

# **Sixth Extinction ?**

## **MOVING BEYOND A FAST APPROACHING CRITICAL FORK IN OUR EVOLUTIONARY ROAD**

122,500 Words

**A book about those originating social, political, philosophical, religious and economic presuppositions believed to be "inherent truths" we are now discovering were built on ecological flaws**

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**A book that will change the way you think about our planet and your life on it**

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**A book that explains why scientists have failed to be heard**

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**A book that explains why the general public refuses to listen**

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We are being faced with an existential threat. There is the possibility of human extinction. And unlike threats in the past to all forms of life on the planet, this one will not be determined by a random meteorite/asteroid or natural planetary happening. It will be species' self-inflicted. Where did we go wrong? Could it be that certain elements in our thought process, laboriously pieced together over the centuries beginning with our bronze/iron agricultural age, are now working against us? And if so, what are those elements? Finally the question: How could we, the most clever and brilliant primate ever to evolve be bringing this upon ourselves? Is it that we have a self-destructive genetic neurotic/psychotic cranial imperfection? And if that is the reason, at what stage of our evolution did the imperfection occur?

Finally, do you and I biologically/psychologically/neurologically have the ability to move away from that imperfection?

**David Anderson**

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**PAGE 2 BEGINNING BOOK:**

*"The problems in the world today are so enormous they cannot be solved with the level of thinking that created them."*

**Albert Einstein**

## **Our Biosphere Vulnerability**

**“Biosphere” is being used in this book to define the relatively thin layer of the earth's surface that can support life. It extends down to the deepest layers of soils and ocean trenches and up to the highest levels of the earth's atmosphere. Change in the biosphere generally operates on “slow,” that is in multiples of many hundreds or thousands or even millions of years. But change can also operate on “fast.” The Permian Triassic mass extinction 252 million years ago and the Cretaceous extinction 66 million years ago are two examples of relatively rapid change. The Cretaceous came from a meteorite and resulted in low temperatures and the Permian Triassic came primarily from a Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) Hydrate Feedback Loop and resulted in high temperatures. Both were accompanied by atmospheric change so extreme as to extinguish a very large percentage of planetary life. When such atmospheric change does occur, those species that inhabit precisely bounded biological niches are the first to be affected. They die out. Then others follow. We are now in our Modern Age seeing the first signs of atmospheric change due to our industrial civilization adding excessive amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> into the earth's biosphere. An immediate result of this, climate change, is becoming a major threat to food production in areas of the planet. There are however many other changes occurring and they along with CO<sub>2</sub> have raised a wide range of scientific questions as to the continuance of our species on our planet. In a metaphorical sense we live inside a membrane, a membrane that encloses our lives. It allows our lives to take form and to develop biologically. We are born in that membrane-and then a short period afterward we die in that membrane. As with all other life on the planet, while in our membrane we are biologically dependent on an evolutionarily constructed and unique “precisely bounded biologic niche” within that membrane. We also know that since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution there have been changes adverse to human life within our membrane and that there is no slowdown in sight. We also know that there is an awareness of these changes among many. Yet, we see no universal social, political or economic consensus as to a corrective course. So many life or death questions are now facing us: Will we experience a Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) Hydrate Feedback Loop that will place us on a repeat path like that of the Permian Triassic mass extinction? Or, to our horror, will there be some other self-induced chemical imbalance within our membrane impossible to reverse?**

***“It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”– Charles Darwin***

## **Our Axial Age**

Some say the change occurred at the beginning of our Axial Age. It was an Age identified by the German philosopher Karl Jasper (1883-1969) that began in the Levant around 800/300 BCE, He was wrong. The foundation was in fact set long before. It took place during a period known as the late Holocene. That period marked the end of the age of hunter/gatherers and the beginning of the bronze/iron/agricultural age.

Two civilizations then began to form. By 4,000/3,000 BCE there was an Egyptian clustered along the northern banks of the Nile and a Sumerian along the lower Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Out of them came an age that gave social, cultural, religious and institutional structure to their societies—and now to ours.

Religious belief as it began to form in the two was strikingly similar. Both in certain terms redefined the human relationship to Planet Earth and to the heavens beyond. Out of this emerged a new mindset directing humans to a god or gods whose residence was not in the here and now surrounding them in Nature, but up above in the celestial heavens.

It was an entirely new religious mindset telling them that Nature need no longer be revered as it had been. And it was telling them that they were destined to dominate Nature. It told them that they were separate from all other life and nonlife here on earth. Not only separate, but even “chosen” was the word used by some.

With this change, the former horizontal transcendental attachment to Nature that had guided human biological evolutionary development for over one million years was cast aside.

Herein lay a fatal flaw and one with dangerous implications for the future of our species, a flaw now pointing to the possibility of our extinction. This flaw is leading many to a reexamination of our Sumerian/Egyptian past and the societal institutional structures that grew out of it. With this reexamination, it has become clear that unless we can extricate ourselves from the hold so many parts of these structures continue to have on our lives; like any other organism within the biosphere of this planet that become alien to it, we will be rejected by it.

Those who are concerned are being plagued by the question of whether changes of such a wide range and magnitude are at all possible in the short period of time we have in front of us. That concern prompted the writing of this book. Based on the scientific evidence now empirically settled, it directs the discussion to the need for changes in thought and behavior that for the survival of *Homo sapiens* must take place over the next one to two hundred years; changes impacting many of the age-old institutions that support and give structure to what we as a 21<sup>st</sup> century human society believe to be our social, political, religious, economic, and ethical norms.

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## **FOREWORD**

For the first time in our species’ history we are being faced with the possibility of an existential threat to our continued existence. And unlike threats in the past that brought down many species,

this one will not be determined by a random meteorite or asteroid or other natural planetary happening. It will be self-inflicted by *Homo sapiens*.

In our world today this is not the way it was to happen. As for the Western sector, early on those of the Abrahamic faiths were told that this planet was given to them by their God. The words became a guide for the human/planet relationship. Their God said that they were to till it and care for it. He also told them to multiply. And that was all He said.

Now Planet Earth is telling us that His words were far too simplistic. There was no reference to the planet as a finite domain. There was no warning of human population size limitations. He did not tell us that our economic and technological advancements could one day destroy the regenerative resource capacity of the planet's biosphere if we dump into that biosphere hundreds of millions of tons of highly toxic chemical waste, much of it non-biodegradable.

So we, at least in the West, are left with the inadequacy of His words to address *Homo sapiens* existential reality. Where did we all go so wrong? Certainly since that early period we have had time to think about the reality of our existence on this planet. Could it be that much of the pattern of our thought processes, laboriously pieced together over the centuries beginning with the bronze/iron/agricultural age six/ten thousand years ago, have from the beginning of that age been working against our continuation? Could it be there are elements in that thought process so dangerous as to bring on our end? And if this is so, what are those elements? And finally; there is the question: How could we, the most clever and brilliant primate ever be bringing this upon ourselves?

There is another troubling question: Why is our response now so muted? Could it be that there are inherent cranial/neurological deficiencies in our makeup; so serious that we as a species are unable to comprehend that we have become a threat to our own future existence? Could that cranial/neurological side of us be our problem?

We have evidence that since the beginning of the bronze/iron/agricultural age our lives have been ruthlessly mean, vicious and brutal. The following ancient biblical verse speaks to this. It shows us that far into our distant past we were fully aware of our problem.

**Jeremiah 17:9**

**“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?”**

Our cranial/neurological malware is the same as it was in the Jeremiah’s time. Is this the reason our extinction possibility is not understood? He said that we cannot know deceit. Is this the reason we are deceiving ourselves? Is our deceitful self-absorption the reason? Continuation of CO2 release, methane release, exponential population growth ( I read that unrestrained human population growth on a finite planet is a logical absurdity) acidification of oceans, resource depletion, corruption, extreme poverty, ISIS beheadings, atom bombs in the hands of psychopaths-and the list goes on. What care I; most of us say? Only pockets of human concern come to the surface. All of that is too far away, out of my vision.

The result; threats to our continued existence remain hidden away, buried in the depths of the global human brain. Many citizens simply ignore the whole thing and go about their business. And when the harsh ecological facts are revealed, narratives are cleverly fashioned to remove those facts from reality. Life can go on in a perpetual “Disney World” kind of existence. Tomorrow will take care of itself. It is easier to pretend everything is OK. Or my God will take care of it. For some within the Abrahamic traditions there will be an Apocalypse after which everything-at least for the faithful, will be OK.

And in academia, humanity’s reality as to its relationship to Planet Earth and the Cosmos is turned into a confusion of professionalized internalized vocabulary and endless footnotes. This has become most obvious in the social sciences of psychology, sociology and economics. Reductive mechanistic “survival of the fittest” has turned into what is called “social Darwinism.” That theory becomes an explanation and even justification for the release of our neurotic psychotic impulses. There is no inference to humanity’s meaning and purpose beyond this. Leave it to the religionists and philosophers they say. Let them argue back and forth as to what is or what is not beyond the brain cage. Here on earth it is simply a matter of biological and social survival of the fittest.

These social scientists dismiss any greater purpose for the existence of man/woman. They say that socially we are the way we are because we are the way we are. We are no different than



wind-up clocks. Find the faulty part and you have found the problem. Fix that part and you have solved the problem.

And as for the social science of economics, strangely enough there is a hint among some-even to include those in the atheist camp-of Adam Smith's market forces being "the hand of God" working its beneficence. This puritanical faux spirituality today is even found in many prominent economist spokespersons teaching in business schools; the likes of Harvard, Wharton and the University of Chicago. For them the Capital Market system is given close to godly status. The dark narcissistic side of human behavior is given no recognition. Worker depravity is not recognized. Ownership of wealth is. The need for negative external costs to be built into investment decisions, built in costs that will serve to mitigate that "dark side" of human nature-that are now damaging the biosphere, and may bring an end to our species, are not recognized. Maximizing total financial return is. A big salary after graduation is.

Equally dangerous are many of those who study the world religions. Their mindset is the irrevocable product of past thought. In university departments of religion staying within preordained religious codes and past religious philosophical constructs rules. Getting papers published rules. Esoteric long winded words rule. Tenure rules.

So, a perpetual "Disney World" existence even reigns among many academicians.

There is, however, a note of optimism here: In spite of this overall dementia at so many levels of society, larger and larger numbers throughout the world-and also in and outside academy, are beginning to understand that at no time in human history has it been more important to face the issue of the threat to our species survival, and at no time in human history has it been more important to search for solutions. The numbers are not high enough for there to be an overwhelming world critical mass, or even an organized collective struggle pointing to revolution, but they are high enough to make a difference. Pope Francis' LAUDATO SI in 2015 and the COP21 meeting in 2015 are illustrations.

Those with this awareness find themselves facing the age-old challenge made long ago by Plato. Have I the courage to remove myself from my friends-and their criticism of me-and step outside of the cave, turn my back on those in denial of the agony of the human condition and move into the bright light? Have I the courage to join the others out there who are in search for a new and

yet undiscovered human purpose that can move humanity forward by way of a new form of thought that will contradict those failed presuppositions that are preventing human life on this planet from becoming integral-at one-with the natural forces inside and outside of the planet?

**Authors Note:**

**The term “Bright Light” in Abrahamic thought here refers to the state of man in the pre temptation Garden of Eden. In Buddhist thought that same state is defined as “Nirvana.”**

Have I the courage to challenge all of our/my past thought grounded on ten thousand years of presuppositions; even though I know that this will call for a change greater than at any other period in our post bronze/iron/agricultural age history, and even though I may have to change the past and present validation of very much of what I as well as the society around me takes for granted, knows and believes? Am I willing to accept this challenge?

That is just the beginning. Now comes the hard part. You and I by challenging our beliefs and the institutional structures supporting them will not alone solve our problem. It will take more than just a change in your “belief” or my belief. That will be no better than placing bandages on a fatal wound. Our human society in its entirety will have to find the courage to confront the dark retrogressive side of the human condition. It will have to examine that mysterious and often deadly juxtaposition between our dark side and our loving side, a perplexing dichotomy that continues, as it did for Jeremiah, to haunt our species. All of human society will have to move outside of the cave into the light.

Is this at all possible? Could it take place on a grand scale? Can we expect those in power throughout the world to change, many of whom are now controlling our thought processes through the academy, through the media, through the religious institutions, and in so many other ways? That is the question. As we are now beginning to see in our Age, those not ready to change do not step aside easily. For the powerful and privileged “they” it is they who see themselves as first, Planet Earth second. Wealth and power come first. Accreditation comes first. Also, we know from revolutions in past history how difficult change can be. We know that stated purpose even by a majority is not always achieved. There is a dark side to those who have power. Even after revolution, that dark side can be a dangerous driver of behavior.

As Jeremiah observed; our brain cage controls our thoughts and actions. No one is spared. So the biblical quote that we can be “wicked” should give us pause. It tells us that the pseudo “civilized” behavior we can observe in so many today is just a mask behind which hides the real them, the real you and the real me. That applies at all levels in our modern society, the lowest as well as the highest.

So, our species’ behavioral survival equation will not be an easy one to solve. Putting in place the necessary changes will be extremely difficult. It will entail challenging the validity of our social, political, philosophical, religious and economic thought and the institutions that now support that thought. It will entail separating out those originating presuppositions we have believed to be "inherent truths" that we are now discovering were built on ecological flaws.

And we will not be given the time we had during the last big change, beginning with our Axial Age. We may only have one or two hundred years. Our planet is right now caving in upon us.

Holding us back is the fact that there will be resistance every step of the way, some of it violent. Yet we can observe that larger and larger numbers of the earth’s human citizens are coming to the realization that there has to be a new equation. Larger and larger numbers understand that without change, our psychotic and neurotic responses powered by our cranial/neurological destructive emotions: so defined by words such as: psychotic, aggressive, selfish, deceptive, mean spirited, ego centric, jealous, possessive, dishonest, power hungry, narcissistic-and yes to again quote Jeremiah; **deceitful and wicked**, will spell our end.

Reduced to a few words; if we are to survive on this planet:

**We will have to change the way we view our present social, political, religious, philosophical and economic thought and the institutions that support that thought. We will have to separate out those originating presuppositions we have believed to be "inherent truths" we are now discovering were built on non-sustainable ecological flaws. In their place we will have to design and introduce into society forms of thought and systems of governance that reflect new ethical formulae, the purpose of which will be the protection and continuance of the Earth's diverse yet mutually supporting systems encompassing all life and nonlife.**

**Reduced to even fewer words:**

**We will have to step out of the cave.**

## **INTRODUCTION – Two Perspectives**

### **American -**

At my home high up in the Smoky Mountains of North Carolina I look out over endless miles without a trace of human civilization. Each spring as cold rains are soaked into the soil and the warm sunshine begins to perform its miracle, I can observe the leaves as they change day by day, taking on a deeper hue of green. Below my home is a lake surrounded by protected national forest. It is fed by mountain streams. They literally “gush” out of the ground at elevations even in excess of three thousand feet. The water in those streams is so pure that, as the Cherokee once did, I too could drink it. So, it is hard for me to absorb in my mind the increasing seriousness of the damage being done.

As I read the news each morning via satellite I become aware of the beginning of a number of terrifying realities challenging our civilization. I read that the earth has warmed 2 degrees Fahrenheit (More than 1 degree Celsius) since 1880. The other day I read about what is called the Clausius-Clapeyron relation which says that the water holding capacity of the atmosphere increases about 7 percent for each 1 degree Celsius increase in temperature. (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) Warmer air means higher humidity means bigger storms. I say to myself; yes that must be the reason the summers here are becoming wetter and warmer and the hurricanes down south more violent. I read that as we continue to dump 36 billion tons of carbon dioxide into the biosphere each year, this is likely to add 4 degrees Celsius (7.2 degrees Fahrenheit) by the end of the century.

I read that the rate of increase of CO<sub>2</sub> has been unprecedented since the Pliocene era three to five million years ago. I learn that this level needs to be reduced to less than 350 parts per million

from the 400 parts per million right now, and we are far from achieving that goal. In fact we have just passed the 400 mark. At the same time I read that the fossil fuel industry is fully committed to develop all of its 2,795 gigatons of carbon in its reserves, five times more than the maximum we can emit without risking human extinction.

I also read about other frightful developments such as mercury poisoning of fish in our oceans and lakes. I read that industrial fishing in our oceans has now reduced many species by more than 90 percent. Also, I read about the acidification of the oceans. Researchers have reported that this acidification is wiping out large populations of phytoplankton, tiny ocean plants that are at the base of food webs that support fish, dolphins, whales, and other marine life. Some are even saying that we may be facing a total extinction tipping point by the end of the century; like past mass die-offs of marine life from the accumulation of carbon.

I also read that as a result of just the small amount of current global warming we are now observing, methane gas beginning to bubble in the Arctic and it could lead to a runaway rise in global temperatures. I read that the Arctic is warming twice as fast as the rest of the planet and the pace is picking up. I read about this acceleration of melting of the Arctic and Antarctica ice caps bringing about rising ocean levels that will within the next several generations inundate coastal cities around the world. I read about the millions who will be displaced by that inundation in Bangladesh, the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, the Nile Delta, Egypt and yes; Miami and New York and London and parts of the European Continent. I read about continuing glacier melt in the Alps and Himalayas that will take out of production enormous areas of farm land. I read about dropping aquifer levels throughout the world-including the US-as a result of sub soil irrigation by industrial farming. I read about terrible droughts, vast wildfires and unprecedented “Frankenstorms” that are now occurring with increasing frequency. And I read about unrestrained population growth in many areas of the planet and the resultant disease and famine. And I read about rising rates of autism among our children as well as increasing rates of cancers among our adults

So I find myself haunted by the words of the late Thomas Berry; Catholic Priest, historian, eco-theologian who proclaimed in his book *the dream of the earth*: “The time has now come where we will listen or we will die.” I find myself asking; are we listening? How many of us are aware

of the possibility of the end of *Homo sapiens*, the end of our human civilization, a Sixth Extinction?

There are those who are. They number among many of the most prominent scientists in the world today. They are saying that much of the unfolding ecological destruction/implosion occurring now is largely irreversible and at its present pace, over the next one or two or three hundred years or even before that if a methane release in the Arctic causing extremely high temperatures becomes a reality, our species will be facing extinction. And they are telling us that the suffering will be extreme. First, those billions of humans who are living on the edge of survival will perish. (We can already see evidence of this) Then, the collapse will take the rest of us.

As I look out at the beauty of the mountains in front of me and the lake below, I find myself deeply disturbed by this prospect. Most distressing for me as an American is the thought that in my own country even at high levels of government, the threat is not being taken seriously. Congress remains in gridlock. Opposition leaders fight every initiative.

We need immediate and substantial funding for new technologies that could help avert the long term impact of global warming. No political way to get us there. We need an increase in the gasoline and diesel tax in order to induce more efficient autos, buses and trucks. No political way to get us there. We need to build an infrastructure that supports a more efficient alternative means of transportation. No political way to get us there. We need “cap-and-trade” or some other economic incentive to redirect coal plants into a more environmentally sound production of electricity. No political way to get us there. We need a tax code to establish end prices for all we consume that reflects eco-toxic “negative externalities.” No political way to get us there. We need to recognize that population growth cannot continue at its present rate. No political way to get us there

How can it be that so many Americans are so determined to be on the wrong side of an issue that will cause so much future pain and suffering to so many-including their own grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren? Polls show that half of the US population does not even believe there is a problem. Who are they? Why aren't they disturbed?

A powerful voting bloc in America consists of evangelical fundamentalist Christians. They are eagerly focused on *the end of times* when only they will survive the calamity. Is this the reason they are not disturbed? As a serious thinker about the parables and aphorisms of Jesus, this confuses me. Much of their thinking does not fit into the Jesus I know insofar as was his understanding of planet Earth and the dimension beyond. But then I keep asking myself; could the problem be far more religiously complex? Could it be something in all of the Abrahamic religions, something about the original Torah image of God? For over two thousand years that image has been an underlying archetypal force driving much of human civilization. It remains so today.

9/11 and the American response gives us evidence of this. In retribution for that brutal event, a born again evangelical fundamentalist Christian president worshiping the Judeo/Christian retributive God of the Hebrew Bible responded with a brutal invasion of a Muslim country; ultimately resulting in over 650,000 Muslim deaths. (exact figure uncertain) An angry American public encouraged and supported him. (I cover this in some detail in my third book; *Q Will Human Species Survive?*)

The irony here is that Islam in the seventh century had used the same Hebraic punishing and retributive template for its god; Allah. It was the Allah image that drove Osama bin Laden and his fellow Brotherhood terrorists to attack the Infidel Americans.

There is another archetypal image at work in the American psyche and it too influences how Americans think. It can best be identified from a description of the iconic hero in the American mythic drama as that drama was played out in the exploratory thrill and then repeated climax of continental discovery and rediscovery. The story became legend during the country's formative years as first the eastern and then the western territories were being settled.

This drama is still being played out today; even though as the succeeding generations unfolded the curtain began to fall on it. With its fall, America went from experiencing the real thing to believing in an icon of the real thing; Gene Autry, John Wayne in the popular movie "True Grit," Daytona muscle cars, a Texan president in his Levis and cowboy boots cutting brush, a braggadocios President Donald Trump.

The popular strength of the NRA shows in bold form that this deep and political sinew still permeates to the core of the American psyche.

All of these images now find their relevance as no more than a reenactment of the early American myth, only a superficial expression of it; not the real thing. The land has changed. The eastern and western territories have been strip mined, paved over with roads and filled with factories and cities. Many farms are now under the control of large industrial corporations, in turn under the seeding, pesticide and fertilizing control of the likes of Monsanto. In Iowa roughly forty percent of the corn is being put into car gas tanks as ethanol; no longer into peoples' stomachs.

One of F. Scott Fitzgerald's title characters speaks to the end of this American dream. Gatsby, his iconic tragic American describes it as the beginning and the end of a "transitory enchanted moment."

Fitzgerald writes:

**"For a transitory enchanted moment man must have held his breath in the presence of this continent, compelled into an aesthetic contemplation he neither understood nor desired, face to face for the last time in history with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder."**

Americans today have difficulty understanding that the unlimited horizons of their Founding Fathers described so eloquently by Fitzgerald are quickly fading from their view. **"The last time in history"** has now become just what Fitzgerald said it would be.

The founders of this nation saw no need to recognize limits. They were the product of a former dispensation, an age of unbounded optimism, heavily influenced by the idealism of Greek thought. The homes of Jefferson, Adams, Madison, and the rest were full of books, letters and speeches reflecting this expansive conviction, as well as a sanguine faith in scientific discovery. There was also an age-even for religious deists like Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, and Monroe-of belief in a God who had made man supreme over nature. They saw nature as a gift from their God, a gift to be controlled, conquered, and manipulated. Armed with this divine mandate, they saw their country as a treasure trove to be exploited at will. The "horizon" was endless.



It was also a scientific age; a new dawn in human history which had grown out of the darkness of the European Medieval Period. It had begun with Copernicus and Galileo and had expanded with Newton and many others. The words of these great men and the scientific discoveries that ensued became the rational for their new world-as well as for the new American reality.

Then, at the beginning of the twentieth century it suddenly all began to change. Cracks started to appear in that American wall of certainty. To the horror of a small number of Americans-as well as many others throughout the world, the end of the human species had, all of the sudden, become a real possibility. And this was not to be an *end of times* brought on by the God of Abraham. It was to be an *end of times* brought on by the human species itself.

The Enlightenment and with it belief that science is all that matters was being called into question. Americans were finding that science not only could not solve many of the problems, it had become their cause.

None of the American Founders had been able to foresee the ecological breakdown that would face their nation and their planet, nor the inability of science to come to the rescue. In their age, the concern was in naming species, not in their extinction. Nor could they, with their unbridled faith in American democracy, have dreamed that the will of the people to respond to an oncoming ecological crisis would be thwarted by the very form of government that they had designed. Nor could they have envisioned congressional gridlock and vested industrial and reactionary interests bringing down the curtain not only on their American dream, but on the entire human species as well.

The following chapters examine a new form of human consciousness that could save the American nation and the planet. They discuss the ideas of Socrates and Plato and then go on to the Buddha, Jesus, Spinoza, Nietzsche, Emerson, Thoreau, Freud, Jung, Einstein, Bohm, Campbell, Berry, Swimme, Tarnas, Geering, Griffith and many others. These great thinkers all have suggested each in their own way a possible transcendental meaning to our existence.

I begin this book with the earliest of them and then I take the reader back to the formation of our human consciousness with the cave drawings at Lascaux in France. I also explore the ages that

came just before and just after Lascaux. I go into detail describing the indigenous Americans and how they came to understand their relationship to the Nature surrounding them.

I write about only one solution. We must all open our minds to new political, social, economic and religious constructs. It is the only way that we can transition from our present state of planetary dysfunction and self-destruction into a state of ecological planetary harmony.

The book does not call for total abandonment of our present civilizational beliefs and structures. Rather, it calls for their redefinition by way of a renewed search for their lasting wisdom and truth.

It examines the validity of our current age which is based on eight thousand years of social, political, religious and economic thought and the institutions that arose from that thought. It separates out those originating presuppositions we have believed to be "inherent truths" that we are now discovering were built on non-sustainable social/religious/ecological flaws.

And as for our religions, it calls for a radical redefinition of the God of Abraham; that God worshiped today as the God of Judaism, Christianity (the Father part of the Christian Trinity) and Islam. It calls for a redefinition of the meaning of the life of Yeshua "Jesus" as that life was interpreted from the first to the fifth century and then in time canonically defined by the Roman Christian church. In doing this it examines the Coptic Gospel of Thomas found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt in 1945.

It says that all three of the Abrahamic religions-and all others-must first and foremost pass the test of how they are to guide humanity toward planetary sustainability. All must serve to place our species in consonance with the "Implicate Order" of the planet and the universe as it is now beginning to be understood.

In Stuart Kauffman's book; *Reinventing The Sacred*, he recorded a profoundly insightful statement for our time made by Scott Momaday; Pulitzer Prize-winning Kiowa poet, playwright, and author:

**"The most important task confronting humankind is to reinvent the sacred."**

This book calls for such a reinvention, expressed within a new metaphysical/spiritual framework, one that by bringing America-and the world, into "oneness" with the immutable, the indescribable, can carry us all through this millennium.

And if we choose not to “**reinvent the sacred**,” what then? The punishing retributive God being worshiped by Jews, Christians and Muslims has already given us His answer. The biblical prophecy is self-fulfilling. We are finished. Our eschatological intentionality will turn into our reality. Our belief in *the end of times* will become that reality.

## **Planetary -**

**"I think the odds are no better than 50/50 that our civilization will survive to the end of the present century. Our actions today may make the difference between a near eternity filled with ever more complex and subtle forms of life and one filled with nothing but base matter."**

Sir Martin Rees, Professor of Cosmology and Astrophysics and Master of Trinity College at the University of Cambridge. Honorary title of Astronomer Royal, Gold Medal of the Royal, 2008

The above statement from Sir Martin Rees is one of literally hundreds made by prominent individuals in the years following Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring*, published in 1962. Hers was the book that started the Green Revolution. At that time I was living in Johannesburg, South Africa. The city was surrounded by cyanide laden mini mountains deposited there from the gold mines. (Reduced in recent years as the price of gold has made it profitable to process the dumps) Ecological thoughts were farthest from my mind. Nor were they on my mind after I left Johannesburg and during my many years of travel throughout the world. International economics and geo-political science; they were my thing. So it was not until years later that I became aware of an ecological concern building up centered on the survival of our species on this planet. This was the result a steady flow of peer reviewed studies from the scientific community indicating the onset of a very large number of dangerous ecological "tipping" points, one after the other from increasing biosphere degradation.

At first there seemed to be a sense of optimism about the whole thing. Eat less meat, burn less gas, stop polluting the rivers was the cry. Then in recent years I noticed a sense of near panic beginning to set in, and not only among the scientists themselves, but also among many others in the world community. There was a general feeling of pessimism beginning to form. We were missing the mark. Something more needed to be done.

I therefore decided to write a book in an attempt to confront this pessimism. I would first examine the reality of the crisis, and then suggest a means by which we humans might extricate ourselves from it. My overall approach was to examine the validity of the information at hand and then the social, political, philosophical, religious and economic bias imbedded in our culture working against solutions.

It was not long before I found, like many others had found, that the information was valid. Also, like many others I found that I too was becoming extremely pessimistic about the future of our species. The scientific information was correct. However, our society appeared to be confused as to its authenticity and was even more confused as to what actions needed to be taken to avert possible disaster-and even extinction. My attendance at a number of conferences allowed me to meet with many of these scientists face-to-face. This confirmed my observation. Then I came upon another observation. I came to the conclusion that it appeared these scientists and their spokespersons were very good at presenting factual information, but not very good at getting the general public to understand what they were trying to tell them. Nor were they very effective in their explanations of just how we need to understand from a religious/philosophical perspective the broader picture of our place on this planet.

It therefore seemed to me that my pessimism had a solid foundation. So I began, like many others, to feel that there was only a marginal chance that we as a civilization would be able to survive through the coming millennium or even for that matter beyond the next two or three hundred years. At this point the same very deep feeling of depression that many others were having also began to come over me.

Then I had an insight. It arose as I was viewing all of the ecological information I had been gathering. I began to see it in a somewhat different light. I began to see the information not as a predictor of the end of our species, but possibly the beginning of a new Age; an age no doubt to

be preceded by enormous pain and suffering, yet a new Age leading to a new form of human understanding of its place on the planet and in the cosmos. This allowed me to view the information from a far broader perspective. It gave me a sense that in all of our awkwardness; we as a species may be moving into an Age of a higher level of understanding, one far removed from our present post Mesopotamian age of cultural dysfunction and self-destruction.

So I asked myself; are there any noted scientists saying anything about this possibility? Are any of them able to see beyond the gloom of the everyday predictions? It was then I became aware of David Bohm (1917-1982), one of the greatest theoretical physicists. Bohm, a colleague of Einstein, introduced the evolutionary idea of cosmic "enfoldment" and "unfoldment." He also spoke in terms of an unbroken cosmic wholeness, with everything animate and inanimate having, as he described it; "an inseparable quantum interconnectedness." He recognized a "consciousness deep down of the whole of mankind." He recognized an intense heightening of this consciousness among many individuals who had shaken off the "pollution of the ages" (wrong worldviews that propagate ignorance). He saw this beginning generating the immense power that will be needed for human survival.

Then I came upon the work of Ilya Prigogine, who won the 1977 Nobel Prize for Chemistry. His work on structures indicated that dynamic systems are engaged in a constant exchange of energy and that those systems can move not toward dissipative entropy but toward higher and higher levels of complexity. In "chaotic" conditions, systems choose between alternate paths; one fatally reverting to lesser complexity and the other to a higher order of complexity. This was a challenge to the law of thermodynamics that said all systems break down with the dissipation of energy. His reference was to all systems of all kinds from organelles to empires, from traffic patterns to termite mounds, from deer antlers to cardiovascular systems.

This was the evidence I needed to see that we may be moving not backward toward extinction but forward toward greater complexity as a part of an emergent upward continuum. Given this new challenge to my perspective, I was able to sense the possibility of a new Age, one that countered the dire conclusions and general ecological pessimism found among so many today. I thought; perhaps we are a part of the holistic process described by Bohm and Prigogine, and there is some form of direction leading us as a species not downward toward Anthropocene

extinction but upward toward our becoming a part of new planetary order. Further; we are witnessing the coming together of science and theology.

This led me to begin reading authors like Stanislav Grof, Richard Tarnas, Joseph Kearns, Ervin Laszlo, Keiron Le Grice, Brian Swimme and others associated with the California Institute for Integral Studies, San Francisco and Mary Evelyn Tucker of the Forum on Religion and Ecology, New Haven, also Emeritus scholar of Social Ethics Larry Rasmussen. They are all referenced in the following chapters.

Next, I decided to go back into my own hominid past. I found that very early on there were life forms on the surface of our planet very much like I am. Then, approaching this from a paleoanthropological view I found that we *Homo sapiens* among all other bipedal life forms, having overcome every diversity imaginable emerged from the evolutionary birth canal superior in terms of more than just survival over the Neanderthals, the Hobbits of Flores-even the mysterious Denisovans. (At some point before 270,000 BCE, African humans such as the Denisovans moved into Europe and interbred with the Neanderthals)

We are now discovering by way of DNA carbon dated testing even more proto humans, a recent example being *Homo naledi* in South Africa. A burial site there indicates they had the ability to think beyond instinct.

An answer as to the why of this forward motion I found in the book *FREEDOM The End of The Human Condition* by the Australian Jeremy Griffith. He begins with discussion of our predecessor life form; *Homo erectus*. His well-researched understanding about how these early ancestors interactively progressed is of great interest. It is his contention that *Homo erectus* began to possess a high level of “human” consciousness-ability to think beyond instinct-very early on; even as many as two million years ago when it began to move into the complexity of its brain cage beyond other animal forms. It is his observation that with our present level of intelligent consciousness we are now at a junction point where we have the possibility of saving our species from extinction by way of an understanding of our dark and psychotic/neurotic side. He compares this “dark side” metaphorically to the mental state of those trapped in Plato’s cave.

In my studies I also found that by 200,000 BCE hominid *Homo sapiens* were demonstrating an extraordinary level of consciousness well beyond that of the earlier *Homo erectus* and possibly

even a consciousness of space dimensionally beyond the cranial cavity enclosing their biophysical brains. Archaeological evidence is now showing that we had by then become human as we today define being human. We had the same emotions, the same sense of family and tribal affiliation, the same feelings of love, the same desire to express our inner nature through forms of artistic endeavor-and most unfortunately the same psychotic sensibility driving inner conflict-as just described. We had a dualistic teleological uniqueness that separated us from other forms of life.

Griffith postulates that our “dark” side was accentuated with the beginning of our bronze/iron and agricultural age. It is a side of us that today could lead to our extinction. Many like him are now beginning to understand that we early hominids before that age were not the “savages” and “primitive cave men” as we moderns with our euro-centric mindset have defined them. That mindset is now being revealed as narrow and limited as to a definition of who they were and what we today are.

And as for those in our modern society who continue to denigrate these early hominids; and here I include those denigrating the “them” hominids with the modern designation: *Homo Neanderthalensis* and *Homo heidelbergensis* (and the others) and after them the indigenous American hominids (American Indians) peoples in America before the European incursion. (As well as those Americans in the central and southern part of the continent) They do so at great risk of not knowing who and what they themselves really have become. Nor do they understand the danger lurking in what they have become.

A week in southern France visiting the caves there with a paleoanthropologist convinced me of this. There I saw Cro-Magnon at the height of his acuity. My euro-centric eyes were opened! These humans survived a mini ice age that had brought the population in that area down to about 10,000. And they did not just survive! They advanced. The level of artistry in the caves there is literally breathtaking. It is said that even Pablo Picasso was visibly shaken when he first entered the cave at Lascaux. (further discussion in Chapter 6) Seeing this art work for myself; I concluded there is no question that among all other life forms, these Cro-Magnon possessed an astounding level of intellectual creative ability.

So given the evidence, the question arises; can we rest our case on the Bohm/Prigogine theory that nature inherently tends toward definite implicate determination and higher complexity? Can we make the assumption that our species here now on Planet Earth is moving progressively in a formation/destruction/recreation direction toward a higher level (form) of consciousness and we among all species are singularly enfolding into some sort of “inseparable quantum interconnectedness”? Are we moving away from the **“danger lurking in what they have become.”** And if this is a correct assumption, can we then say it follows that we are for some reason a part of a unique and enduring hominid biological progression?

This leads to the big question; if so; for what reason? And that leads to an even bigger one; what if our thinking is too shallow and egocentric and we are just another cosmological “Big Bang” biological experiment on the way to our own partial end or even total extinction so as to make room for the next better life form?

Clearly, a strength we have as a part of Bohm’s “enfoldment” is our tenacity. It was very well expressed by one of America’s greatest writers, William Faulkner, in his book *The Sound and The Fury* where he wrote:

**“I decline to accept the end of man. I refuse to accept this. I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among the creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance.”**

Faulkner’s view rose out of an era of extreme pain and suffering in the American South after the Civil War. Viewing this in a broader historical context, we can see that humans have been going through the same form of pain and suffering from the very beginning of the bronze/iron agricultural age. Our history has been horrific, with example after example of man’s inhumanity to man. Yet, as Faulkner reminds us; man (and woman) has prevailed. Yet, the question remains; can we trust Faulkner?

I decided at least there was a chance that Bohm's "inseparable quantum interconnectedness" and the observations of Prigogine, Griffith and others could be explaining an underlying force in play and this combined with our tenacity to endure-Faulkner-could possibly be the reason we are here today and may be here tomorrow. I also had the feeling that something else far deeper may be



going on. We may be moving, for some reason we do not know, toward the realization of a greater purpose to our existence on this planet, and in the Cosmos.

Recent developments may be giving us proof of this. Just the fact that there is a growing and persistent concern among so many throughout the world-no matter how seemingly underrated and misunderstood this concern is at present-shows that something of enormous significance is happening. Many are beginning to sense a growing insight into our *raison d'être* beyond former insights. Many are beginning to sense that we are moving into a time when there will be a reevaluation of everything about our lives; our religious beliefs, our institutions, even our biological DNA makeup, everything. It is an evolving realization that could change the planetary interrelationship between not just our own but all life and nonlife on it. My conclusion therefore was that we may be moving through what can be called a “cosmic transition curve,” one as significant as that when cellular life began to form four billion years ago. We may be at the very beginning of a new age unlike any in our past.

In the light of this realization, the Bohmian/Prigogine/Faulknerian/Griffith analysis did seem to make sense to me; nevertheless it did not materially alter the ecological time line I and many in the scientific community were seeing coming into view based on the planetary evidence forming. In fact my own observation was that we may be entering an extreme planetary destructive period, and once tipping points are reached, climatic and other, it will take thousands or even hundreds of thousands of years for the planet to readjust. The so called Gaia theory (the earth is an organism) will come into play. The damage will have been done. The Planet, along with a new version of *Homo sapiens* at some future point in time will then have to regenerate.

If this does come to pass, it will be preceded by enormous pain and suffering for *Homo sapiens* as well as for many other life forms. Unfolding events in the twenty-first and twenty-second centuries will be devastating for hundreds of millions and even billions of humans. There is ample evidence to make this observation. Those who would deny it are living in a state of cranial/neurological dysfunction. *Chapter 4 Part XIII A New Axial Age ?* speaks to this. I quote it here.

**“It will be too late to reverse many of the adverse ecological forces already set in motion. Drastic measures will need to be taken to sustain a limited population size (some estimates as low as one billion) on an increasingly inhospitable planet. Temperatures will be far higher than now. The**

**coastal cities will all be gone. Acidification will have destroyed much of the fish and crustacean food stock in the oceans. Weather patterns will be extremely damaging to agricultural production. In order for humans to exist away from the harsh climatic and atmospheric conditions, self-contained enclosed structures such as Buckminster Fuller tetrahedron domes will need to be used on parts of the planet. Even space stations just above the earth housing humans capturing the Sun's energy are a possibility although they remain in the realm of science fiction with inherent problems of their own. We must keep in mind the fact that biologically we are "earth creatures" gravitationally."**

Can we avoid having to retreat to Buckminster Fuller's tetrahedron domes or their equivalent? Possibly we can. We are seeing the very beginning of a breakthrough that could transition our species from its present state of planetary dysfunction and self-destruction as just described into a state of at least some form of planetary accommodation. As stated above, many throughout the world are beginning to understand that our continuance on the planet will require enormous change, and we defy that change at our peril. They are coming to the realization that this is calling for the abandonment of much of our past thought in every area; political, social, economic and religious.

Are we moving fast enough? That is the question. We fool ourselves if we think we can come up with a quick technological fix for each problem as it arises. That is materialistic deterministic thinking, and the end result of our so-called "Enlightenment." One can argue that it is the reason we are in the fix we are in.

So, where will we be 50/100/150 years from now? Public response continues to lag. Because continuing population expansion is taking place in tandem with the ecological breakdown, many tipping points, each with its own built-in momentum, will soon be coming upon us. The vast majority of humans on the planet will find themselves facing forces for which they are unprepared. Measured in terms of human suffering; reaching a New Age therefore will be far more painful than it was passing through the post Sumerian/Babylonian/Egyptian/Mesopotamian one (Also known as the Neolithic Revolution). Therefore, there is a high probability that enclosed Buckminster Fuller tetrahedron domes described here-and/or their architectural equivalent-will become a reality, as least for the remnant who survive, (Estimated at one to two billion or even far less). The irony is that it may take such a sudden shock to force a needed critical mass of the world population to bring about the necessary rapid societal change-I write about this as an historical phenomenon in *Chapter 4 Human Civilization – The Future Part IV*

*“longue durée”* where I describe how difficult it is to speed up the process of cultural and institutional change.

Humans will be learning the hard way about a delusive flaw in their thinking that empowered their Axial Age; the belief that planet is something separate from them that they can exploit according to their own desires.

As for the present; signs of a lack of movement toward a New Age must not lead to disillusionment. Slowly but surely progress is being made. It needs to become more active. More individuals need to become vested in the challenges. Every step forward means lives saved from future pain and suffering.

It is going to be a long and difficult road. It will not be easy to abandon so much of the thought we had believed to be so sacred.

We who have a grasp of this must make our political voices loudly heard. We need to meet the deniers head on. At the same time, we need to be training our children and grandchildren to prepare for the coming contagion. That is why I wrote this book.

## **Chapter # 1**

### **A Lesson from Socrates**

#### **Part I Flash of a firefly in the night**

**“What is Life?**

**It is the flash of a firefly in the night,  
It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime,  
It is the little shadow that runs across the grass  
And loses itself in the sunset.”**

A Blackfoot Indian Chief as he lay dying (circa 1890)

The words above were spoken out on the American prairie to an American missionary by a Blackfoot Indian Chief as the Chief lay dying. They express a sense of wonder at creation. They speak to no moral rightness or wrongness. They are the reflection of a dying human being in his last hours.

These two men coming together were bound by a common inescapable biological human link; however, each viewed the world around him from an entirely different perspective. The American Missionary came from a society with a belief system built upon ancient Hebraic scriptures and prophecies. An essential part of that system was the belief, made explicitly clear in the very first book of the Hebrew Bible, that God was not here in *the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime* but “up there” in some other celestial dimension. Also He was a god of “subjugation and domination.”

The Blackfoot Indian Chief came from an earlier form of social organization dating to the very beginnings of human consciousness, a pre-agricultural civilization of hunter/gatherers perhaps extending as far back as 250,000 or more years. It saw the stars, the mountains, the plants, all forms of life from an entirely different point of view. It looked at the world with awe and veneration. All of Nature was at one with the mystery of the Universe. It was a Nature not to be subdued or dominated by man, but to be revered and looked upon with respect and awe; as expressed in the dying words of the Chief, even to its most minute part; *the flash of a firefly in the night*.

Not so for the American Missionary and others like him as they spread across the vast American continent. There was no mystery in that *flash of a firefly in the night, breath of a buffalo in the wintertime, little shadow that runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset*.

When these Americans met the Native Americans and had their first glimpse of that other god(s) perspective, they looked upon it as far different from theirs; and the product of an inferior society. So the missionary and the others like him were quick to rule out the god(s) of these indigenous peoples as being alien and in opposition to their own Judeo/Christian understanding.

The Blackfoot Indian Chief has now been gone for over 100 years, yet his eyes are still with us in his last words as we too picture this scene in our own minds. We see more than just a dying human being painted in words. We see our own never-ending search for the source of the *flash of a firefly in the night, breath of a buffalo in the wintertime, little shadow that runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.*

In our fast paced Industrial Age, can his words be of help? Yes they can. They tell us that we are a part of a dimension both within and beyond our observation of it. Just the fact that the Blackfoot Indian Chief was able to observe what he observed and experience what he experienced gives us hope.

Yet, not all would agree. Most in the West today, as it was with the American missionary, remain the product of that Judeo/Christian deity; a deity that tore our civilization away from nature's other dimensionality. Even those who have over the years rejected Judeo/Christianity find themselves in that same self-enclosed time/frame. The concept of "Nature" held by the Blackfoot Indian Chief is not a part of their thought process.

With the European Enlightenment a few chose not just to abandon the Judeo/Christian god but all gods in any form. And that included any form of Nature/God dimensionality as expressed by the words of the Blackfoot Indian Chief. Mention should be made of one of them. He was the philosopher and Scott, David Hume (1711-1776). Today, he would be saying that the missionary's Christian god was a fantasy; as was that sacredness of Nature expressed by the Blackfoot Indian Chief. David Hume would be saying that the Chief as he lay dying was simply describing rationally and objectively the changes in the light on that prairie. The firefly, the breath of a buffalo, the little shadow that runs across the grass he would explain were simply observations registered in the brain of that Chief corresponding to past subjective experience. He would go on to explain that the Chief, as an earth bound biological organism aware of its own mortality soon to be at its end was simply acknowledging the existence of nature around him, and as he was dying recalling certain unique subjective impressions gained from his past life experience.

Can we in the twenty first century trust the veracity of David Hume's observations? Are they not just the response of a skeptical human being arising from a highly subjective description of an

impression of an event being recorded on the neurotransmitters in his brain, an impression demonstrating his own innate subjectivity-and in his case a subjectivity with extreme bias, a bias that many in his time had and many today have, a bias that excludes credence of any other dimension to human and other life and is therefore by definition devoid of absolute objectivity. How could David Hume trust the synapses and dendrites of his brain? How can we? Should we trust them? To the rational objective mind, David Hume most certainly had an argument, but he had no open and shut case.

**Author's Note:**

**Charles Darwin's in 1859 had published *On the Origin of Species*. Its emphasis was on the "Survival of the Fittest" in a biological sense. Later as an outgrowth of this, there came the popular concept of "Social Darwinism" when the biological emphasis toward survival also became social. It said the most self-centered and clever socially always wins. The others lose. This idea was not new. It had been introduced in the prior decade by David Hume (1711-1776) in his writings and then by Adam Smith in his 1776 *The Wealth of Nations*. The emphasis for Hume and in Smith's market analysis was on reductive mechanistic human behavior. We are driven by a competitive self-serving human dynamic. In the market we pursue our own best interests without regard to others.**

This book questions the narrowness of human life as David Hume and the others like Adam Smith understood it to be. Nor does it dismiss "Social Darwinism," but it makes the claim that there is more to the human equation. It claims that you and I have the ability to participate in a source of intelligence like that participated in by the Indian Chief, a source beyond our ability to fully comprehend it-as seen in his words, a source moving our species in some mysterious evolutionary way closer and closer toward the beauty of cosmic perfection.

Confirmation of this something "beyond" and "cosmic perfection" is now beginning to emerge as twenty-first century cosmologists, astronomers, quantum physicists, mathematicians, parapsychologists, molecular biochemists, theologians, mystics, astrologers, historians, anthropologists, philosophers and many others of varied interests examine the strange non linearity of the new evidence at hand. (Most of it not available in Hume's day)

Yet we should honor David Hume for his skepticism and be sympathetic with him. It is quite understandable that this brilliant individual with his questioning mind, living in the eighteenth

century in a society overwhelmed by the pretentiousness of doctrinaire Christian religious belief-and its past years of internal and external conflict-would find himself highly critical of that belief. Also, it is understandable that with the political and religious resistance to him he would have been all the more firm in his non-belief. It is also understandable that as an enemy of the Christian religion he would have been excluded from prestigious University positions he was well qualified to hold and viciously attacked by the pious. Hume was a maverick. He raised critically important questions about the Christian religion, present and past. He saw Christians of his time and before using Christianity as a bridge for self-serving reward. His observation contained truths and had enormous value.

With the beginning of the Enlightenment came a new Age. There was a great questioning of all past thought. Sudden breakthroughs, scientific and other, were occurring. At the same time valuable parts of the past having relevance were being brought back into the discussion. To this day, it continues. The Blackfoot Indian Chief understanding of Nature and of the cosmos here described in this part of this chapter is one of them. It was absent among the early Europeans as they spread across the American plains. For them the Judeo/Christian God was an anthropomorphic god up there over all of us down here.

Recent breakthroughs in the area of physics, beginning with the discoveries such as *quantum entanglement, indeterminacy, superposition, observer effect* point to another dimensionality. As all this has been taking place, large segments of the Judeo/Christian thought have been adjusting to encompass an understanding far beyond what had been the belief system during David Hume's time.

It has entailed an adjustment of the Hebraic "God definition," and it has become more than just another epistemological/philosophical exercise. Survival of our species on this planet is at stake. That survival is requiring a change in our understanding of the "why" of human existence; an understanding that has to extend beyond all past Age philosophical, religious and other understandings.

In this book I attempt to search for the why by way of exploring our role as a life form on the planet. Without an understanding of this, there can be no understanding of the purpose of our existence. Without "purpose" there can be no reason for.

Also, I explore the question of whether at this stage of our evolutionary neurological development we can in fact be able to transition ourselves fast enough into a form of advanced intelligence able to find and fulfill our purpose.

At this moment we are being faced with a wide range of ecological challenges. If we do not meet them quickly, *Homo sapiens* may become extinct. Facing these challenges will entail abandoning many of the social, political, philosophical, religious and economic presuppositions we now believe to be inherent truths. These underlie the institutional societal structures that are impeding us from moving forward.

We may have no more than a few centuries. That is the reality. Many scientists are telling us that if we do not face these challenges now, there will be decade by decade enormous pain and suffering. And it will begin soon; within the next fifty years. As I proceed with the book, I would ask the reader to be totally honest and self-critical as we together explore the options before us.

## **Chapter # 1**

### **A Lesson from Socrates**

#### **Part II When lies become truths**

Part I of this chapter began with an examination in transcendental visual terms of the dimension beyond; *the flash of a firefly in the night, the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime, the little shadow that runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset*. Before moving on, we need to examine our use of language to define what lay beyond the transcendental definition according to the image here described. How we use language shapes our thoughts. Language (words) determines how we perceive what we perceive. Our use or misuse of words also shapes our beliefs. If we believe that an untruth is a truth, for us it will become a truth. Then it can become a belief. The remaining parts of this chapter will reveal how we have distorted the meanings of



many of the words that we commonly use and how this has made much of our modern discussion meaningless.

We will begin with Socrates (399-470 est. BCE). Long ago Socrates, as recorded after him by Plato, forced the Athenians to examine the use of words. Now, over two thousand years later we are being asked to do the same. Socrates asked the Athenians: What is **Truth?** What is **Honesty?** What is **Beauty?** What is **Absolute Good?**

We can see in these words eerie parallels between the falsity in the discourse in our society today and that same falsity in the Athenian. We find Socrates speaking to us as if it were yesterday. In the culture of his Grecian city, he saw the same self-destructive and contradictory human behaviors we are now experiencing, the same deceptive and dangerous thought process by way of deception through obscurity in the meaning of words.

In Athens at that time, there were the Sophists who believed that man—not God—was the measure of all things. The more clever men were—women were relegated to secondary status in Greek society—the more men could take advantage and benefit by the system. The Sophist modern counterpart in America would be the MBA graduate (in our society today more and more both men and women) who joins a major American corporation and sets out to make as much money as quickly as possible, serving him or herself only, always maneuvering within the subtle distinctions of the law; with no respect for “social or ecological value,” only intent on his or her own material gain.

Examples of this in our own recent past were the Wall Street Commercial and Investment bankers—absent the Glass Steagall Act, raking in huge bonuses while knowingly trading in spurious derivative securities. Their actions lead to a 2008 crash, a crash even more serious than the one in the twenties. Before that we saw this same irrational self-serving behavior and distortion of fact in the pre debate leading to the American Iraq invasion and then the discussion afterward when it began to fail.

The W. Bush sycophants began the American campaign with politically coined clever expressions such as “compassionate conservatism.” We continue to see this methodological construct in today’s dishonest advertisements. Ad after Ad deceptive language is used solely to

attain end results. Examples: the ongoing token environmental advertising of the American oil companies presenting themselves as planetary stewards. The advertising of the cigarette companies a few years back. In more subtle form it continues. Another example was this marketing line some years back: "Lead helps to guard your health." The reason: A former Lead Company sold lead-based household paints. These paints were poisoning millions of children and permanently damaging their brains. Tens of thousands of children died, and countless millions were left mentally impaired. And then we have the 2015 Volkswagen ordeal. Some automakers have a long history of trying to skirt environmental regulations. Volkswagen was caught in 2015. The New York Times spoke to the brazen failure of the company to live up to its environmental responsibility.

Many in Athens at the time of Socrates operated under this Sophist double talk code of behavior. Wealthy families in fact would hire "Sophist" tutors for their sons. Language was to be used for persuasion, not for truth. Ultimate objectives were all that was important.

At that time in Athenian society, there was another group controlling much of the thought. They were the religious traditionalists. Distinctly different from the Sophists and in opposition to them, they worshiped the mythic heroes that had over Greek history become the bedrock of Greek religiosity. They looked to their priests, philosophers and poets for an interpretation of the ancient Greek myths. This group was repulsed by the brash secular Sophists. They wanted Athens to return to a reverence for the Gods of the past. They felt that these Gods would give them all the protection and guidance they would ever need.

Again we see parallels with our modern society. We see the same level of fundamentalist religiosity today in America and in the Muslim world and the same desire to return to the past. We also see it in Orthodox Judaism. We see the same worship of mythic heroes. Monotheistic Jews and Christians, as well as Muslims, have their God-like heroes. These heroes are solidified in the mindset of believers through scripture and creed. The lives of these gods become a metaphorical template for the lives of worshipers. As with the Athenians who looked to their priests and philosophers to keep their mythic heroes alive in their minds, Jews, Christians and Muslims today look to their Hebrew professors and rabbis, Roman Catholic popes and priests, Protestant Christian theologians and pastors and Imams.

In recent years the world has been made painfully aware of this as Muslims following Prophet Muhammad find themselves following the conqueror King David, with all of his retributive and violent behavior.

History tells us that toward the end of a society there is generally one last desperate surge toward a paradigm shift, a last gasping for breath, and with it a sudden clarity of vision. It also tells us that this vision exists only among the very few. For these few—the Bible called them Prophets—the hubris that had clouded judgment is cleared. But life does not change. The masses are too set in their ways. Religious and Sophist behavior has become too fixed in the minds of the people.

The first signs of entry into this period often appear in the misuse of language. Words and expressions lose their deeper meaning. They become sophistic artifacts of what they were. There is no integrity within the information at hand. With this comes an inability to think critically. Critical thinking, so necessary for human progress begins to die and shows few signs of revival. **Truth** is no longer truth. **Honesty** is no longer honesty. **Beauty** is no longer beauty. **Absolute Good** is no longer absolute good. We see indications of this in the American dialogue today. Listen to the political rhetoric. Listen to the media. We Americans it would seem are about to repeat the Greek downward spiral.

When Socrates appeared on the scene, Greek civilization was at its peak. The decline had however begun. Even though during his lifetime the Parthenon was begun and completed marking a high point in Greek art and architecture, sophistic thought and religious dogmatic intransigence was slowly eating away at the former vitality of Athenian society. Socrates saw this decline and called for change. He approached this not with patchwork proposals to revise current systems but by way of a call for radical change in the way Athenians thought. He saw their problems coming from the content of their minds. His words challenged the secularism of the Sophists as well as the religiosity of the religionists.

The words of Socrates were disturbing. They challenged accepted norms. They questioned the status quo. They cut deeply into the core of the minds of each and every Athenian. He demanded that they free themselves from the bondage of all shallow and empty belief. It is interesting to note that Socrates met the same fate as have so many others of like mind in human history. We humans are not comfortable with change. We resist it, often by violence.

Socrates gave an eternal dimension to words such as; **Truth, Honesty, Beauty** and **Absolute Good**. He challenged the Athenians to think about them as absolutes. He told them that their real meanings were eternal and unchanging. He admonished them saying: Your truth is no longer **Truth**. Your honesty is no longer **Honesty**. Your beauty is no longer **Beauty**. Your absolute good is no longer **Absolute Good**. He showed his fellow Athenians that these words had become hollow. They had lost all meaning. He argued that the Sophists had destroyed them. He also argued that the Athenian god worship had destroyed them as well. He said that the rituals were irrelevant. They were not a reflection of eternal truths.

Socrates told the Athenians that they must define **Honesty** as it really is, not what they choose to say it is. He told them that they must define **Truth** as it really is, not what they choose to say it is. He said **Honesty** and **Truth** are externalities that cannot be compromised by relativistic thinking. They are not conditional. They are immutable, unchangeable. They are what they are.

He gave Athens a wisdom tradition that was not only relevant to the human condition at that particular time in Athenian history, but relevant for all time. His was a wisdom tradition based on unchanging absolutes. It would transcend Greek history. His words were so powerful that they still hang over our lives. Now, in the twenty-first century they call for hard questions to be asked of ourselves. They are far reaching questions; for they now concern our very survival. They demand that we respond with an answer as to how each of us is to define our relationship to each other and to the planet on which we live.

If Socrates were alive today, he would be examining every statement for its **Honesty** and **Truth** made by every politician, every newscaster, every writer, every cleric, every scientist, every corporation, every “think tank,” every one of us.

As we proceed through this book and examine the causes of the ecological problems confronting us—and the possible solutions, we must be ready to think as Socrates thought. We must be honest with ourselves. We must be willing to face the truth. The stakes are much higher now than they were in Socrates’ time. That in itself is a universal **Truth** each of us must be willing to face.

## **Chapter # 1**

### **A Lesson from Socrates**

#### **Part III Religious and Sophistic behavior in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

**George Orwell** *In Front of Your Nose* *Tribune*. — GB, London. — March 22, 1946.

**“The point is that we are all capable of believing things which we know to be untrue, and then, when we are finally proved wrong, impudently twisting the facts so as to show that we were right. Intellectually, it is possible to carry on this process for an indefinite time: the only check on it is that sooner or later a false belief bumps up against solid reality”**

**WIKIPEDIA**

**Edward Louis Bernays (November 22, 1891 – March 9, 1995)**

**An Austrian-American pioneer in the field of public relations and propaganda, referred to in his obituary as "the father of public relations." He combined the ideas of Gustave Le Bon and Wilfred Trotter on crowd psychology with the psychoanalytical ideas of his uncle, Sigmund Freud. He felt this manipulation was necessary in society, which he regarded as irrational and dangerous as a result of the “herd instinct.” He was the originator of modern public relations, and was named one of the 100 most influential Americans of the 20th century by *Life* magazine.**

I will comment here on a number of interrelated parts of the problem leading to an American and for that matter world incomprehension of the fact that our human society is presently on a non-sustainable ecological course. Key to an understanding of this is acknowledgement of the ability of humans to not “comprehend” what they choose not to comprehend; or viewed in another and more frightening way only to allow comprehension of what others psychologically “engineer” them to comprehend.

As can be seen above, George Orwell pointed this out in 1946 in an article in Great Britain’s Tribune. He gave it an ominous tone. To quote him; “sooner or later a false belief bumps up against solid reality.”

At the turn of the twentieth century psychologist Edward Louis Bernays arrived in the United States from Great Britain. His was the nephew of Sigmund Freud. He built his reputation on giving advertising, public relations and politics the ability to distort reality on a grand scale, i.e. the falsifying of information. He said that if a person can be made to believe that a lie or even just a distortion of truth is truth, then for that person it will become truth. The media and advertising obfuscation we see today throughout America-and the world, is to a large extent the product of his work. He was the father of American Public Relations and American Advertising. He was the first psychologist to advise a US President; Woodrow Wilson.

Since he arrived on the American shores, deceptive advertising in the US covering a wide range of human activities continues to be considered acceptable. The higher the sales volume of the product the better for the executives and the shareholders! Forget the health and the well-being of the consumer. As long as one can operate up to the edge of legal and social constraints, it is all OK. Examples of Bernays’ work are not only seen in advertising and public relations but in the fulfilling of hierarchical self-serving political aims.

**Authors Note:**

**The work of Edward Louis Bernays in recent years has taken on a high level of sophistication. Public accessibility to the Mass Media and social networking through the internet has made this possible. As a result, a wide range of psychological methodologies are now being used to control individual and group thought. They enable access to every facet of our identity, thus allowing outside parties to take advantage and influence our decision-making process. This is leading to dire implications for the individual consumer in the marketplace and in the political realm. As to the political, well timed inaccurate**

**viral posts can even be enough to turn an election. The danger here is that words and visuals are often being used as a means to give legitimacy to views contrary to reality and the wellbeing of the recipient(s). Identifying the truth is therefore becoming the more difficult and even in some cases impossible. Free speech becomes “Fake” speech.” Fake speech becomes the new reality. At the same time by way of “group identity” and the resultant “herd instinct,” irrational and often dangerous political behavior is being empowered that can have dire domestic as well as international consequences.**

In the context of this discussion what must be understood is that the psychotic/neurotic dark side of a cadre of enablers benefiting from the system is having an adverse ecological impact on the planet, and the ecological damage being done could bring on the end of *Homo sapiens*. Fake News as we see it in many quarters is about to bump up against ecological planetary reality.

### **The Influence of the Sophistic anti-environmental Oligarchic Plutocrats**

There are a number of societal causal forces at play here relating to the manipulation of the mind. Each interweaves into the other. We will begin with a discussion of the influence in American society of what this author calls “Sophistic anti-environmental Oligarchic Plutocrats” and their distortion of ecological information. Certain members of the business and financial community fit into this category. They represent a powerful force. Mention should be made of them as they have in recent years become extremely influential. We should keep in mind that this does not include all owners and shareholders of all American businesses. The following comments are directed specifically at business owners and executives who have much at stake and would lose some if not all of their wealth through the implementation of environmental initiatives.

First a note about oligarchy and its formation: History has shown that meritocracy in combination with economic reward as an upward mobility driver in time produces a calcified top-down society. This pattern has been and continues to be the same in all societies. Future generations become an entrenched moneyed oligarchy grounded on nepotistic loyalty. We humans are programmed that way. We are economic and nepotistic animals. As a result, throughout human civilization going back to the very beginning, we can see that economic power is always rigged in favor of the oligarchic blood line by way of massive wealth transfers to succeeding generations. With it comes political privilege, intermarriage among the privileged, superior education and superior medical care.

European history is replete with this story as is Asian history. China today even with its recent socialist communist past is following this pattern. Soviet Marxism itself could not defy the rule. In America we saw it early on with the concentration of wealth and privilege in the North and South before and after the Gilded Age (1865–1900). We saw it in the roaring twenties. Now in the twenty-first century we are seeing it again. Only we are not talking about wealth concentrations in the multi-millions of dollars as in the past, we are talking about multi billions.

In time this entrenchment always leads to wide distortions in wealth and privilege which in turn leads to a fracturing and ultimate disintegration of underlying order. The beginnings of this are becoming evident in America today with the gradual disappearance of the middle class. Social, political and economic mobility in the middle and at the bottom has become extremely difficult. (Largely the result of globalization and automation)

One way that oligarchs are able to postpone societal awareness of this disintegration of underlying stability in the middle and lower classes is to control their thoughts by making them believe that change will do them harm, that it will take something away from them. A sense of fear then holds them back from an understanding of the extent of their disenfranchisement. An advanced form of Edward Louis Bernays' methodology as noted above is the way this is being accomplished.

Those at the top want those below to be afraid of change. They want them to believe in the chimera that they have concocted. They do not want the disenfranchised to think for a moment that change could possibly be to their advantage.

Another oligarchic approach is to buy loyalty. Lesser politicians who toe the line are rewarded. In America we also see this today within the economics teaching profession in the form of corporate grants to the university system at the business school level. We also see it in the funding of the economic right wing think-tanks. We see it in speaker's fees and media appearance money paid to economists who follow the line of the right-wing think-tanks. Recent history provides an example. Even after the 2008 economic implosion horror, Milton Friedman and Chicago School Hayek free-market economics still ruled the roost among much of the economic profession. Another example is seen in the large corporate political donations made to "conservative" politicians who enforce the *oligarchic plutocratic* mantra. Organizations such as



the National Association of Manufactures exert considerable Washington political influence. At the center we have the Heritage Foundation, the Wall Street Journal and for the common folk; FOX News. All these outlets are in the pockets of those in the hierarchy of the business and financial community.

### **Sophistic crainial aspect of deception**

The oligarchic group here discussed is in control of America's right wing advertising and media deception. The advanced Bernays' methodology is their mechanism. Distortion of information is carefully crafted so as to plant seeds of doubt and or disparagement in the mind of the listener, viewer or reader. Millions of Americans can be exposed to untruths in a few minutes or hours. Each crafted untruth is cleverly designed to fester in the recipient's mind, to sit there in its cranial silence as would a bacterial infection in an abscessed tooth. Then, as the untruth searches out old biases hidden away in the gray matter of the brain—often rooted in religious or other “beliefs,” it then quickly spreads like an infection. From this psychosomatic obfuscation and deception, deeply held opinions are formed. Opinion turns into unquestioned truths which then take on the power of belief.

### **Ecological ramifications**

What does this all have to do with the ecological implosion facing our planet? Americans remain skeptical of the scientific evidence associated with global warming as well as all other ecological problems. The interests of corporations responsible for these ecological problems remain protected.

### **The seriousness of this kind of deception**

The ecological challenge to human civilization, because of this distortion, remains unaddressed. The inherent dangers in the new epoch now emerging, being named by anthropologists appropriately as the Anthropocene, escapes the attention of the masses. The oligarchic industrial interests want it that way. After all, cap-and-trade or a carbon tax or banking regulations or environmental controls would cost them a lot of money! And as for the *anti-environmental oligarchic plutocrats*, with their private jets and mountain and ocean-side homes, life is too good to care about environmental matters.

There are solutions to all of these problems, but it would appear they remain far too demanding intellectually for the American public to grasp. For the reasons just outlined, many at the top of industry, even those who understand the problems, avoid them. They would lose their jobs if they spoke out. So the government remains in a state of near ecological paralysis. Because this obfuscation and deception has reached so deeply into the American psyche, it has become dangerous for many politicians of either party affiliation to speak and act with conviction on these issues.

### **Truth, Honesty, Beauty and Absolute Good in America today**

Where does this leave America today? The picture remains one of confusion. Socrates' words *Truth, Honesty, Beauty* and *Absolute Good* no longer apply to the public domain. In election campaigning, media deception is at an extreme. The stature of America continues to decline throughout the world. Many problems remain unmet. And the greatest challenge of all; that of accommodating environmental demands to the ecological problems at hand remain largely unaddressed.

### **Bernays versus Christianity in America**

This discussion would not be complete without mention of the influence of Christianity in America. It was a very significant building block underlying the original American experience. Many Americans today profess to adhere to a fundamentalist version of Christianity. There is a contradiction here. These Americans spend more hours exposed to ads (many political) than in their own Christian places of worship. Enticing "secular interior adventures" are drummed into their minds by a constant barrage of commentary, ads, movies, song. The emphasis is largely secular; often sexual. On the news casts, long legs, short skirts and lots of makeup take over. The underlying symbolism is always interior need oriented; biological, psychological. As a result, in America past Christian thought has lost much of its claim to authority. Herein lay the American Christian contradiction: a mind-set in constant battle. Is it me and my material and interior desires first or the "oneness" of my God as expressed in the Old and New Testaments?

As a result of this contradiction, the framework of the American Christian mind has become a schizophrenic mix of the original parables and aphorisms of Jesus in contradiction to the secular demands of a 21<sup>st</sup> century industrialized world. How did this distortion of religiosity all come

about? Was it just Bernays and his clever physiological observations? No; it was the encroachment of what is called the “European Industrial Revolution” on the American value system.

With that European Industrial Revolution came a challenge to the Roman Catholic doctrinaire Christian all-powerful and all-knowing God and His omnipresence in the lives of the citizenry. Reliance for life’s fulfillment on the structures of the Church was cast off.

The final revelation of what was occurring came from philosophers like Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). He warned his fellow Europeans that the former idealist religious view of hopes’ audacity can be a destroyer of reasoning. Many agreed with him. Clearly, he was pointing to the Christian message of unquestioned faith. The result of this was a turn in the mind of many toward a form of rationalization informed by an awareness of human psychological /neurological limitations and their weaknesses and strengths. Nietzsche successfully replaced Abrahamic “Faith” with earthly-and now we can understand-planetary reality. But the transition as he described it was not entirely comprehensible. It left out an understanding of the “other;” the metaphysical. In many quarters, then and today, Christian religious belief remained as strongly attached to the “other” as it had been before.

Those holding on to the Christian mindset were among the first settlers in America. We should note here that past American religiosity at its extreme can still be seen today among large segments of the American population. At that extreme of the extreme today is the American evangelical fundamentalist Christian belief in an all-powerful God who will bring on the Apocalypse; at which time those who believe in Jesus as their savior will enter Paradise.

On the European Continent and in America too, as the Industrial Revolution was taking hold, Friedrich Nietzsche’s famous observation as quoted in *Chapter 4 Human Civilization – The Future Part VIII Survival* has now become a side bar of philosophical interest. Here is”

**“The madman when he went into the marketplace to tell everyone the news of God’s death; those going about their business missed the significance. Nor did they recognize the extent to which they themselves were implicated.”**

In his time, as today, material gain had taken over human thought. Society reasoned that the Industrial Revolution in the end, with all of its secularism, was good for all humanity. This line

of reasoning, although ambivalent with regard to a strict interpretation of the life of Jesus, was working out very well for all believers. So, many Christians along with their version of Christianity, bifurcated as it was, broadly accepted it and charged ahead. Yes; indigenous people throughout the globe were being slaughtered. Their land was expropriated. Children were being sent into the textile mills. Slave labor was being imported from Africa to the colonies. The arms of those in the Congo who did not meet sugar quotas were being chopped off. Serious ecological damage was being done. But, everyone reasoned, believers and not, secularism had turned out to be a good thing. Some even reasoned that it may even be God's doing. In fact some, as this book as discussed in detail, were even looking to Adam Smith's "hidden Hand" as the hand of God.

There was a deadly danger in this Christian ambivalence. It was engrained in the denial of actual social and ecological reality. Blind "religious" hope as the key to the future had been obfuscated by greed. Words from Nietzsche can be helpful here. He referred to hope as being evil because it prolongs man's torment.

What both religionists as well as secularists refuse to acknowledge is that a social and ecological collapse is now fast moving in upon us and it will not be stopped simply by man's prolonging hope for the future. I will be stopped by going back and figuring out where we all went wrong. We need to accept Nietzsche's insight.

### **Other Christian dangers**

Dangers continue to lurk in the rigidity of some Christian thought. For many evangelical fundamentalist Christians, their God tells them that they are able-and no one else, to judge what is right and what is wrong, who is right and who is wrong, who/what is evil and who/what is not. It extends further than this; what Natural forces in the planet are evil and what it are not, what in the cosmos is evil and what it is not, what actions personally have their God's blessings in their lives and what do not.

An example of the dangers of this Christian conscripted mindset was the decision of an American President after 9/11 to invade Iraq. That President had become a born-again Christian. (His conversion during an alcoholic period came on a beach in Florida by the intercession of Billy Graham) Did he first seek the blessing of his God before making his Iraq decision? There is evidence that he did. His daily war briefing book had passages from the Old Testament on its

cover. We know that he had a strange conversation in a telephone call to French President Jacques Chirac just prior to the invasion when he suggested that the coming War was “biblically ordained” according to the story of “Gog and Magog.” That in itself has raised serious questions.

The great irony here is that this same Abrahamic God was giving similar instructions to the other side.

**Author’s Note:**

**A Wahhabi Saudi Muslim named Osama bin Laden masterminded a plan to attack the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon from the caves of Afghanistan. After the attack, he issued a call to the American people. In a recorded a message he said: “Indeed, I’m a trustworthy adviser to you. I invite you to the happiness of this world and the hereafter and to escape your dry, miserable, materialistic life that is without soul. I invite you to Islam, that calls to follow of the path of Allah alone who has no partners, the path which calls for justice and forbids oppression and crimes.”**

A most direct description of evil is found in the last words of a speech that Chris Hedges gave on April 17, 2017 at Princeton University in New Jersey. He quoted Vasily Grossmam as follows:

**“My faith has been tempered in Hell,” wrote Vasily Grossman in his masterpiece “Life and Fate.” “My faith has emerged from the flames of the crematoria, from the concrete of the gas chamber. I have seen that it is not man who is impotent in the struggle against evil, but the power of evil that is impotent in the struggle against man. The powerlessness of kindness, of senseless kindness, is the secret of its immortality. It can never be conquered. The more stupid, the more senseless, the more helpless it may seem, the vaster it is. Evil is impotent before it. The prophets, religious leaders, reformers, social and political leaders are impotent before it. This dumb, blind love is man’s meaning. Human history is not the battle of good struggling to overcome evil. It is a battle fought by a great evil struggling to crush a small kernel of human kindness. But if what is human in human beings has not been destroyed even now, then evil will never conquer.”**

One of the themes central to this book is that the relationship between Planet Earth and *Homo sapiens* has suffered enormously as a result of our inability to understand what evil is and what it is not. Our religions have closed the believer’s mind to the broader dimensions of Evil. This is not meant to imply that all religious thinkers are on the wrong track, but it does make the case that many religious beliefs are obstacles to progress. To repeat the above: “Human history is not

the battle of good struggling to overcome evil. It is a battle fought by a great evil struggling to crush a small kernel of human kindness.”

### **Evangelical fundamentalist Christianity in America-International scope**

Our discussion now will center more specifically on evangelical fundamentalist Christianity in America as it encompasses the most extreme form of the planetary problem. Believers represent a substantial voting bloc. Many will not recognize the ecological damage being done. As such, their intransigence has international scope. Here we must be careful with the use of words. This author is referring to those evangelical fundamentalist protestant Christians who believe in the absolute inerrancy of the Old and New Testaments. They are those Christians who pursue doctrinal belief to the extreme. In their minds, the coming Apocalypse is a reality.

This rigidity of thought was codified in the fourth century at the Council of Nicaea. Sacred creedal proclamations were declared by a select group of Christian bishops and confirmed by the Emperor Constantine. In subsequent pronouncements the New and Old Testaments were identified and declared inerrant. (I give this extensive coverage in my books; *Holy War The Blood of Abraham.*) All other interpretations—representing as much as 45 % of Christianity at that time, were declared *heretical* and *schismatic*. With the Protestant Reformation twelve hundred years later, the scriptural texts as approved by the early Roman Catholic Church were reaffirmed. The result is that today; evangelical fundamentalist Christianity is in many ways similar to fourth century Roman Catholicism. In fact, one can say that with the Protestant Reformation there was a return to the original fourth century Roman Catholic intent.

It should be noted that the council of Nicaea did more than just recognize Jesus. It codified its own interpretation of his teachings. That codification of Christian doctrine provided a framework for the stabilization and advancement of a crumbling Roman Empire. We live under the shadow of that codification today. By means of that codification; Nicaean Christianity preserved the secular and legal Roman mindset. It made possible the preservation of Roman values. It legitimized the Roman desire for conquest and material accumulation. That desire for conquest and accumulation became most apparent as European nations took control of the seas. And like the Roman, it was a brutal conquest.

The Romans saw the planet as a gift to be used. There was no recognition of the urgent need for human civilization to accommodate its social and religious and economic structure to the countervailing forces of nature in such a way as to enable our species to be able to exist in harmony with those forces; American evangelical fundamentalist Christianity today is the same. For these Americans the earth is their breadbasket handed to them by their God. And as for all the scientists telling them about the destruction; why worry? With the Apocalypse there will come a new and perfect world. As a result of all this, solutions to a wide range of ecologically pressing problems such as global warming from CO2 and exponential population growth are avoided. All that can be heard from evangelical fundamentalist Christianity is a steady stream of denial of all scientific observation. This rigidity of thought holds back these protestant Christians from seeing the planet in any other way than that described in their King James Bible.

There is a spillover into the non-evangelical fundamentalist Christian as well as secular nonreligious community. Expressions such as “junk science” are repeated time and again through the media. Global warming is disputed. This has led to an obfuscation of scientific ecological fact. The population at large becomes overexposed to the evangelical fundamentalist Christian anti-science position.

### **Lethal outcomes from two beliefs working in consort**

The combination of extremist religious belief combined with Edward Louis Bernays’ psychological **Right Wing Entertainment Complex**

**Author’s Note:**

**FOX News has been refused broadcasting rights in Canada. A provision in the Canadian law has kept FOX News out of the country. It requires that “a licensor may not broadcast....any false or misleading news.”**

An understanding of this is necessary for an understanding of the seriousness of the environmentally destructive power at large in America today. It is expressed in three voices: (1) Bernays’ influence on the American mind (2) the power of evangelical fundamentalist Christianity (3) the self-serving objectives of an American anti-environmental industry

But first a word of apology to those readers who consider themselves to be on the right side of the political spectrum: FOX News is being chosen here because of the fact that its detachment from “truth” by Socratic definition in the ecological area is the most blatant of all other news organizations in the US. The Canadian decision noted above was made because of the FOX News bias in its methodology. This author is fully aware that distortions of truth are common on both sides of the political spectrum. The merging of political dialogue and untruths during the last several election periods was seen equally by attack ads from those distorting the character of Michael Dukakis and John Kerry to those distorting the character of Mitt Romney and Hillary Clinton. With regard to the media, left and right, the techniques introduced by Edward Louis Bernays can be observed as coming from all sides. The statement can be made that all political dialogue in America today is filled with distortion. One last comment: This distortion is “evil.”

Here is a summation of common distortion techniques:

### **Media techniques designed to turn the minds of the public away from truths**

**Lack of emphasis on substantive issues in favor of the non-substantive**

**Placing of “experts” before the audience who are not experts**

**Presenting untruths from unreliable unnamed sources as truths**

**Propagating an unrelenting stream of nebulous only partially true information**

**Using contradictory piece-meal information to obscure truths**

**Viewing partial truths as truths**

**Taking statements of spokespersons out of context**

**Disseminating false impressions about public opinion**

**When confronted with inconvenient facts reaching for obscure unrelated truths**

**Using conspiracy theories to obscure truths**

**Using audience cultish beliefs—religious and other—by insinuating all other beliefs to be untruths**

Distortions on CO2 causation are particularly extreme. Most FOX News listeners remain unaware of this reality. They take at face-value what FOX News tells them. As a result, they are



left unable to analyze and to understand the importance of the ecological issues at hand. They are unable to synthesize, to evaluate, to distinguish between truth, fancy and fallacy. If they hear on FOX News that global warming is not a problem, it simply is not a problem.

Here is a telling example by way of a statement FOX News made as recorded by *Media Matters*:

**“On February 7, 2013 a trio of journalists on Fox & Friends claimed that solar ‘won’t work in America because it’s not sunny like Germany.’”**

This blatantly stupid and inaccurate statement is representative of the propaganda campaign being waged by FOX News supported by the oil, coal, and gas industry against the use of Solar as a substitute for carbon based fuels. Underlying all of this is a denial of human-induced global warming.

Philip Yam, the managing editor of *ScientificAmerican.com* posted the following on September 22, 2012 giving some statistical facts. Under the headline “Fox News Distorts Climate Change” he wrote:

**“For anyone with an interest in journalism, it’s no surprise that Fox News Channel and the opinion pages of *The Wall Street Journal* lean well to the right. Editorially, these two jewels of Rupert Murdoch’s News Corp. have a long history of denying human-induced global warming, in keeping with certain ideological interests.**

**“In the six months from February to July 2012, the UCS searched for the terms ‘climate change’ and ‘global warming’ during primetime Fox News Channel programs, which consist of political commentary shows such as *The O’Reilly Factor* and *Hannity*. The UCS found that, in 37 of 40 instances, Fox News programs misled viewers about climate science—mainly, by broadly dismissing it.”**

Here is another as recoded by *Media Matters*:

**“On the February 7 edition of Fox News *Special Report* guest host Chris Wallace set up a segment on proposed carbon emission regulations by protesting that President Obama has declared climate change a fact, despite objections from many dissenters.... Correspondent Doug McKelway followed up with a report that continued to cast doubt on the existence of climate change and featured a professional climate misinformer, Marc Morano whose financial ties to the fossil fuel industry went undisclosed.”**

Today, an American partisan divide penetrates deeply into the fabric of American political thought. Even on the intellectual right; empirically scientifically based evidence is cast aside. As

an example; the present and future rise of the oceans and all the other adverse ecological factors haunting the Nation-and the globe, are discounted as a matter of doubt. This falsifying of reality has now become an ominous sign for the future of the nation and the world.

The ecological questions every American should be asking as he or she faces the media and advertising barrage from all sources is what is epistemologically true and what is not, and how authentic is the empirical evidence. With respect to ecological issues, it has become clear to any observer that FOX News feeds on a distortion of the evidence at hand both internally and in ads from its sponsors. Again, returning to Socrates and his definition of *Truth* and *Honesty*; he was saying that essential for “right” decisions is critical thinking based on **true** evidence. FOX News by distorting **true** evidence about the causes and ramifications of global warming is being **dishonest**. It is being **irrational**. With respect to the ecological issues at hand, most other news outlets at least in principle attempt not to let their biases be shaped by this kind of obfuscation although, it must be said; they too by-and-large shirk from their duty.

Here is a blatant example of the outcome of distortion as it relates to climate change. It illustrates just how this distortion—in this case by a representative in the Virginia State Legislature, can lead to dire consequences for the future of the city of Norfolk as well as the entire Chesapeake Bay area, consequences, as dire as were those after the Civil War. Keep in mind; scientists have determined that demographically Norfolk, Virginia ranks among the American cities most vulnerable to climate change:

The *Virginia-Pilot* reported that Virginia State Delegate Chris Stolle, a Republican from Virginia Beach, during debate over the legislation to fund a study of rising sea levels, argued in his version of a bill that "sea level rise" is a "left-wing term." Stolle said flooding in low-lying coastal areas in Virginia shouldn't be judged as a potential consequence of climate change.

Americans who deny the ecological collapse in front of them would be wise to return to the pre Nicene Jesus discovered in 1945 outside of the Nag Hammadi monastery in Egypt. (More on the discovery later on in this book.) Jesus had prescient words for them. Quoting from the Gospel of Thomas found there:

***(41) Whoever has something in his hand will receive more, and whoever has nothing will be deprived of even the little that he has.***

This author's Socratic translation would be as follows:

**Whoever has *Truth, Honesty, Beauty, and Absolute Good* in his or her hand will receive everything, and those who have not will be deprived of even the little that they have.**

## **Chapter # 2**

### **A Warning from Sigmund Freud**

The last chapter examined the overall response in America to the oncoming ecological dangers facing our planet. We examined it in the context of a cognitive dissidence among the general public leading to a blind-sighting of these dangers. We examined the inadequacy of religious thought and the power of the media and the internet under the influence of a turn of the century protégé of Sigmund Freud who changed the advertising industry; teaching it how to turn lies into truths, thus enabling segments of society to profit from society's ignorance. In this chapter and the ones that follow we will leave America and examine the ecological danger from a broader perspective. We will begin with an examination of the cognitive weaknesses and strengths of our species as a whole by reaching back into the Pleistocene. Then, after that in later chapters, recognizing that we humans as with the rest of the animal kingdom, are prone to learn quickly by the pain of error, we will examine decade by decade over the next two hundred years the geo

political, social, economic and religious scenario that will likely unfold as *Homo sapiens* in desperation through the thick of the trauma attempts to avoid extinction.

Let us begin with three well known and worrisome quotations from the father of evolutionary psychology; Sigmund Freud, as recorded in *Sigmund Freud, Great Conversations Thoughts for the Times on War and Death*:

***Civilized society is perpetually menaced with disintegration through this primary hostility of men towards one another.***

***I have found little that is "good" about human beings on the whole. In my experience most of them are trash, no matter whether they publicly subscribe to this or that ethical doctrine or to none at all. That is something that you cannot say aloud, or perhaps even think.***

***One might compare the relation of the ego to the id with that between a rider and his horse. The horse provides the locomotor energy, and the rider has the prerogative of determining the goal and of guiding the movements of his powerful mount towards it. But all too often in the relations between the ego and the id we find a picture of the less ideal situation in which the rider is obliged to guide his horse in the direction in which it itself wants to go.***

**Author's Note:**

**Freud saw the mind as being made up of two distinct parts; the Conscious-ego and the Unconscious-id. He saw the id as the ruling part. He said the id is composed of three parts; sexual desire, power desire and self-preservation desire. In recent years much of his observation relating to suppression of the id and most notable that dealing with sexual desire has been abandoned by psychiatrists. Nevertheless, it is very clear that the existence of the id as well as aberrant behavior resulting from it is a part of human behavior.**

We in the 21<sup>st</sup> century society need to recognize the id observation of Sigmund Freud.

Our id developed over our biological history. It is an indelible part of each of us, encoded in our DNA. The question arises; given our world now in this Anthropocene age, are id controlling response behaviors working against our survival on this planet? Is our neuron circuitry about to destroy us? Many scientists say that our preemptive controlling power over the network of interconnected neurons, dendrites, axons, synapses as determined by our DNA is limited. Their

power rules us. We do not control them; they control us. In the quotation above Freud compares our helplessness to that of riding a powerful horse. Plato did also.

**Author's Note:**

**Plato used the horse metaphor well before Freud when he referred to the driving of a two-horsed chariot with one horse being "good" and the other "bad." The charioteer is urged to "do terrible and unlawful deeds" to control the bad horse.**

If these inner forces are real, and there is a mismatch between them and the demands for our species survival on the planet, the question then becomes how ominous could the outcome be?

To answer this question let us look at a brief history of the evolutionary periods from our past. (Some of it anthropologically proven, some not) In a sense this history has molded us into what we are today:

- **252/250 million years BCE; Permian extinction wipes out 81% of all marine species and 70% of all terrestrial vertebrate species and begins the age of the Dinosaurs.**
- **65 million years BCE; mass extinction wipes out Dinosaurs.**
- **7 million years BCE; *Australopithecus* to *Homo*, oldest hominins *Sahelanthropus tchadensis*. *Homo* separates from chimpanzees and others like them. Evidence of standing and bipedal walking. Beginning of what we now call human consciousness.**
- **4.4 million years BCE; *Ardipithecus ramidus*; more evidence Quadra to bi pedal.**
- **2.6 – 2.8 million years BCE; Gene-culture revolution for *Homo habilis* begins wherein there is biological and cultural genetic evolution affecting the trajectory of *Homo habilis*. Part of the long creation story begins for primitive *Homo habilis*. (or a species closely related to it) Prior to that, pre humans had human-like bodies with the cranial capacity of a chimpanzee today; at or below 500 cubic centimeters. Starting with the habiline period the capacity grew to 680 cubic centimeters in *Homo habilis*, then to 900 in *Homo erectus*, and now to about 1,400 in *Homo sapiens*. The expansion of the human brain was marked by ongoing complex cultural evolution. First crude stone tools appear during this period.**

- 1.5-1 million years BCE; slowly Hominids go from flight to fight, from being prey for the stronger animals to being predator of them. This transition from plant eater/scavenger to superior hunter occurs within a time frame of one million years, called the Middle to Late Pleistocene, a period associated with the emergence of *Homo Neanderthalensis*, *Homo Heidelbergensis* and others, and eventually to the superior *Homo sapiens*. Point-bearing hafted spear tips were used as early as 500,000 years BCE. Fire discovery begins allowing for storage high meat protean diet.
- 270/250-50 thousand years BCE; Hominids with Modern human bio physical characteristics develop the distinctive capacity to sense a dimension beyond the immediacy of their existence. They begin to see themselves as a part of the natural world (Nature) around them, both animate and inanimate. In terms of capacity to reason, brain function within the later period generally the same as modern humans.
- 100/80 thousand years BCE movement out of Africa and possibly even before.
- As humans increase in numbers, the surrounding animal population declines from over-killing.
- Modern humans develop primitive weaponry; first spears and clubs, then the sling and the bow and arrow, thus allowing superiority over prey and other humans.
- Working together within families and communal hunting groups, humans are able to stalk and attack large animals. This allows for the multiplication of individual and group strength.
- Early suspicion toward outside predators, as a threat to group survival, is engrained in DNA and leads to suspicion toward other communal groups. Advanced weaponry used.
- As far back as 50,000/30,000 years BCE extremely sophisticated art forms begin to appear among communal groups. "Existence" takes on a cosmic dimension. Cave paintings and funereal objects illustrate an understanding of art form and transcendental power. Hallucinogenic drugs derived from plant life begin to be used.
- As the age progresses into what we now call the Axial, the forces of evil in the human is understood.
- The journey from life to death, both natural death and heroic death, becomes associated with a transcendental power. "Evil" becomes the antithesis of that power.
- Soon after, what began as awe of transcendental power becomes subservience and fear of that transcendental power. Shamans become common as interpreters of this transcendental power.

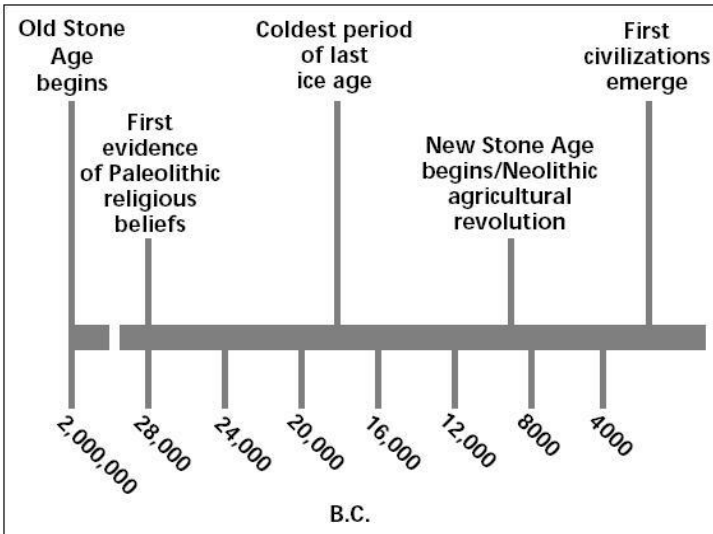
- **As mass migration to better territory begins, so does internecine (mutually destructive) group behavior. Humans begin to attack and kill each other, first as a defense against territorial encroachment, then to enlarge territory and gain power over competing groups. The “other” is seen as the enemy.**
- **The Holocene Age begins (around 12,000 to 11,500 years ago); a geological epoch at the end of the Pleistocene. By the years 10,000/6,000 BCE humans begin to cluster into informal social tribal agricultural groups. They continue to recognize transcendental forces which by then have become more powerful. The Agricultural Bronze then Iron Age begins.**
- **Recognition of a transcendental power intensifies and then moves from the horizontal god or gods (nature) here among us to the vertical god or gods in the Heavens. At the same time the power of myth begins to permeate human consciousness. That myth begins to captivate the imaginations of large numbers of individuals beyond the immediate grouping of family and tribe.**
- **Two groups will determine the future of western society. By 6,000/3,000 BCE a Sumerian civilization emerges along the lower Tigris and Euphrates rivers. It is influenced by another, the Egyptian, clustered along the northern banks of the Nile River.**
- **Both civilizations begin to codify expressions by use of writing; Cuneiform in the case of Sumerian, hieroglyphic in the case of Egyptian. Many myths relating to existence of higher powers or a power are created and passed on to succeeding generations. Priests exercise control over large numbers of the population.**
- **Sumerian transcendental consciousness within a borrowed mythical structure from the past brings together over one or two thousand years what we understand today as the god belief and ethical law of the Judeo/Christian/Islamic religions.**
- **This is associated within a foundational belief that we exist not as equals but in an inferior state under the power and control of a vertically heavenly (Sky) god (As later interpreted) above Planet Earth. Dualistic interpretation (heaven and earth) abrogates the pre 6,000 BCE prior hunter/gatherer transcendental horizontal nature view. There is the belief that my god (or gods at the earlier stage) are “up there” and I am “down here.” Also, there is a belief that the god/gods are tricksters. Their – His, actions cannot be logically explained.**
- **This move from the horizontal view to the vertical view takes over religious belief throughout the Levant and in Egypt. Because of geography, there is only limited contact from what we now call the East; pre Socratic 580/560 BCE Greece, Lao Tzu in China, Zoroaster in Persia, the Buddha in India.**
- **Around 1900/1500 BCE, one of the Sumerian tribes under a charismatic leader named Abraham migrates to the northwest. It takes with it many of the**

**Sumerian religious practices, legends and myths, bringing them along as a part of its own belief system.**

- **The tribe as it moves makes contact with the Egyptian civilization. They are enslaved by the Egyptian pharaohs until around 1250 BCE at which time their leader, Moses, leads them on an exodus out of Egypt into the Sinai Peninsula. Some Egyptian spiritual beliefs are brought into the belief system of the tribe.**
- **From there they conquer other tribes killing their members and eventually dominate the area.**
- **At the turn of this era as now designated by C.E. (Common Era) in Jerusalem an individual from Nazareth named Jesus challenges much of the belief system of the Jews including the idea of a vertically positioned God. He emphasizes the horizontality of this God. Also he challenges the Roman and Jewish societal structure. He challenges Temple and Pharisee Judaism. He is assassinated; however his message is carried on by his apostles, the first notable being Saul of Tarsus; now known as Paul.**
- **In the fourth century the Emperor Constantine restructures the Jesus/Pauline Christian message, making it the official religion of the then crumbling Roman Empire.**
- **Today, much of the religious belief of Jews, Christians and Muslims, each in its own distinct way, looks back to early Sumerian/Egyptian/Jewish/Pauline and Roman Catholic Christian thought. Focus remains with the original vertical (G-d) and away from the horizontal (G-d). This is reinforced through liturgical practice in Synagogues, Churches, and Mosques by way of scripture, creed, myth and dogma**

A way to look at the early formative period to the emergence of what we call civilization is with the following graph:





Evolutionary influences overlap across all biological life forms. In our current age this has led to the study by biological anthropologists of the similarities between us and our closest living relatives; Chimpanzees, Gorillas and Bonobos. Some of the positive as well as negative behaviors are immediately visible; some remain hidden. We can see this as we observe the behavior of these three other primates. For example, they can at times show compassion not only among themselves but also to others of their own kind and to those humans who have become close to them.

Many self-destructive responses in behavior exist in all primates beyond this “compassion” response. It is especially noted among humans where destructive responses boil under the surface. We can observe that under certain conditions humans can become extremely violent toward each other. (Seldom seen among Bonobos) Beginning with our Axil Age there have been many examples. Looking at recent history; millions perished during World War I and II. During World War II millions Jews and other non-Aryans were systematically exterminated by Germans only because they were not of Aryan blood. It should be noted that Germany at that time was one of the most intellectually advanced nations in Europe. Yet, within a relatively short period of time a high percentage of its population would enthusiastically take up the Aryan cause. Then in recent years, an American president sent over one hundred fifty thousand American troops into an internecine conflict in a Muslim country as payback for an attack on America from Islamic extremism emanating from another country. That attack enraged Americans so they-at

first-enthusiastically supported his action. “Kick ass” was the expression heard. All of these actions can be explained in terms of a behavioral psychotic/neurotic response circuitry ingrained in the human brain. With the development of advanced weaponry, including atomic, the carnage from such impulses could run into the hundreds of millions of deaths or even billions.

Many of these responses as seen in our past are not only inadequate for our adjustment to the social and ecological realities of our twenty-first century world but are dangerously self-defeating and self-destructive. They draw us into the darkest reaches of the human psyche. This is what we see with extremist Islam today. It is also what we saw with Christianity during its dark periods; the Inquisition being a case in point?

Is there a hopeful side to this dismal picture? Yes there is; but it is conditional. It rests on our recognizing the inadequacy of our thought processes. Present analysis organizes all behavior into simplistic reductive mechanistic theory, impervious to the serendipity of time and place. It leaves the impression that human nature as it was carved out over the years can simplistically be analyzed. It implies we are helpless in the face of our inner psychotic/neurotic impulses.

Human nature is flexible. It is adaptive. It adjusts itself to the world by means of response to a continuing flow of information over periods of time gradually adjusting genes in an idiosyncratic blend. Herein rests the challenge for future human civilization. But biochemical change takes time. We do not have the hundreds of thousands of years we had in the past. We may only have centuries or even decades. So, rapid human flexibility and control takes on extreme importance.

There are those positivists who would argue that expanding global interconnectedness and advances in intellectual understanding are moving us towards ever more mutually beneficial inter-global understanding and relationships. There is in fact some evidence of this

Dr. Renato Bellu, Professor Emeritus at The City University of New York who is a Benedict de Spinoza scholar writes: (I also quote him in my last chapter)

**“Human nature is flexible. It is adaptive. It is adaptive because it is capable, through reason, to overcome the darkest and most destructive instinctual impulses. Since this process is not continuous, setbacks, even catastrophic ones will occur, but in the long run human progress will move in a forward direction. My argument derives from a conception of a universe characterized by the eternal harmony of its laws. I argue that the human mind, as an attribute of the eternal**

universe has the power to override the emotions, passions, imagination and illusions produced by instinctual drives, which are always directed to self-serving win-lose situations, and in so doing makes it possible for human beings to have clear and distinct ideas about their interconnectedness, the oneness of the cosmos. It is this power of the human mind-reason-which directs us away from willing self-serving win-lose situations to the rationality of win-win situations. Viewing this from a Biological systems perspective we can observe that we have over our history been forced-by Darwinian selection, into more complexity leading to more win-win scenarios. A cell that incorporates mitochondria symbiotically wins out over a cell that cannot. As a result, increasingly complex and adaptive intelligence occurs,”

Any review of current scientific information relating to coming biosphere change will immediately raise the question; are we moving forward fast enough? Clearly we are not. Enormous pain and suffering lie in front of us. But this does not mean that when future generations of *Homo sapiens* look back through all that pain and suffering-as well as planetary destruction-they will not see their species as having moved in a **“forward direction...to the rationality of win-win situations.”** After all; looking back over the last six thousand years, we can observe it to have been our history?

It is an historical fact that momentum in rational thought often leads to **“win-win.”** That should give us some hope for a new age for *Homo sapiens*.

## **Chapter # 3**

### **The Anthropomorphic God of Abraham**

#### **Part I Yahweh**

##### **Anthropomorphic**

**“ascribing human form or attributes to a being or thing not human, esp. to a deity”**

Random House Dictionary, 2009

It was not long after the very beginning of Jewish religious history that the definition of G-D was given an anthropomorphic meaning. Random House Dictionary defines this meaning as “ascribing human form or attributes to a being or thing not human.”

The Hebraic God did not start out that way. When YHWH was revealed to Moses on Mt. Horeb/Mt. Sinai, this was not the definition. YHWH was *I AM THAT I AM*. (also translated as *I SHALL BE WHAT I SHALL BE*) Then, as the Nation of Israel moved forward in time, the definition began to change. He expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Then, in anger He brought on a great flood showing humanity that He would punish those who disappointed Him. Years later with the advent of Christianity, He would sacrifice His own son as expiation for the sin of man. One hundred years after that, He would have John in the Book of Revelation outline in gruesome detail how He will destroy all of humanity for a second time, allowing only a select few to join Him in eternity. Then in the seventh century with the advent of Islam, He continued to change. The original Hebraic definition was no longer undefinable; He had become a fearful, loving, controlling, punishing, judgmental god for all noncompliant Jews, Christians and Muslims, as well as all non-believers, He had become a capricious god hidden far off in the heavens.

What was occurring here? The image of God had become the image of man. God was saying to man: “You are like me; I am like you.” I can be a loving God, but then like you I have a dark neurotic, psychotic side.

This created a tension for His worshipers. They never knew which side would surface. They found themselves worshiping a bipolar god. Today, large numbers of Jews, Christians and Muslims still worship this god. No matter how hard they try, they find themselves bound by the anthropomorphic definition.

Atheists are quick to point out this anthropomorphic nature of the Abrahamic God. Then, with the worst of Christian history as well as that of Judaism and Islam to prove their point, they criticize all of the Hebraic religions for their belief in this god. The assumption is that everyone in the three religions of Abraham continues to use this anthropomorphic form as their template.

Could there be another dimensional reality to God, one that our human mind is not able to conceive? The answer to this is borne out in the following retort to the atheist argument: How can you argue that something beyond your human ability to observe it does not exist? How can you disbelieve in something that you cannot in the first place define? The absence of empirical proof of the existence of something is not proof of its nonexistence. This, of course, brings us back to the meaning of the original Hebraic definition of GOD as *I AM THAT I AM* or *I SHALL BE WHAT I SHALL BE*. Either way we are dealing with something that we cannot define.

Why is an examination of this “GOD definition” so important at this particular time in our human history? It is because how we choose to define or not define “GOD” determines the meaning or absence of meaning of our place on this planet and in the universe. It answers the questions: Am I unique? Do I have meaning or am I meaningless? It even refines the meaning of the answer to: Do I have a purpose or no purpose? And if I do have purpose, what is that purpose?

Clarifying the God definition demands that we answer some other far reaching questions: Is Earth just a random rock in space or is there some ubiquitous force underlying its presence and giving it meaning? Or is it just the work of chance? Or, is it the work of some form of organizational meaning beyond our ability to understand?

For many of the followers of the religions of Abraham these questions take on predefined answers. They assume the writers of their scriptures had the ability to define who this god of theirs is and who He is not, what He will do and will not do.

Many scientists today are atheists or agnostics. Many believe that there is no god directed *AM* or *SHALL BE* purpose to the Universe. They are therefore cynical with respect to the future of our species and Planet Earth. The late Carl Sagan was one of these a-theists. He saw the planet as no more, no less than an insignificant speck in “the great enveloping cosmic dark.” To quote him:

**“Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.”**

Many-and the numbers are increasing, have come to the conclusion that there is far more to it. They are finding that there is an underlying order moving the universe toward a higher and higher form of complexity. This will be discussed at some depth here and in later chapters. A Biographer of Albert Einstein states it well:

**“Einstein’s ‘religion’ as he often explained it, was an attitude of cosmic awe and wonder and a devout humility before the harmony of nature, rather than a belief in a personal God who is able to control the lives of individuals. He referred to his belief as ‘cosmic religion.’”**

*Einstein and Religion*, Max Jammer, Princeton University Press, 1999 p. 149

Einstein drew a line between the doctrines of the theistic religions with belief in a personal god who punishes the wicked and rewards the righteous and what he called “cosmic religion.” This is not to say he did not believe in G-D. What he did not believe in was the traditional Hebraic religions’ interpretation of G-D that had arisen from his own Jewish culture. He believed in a determinant power underlying the majesty of the Universe. It is said that he was in fact quite comfortable with some interpretations of Judaism, Christianity and Buddhism.

By the early twentieth century almost all of science had given up on the anthropomorphic god and did not see a need to replace Him. There was a rush toward atheism. As seen in the quotation above, Carl Sagan was one of them. The atheistic writer/scientist Richard Dawkins was another. From Max Jammer’s observation, we can observe that Einstein resisted this a-theist certainty. He laid the ground for another far broader view.

This a-theism among scientists is now changing. Many are beginning to alter their views and think in the direction of Einstein. They are seeing in the Hubble telescope and in their micron microscopes an acknowledgement of something organizationally behind and beyond the physicality of the Universe itself. They are beginning to see, as Einstein so well phrased it:

**“...harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of Human Beings is an utterly insignificant reflection....”**

*The New Quotable Einstein*, Princeton University Press and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2005

Some are even taking this the next step. As Richard Tarnas describes it in *Passion of the Western Mind*: p. 434

**“The human mind is ultimately the organ of the world’s (Cosmos) own process of self-revelation.”**

What we are seeing here is the emergence by many of the great intellectual minds of the world a rebuttal of the narrowness of previous atheistic as well as religious thought. Slowly creeping into the dialogue by way of scientific observation are real proofs that an “other” does exist on the “other” side of the theistic/deistic/pantheistic definition. More than this; many scientists today are going so far as to define our species as unique cosmically. They are basing this on the fact that;

- **We are the only known biological form of life in the Universe endowed with the necessary intelligence to comprehend the Universe.**
- **We are the only known biological form of life in the Universe endowed with the necessary intelligence to comprehend ourselves.**
- **We are the only known biological form of life in the Universe endowed with the necessary intelligence to comprehend the possibility of a dimension beyond ourselves.**

The key words here are “**necessary intelligence**” and “**comprehend**.” They describe our unique human condition, namely a life form having the intelligence necessary to comprehend meaning beyond itself. This separates our species neurologically from all other living organisms on the planet. The words describe the further dimension of which we alone are able to comprehend. They release us from this Planet and allow us to comprehend our existence in a broader dimensionality.

All of this takes on special meaning when we face the cold hard fact that we may be alone in the universe. And so it also raises the question: Do we have a purpose and if we do, what is it?

Evidence discovered over the course of this century indicates that there are over one hundred billion galaxies like ours and each contains several billion stars. This very fact gives some credence to “intelligent” life being elsewhere; however, we have not found any evidence of it. And if there is life, it does not mean that it is “intelligent.” There may be organic life of some sort, but not intelligent life as we have here defined it. UFOs, *Star Wars* and all else remain a fiction. No signal has ever been received from our galaxy or any other to indicate the presence of intelligent life. Further; as more and more information is gathered by astrobiologists, the

possibility of “intelligent life” beyond our planet in some organic form like ours with our level of neurological capacity is becoming more and more remote. This possibility was expressed mathematically in the 50’s by Carl Sagan and Frank Drake in the so called “Drake Equation.” At that time there was some optimism. Since then, however, the odds have varied from cautious optimism to extreme pessimism.

We need to understand that there is a strong possibility we may be alone. We need to guard against using the thought that we are not alone as an excuse for disregarding our cosmic uniqueness and the consequences of our wrong ecological actions. When Carl Sagan said; “Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark,” he spoke the truth. If we are indeed alone and we are moving toward a self-imposed extermination, his statement takes on enormous significance. If we destroy ourselves, there may be no intelligent life in the universe to take our place. The authors Peter D. Ward and Donald Brownlee in their book *Rare Earth* make the following profound statement:

**“Most of the Universe is too cold, too hot, too dense, too vacuous, too dark, too bright or not composed of the right elements to support life.”... It is unlikely that Earth could ever be replicated.”**

*Rare Earth*, Peter D Ward and Donald Brownlee, Copernicus Books, 2004, p. 169

Their thesis is lengthy and complex. It is shared by many under the name; “anthropic cosmological principle.” It grew out of the recognition of the many cosmic coincidences necessary in order for intelligent life to have appeared on earth. A few facts given by Ward and Brownlee are worth noting here:

- **Earth was given a rare planetary position in our Galaxy and possibly the entire Universe.**
- **Without the giant planet Jupiter acting as a comet and asteroid catcher, intelligent life would not exist on the planet.**
- **Without the planet being the ideal distance from the Sun, intelligent life would not exist on the planet.**
- **Without the moon itself by way of an asteroid strike having been carved out of Planet Earth precisely as it was, life as would not have formed in the way it has on the planet.**



- **Without about 15 mass extinctions during the last 500 million years, 5 of which eliminated over half of the species then inhabiting the planet, the Age of Mammals would have been held in check, and intelligent life would not exist on the planet.**
- **Without a “spin rate” that has allowed the planet to remain in a “habitable zone” position in relation to the sun, intelligent life would not exist on the planet.**
- **Without the renewing chemical reactions generated by Plate Tectonics, intelligent life would not exist on the planet.**

Added to this is the following observation by Brian Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker relating to formation of the cosmos in their book; *Journey of the Universe*: Yale University Press, New Haven, 2011. pp 10, 11

**“One of the most spectacular features of the observable universe is the elegance of its expansion. If the rate of expansion had been slower, even slightly slower, even one millionth of a percent slower, the universe would have re-collapsed. It would have imploded upon itself, and that would have been the end of the story. Conversely, if the universe had expanded a little more quickly, even one million of one percent more quickly, the universe would have simply diffused into dust, with no structure to bring forth life.”**

Is our planet a unique part of a unique expanding cosmos? Are we unique? Is there a guiding force behind it all? As stated above, many scientists do see evidence that a determinant force does exist. They are coming to the conclusion that we are for some unknown reason unique. But we cannot afford to find comfort in this. For the first time in all of planetary history we have become a biological force alien to all life on our planet. That includes our own.

How do we become other than what we are; other than destroyers of what we have? Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Pascal, Gandhi and many like them have over the centuries wrestled with this question. They all ended their search with the same message: We must deconstruct those elements of our thought process that are working against us. We must break out of the prison of our hominid mindset.

Abrahamic religious belief is of foremost importance as it remains a large part of the problem. Jews, Christians and Muslims can begin by leaving the cynical, punishing and self-destructive

side of their anthropomorphic god behind them. They desperately need to rethink the meaning of their word “god” and the meaning of all human life on the planet.

The late Westar scholar Robert Funk commenting on Jesus’ admonitions and pronouncements called for this deconstruction and replacement. He wrote in *A Credible Jesus, Fragments of a Vision*, Robert W Funk, Polebridge Press, 2002, p. 148

**“The world we humans inhabit is socially constructed. If we want to change that world, we must collectively deconstruct the old world and then collectively fabricate its replacement. That is a formidable challenge.”**

## **Chapter # 3**

### **The Anthropomorphic God of Abraham**

#### **Part II Dancing with the Devil in defiance of Cosmic Order**

**The Gospel of Thomas, Nag Hammadi, Egypt, 1945**

**(7) Jesus said; *blessed is the lion which when consumed by man becomes man, and cursed is the man whom the lion consumes....***

Translated by Thomas O. Lambdin

**“Human nature has taught us that we are mistaken in regarding our intelligence as an independent force. We are dependent to a very large degree upon our emotional lives. Each new generation can achieve a transmutation of instinct and become the pioneer of a higher form of civilization. But, the primitive stages can always be reestablished; the primitive mind, in the fullest meaning of the word is imperishable.” P 361**

Freud, Sigmund. Great Conversations # 1 “Thoughts for the Times on War and Death” 1915. Chicago, Illinois: The Great Books Foundation

We will begin this part of the chapter with words from the first chapter in the Book of Genesis. We are told that we can be *like the Gods* and that we can have *dominion over the earth*, that we are to *subdue it*; and that we are to *be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*.

Was this from the very start a deception? Every indication is now showing us that it was. The relationship between humans and the earth is far more complex. And the word *dominion* is a scary one.

Our planet is facing an ecological breakdown. We are consuming the earth’s resources at a ravenous rate. Temperatures are rising. Ice is melting. Population growth is exceeding planetary sustainability. Yet; most of the seven billion of us living on the planet remain unmoved. The Deceiver’s words that we can be “like the Gods” and have “dominion over the earth” whispered into our ears so many years ago have given us a false sense of confidence. We say to ourselves; don’t sweat it, we can be “like the Gods”; we can handle any problem that comes along.

In the Nag Hammadi Gospel of Thomas, Jesus refutes these words recorded in the first verses of the Book of Genesis, words that set the foundation for Judaism, then Christianity in the fourth century and then Islam in the seventh, words that established in Abrahamic belief our relationship to the planet. In that gospel Jesus said that the formula is far more complex.

By way of metaphor he spoke of our self-destructive nature in terms of the self-destructive versus constructive power of the biological inner human self. Over the last two centuries,

psychologists like Freud and Jung also spoke about this power. In addition to the quote above, the quotes from Freud in *Chapter 2 A Warning from Sigmund Freud* bear this out.

The psychiatrist Rollo May placed it under the label of the “daimonic.” May described it as those inner drives that have the power to take over the whole person—sex, eros, anger, rage, craving for power, dominion, achievement, vengeance, aggression. Then he drew a startling conclusion: It was in contradiction of the early Abrahamic understanding of evil. He said that these drives are essential for human health and creativity. They are an inescapable part of who we are as we in a positive sense create and recreate the world in front of us.

Jesus referred to this two millennia before Rollo May’s daimonic when he (using the Lion as metaphor) said in the Gospel of Thomas; (7) ***blessed is the lion which when consumed by man becomes man, and cursed is the man whom the lion consumes.*** From our observation and experience we know this to be true. For those who would allow themselves to be consumed by the lion, (sex, eros, anger, rage, craving for power, dominion, achievement, vengeance, aggression) it can be described as a dance with the devil; a dance that, when the music stops playing, leads to a painful end. The same holds true for any society that enters into that dance. There is ample evidence historically of this outcome. Nations that have danced with the devil have not lasted very long.

Orthodox Christianity traditionally labeled this dance as a submission to the forces of evil. The antidote is to resist these evil forces through willpower while believing that if one is unable to do so and does succumb to these forces, the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for the expiation of sins will provide forgiveness.

In this world of today, we have found that it is far more complicated than that. The Christian good/evil dichotomy turns out to be an indecipherable self-defeating obscurity. The following blog sent by this author after the mass shooting at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut on December 14, 2012 that left 28 dead as well as some quotes from the fifth gospel of Thomas illustrates this in its full complexity.

***Dec BLOG-The Debate that should be taking place***

**The Rev. Msgr. Hilary Franco of St. Augustine's Catholic Church said.**

**“Evil visited the community”**

**NO, Monsignor!**

**And with all due respect for your honest compassion: The American Rifle Association visited the community. The radical American right wing visited the community. A corrupted American culture visited the community. Every person in American who stone walled gun control visited the community. Every person who turned his or her back on funding help for the psychologically disturbed and disabled—including institutionalization, visited the community.**

**Our nation is in decay. Until we are able to unite and look for the blame not from outside of ourselves; but from inside, the decay—evil you call it—will continue.**

**Monsignor; evil does not run around visiting people and destroying communities. People destroy communities.**

**Your concept of evil has been a doctrinal weakness in Christianity, ever since the formation of your Roman Catholic Church, ever since Nicaea.**

**Don’t believe me? Remember the Inquisition? Or listen to the twisted American response to that “Evil Empire” Iraq shortly after the Bush invasion as thousands of Iraqis were dying.**

**“Fans at sporting events around the U.S. greeted the war and its early ‘shock and awe’ bombing campaign with the chants of ‘U.S.A.! U.S.A.!’” BOB HERBERT “Death of a Marine” N.Y. Times March 19, 2007**

**No Monsignor; Evil did not “visit” your community.**

**The American Rifle Association did. The radical American right wing did. A corrupted American culture did. Every person in American who stone walled gun control did. Every person who turned his or her back on funding help for the psychologically disturbed and disabled-including institutionalization did.**

It becomes clear that this “evil” as the Monsignor envisioned it is not the way both Rollo May in his writings and Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas envisioned it. They described you and me as being overtaken by violent inner forces; for Jesus as we see metaphorically in the Thomas Gospel the violence of the lion. Here is the difference. Both Jesus and May were saying that we cannot approach that force as something independent and outside of us, rather we must accept it as a force that we can internalize, subdue and find strength in. We must regard it as a primary

source of our creativity. We must harness it; so to speak use the Lion within. By internalizing the Lion, Jesus said we have the possibility of being able to master the greater part of our creativity. He says from this internalization can come enormous creativity and strength. Jesus refers to this when he says; ***Blessed is the lion which when consumed by man becomes man.***

How does one internalize the power of the Lion? How can we turn our animalistic urges into the creative force that Jesus and Rollo May both describe? There is only one way. Again, for an answer we need to return to the Gospel of Thomas. Jesus says that we must look deeply within and go through struggle. Jesus says only then will we be able to conquer the lion (daimonic) within.

***(2) Let him who seeks continue seeking until he finds. When he finds, he will become troubled. When he becomes troubled, he will be astonished, and he will rule over all.***

Jesus pulled no punches when it comes to those consumed by the lion. He said; ***cursed is the man whom the lion consumes.*** Then, he went even beyond that when he said:

***(70) That which you have will save you if you bring it forth from yourselves. That which you do not have within you will kill you if you do not have it within you.***

This internalization of the power of the Lion applies metaphorically to individuals as well as to societies. We individually or as a tribal or other group and/or as a nation can master the lion or be ***consumed*** by the lion. To master the lion within we must ***seek*** and we must find the “real” GOD of all creation within. (Gnosis)

One of the early and continuing criticisms of Gnosticism was that it was too exclusive. Only those who had “found” God within could be saved. Essentially, this is what Jesus is telling us in (70) when he says; ***That which you do not have within you will kill you if you do not have it within you.*** He emphasizes that we must find God within by way of a search within. Here we can be critical of both historical and present day Christianity. Christianity (Going back to the Council of Nicaea) took the easy way out. All one had to do is “believe” in Jesus to be saved.

**Author’s Note:**

**From the time of Jesus until the 14<sup>th</sup> century Gnosticism had existed side by side as a sub sect of Christianity. Then the Cathars (Gnostics) in France were brutally wiped out by the Catholic Church when Gnosticism was declared heretical by the Pope.**

There is only one way that a person can achieve Gnosis. He/she must begin with an internal exploration. That exploration must entail an examination of where that person's loyalties lie. For many it entails a new relationship with their God. It cannot be any god of one's own choosing. It cannot be a superficial god. It must be the universal GOD of all there is; of our planet, of all life and of non-life on it, of the cosmos. So the first step is to break through all fictions the person may have about definitions of their god.

A danger exists here: Defining that inner God can include a reflection of our psychotic "dark" side. Rollo May in his books makes the observation. He writes that throughout human history, the persona of the god or gods worshiped generally has been a reflection of the psychotic inner selves of the persons worshiping their gods. This is supported by the observations of the greatest mythologist of our age; the late Joseph Campbell. (See *Chapter 4 Human Civilization – The Future Part IV "longue durée"*) where he concludes that the (i.e. Abrahamic vision of the Christian God) has included a personification of the "dark" side; what is in this book called a Rorschach test God, that is a God bringing to the surface of the human a mixture of its worst as well as its best.

Both May and Campbell also emphasized that the persona of the god or gods we worship gives meaning to who we are. Our god or gods become like us. We become like them. It is a mutually supportive arrangement. Both May and Campbell also point out that this is how we make sense of our inner daimonic. For many the definition of the god within becomes a reflection of that power. Bad gods bring on the self-destructive forces noted above. Is this not what drove Osama bin Laden to plan 9/11? Was not his God, Allah, the daimonic at play within him? Also, was not George W. Bush after 9/11 driven by his own god image? (His daily briefing books often had militaristic biblical verses printed on the covers.) Does not this explain what motivated devout Christians to pursue the many horrific events over the centuries, two of note being the Inquisition and the Crusades?

We must first be sure that we have correctly identified who/what our god or gods are, who/what they are not. We must face the possibility that in a wrong choice we may be worshipping a

dangerous fiction based on that metaphorical lion Jesus spoke about in the Gospel of Thomas when he said: *Blessed is the lion which when consumed by man becomes man.*

The process of search for the “real” God or gods has been a constant occupation of all religions over their history. It continues with “progressive” movements today in Judaism and Christianity-tangentially in Islam. Each Abrahamic religion has had to face the questions: Who is this God we Jews, Christians-and Muslims-are worshipping? Are we just responding to the negative side of our own inner diabolic? The search spares no one.

To understand the divergence from orthodoxy as seen in the Gospel of Thomas, we need to explore the questions: When did the Hebraic definition of God begin? Why did the Jesus of the Gospel of Thomas see God so differently? I came upon an answer some years ago as I sat in a Hebrew Bible studies class taught by a professor from Yeshiva University-I was the lone gentile.

Here is what happened in that class:

We had spent several classes discussing the first verses of the Book of Genesis where Eve is tempted by the deceiver. The deceiver tells her that if she eats the pomegranate from the tree of knowledge, she and Adam will be like the god(s) knowing good and evil.

A question arose in my mind. I said to the professor:

Genesis has the deceiver define for the very first time your Hebrew God. This sets the biblical stage for His nature. The deceiver tells Eve that if she eats from the tree of knowledge, she (we) will be like the god (s), knowing good and evil.

Rabbi, with due respect let me ask you a question:

But first, a statement of fact:

From this you have concluded that your God, the God of the Nation of Israel, is a God knowing both good and evil. The definition is specific. The deceiver does not say that He is a god who knows only good. He says that this God of yours is a God who knows both good and evil.



But it does not stop there. Your Hebrew Bible then goes on to build His persona from this original definition. He is subject to the same diabolic urges that you and I are subject to. He is in a sense an anthropomorphic God.

So, here we have for the first time in your history the first definition of your Hebraic God. This God is like us. He is a God driven by His own inner lion. And His actions prove this to be true. Out of anger He would destroy all of human civilization except for Noah and his family. Then He would destroy the Amalekites, every man, woman and child. Years later when the Christians pick up on this definition, He is a God who would have His son tortured and crucified. One hundred years after that, again for Christians, He would have John in his Book of Revelation outline in gruesome detail how He will destroy all of humanity for a second time, allowing only the select few to join Him. Then, in the seventh century it gets worse. The prophet Muhammad discovers this Hebraic God in the Jewish settlements around Mecca and Medina and in the Christian settlements along the Mediterranean coast and incorporates Him into the verses of the Koran. His name is changed to Allah. It is this Allah who would destroy the Infidels on 9/11.

Now Rabbi, to my question: I ask you; what authority did this deceiver have to define the nature of your god? **If the deceiver is by definition a deceiver, how can we be assured his definition of God was not a deception?** Why should you Jews trust the words of a deceiver to define the nature of your god? Why should Christians and Muslims? **What if God is not a good/evil God but a God who only knows “Good” and it is only we humans who can know evil?**

The professor stood in silence. He believed in the sacredness of the Hebrew Scriptures. He had no answer.

Now, in the twenty-first century with the first signs of our possible extinction at hand, we are being called to challenge the validity of the deceiver’s definition of this god of the Jews, a god since shared by the other two religions of Abraham.

It was this retributive God of Abraham who told an American president to invade Iraq. This same Abrahamic God is encouraging Islamic terrorism today. This same god is now telling evangelical fundamentalist Christians in the United States to turn a blind eye to governmental environmental initiatives. This same god is saying to them: have no worry about Planet Earth;

you are living in *the end of times*. When it no longer serves **My** purpose, you will all be with **Me** in paradise. Nor does it end there. In all three of the religions of Abraham we have centuries upon centuries of other disjointed interpretations of how God would respond to this or to that. A Christian example today is the Roman Catholic Churches' stance on the use of condoms under the Vatican rule that God considers them an "intrinsic evil."

As these examples illustrate, wrong thinking about GOD can have enormous consequences. What appears to be of greatest consequence now revolves around the possibility of those of the Hebraic faiths through Judeo/Christian and Islamic *end of times* collective intentionality allowing the continued destruction of our planet. This is an example of the dark side of the daimonic in action—*those who are consumed by the lion*, to which Jesus referred.

The world today remains largely comatose as to the future of our planet, with most individuals simply accepting the status quo (A few nations and individuals worldwide do not fit into this category). For example, there are loud rumblings among the scientific community; but those rumblings find limited if only cosmetic political action. Also we see occasional media exposure; however, by and large, it too remains in a state of slumber. Not just the Abrahamic, but all religions of the world need to be taking their stand on this issue.

They are not. A powerful underlying reason is human thought and behavior arising out of the religious beliefs here described. The absence of corrective thought and behavior is to a large extent the result of behavioral adherence to the God imagery that arose out of our Hebraic religious belief. Expressed in another way, a quote from Larry L Rasmussen in his book; *Earth – Honoring Faith* p 66 where he quotes Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

**“Western, or European,-American spirituality, ethics, and politics are exhausted. For a different world, spiritual-moral formulation will have to begin anew.”**

It is becoming increasingly clear that solutions will not be found without a serious reevaluation of many parts-not all-of the Abrahamic theological. It is now obvious to many that the three religions of Abraham must separate themselves from this “devil’s dance” of theirs, a dance that may be leading to the end of the human species. They need to reconnect with the cosmic GOD of their origins by reformulating their theologies. They need to face up to the fact that institutionally

and individually, they themselves, have been and continue to be the source of the evil they so well define.

This redefinition will call for **a reinvention of the sacred**. The Cosmos is waiting. The planet is waiting. Only then will we humans find the emergence of a new civilizational social/political/economic paradigm, one that will enable future generations to live in a biologically consonant relationship with Planet Earth and the cosmos.

The rewards in recognizing this redefinition will be enormous. The pain of not recognizing it will be beyond the human imagination; as within the next several generations our society bears witness to the beginning of the extinction of our species.

The time has come for humanity to turn away from the simplicity of the Book of Genesis and understand what Jesus meant in the Gospel of Thomas. Again and again I repeat it in this book. In that Gospel Jesus said:

***(41) Whoever has something in his hand will receive more, and whoever has nothing will be deprived of even the little that he has.***

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

#### **Part I Our Planetary Dilemma**

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| <p><b>1976</b> “We now stand at a turning-point in the history of the biosphere and in the shorter history of one of its by products, mankind ... the first species of living being ... that has acquired the power to wreck the biosphere and in wrecking it, to liquidate himself.”</p> |
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Mankind and Mother Earth, Arnold Toynbee, Oxford University Press

**2008** “Twenty years ago, James E. Hansen, a climate scientist at NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies, which he has directed since 1981, shook Washington and the world by telling a sweating crowd at a Senate hearing during a stifling heat wave that he was '99 percent' certain that humans were already warming the climate. The year of Hansen's original testimony was the world's hottest year on record. Since then, 14 years have been hotter, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Dr. Hansen will again be testifying in congress this week. In an interview before the meeting he said;

"The greenhouse effect has been detected, and it is changing our climate now...

"It is almost, but not quite, too late to start defusing the 'global warming time bomb.

"If we don't begin to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the next several years, then we are in trouble, then the ice sheets are in trouble. Many species on the planet are in trouble."

*NASA warming scientist: 'This is the last chance' NY Times ANDREW C. REVKIN June 23, 2008*

**2011**“It is clear that the targets and timetables most nations are bringing to the table at Copenhagen are insufficient to safeguard the living planet and the biological underpinnings of sustainability.”

Thomas Lovejoy, Chief biodiversity adviser to the president of the World Bank, senior adviser to the president of the United Nations Foundation

**2015** “Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive, from homes and businesses, from construction and demolition sites, from clinical, electronic and industrial sources. The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.”

Pope Francis Encyclical 2015

**2015** “A leading climate scientist has denounced the Paris climate change agreement as a ‘fraud’-saying there is ‘no action, just promises.’ Professor James Hansen-credited as being the father of climate change awareness, told the Guardian the talks that culminated in a deal on Saturday were just ‘worthless words. We’ll have a 2C warming target and

**then try to do a little better every five years. It's just worthless words. There is no action, just promises. As long as fossil fuels appear to be the cheapest fuels out there, they will be continued to be burned.'"**

The Guardian James Hansen December 2015

The quotations above reveal an indisputable scientific fact: The damage being done to our planet is so great that it reaches beyond the ability of the general public to comprehend it. So the question facing our species is this: Could it be so serious that we will become extinct? To borrow from the Prophet Ezekiel's metaphor; will we be reduced to a valley of dry bones-but unlike in his dream; bones never to find human life in them again?

We fool ourselves when we push this gloomy prospect to the back of our minds. In the end there is no way we can disguise the fact that we are being confronted with an extremely dangerous ecological dilemma. The question is this: How long will it take before the music stops playing, the mask is be torn off, and the self-deception revealed?

Although it is not possible to be precise as to when frightening planetary scenarios now taking form will become reality, there is evidence that some could have an impact in the near future. They bear a haunting metaphorical resemblance to the desert description in the Ezekiel story. Several have already reached the level of alarm. Some could come upon us at any time and with unexpected suddenness. There is ample evidence to state this one fact: Within the lifetimes of those being born today, this planet will be entering a period of extreme environmental change followed by extreme economic, social and political instability.

Our energy dependent civilization will be entering a stage where what is left of fossil fuels in the ground will become not just prohibitively expensive to extract but environmentally dangerous to extract. All of this will be occurring as the oceans are rising; thus forcing population to relocate inland. Billions of people will have to move to higher elevations. There will be demand for energy resources to build dikes and levees and inland cities. The extraction of metals-highly dependent on fossil fuels, will be very expensive. Also agriculture with all of its carbon fuel and fertilizer need (Carbon based) will suffer. Wide ranging social and economic disruption will be the outcome. One can argue as to the range of dates; however, there is no disagreement among

the majority of those studying the problem, scientists and others, that this will be taking place in the near future and that human civilization's present consumptive levels will be coming to an end. And this does not take into account the consumptive expectations of an increasing world population of eight to ten billion demanding an increasingly consumptive standard of living.

The following shows this exponential rise in Population growth:

**World's Population**

**20,000 BCE    2 to 4    million**

**2,000    BCE    130/200 million**

**1800    CE    1    billion**

**1930    CE    2    billion**

**1950    CE    2.5 billion**

**1999    CE    6    billion**

**(Scientists have determined that 2/5 billion is the resource sustainability "break point.")**

**2020    CE    7 plus billion**

**2050    CE    9 plus billion**

**2100    CE    At present growth rates 11 billion plus or possibly sharp shrinkage due to famine, disease, war**

The above figures showing an escalation to 11 billion come with a measure of uncertainty. Within the next fifty to one hundred years, the human population will be facing a series of devastating shocks-as just noted, that could change that figure. We may in fact see a sharp decline. It would be the result of starvation, disease or war on a massive scale; also, in many developing countries a noticeable trend toward women having fewer children. It should be noted though that this trend is limited to the non-Muslim developed countries.

Along with this will be rising temperatures on the planet and violent weather conditions.

In the scientific community there is a growing concern over this oncoming dilemma. Many see a real possibility within the next 50 to 100 years of human suffering on a scale that has had no historical precedent.

To quote from a 2009 speech of U.N. General Secretary Kofi Annan:

**“Mass starvation, mass migration, and mass sickness will ensue if the world does not agree to the most ambitious international agreement ever negotiated on global warming.”**

The warning of the U.N. General Secretary is issued in the face of recalcitrance among the world’s population politically, socially, religiously and economically. An expression has even been coined to describe those with this recalcitrance. It is “**deniers.**” This is not the first time in history there have been deniers. Those Romans living in the shadow of Mount Vesuvius in the first century too were deniers—until one day in 79 AD. Like those Roman citizens back then, many humans today are unable to understand the meaning of the changes to come.

For a large portion of the world’s population, man and woman are burdened by a psychological impairment that has extended back well before the Venesian eruption just referenced. It is both psychological and religious. It became evident many thousand years ago with the idea of God(s) power beyond us. As time went on this God power came to be interpreted as our protector and also our provider. We began to believe that our lives are in that God(s) hands. God(s) determines what happens both to us and to the world around us. God(s) makes our crops grow. God(s) keeps us from danger. God(s) helps us win our battles.

In more recent years there came impairment. It grew out of the scientific age beginning with the Enlightenment. There was the notion that the physical sciences could explain everything; also, that those sciences could solve all of our problems. We began to believe that the scientific method had all the answers and no matter how intractable the problem, it could come to our rescue.

These two impairments have kept many from comprehending the gravity of the emerging planetary crisis. One group in our society believes that their God will come to the rescue, and for

some bring on *the end of times* when they will be saved. The other believes that scientific innovation will turn back the tide.

Neither can accept the fact that humanity is about to experience an irreversible ecological crisis and it is just around the corner. Neither can comprehend that no god or scientific innovation will be there to come to the rescue.

Many ecological forces are building. Some are building quickly, some slowly. Here is a listing of the ones that will be the most recognizable by the turn of the century:

- **Parts of the planet will reach temperatures beyond the ability for humans to exist in them.**
- **Weather conditions will become erratically destructive**
- **Ocean levels will rise from heat induced ocean water expansion and the melting of ice caps in both the North and South Poles. Widespread coastal inundation will follow with the loss of coastal cities and marshlands**
- **Agricultural production throughout the world will be severely disrupted by climatic change, aquifer depletion and unavailability of carbon based fuel and fertilizer resources**
- **Fish stocks in the oceans will be depleted as a result of acidification and over fishing**
- **As population continues to press on the availability of resources, there will be starvation and massive civil conflict**

We need to understand that ecological forces can be reinforcing, one accelerating the other.

Signs are already appearing. As an example; parts of the world are now facing severe ground water shortages. Glacial run offs in land areas below high mountain areas such as the Himalayas, Alps and Andes are decreasing. This has the potential of reducing water supplies to hundreds of millions of people area by area. To compensate, water is being taken from underground aquifers. As a result, aquifers under agricultural land in those same areas are dropping to levels where such sourced irrigation for agriculture will either cease or be extremely limited. At the same time, in the coastal areas salt water from the rising seas has begun to leach into coastal aquifers thereby making them unsuitable for irrigation. According to one dire prediction; by 2030 vast



regions of the globe, now abundant in agriculture will, as a result of these interacting forces, become unsuitable for farming. Some experts are saying that in just a few decades some 3.5 billion people on the planet will be without sufficient fresh water for either food or personal needs.

What does all of this mean for the future? First, let us look at where we are today in our global response: The word “global” is being used here for the reason that this is a global problem directly affecting every human life-and all other life forms, on this planet.

Overall, it has been uncoordinated, scattered and ineffectual.

Why? The social sciences (including that of economics) remain silent. The religionists remain confined to their fixation on a circular theological epistemological disconnect to Nature’s reality. Political and moneyed powers remain fixated on their own self-interest.

The outcome by the turn of the century will be our species facing a painful adjustment as it attempts to survive in a hostile planetary environment of its own making.

To summarize the above with more specificity:

- **Academia; confined to the narrowness of research within the exclusivity of the University**
- **Public; suspicion of those in academia**
- **Legislators; gridlocked by their own and constituent self interest**
- **Religions; blinded by ancient beliefs**
- **International organizations; weak and without geo-political power to enforce agreements**
- **Non Profits and citizen groups; ineffectual against the tide of opinion**
- **Market Economics; unable to factor into cost “negative externalities”**
- **Population Masses; powerful financial/industrial/media/religious interests feeding non-rational inherent narcissistic desire**

To understand how drastic the change in thinking will have to be; you the reader ask yourself three personal questions. They bring to the fore the challenge each of us will very soon be facing.

- **Are you willing to acknowledge—not at some time in the future but at this very moment, all of the life style changes that will be necessary for the survival of future generations?**
- **In the context of an acknowledgement of these changes; are you willing to acknowledge which of your own political, societal, economic and philosophical/religious beliefs are meaningful for human survival and which are the cause of the problem?**
- **Would you vote for a radical change agent promoting all the above?**

Climate meetings such as the Paris COP21 in 2015 illustrate the difficulty being faced. Although agreements were made at that one, large enough cuts by big CO<sub>2</sub> emitters to meet the planetary crisis will not materialize. Heavy polluter nations—with the United States as a prime example—lack the discipline to implement decisive measures. Many smaller nations are too desperate to take necessary measures. Country-by-country it is becoming clear that “adaptation” arising out of separate limitation agreements is too weak an idea. For example, all nations of the world should immediately be placing a tax on fossil fuels so as to reduce demand and encourage alternative sources of energy. This is covered in *Chapter 8 Part IV An Economic Solution for the Increase in the Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and a Methane Hydrate Feedback Loop*. Yet because of expanding consumer demand and internal political weakness, there is no such firm global commitment. As a result, the world will not be able to reach the goal of stabilizing global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2020. Because of this, the CO<sub>2</sub> targets necessary to avert the worst consequences of anthropogenic global warming will not be met.

Ongoing meetings are, however, having two positive effects. One; they are showing world society just how weak it is in the context of understanding to its fullest the dangers noted above. Two; they are showing that slowly creeping into the consciousness of this generation is the thought that we may be witnessing the beginning of the end of the human species. An idea is beginning to form: It is that we are treading on dangerous uncharted territory with no cognitive antecedent in all of human planetary history. Warnings coming from the many scientists involved in fields related to planetary sustainability of the damage being done to the planet by

our advanced industrial civilization are beginning to sink into the public consciousness. Science is being given a voice. The result is the beginning of a global sense of unease.

These meetings are also showing the world that as useful as the CO<sub>2</sub> and the energy discussion is, there are a multiplicity of other interrelated problems calling for solutions. And these solutions extend into the **political, societal, economic, and very importantly religious/philosophical**. As to the last, questions are beginning to rise: What is our purpose on this planet? Are we a failed experiment? If we are gone, will something better take our place?

Without discussion in this depth, ecological meetings like the one in Paris become weak. Key to a permanent solution to our ecological dilemma is a thorough understanding of all the forces that make us think the way we do. Questions such as the following take on prime importance: They should be front and center. They are not. Following in capsule form are some of the reasons why delegates to meetings such as COP21 are not able to face up to them:

- **The difficulty psychologically for us to make changes in the way we think about religious/philosophical issues**
- **Our inability to address as a religious/philosophical issue the underlying problem of a burgeoning human population, at this stage more two to three times the sustainable planetary size**
- **The absence of an understanding among the economic elite that capital market economics is a major part of the problem**
- **The lack of recognition of the overwhelming power of corporate, political and other vested interests holding back progress through obfuscation and lies**
- **Suspicion among delegates in the broadest of terms toward the introduction of new social, political, economic and religious/philosophical institutional structures that could deal with the coming ecological dysfunction**

It would seem humanity has lost control of future generational hominid survival. For example; as stated above, a key problem is present population size. Our hominid DNA file has left us with unrestrained sexual desire and its by-product; uncontrolled population growth. With each new generation, a burgeoning human population is making its claim on the earth's limited resources.

Our religions offer no help. They refuse to face up to the need to reduce family size. Scientists have estimated that it would take six earths to just bring the present population up to a middle class standard of living.

Adding to this population problem is the problem of the waste produced through our advanced knowledge of chemistry and physics as this knowledge is used to reinvent and reformulate the earth's natural resources, which then at some end stage after they have served their purpose are "dumped" into the biosphere as toxic residue unable to be recycled back into their "natural" state. One example is the result of the contamination of fresh water caused by chemical waste from industrial and pharmaceutical effluents. These chemicals are leaching into our drinking water. Water treatment facilities are unable to remove some of them. We are already seeing this biochemical contamination resulting in disease patterns among many forms of life. We see it in the form of newborn cellular aberrations in reptiles and mammals, including humans.

To quote from *The New York Times*, Fred R. Conrad/Nicholas D. Kristof, June 27, 2009

**"Some of the first eerie signs of a potential health catastrophe came as bizarre deformities were found in water animals, often in their sexual organs. In the Potomac watershed near Washington, male smallmouth bass have rapidly transformed into "intersex fish" that display female characteristics. This was discovered only in 2003, but the latest survey found that more than 80 percent of the male smallmouth bass in the Potomac are producing eggs. Now scientists are connecting the dots with evidence of increasing abnormalities among humans, particularly large increases in numbers of genital deformities among newborn boys. For example, up to 7 percent of boys are now born with undescended testicles, although this often self-corrects over time. And up to 1 percent of boys in the United States are now born with hypospadias, in which the urethra exits the penis improperly, such as at the base rather than the tip. Apprehension is growing among many scientists that the cause of all this may be a class of chemicals called endocrine disruptors. They are very widely used in agriculture, industry and consumer products. Some also enter the water supply when estrogens in human urine — compounded when a woman is on the pill — pass through sewage systems and then through water treatment plants. These endocrine disruptors have complex effects on the human body, particularly during fetal development of males."**

A small hominid population in the wilderness of the African Continent, having lived in complete harmony with Nature for over two/one million years, has now turned into seven plus billion rapacious consumptive humanoids wanting more and more, making every effort to get as much of the planet's limited resources as they can get. It would seem there is no defense against this. Our culture has conditioned all of us to believe that the earth's resources are ours to use as we

wish. The result; an ecological acid brew of its own making, a brew that is becoming increasingly the more foul every day.

We must keep in mind one other “the more foul” possibility: It is the nuclear threat overhanging all human civilization. Today, nine nuclear states have stockpiled as many as 20,000 nuclear weapons, many of which are many times the power of the weapons dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. What the figure will be fifty or one hundred years from now is anybody’s guess. And it will only take the detonation of a few together to blanket the planet with radioactivity. The important question here is the following: If nuclear proliferation cannot be addressed today, is there any possibility that it can be in a future world that is in a state of political disintegration due to ecological collapse? This book does not factor in a mass detonation scenario. It sees it as limited due to the complexity of these bombs and the general realization by governments of the global suicidal implications of the use of such weaponry. The Khrushchev/Kennedy standoff on Cuba was a positive case in point. Also, the book sees a futuristic world—even though ecologically disintegrating, as being one highly communicative due to advances in technology. Yet, we must consider this horrific atomic possibility.

Is there hope? We will now leave to the cynics Sir Martin Rees’ pessimism quoted in the Introduction of this book where he describes our future planet as one **"filled with nothing but base matter."** In the chapters that follow, this author will be sounding a guardedly optimistic note. It will better Rees’ 50/50 chance of survival. But here the optimism must be conditional; it will necessarily rely on the implementation of cultural and religious norms and political structures far removed from those we take for granted today.

In sum; we will have to change the way we think.

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

## Part II The Journey from Wasps and Ants to Apes, Chimpanzees and Bonobos to Australopithecus to Neanderthalensis to *Homo sapiens*

### TODAY'S ECOLOGICAL REALITY

**“Achieving that ‘*happy ending*’, however, obviously requires that we allow the truth to live in our lives, which is an enormous adjustment that resigned humans will initially resist. So while we at last have the means to ameliorate the human condition, we still need to overcome the difficult responsibility of facing and accepting the truth about ourselves.”**

Jeremy Griffith. *FREEDOM The End of The Human Condition*. P691

**"We may be on the cusp of some very real disasters. If you look back, the thing that strikes you, if you've got any sensitivity, is that extinction is the most common phenomena. Extinction is always driven by environmental change. Environmental change is always driven by climate change. Man is now accelerating, if not creating, planet change phenomena; I think we have to recognize that the future is by no means a very rosy one."**

Richard Leakey: Evolution Debate Soon Will Be History  
Huff Post Science, Frank Eltman 05/26/12

Part II of this chapter will examine the obstacles facing our society as it attempts to come to a realization of the tragic ecological outcome it will soon be facing. It also spells out ways we can come to terms with this reality by; as Jeremy Griffith expresses it **accepting the truth about ourselves.**

The quote from Richard Leakey tells us that “extinction is always driven by environmental change. Environmental change is always driven by climate change.” He says that we are now facing the possibility of extreme anthropogenic climate change and that this could lead to an alteration of our environment not seen millions of years. The implication here is that this could lead to dire consequences for our species and even extinction. So the questions are: Why are we

as a species so hesitant to confront the problem? And if we were to confront it, what changes will we have to make in ourselves?

Many in our world society like Richard Leakey understand the problem in all of its complexity. Yet, the general public remains content to carry on day by day, month by month, year by year as if there will be no adverse life-change or even inconvenience as a result of the underlying ecological forces being set in motion. There is no fear of the possibility of human extinction. There is discussion at many levels, but those discussions and the political agreements made after them fade into inconsequence. An example: The 2015 COP21 agreement in Paris made headlines and then faded into the midst. The Pope's environmental encyclical just before that; the same.

Why is the increase in heat from CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere and the attendant triggers that will come into play so far beyond the universal ability of *Homo sapiens* to comprehend?

An example of this incomprehensibility is the methane danger. It is now common knowledge that as the permafrost warms; methane will be released. Methane is much more potent as a heat-trapping greenhouse gas than is carbon dioxide. As a result of global warming, within the next one hundred years underground permafrost stores will release massive amounts of methane. This will exponentially compound the global warming problem. It could lead to the extinction of our species. So we are left with the question: Why is this threat not sinking into the global human mind?

Very few citizens of this world spend any part of their day or year thinking about this.

Is there a reason for the public insouciance? Yes there is. It can be found in a number of recent scientific observations about the genomic origins of human behavior. For our purposes we will begin here with what is called **eusocial** behavior as it took form early on in the formation of life itself. Then we will explore other influences. Then we will bring the discussion into the present and explore the reasons for our being unable to understand in a scientific/religious/philosophical sense the seriousness of our predicament. We will end with an outline of what we as a species must become in order to avoid extinction.

To give order and continuity, the following captions will be used:

## **I Eusocial Behavior**

## **II Hominid Consciousness Beginning Over One Million Years Ago**

## **III Ernest Shackleton**

## **IV Technocratic Fixes**

## **V The Social Sciences**

## **VII It Is We Who Have To Change**

### **Eusocial Behavior**

First we will approach the answer by examining certain aspects of our behavior. This examination will attempt to answer the question: Was our eusocial behavior a part of our evolutionary success?

This will lead us into an examination of a contrarian question, one that is now beginning to haunt many today, including this author. Could some of those behavioral biological genomic eusocial strengths that in the past enabled our species to survive now be working against our survival?

In order to understand these challenges, we must have an understanding of our past before our hominid development. We must understand that we began as a **eusocial** species. **Eusocial** behavior itself began at the very beginning of life development on the planet. It played an important survival role. It is even now built into our hominid 21<sup>st</sup> century human DNA. We are today much the same as certain flying insects such as wasps, ants and some marine crustaceans. It is also built into the DNA of other like ours mammalian forms of life like ours.

The common characteristic is that all of a kind within a group live as a cooperative survival unit in which at least one female and some males are reproductively active and those that are nonbreeding care for the young and protect and provide for the group as a whole.



Over the course of our human evolution many eusocial attributes have played an important role. One was beneficial. For the Primates it is expressed by fealty within the group. Interdependency is confined first to family, then to tribe and then moving on into our Axial Age history; the Nation state. That interdependency today is seen as self-contained by language, as well as binding religious and historical tradition.

We see this **eusocial** “group fealty” among certain insects today in their protection of the nest. An experience of mine at my Appalachian mountain home gives an example. After building the home, I noticed nests of wasps in the corners adjoining the ceiling of the outdoor front porch. I soon found out that if you come too close to those nests, the wasps in them interpret it as an invasion of their territory. All at once by a sudden signal I have yet to figure out, they will all-the-entire nest-turn on you. And when they do, they seem to know just where their bite will be most painful; on the back of the neck, and as I have experienced-mine. It all happens in an instant.

For the wasps this eusocial defensive benefit developed early on. It was recognition of emergent forces outside of group boundaries. Here is an interesting note. That recognition only applies to emergent forces near the nest. There is no recognition of those forces distant from the nest. Distant forces are not seen as a threat to group survival. What exists away from the group boundaries is of no concern.

It is important for us to understand that our eusocial behavior is the same as that of the wasps. We are unable to comprehend threats out of the bounds of our immediate hominid eusocial survival limits.

We need now in our modern age to understand that many eusocial behavioral patterns-such as this one-that were our strengths have now become our weakness. For the continuance of our species, we must alter the template that has fashioned parts of our evolutionary thought process. We must acknowledge the above eusocial wasp behavior as being a part of our human behavior, but take this acknowledgement as our strength. An understanding of this can help. Here in summary form are two eusocial behaviors that are now working against human survival.

**# 1 – Because of our eusocial DNA we are unable to recognize the threat of the accelerating environmental planetary damage being done. Its potential damage is an**

emergent force too far outside our eusocial mental boundaries; “outside of the nest” emergent forces. We are unable to understand what these forces are in terms of our survival/non survival. That they are a threat to our planet and to our own continued existence on it will not register.

# II – We act violently to perceived threats to our nest. (Nest defined as: family, social/religious groups, Nation states). Then we strike out without forethought. The history of war over the centuries shows this to be painfully true.

Fortunately, these human deficiencies are beginning to sink into the minds of some. It is becoming clear to a segment of the human population that we will all have to change our **eusocial** thought process or we risk extinction.

Where do we start? Much of the thought and the institutions that arose from that thought will have to be examined. We will need to construct a new form of *Homo sapiens* institutional behavior.

A warning; on each step along the way we must proceed with cautious deliberation. Our **eusocial** behavior is a neurological part of us. The accuracy of our understanding as to what can be done and what cannot be done, and what the counter responses should be will be critical.

### **Hominid Consciousness Beginning Over One Million Years Ago**

Our “consciousness” as it exists today came into being long after the referenced above **eusocial** insect behavioral DNA markers were imbedded on our genes. It began over seven/six million years ago as evidenced from paleo archeological discoveries. It should be noted here that we took many hominid forms along the way.

The question becomes; why/how among all of our fellow hominids-Australopithecus, Neanderthalensis, Hobbits of Flores and the others like us, having emerged from the same origins, did we *Homo sapiens* emerge from the evolutionary birth canal so superior in terms of survival. What empowered us to survive beyond the **eusocial** nest? And most importantly, for the purpose of this discussion; are some of our survival skills-as with the **eusocial** ones just discussed-now threatening our continued existence?

If we examine this question closely, one *Homo sapiens*' survival trait does stand out. Our brains are hard wired not to be afraid. We possess an intense curiosity, combined with an aversion toward risk. In fact, many of us enjoy going to the edge, even tempting death itself. Unknown danger holds a special fascination.

Although we cannot precisely define how other hominids thought and acted, we can speculate. For example, some are saying that the Neanderthals may have died out because they did not have this risk aversion. They stayed in the relative security of their caves and camps while *Homo sapiens* with its intense curiosity ventured out. A difference, therefore between *Homo sapiens* and *Homo Neanderthalensis* may have been that we were more likely to throw caution to the wind.

Other explanations abound: Tool use differences related to the anatomical may have been a cause. There may have been epidemics. Hunting skill, communication ability, or ability to cope with environmental contingencies may have been responsible; ability in physical combat too.

One thing we know. *Homo sapiens* were constantly in search for new territory, new hunting grounds. They did not confine themselves to a corner of their territory as did many of the others. They saw themselves as dominating of the whole territory. Unlike the spider confined to its web or the Bonobo content to feed in its prescribed feeding ground, *Homo sapiens* envisaged the wide African savannas and swamps as its own to be explored. As the Nile formed and reformed, they saw that river as a means to take them north beyond the cataracts, then beyond to the delta and then finally into another great continental land mass; one probability moving by floating on reed rafts. Today the Nile, Blue and White, run from south central Africa to the North for three thousand miles. Climatic conditions have changed over the period here stated, but we must consider that we are looking at a region of the planet in the middle area largely equatorial and in total almost four times the size of the United States. Early *Homo sapiens* moving north saw the planet as its own to possess, to dominate. There was no fear of the unknown.

Jeremy Griffith in his book *FREEDOM The End of The Human Condition P 446* expressed this very well in terms of why these early hominids in Africa very early on left family and tribe and venture out:

**“Fossil evidence has revealed that it was *H. erectus* who first ventured out from our ancestral home in Africa about 1.9 million years ago and initiated the spread of humans throughout the**

**world....Yes, our behavior underwent an *immense* transition – especially among those who became resigned and changed from living cooperatively, selflessly and lovingly to living extremely competitively, selfishly and aggressively.”**

One distinct group moving out of Africa during the later period were *Homo sapiens*. These hominids first traveled west into southern Europe, and then east into Asia, then down to Australia. By 26,000/12,000 BCE some, while mixing with the earlier *erectus* inhabitants, were traveling to the north into what is now Siberia and then south across the Beringian land bridge spanning the current day Bering Strait (commonly referred to as the Bering or Alaskan land bridge) and then all the way down to the most southern part of the Americas. (Some possibly by kayaks along the frigid shores) Then not content with land and kayak travel, the Polynesians 3,500/2,500 years ago even ventured by boat into the south Pacific (only guided by the stars), occupying islands five thousand miles along the way.

Within a relatively short evolutionary time frame *Homo sapiens* had increased in numbers and occupied almost every corner of the habitable planet!

### **Ernest Shackleton**

Why, we ask? Why did *Homo sapiens* not stay close to its hunting and foraging grounds? Many of the others did. One answer was the use of spears and spear-throwers that allowed them to over-kill in their surrounding area. Spear-throwers generate forces ten times greater than the human arm. (There is the theory that Neanderthals with their short stubby arms may not have been able to master this) *Homo sapiens* as they over-killed the surrounding area were forced to move on.

There may have been another reason. It can be attributed to their sense of restlessness and curiosity as a result of a variant of a gene called DRD4-7R. It is carried by roughly 20 percent of all humans today. It has been identified for just that; restlessness and curiosity. Dozens of studies have shown that it makes us more likely to take risks. It, combined with all of the other cranial skills such as tool and weapon making, memory and language, may be the answer. In recent history we have seen examples this sense of curiosity and willingness to take risk. Stories abound. The tale of the great Anglo-Irish explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton from beginning to end is one; even sky diving today as a sport another. And of course we have space exploration. We

must be cautious here. There are many variables to the equation. It would seem, however, that risk taking and anatomical advances played an important role.

Along with this “risk taking” is a manifestation of *Homo sapiens* feeling of ownership over its surroundings, no matter the risks. We have come to believe that the mountains and swamps are ours. The woods are ours. The animal life is ours. The whole planet is ours. Even the Universe is ours. So, another possible conclusion here is that a major factor in our survivalist superiority over the Neanderthals and the many other hominids, all of them at one time or other also attempting survival, was our assumption of ownership.

Is there a twenty-first century meaning to all of this evolutionary history? Yes, there is. It sheds light on two of our great and possibly fatal flaws; one our inability to recognize danger beyond us, (Wasps’ nesting **eusocial** behavior as discussed here) and the other our over optimistic view of our future. (Sir Ernest Shackleton DRD4-7R just discussed)

What can we learn from all this? Many other forms of life from the beginning of time have come and gone. Ours may be just another. We are no different. We should be taking Richard Leakey’s words captioned at the beginning of this chapter seriously. Whatever deficiencies we have, we had better recognize them or our evolutionary path could be no different from that of *Homo heidelbergensis* and the others that reached an end point of theirs.

We need to search down deep and ask ourselves: Will we be just one more species to come and go? Anthropologists are telling us that our brains have not materially changed in 150,000/30,000 years; some minor genetic changes, yes, but none of significance. And we also know that certain **eusocial** and other behaviors continue to rule how we think and act; some constructive and some destructive.

There are parts of us that attach to our closely remote and even very remote ancestors; on the closely remote side to Cro-Magnon and on the far side to certain proclivities inherited from those **eusocial** industrious ants and wasps ready to attack those invading their territory. We are the same cranially. Our lack of a sense of fear is the same as it was for Shackleton and others before him as well as the wasps at my mountain home. Our aggression toward intruders is the same as it

was for the **eusocial** ants and wasps. This is a fact we must all fully understand about ourselves as we face our future.

So the question arises: How can we combat these evolutionary weaknesses? A word on risk taking: We are aware that we are risk takers. We are aware that we enter into decisions for the thrill of it with little regard for possible consequences. We are aware that we avoid all thought of the dangers along the way. We are also aware that if we do fail; buried in the massive cell structure of our brains is a turn-off switch placing the failure in a deep dark recess that says it is not we who failed. Blame it on chance. Try again we say to ourselves. The next time we will find success.

For *Homo sapiens* with the passage of time the fear of failure was at some point in its biological evolution subsumed into the far reaches of its memory bank. It is there today hidden away. It gave us over the course of our recent history enormous confidence well beyond the Shackleton kind of risk noted above. In every sphere of activity; political, economic, social and religious we moved unhesitatingly forward. This allowed for an eagerness to try again and again regardless of the pain of failure. In fact some failure came to be revered.

This is one of the reasons we in our current era are having such difficulty facing the growing danger of an oncoming ecological catastrophe. Cranially we find ourselves unable to comprehend this danger. The immense threat coming from nature's force field will not register. As a social group we find ourselves unable to adjust our thinking to recognition of that threat. Our minds remain frozen in a past anthropological **eusocial** time zone.

Mention should be made here of a human flaw that can and often does lead to tragic ends. It extends beyond the "risk taking" discussed above. It is caused by the inability of the rational computational power of the human mind to recognize already known limitations. Being "dumb" to reality would be a way to describe it. (Psychologists have explored this at some depth in the area of game playing) Some real life examples follow:

- **Shackleton's failure to comprehend the extent of the frozen ice danger to his ship.**

- **The World Trade Towers in New York disintegrating because its open skeletal steel construction lacked protection from the high temperature of burning jet fuel. That was an architectural design failure that should have been considered.**
- **The Columbia shuttle disaster killing all seven crew members on board. It broke apart while re-entering the atmosphere over Texas. A briefcase-size chunk of foam insulation fell away from a bi-pod ramp on the ship's external tank. The investigation determined that it had sustained this fatal wound 16 days earlier.**
- **The Challenger Space Shuttle disaster leading to the deaths of its seven crew members. The night before the launch five engineers at NASA contractor Morton Thiokol had tried to stop the launch. A seal in the booster was designed for minimum 52 F degree temperatures and morning temperatures were forecast to be in the 20's. Their managers at NASA overruled them. That night, one of the engineers, Bob Ebeling, told his wife, Darlene, "It's going to blow up." 73 seconds into its flight, disintegration of the vehicle began. An O-ring seal in its right solid rocket booster SRB failed due to the cold 23 F degree temperature at liftoff which caused a breach in the SRB joint, allowing pressurized burning gas from within the solid rocket motor to reach the outside and impinge upon the adjacent SRB aft field joint attachment hardware and external fuel tank. This led to the separation of the right-hand SRB's aft field joint attachment and the structural failure of the external tank.**
- **A 55-year-old former British Army officer died after being airlifted to a hospital in Punta Arenas, Chile. Inspired by Ernest Shackleton he was attempting to cross the Antarctic passing over the South Pole.**

Many are now asking; can we in the post Axial Age 21<sup>st</sup> century turn ourselves into rational sentient human beings and see through our flaws; like the ones above? Can there be a breakthrough; some form of all-embracing change in our consciousness that will guide us toward consonance with the inalterable power of Nature and toward fulfillment of our true evolutionary purpose?

Those with eyes open to the problems in front of our species find themselves confronted with these thoughts. They are asking; if *Homo sapiens* in its present form cannot rise to the level of reinventing the sacred within itself toward a constructive cosmic consciousness and incorporate this reinvention into its ongoing generational brain function, and build this reinvention into its culture and its institutions, is there any hope at all for its survival?

The above just begins the discussion. Here are some other problems.

### **Technical Fixes**

Being discussed today as a way to enable human civilization to live and thrive on this planet are technical fixes such as geo-engineering of the biosphere. This panacea needs to be approached with great care. The outcomes of geo-engineering the biosphere are disquieting. Tampering with the chemistry of the planet can lead to unintended consequences. There is a contra synergistic danger here. The end result may not align with the sum of the inputs.

The genetic side of issue-reinvention of our species neurologically and biologically, looks more promising. It is now becoming clear that we must soon take steps to achieve this. For our survival, we need to take bio physical control over our progeny. In this regard; a change in our individual and collective consciousness can be achieved. Our behavior can become less unpredictable and less aggressive. Collectively we can tone down the negatives. We need to avoid our genetic weaknesses and isolate and perpetuate our genetic strengths. There have been indications in recent years that science can assist us. Sperms and eggs can be engineered for resultant fetus development. Individual sexual behavior before copulation and sperm/egg receptivity can be engineered. Clearly, this is our future on our planet. As Edward O Wilson writes on page 14 in his book *The Meaning of Human Existence*:

**“No longer will the prevalence of some genes (more precisely alleles, variations in codes of the same gene) over others be the result of environmental forces.”**

All of this will involve:

- **Some form of brain altering biotechnology  
(Manipulation of brain through genetic engineering)**
- **Some form of brain altering chemistry  
(Introducing chemical compounds to functionally affect the brain)**
- **Some form of brain altering nanotechnology  
(Engineering of the brain at the molecular level)**
- **Some form of generational bio/cranial altering by way of “distributed eugenics”  
(Controlled exchange sperm and egg)**



- **Some form of permanent editing of the human genome, (known as CRISPR) a procedure that allows the replacing of defective genes responsible for hereditary disease.**

Recent discoveries along the lines of the above are indicating the possibility of engineering *Homo sapiens* biophysical and cranial change. They are drawing increasing attention. However, we must keep in mind that the anatomical/cranial approach, at least initially, cannot be extended universally. It is a time-consuming disciplined and expensive process that can only be implemented selectively. Also, there are strong cultural/religious/societal barriers. A well-organized futuristic society would have to be in place. There are dangers to this. It can lead to what has been called “techno-utopianism,” that is selective societal differentiation bringing about unalterable biological class divisions of our species. The emphasis quite naturally will be on body form, IQ and disease resistance.

### **The Social Sciences**

There is another problem. It relates to the inadequacy of the social sciences as they have taken form in our post Enlightenment society. Jeremy Griffith in his book *FREEDOM The End of the Human Condition* explains this problem-which I paraphrase by the following:

**With the European Enlightenment the thought process of science was detached from religious belief-and all forms of the metaphysical. The physical sciences adopted a Newtonian/Cartesian mechanistic mindset, holding on to the reductionist position that a complex system is no more than the interactive sum of its parts, and that an account of those parts can therefore be reduced to accounts of their physical constituents. Shortly after the Enlightenment, as the social sciences took form, they too adopted this mindset as regards biological/neural *Homo sapiens* over its period of development.**

Griffith in his book departs from this mechanistic mindset. He begins by comparing the origins of *Homo sapiens* society (beginning over one million years ago) to that of the Bonobos *Pan paniscus* as we can observe them today. They are our closest living relative from that period. We share 98.7% of our DNA with them. They employ a much different social process than our own. From birth to death it is in a sense like that of our own preadolescent social process. Bonobos reflect among themselves an almost total communal “love-indoctrination process.” They live in a cooperative peaceful state of selfless innocence. Grooming takes place across the sexes and at all age levels. Sexual activity is prompted by curiosity and is not limited to same sex. There is no

sexual rivalry at any age. Children stay close to their mother, remaining dependent until seven to nine, although the whole group participates in their nurturing. The authoritarian structure of the group is matriarchal, but minimal in that regard.

He goes on to explain that we Humans live our lives in a different state. After a short period of preadolescent love, we move quickly into the post adolescent psychotic and neurotic; a state filled with destructive emotions of alienation, self-hatred and self-interest. We become competitive, aggressive, selfish, deceptive, mean spirited, ego centric, violent, jealous, possessive, power hungry and narcissistic. This is a state far removed from the “cooperative peaceful state of selflessness innocence” seen among Bonobos. Centuries of our violence prove this. This violence continues to this day. Where did we all go wrong?

Griffith tells us that the social sciences should, but have not been exploring and answering that question. By wedding themselves into a mechanistic biological reductionist approach in the examination of the human condition, they have removed themselves from the idealistic moralistic behavioral investigation of the religionists and the philosophers, thus abrogating any real responsibility for an examination of the need for profound insight into the dark as well as light side of the human condition. As a consequence, study of human consciousness by psychologists has been limited to biological cognitive nerve response. Sociologists have limited their study to societal patterns. Social Darwinian “survival of the fittest” has set the limits for investigation of origins of aberrant behavior. The question of why humans as they evolved departed from the “idyllic” state as seen both metaphorically and in actuality of the Bonobos-as described above-has been categorically dismissed in favor of acceptance of belief in the human state through its evolution as being simply one of survival, Unable to find an answer to the why we are who we are, these social scientists have disparaged as being useless all religious insight. They have rested their case on the “survival of the fittest” theory as being all that there is. The result; the public has been taught to reason that we got this far by means of only limited respect for each other-as well as all other life and nonlife on the planet, so we might as well continue in that mode.

Our civilization therefore is left with the social science professions unable to define the predicament of man (and Woman) today on this planet.

This author now asks you the reader: When was the last time you heard a psychologist, sociologist or economist speaking about the absurdity of the self-destructiveness of the human condition? (Not even a rat or mouse will intentionally self-destruct.) When was the last time you heard one of them speaking about the human destruction of our planet-and ultimately you and me and our progeny? When was the last time you heard a sociologist giving constructive social solutions based on violent human historical reality? When was the last time you heard an economist offer an economic plan to save the planet? When was the last time you heard any of them speak about the biological psychological frontal cortex origins of the Hebraic definition of “good and evil” as an explanation for the underlying self-destructive force driving human behavior? When was the last time you heard one of them even utter the word “soul”? When was the last time you heard one of them allude to the possibility of an external dimension beyond human “consciousness”?

When was the last time you heard one of them expressing perplexity over this new development:

Discoveries now of eugenic internal dicta pathways indicate sharp jolts along the road to evolutionary change, change punctuated wherein organisms evolve by some as yet unknown external guidance, thus enabling life to preadapt to destructive forces outside, not gradually but in sudden jolts, with the end result evolvement into higher forms of complexity. This new information tells us that something far more mysterious and complex is occurring. It is not to totally discredit Darwin’s theory of the “survival of the fittest,” but it does prove the theory to have been far too simplistic.

When was the last time you heard words such as these from Social Scientists? I quote here from Jeremy Griffith’s book:

**“There is a teleological, order-of-matter-developing, integrative, cooperative theme or direction or purpose or meaning to existence, which God is the personification of.”**

Most likely not: They remain buried in Enlightenment reductionism, a form of thought that gives no meaning to human life other than it being “mechanistic.”

Some further definition is in order. Griffith defines “Reductionism” as the scientific/philosophical belief that all human activities can be “reduced” to, i.e. explained by, the

same behavioral response as observed in lower forms of life. “Survival of the fittest” mechanistically rules. When he employs the word “God,” he avoids that anthropomorphic reductionist definition. He refers to *Homo sapiens* being originally created in a state of cosmic perfection in the image of that perfection, toward which *Homo sapiens* now is capable of becoming.

Avoidance by the social sciences of recognition as he describes it of the “**teleological, order-of-matter-developing, integrative, cooperative theme or direction or purpose or meaning to existence**” could lead to dire consequences for our species. At issue here is the planetary destruction-as outlined in this book-that could lead to human extinction from forces similar to those that were unleashed during the Permian Triassic extinction. See: *Chapter 8 A Dangerous Zero Sum Game—The “Chicago School” vs the Planet Part III An Increase in the Emissions of CO2 and a Methane Hydrate Feedback Loop* To put it in the vernacular: DON’T MESS WITH GOD.

The physical sciences are tackling the issue head on. They are identifying the planetary destruction. We see a flood of information on the ecological issues facing humanity. We also hear alarms from the biological sciences. We are also hearing from the psychiatrists who are examining the problem from the perspective of a psychotic/neurotic *Homo sapiens* under the control of adverse eugenically engrained patterns of thought and behavior.

Why relative silence in the social sciences? Is it that atheistic social science practitioners are, as a result of the influence of past Cartesian age thinking, saying to themselves: There is no defense. There is no “purpose” to human existence. There is no “purpose” to the universe. There is no meaning.

The time has come for them to reexamine their thinking. The planet is in desperate need for psychologists, sociologists and economists to identify their own role in the causation of humanity’s problems and help to overcome them. These sciences need to become a part of the process. Their practitioners need to understand that if all peoples on this planet cannot come together into a world society living in a “cooperative peaceful state of selflessness innocence,” we are all finished.

## **Moving Into The Next Age**

Whatever approaches we choose, whatever changes we make; we will be finding ourselves in a new world. We will have abandoned certain areas of the historical process that created us and the society we live in today. We will be moving toward new cosmic integrative meaning to our existence. Intelligent self-understanding will take on supreme importance. Embryo selection based on genetic manipulation will be important; also, DNA manipulation (CRISPR), but that cannot be the full story. Core values will need to be a part of our consciousness, such as respect for all other humans and all other forms of life, individual responsibility for our actions, self-discipline, empathy, compassion and integrity. This will have to carry over to respect for the Gaia rhythm of our planet at all ecological levels. Whatever the methodology; gene selection/manipulation, brain altering chemicals, mentoring, discipline; all of humanity working together will have come to an understanding that to survive on this planet, we must:

- **Become an organism that is socially intelligent**
- **Become an organism not centered on selfish activity**
- **Become an organism that does not seek destructive competitive advantage**
- **Become an organism that can find a way to live with inborn turmoil at the same time using that turmoil as a source of creativity**
- **Become an organism that can enhance both personal fulfillment and social organization through the division of labor**
- **Become an organism that respects the introspective nature in each mind**
- **Become an organism that allows each member to determine its own transcendence by way of its own inner search, at the same time respecting other's right to do the same**
- **Become an organism that will allow each member of its species to find out who he/she/it is and what he/she/it must become**

## **Chapter # 4**

# Human Civilization – The Future

## Part III *Homo economicus* we have all become

**“What does it mean to say that world GDP has increased four percent when the cost of nature’s resources are not on the calculation?”**

Dr. Paul Craig Roberts, Former Assistant Secretary of the US Treasury, *The Failure of Laissez-Faire Capitalism and Economic Dissolution of The West*, page 174

### **Author’s Note:**

The expression “*Homo economicus*” is commonly used today as a reference to those individuals in our modern society who are secular and materialistic. Money and profit take precedence. Some say this is “good” for society. Some say it is “bad.”

The questions we will attempt to answer here are the following: What part of the brain cage is driving this secularism and materialism? Does it amount to neurotic/psychotic deficiencies or strengths? Is everyone this way, or just a few? Does this apply to the peoples in all nations at all levels, rich and poor? How deeply engrained is it? Is it a serious human deficiency with ecological ramifications that could cause the end of our species? If it is a deficiency, with a bit of brain cage tweaking could those secular materialists who emphasize money and profit save us?

Such a discussion must necessarily cover both the strengths and weaknesses of our modern day Capital Market system, and the public acceptance of those governmental structures dependent on that system.

First we need to understand that the exchanging of goods and services most likely was a part of our nature long before this Axial Age. Although there is no direct empirical evidence, anthropologists assume that *Homo sapiens* from the time that they were fashioning arrow points and beads most likely were trading them within their communities. A recent example of this possibility is an assortment of such artifacts found in the Blombos Cave in South Africa. (It showed the possibility of near humans trading as early as 140,000 BCE)

We need to recognize that any solution to our ecological problems must recognize this part of our nature. Non market solutions that deny our being *Homo economicus* have in the past failed, with Marxist Soviet Communism being a prime example. We can, however, point to others having success such as those seen from time to time in religious

and other kinds of communes. But they have succeeded only when limited to small numbers of people. This has left us with a problem:

Our Industrial Capital Market system is now testing the biophysical limits of Planet Earth. The reason is that Planet Earth's natural resources are not unlimited. Many are renewable but only over very long periods of time even extending into the hundreds of millions of years. As our industrial society continues to reconstitute and absorb the earth's resources, there are no technical processes able to eliminate the entropic aspect of such resource depletion and reconstitution. All so called "technocratic fixes" now being widely discussed such as an aerosol blanket in the atmosphere upon examination turn out to be no more than dangerous pipe dreams. Their insufficiency arises from the fact that the cure can be worse than the disease.

This is leading to a questioning of the efficacy of the foundations of the Capital Market system and the dependence on it today of over seven billion humans. (Many are saying that the planet can only support two billion at a medium standard of living)

Given the assumption that capital markets have become a primary cause of our ecological malfunction, the time has come for these markets to be placed under some form of control that acknowledges their deficiencies as they are they are rooted in our secular and materialist mindset. A way to achieve this is to factor in external costs (externalities) measured and priced in up front so as to encourage, discourage, temper, or at the extreme eliminate the trade itself.

How can we under our normal societal constraints achieve this end? Organic and inorganic resources can be internally priced at the moment of investment decision and subsequent market entry so as to prevent their exploitation and damage to the planet. These resources need be inclusive of every human planetary exploitive economic activity. At the same time; positive incentives that advance the higher values of humanity; ranging from the opera house to the athletic field to the hospital must be built into every investment decision and subsequent market entry. Economic outcomes with positive social value need to be recognized.

In short; every investment decision must be internally priced to reflect its socially constructive or destructive outcome. At present, this is not being done.

Implicit in this assumption is that only economically disinterested parties can be in a position to recognize negative external costs and positive incentives. This is not what we have in our world today. At both the investment decision and political decision level, neurotic/psychotic self-interest prevails. Kleptocratic millionaires and billionaires manipulate markets. Politicians, some too very rich, under Kleptocratic control are manipulated. There is nothing new about this. We saw it in Rome. We saw it in Feudal Europe. We see it all over the Middle East today. We see it in Russia. We see it in China and India. We see it in "so called" American Democracy.

Throughout human history, even before the bronze/iron agricultural age, the manipulation and exploitation of Nature was considered a “given.” There was plenty of animate/inanimate Planet Earth to go around; both eagerly waiting to satisfy *Homo economicus*’ desires. Most of the religious gods agreed to this; particularly the Abrahamic. Then later on with the Industrial Revolution, Adam Smith’s “hidden hand” seemed even for some to have a god-like beneficence. Many in our world today continue to believe this.

The viability of Planet Earth to sustain human civilization in its present form is now being questioned. We are heading toward a cliff. The fall will not just be painful; it could spell the end of *Homo sapiens*. For a start, we urgently need to examine the rational undergirding our Capital Market system. Certain elements of that system, laboriously pieced together over the centuries beginning with the bronze/iron agricultural age and then energized during the Industrial Revolution are now working against us. This examination will require a questioning of the dark side of our neurotic/psychotic weakness.

Our *Homo economicus* neurotic/psychotic behavior was present long before the late Middle Ages and then the Enlightenment. It was present long before the Industrial Revolution. As noted above, it even most likely was present as far back as 140 thousand years ago in a Blombos cave, or even before then. It was accelerated by the Babylonians, Akkadians, Egyptians and others who lived at the beginning of the bronze/iron agricultural age; what many now call the beginning of our Axial Age. It was always there as human civilization marched forward.

It started to become a problem as *Homo sapiens* was torn away from away from its hundreds of thousands of years of attachment to Nature. During the pre-Axial period, like all other life on the planet, we hominids had lived in consonance with Nature. We had a reverence toward it. Then, within a very short period of time we turned away from Nature, viewing all other life as well as nonlife as a resource to be used as we wished. The mind of *Homo sapiens* with the coming of the bronze/iron agricultural age changed from being at one with Nature to being separate from Nature. Remnants of the past mindset, however, remained in some geographical areas of the planet. Pre Axial Age indigenous peoples were encountered by Europeans when they first met them on the American Continent and then later on in other parts of the planet. (As noted in this book, the indigenous Americans as well as the other pre axial hominids had begun their move to the ends of the planet long before the beginning of our Axial Age.)



Now, several thousand years later; we are finding that this axial understanding of Nature was built on a self-deception. As a result, there is an ominous shadow forming over the planet and human as well as other life on it.

The problem of separation from Nature at first had only limited consequence. However; during the late Middle Ages, with a transformation in the physical sciences and what we now call Adam Smith's Capital Market theory, that forward motion took on a force of its own and accelerated. The word "Enlightenment" is commonly used to describe this transformation. Western civilization, by historic measure, in a relatively short period of time changed. It became in a sense constructive, but also self-destructive. Now, except in certain areas such as the arts, where change continues in a societally constructive fashion, that self-destructiveness appears to have turned in on itself and most notably in the area of the application of science leading to the diminution of the earth's resources and even distortion of the biological process of life itself.

This has left humans with a wide number of misunderstandings of their place on the planet. They are holding them back from the next axial transformation, one necessary for the continuation of our species.

Nature has its own geologic time table. It generally operates on "slow," that is in multiples of tens or even hundreds of thousands of years. We must keep in mind though that it can also operate on "fast." So-called "chaos" theory then can come into play. That happens when an increasing number of essential parts of the system suddenly break down. The future can then come suddenly and without expectation. This was confirmed by Dr. Lonnie Thompson, famed American paleo climatologist and distinguished professor in the School of Earth Sciences at The Ohio State University. He worked in 15 countries on five continents helping to build an ice archive dating back 700,000 years. He is one of those first scientists to discover global warming. When asked about the melting of the glaciers: (National Geographic Jan '13 issue) he said:

**"At some point the discussion will change very rapidly. It will seem like it happened overnight."**

What is important for us to understand here is that as a result of the direction we humans took with the start of the agricultural bronze/iron Age and then with the Enlightenment we are now in

the 21<sup>st</sup> century facing the strong possibility of triggering a very large number of ecological tipping points, each with its own ricochet effect. Here are some of them.

- **Biosphere temperature rises.**
- **Weather changes switch over to “fast”**
- **Ocean levels rise as a result of the above (Heated water expanding combined with accelerating glacial melting in the Arctic and Antarctic)**
- **Acidification of the oceans kills Reefs and then most of the fish stock**
- **Massive world starvation takes place**
- **Civil conflict occurs as a result of all the above**
- **Methane Hydrate Feedback Loop Accelerates**

Nature may be about to show us that it can in quick evolutionary time move from “slow” to “fast” to “chaos.”

We could be facing conditions for which we are unprepared. Our inability to understand this comes from our feeling of invincibility. (As discussed in this book) That is our greatest weakness. Only a limited number among the human population seem to be fully aware of the “**switches over to fast**” possibility. Many are, however, at least beginning to have discomfiture.

Yet, when these “many” turn on their air conditioners, drive their cars, take a cruise, it all seems to be a part of normal twenty-first century life. And as for the private “jet-setters” with their multiple mega mansion houses and motor yachts, affluence is simply considered a well-deserved “given,” an entitlement.

We need to understand; we are like any other organism on this planet, totally dependent on the biosphere for life continuation.

There is some hope. When some of them (us) find ourselves reading about the CO<sub>2</sub> buildup, ice caps melting, world population growth, starvation in Africa, acidification of oceans, threatening weather conditions, threat of terrorist attacks and even atomic wars, there is an uneasy feeling that something in our world has gone terribly wrong.

One would expect to hear an ongoing serious discussion from all political leaders throughout the world. But we only find it in isolated form among an elite of scientists and writers and activists. There is no truly broad based global consensus toward a necessary radical transformation of world society. We find only muted talk nation by nation about where to get more and more energy to fuel the consumptive desires their growing populations. And as for the coal oil and gas industries, with political and media help funded by their massive profits, they more often than not come out in that media smelling sweet as ripe fruit, thereby enabling greater exploration, development and use of their end product. The real issue of human species' sustainability and the necessary institutional changes; religious, political, economic, and social are cleverly pushed aside from the discourse.

So those who are taking these matters seriously find themselves asking; why are we not seeing a new surge in awareness like the one that brought on the great transformation in thought beginning two thousand years ago, a synthesis of the creative encounter between Greek, Jewish, Christian and Roman thought? Why not another like the one that came with the Enlightenment? Why not like the one that came with the agricultural bronze/iron age itself? Why does the possibility of another new age seem so distant?

Today we find ourselves locked into virulent forms of religious fundamentalism promulgated by radically doctrinaire religionists, all shouting from their sacred texts. We find ourselves locked into the rawness of twenty-first century secularism. We find ourselves locked into a capital market system about to destroy our planet, or at least our ability to live on it.

And as we look back on centuries of horrible wars and human slaughter, much of it in the name of one ancient god or another, we see enormous pain and suffering. In recent years we have seen the Holocaust, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. And the list goes on. And now, with over-population and social inequality growing all over the planet we see hundreds of millions of deaths from disease and starvation. And we see the possibility of something even worse, massive atomic destruction brought on by fanaticism.

As for the dawn of a second Axial Age; we are finding that much of the greatness of our past has become an impediment. Our *Homo economicus* mindset that took hold of the bronze/iron agricultural age is now acting as a delusionary drug, mesmerizing our minds and acting as a

destructive force bringing on the ecocidal brutalization of the planet and the annihilation of millions of its species, including our own. It is no surprise that there is only silence from the political power structures and their moneyed enforcers—many cleverly positioned in the religious camp, intent on only one objective; material plentitude for themselves; the “haves,” at the expense of diminishing planetary resources—and the billions of “have-nots.”

So, the many who are aware of this are left with an ambivalent feeling of emptiness and meaninglessness.

But there is a measure of good news here. Many thinking individuals throughout the world are now beginning to realize that we are responsible for our future on this planet and in this universe. They are beginning to understand that we must become a part. Many are beginning to see that the crumbling of this age with all of its ignorance may be the first sign of the beginning of another, an age defined as one dominated by human awareness of a “cosmic” purpose for all life, one built on parts of the old knowledge, yet bringing in the new, and leading our lives toward purposeful ecological planetary consonance.

But a thought nevertheless haunts: What if the realization does not take form soon enough; what then? Will it be too late in the game? Will “chaos” come into play?

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

#### **Part IV “longue durée”**

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|----------------|
| “longue durée” |
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**an expression used by the French Annales School of historical writing to designate its approach to the study of history; one that gives priority to civilization's long-term historical socio-economic and technological structures and describes how changes in them over long periods of time play out; expressed as "l'histoire événementielle." (eventual history) This view of history is in contrast to the short term time-scale that is the domain of the chronicler and the journalist so prevalent in our society today.**

The popular surge that began with the Green Revolution has continued to gain momentum. It is now spread around the globe, bolstered by scientific observation of the ecological problems facing the planet. As a result, we are now in near information overload. Professionals from a wide range of scientific disciplines are joining in and spelling out with precision the changes taking place. They are pointing to dire consequences if no action is taken. Very few questions relating to the validity of their findings remain unanswered. The few doubters, even in the scientific community, are being pushed aside leaving behind no more than shreds of misinformation.

Yet, our institutional response on a national and global level has been largely ineffective. It can even be described as apathetic. More often than not, governmental measures being taken are piece-meal and half-hearted. So, given the seriousness of the scientific forecasts, we are left with the question; why? The French Annales School of historical writing gave us an answer. It said that our thought processes are locked into past **socio-economic and technological structures** from which we cannot escape.

If this is true, the question arises; could our present insouciance then soon drag us into a tragic period of human history referred to by those French historians as a period of "**l'histoire événementielle**," translated into English; "eventual history," a period with respect to ecological matters leading to the eventuality of a series of irreversible tipping points possibly ending in human extinction or at best human survival in some meager form of existence?

For the remainder of this chapter I will attempt to answer that question. I will begin by pointing out the origins of those elements of our Axial Age **socio-economic and technological structures** that are holding us back from implementation of actions that would enable us to meet the crisis head-on. I will be defining these structures by way of an analysis of the evolutionary

origination (DNA) of the thought processes that have molded our culture and our institutions into what they are today.

History has taught us that societal change generally comes in two forms; one through intellectual discovery and the other through pain and suffering. Both align themselves with l'**histoire événementielle**. So the question for us becomes; can necessary change come without first having to go through the pain and suffering that will arise from the impending planetary ecological reversal? Can we skip over that and go straight forward into a period of “intellectual discovery”? And how long a time period are we looking at? These are the questions we are now facing.

L'**histoire événementielle** moves history in one direction or another regardless of the abruptness of pain and suffering or regardless of intellectual discovery. Therefore; to understand this we must first concentrate our attention on what “culture” is.

- **Culture begins to make an impression on the biology of the brain from the moment of birth onward and even from external stimuli during formation in the womb. Every impression gets stored in. Then, over time every impression at some point is revisited, even those impressions that originally lasted a second or two.**
- **Culture is not genetic. Major genetic changes in the brain of the hominid came to an end over one hundred thousand years ago. Since then, the brain has changed only in minor ways genetically.**
- **As strong an influence as culture has on our behavior, we remain biologically neurologically in much the same state as were our ancestors. We can revert back to aspects of early ancestor response in a split second. Some of us even spend our lives behaviorally in that neurological ancestor state.**

Now more specifically to a definition of **social thought**. It is formed out of past experience, knowledge, and belief. It is not genetic We need, before moving on, to give meaning to the expression **social thought** as it will here be used.

- **Some past social thought has a very strong influence on us**
- **Some past social thought is negative, self-destructive and dangerous**
- **Some past social thought is constructive, positive**
- **Some past social thought is both negative and positive.**

Social thought among humans today is heavily influenced by developments beginning with the societies that grew out of the Sumerian/Babylonian/Egyptian thought period. To understand who we really are, we must go back to that thought period.

Only then can we understand the hold that “l’histoire événementielle” has upon us.

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

#### **Part V Thought Periods**

Let us now go back before the Sumerian/Babylonian/Egyptian thought period and the ones that followed; the Greek, Roman, and Western Enlightenment periods. The seeming intractability of our “l’histoire événementielle” is under the control of these thought periods.

There are others too that have had some influence. Let me summarize the many thought periods that today ground our thoughts. (Covered in greater depth in *Chapter 2 A Warning from Sigmund Freud*)

- **Early Pre-agrarian thought period (known to scholars as the Paleolithic period beginning about 2.5 million BCE to the period 10,000 years BCE)**
- **Upper Paleolithic thought period (about 40,000/10,000 BCE; Cro-Magnon man as evidenced by the caves seen today in southern France and Spain)**
- **Sumerian/Babylonian/Egyptian (Neolithic Revolution) thought period (about 10,000/6,000 BCE and marking the end of the hunter/gatherer and the beginning of the bronze/iron agricultural age; the foundation for western civilization)**

- **Hebraic thought period; (beginning about 1,500 BCE, coming to fullness about 1,000 BCE and ultimately marking the origins of Abrahamic anthropomorphic monotheism)**
- **Early and late Greek and Roman thought period; (beginning earlier than Hebraic and coming to fullness about 600/500 BCE)**
- **Christian/Islamic/Hebraic thought period; (beginning with Jesus at turn of the Common Era)**
- **European Enlightenment thought period (beginning 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century CE)**
- **19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century worldwide secular industrial thought period.**

The period that grew out of the post Sumerian/Babylonian/Egyptian thought period is now referred to as the Neolithic Revolution. It began about 10,000/6,000 BCE. It is interesting to note just how recent this was in the expanse of hominid history.

It led to a ground shift in the direction of hominid thought. What is most important to observe here is that it was a move away from the view of man's relationship to Nature held in all prior thought periods. The understanding of what Nature "is" changed. In this book I emphasize that this explains the seeming intractability as we attempt to work our way out of our ecological predicament.

The million plus year metaphysical understanding of Nature disappeared. Focus went from the horizontal to the vertical. As this was occurring, Nature became desacralized. The centrality of the dominance of man and his god or gods over Nature took hold

New age hominids chose to look vertically for their god(s), and in so doing they separated themselves from their former horizontal view of God/Nature. This upward attachment moved to the forefront of their minds. The horizontal synchronistic attachment to Nature that had been a social/cultural assumption from the very beginning of hominid evolutionary development changed. The hominid mind began to attach itself to the authority of a god or gods whose residence was not on Planet Earth, but up in a vertical heavenly dimension.

Where did this upward definitional come from? It came from the anthropomorphic depths of the human mind itself. The god and/or gods above became a personification of that human mind, a:



**Rorschach test god bringing to the surface of the human its best and its worst**, at the same time a social/cultural force leading at first toward tribal and then finally state and national cohesion. It was a force so strong that over a relatively short period of time—in hominid evolutionary terms—it had spread throughout most of what is now the European continent.

In many ways it would seem that this upward god allegiance was a positive one. Our species flourished. But there was a troubling negative side. **By ignoring the sacredness of Nature and therefore the need to define the biological human in relation to it, the legitimacy of the human exploitation of Nature was given full reign. Abrogation of Nature became the social/cultural-and religious, norm.**

Christianity as it began to take hold in the fourth century gave sanctity to the denigration of Nature. The Roman view became the Christian view. God had given mankind this beautiful earth. We are to “tend” to it as would a farmer his field. We can exploit it to our own benefit.

This continues to play out strongly in twenty-first century Abrahamic worship. It is loudly spoken to in the services of many evangelical fundamentalist Christian churches. What is on this earth is even denigrated, to the extreme of being sinful and unclean. Judaism speaks little about it. Islam sees only oil and gas. As a result, with ecological challenges now becoming apparent, many from these faiths are having great difficulty comprehending the ecological problems at hand. They are being held back by their upward god-attachment and understanding of their relationship to Nature. They resist the modern scientific understanding that says we and Nature are integral to an energy field and we are one and the same within that field; there is no up or down.

This is made the worse by a lack of understanding within “Western” Abrahamic sourced belief as to what “life” is and what “non-life” is. A few words here are in order: In the mind of the general public today the words “life” and “non-life” designate an existential contrast; a difference between the biological and the non-biological. Throughout post bronze/iron agricultural age history, this had been the understanding—until now! Scientists are finding that the difference is not in fact so easy to define. “Life” is more than what we had thought it to be.

The following quote from The Opinion Pages of the NY Times, |*Why Nothing Is Truly Alive*, By FERRIS JABR, MARCH 12, 2014, expresses it very well:

**“Four billion years ago, in Earth’s primordial soup, similar self-replicating RNAs may have spontaneously formed from linkages of free-floating nucleotides. As naked pieces of RNA, they are even simpler than viruses and, because they can reproduce and evolve..... To compensate, modern textbooks point to characteristics that supposedly distinguish the living from the inanimate, the most important of which are organization, growth, reproduction and evolution. But there are numerous exceptions: both living things that lack some of the ostensibly distinctive features of life and inanimate things that have properties of the living.... Crystals, for example, are highly organized; they grow; and they faithfully replicate their structures, but we do not think of them as alive. Similarly, certain computer programs known as “digital organisms” can reproduce, mate and evolve, but ushering such software through the gates to the kingdom of life makes many people uncomfortable. Conversely, some organisms-such as gummy bear-shaped microanimals called tardigrades and brine shrimp (whose eggs are sealed up in little packets like baker’s yeast under the brand name Sea Monkeys) can enter a period of extreme dormancy during which they stop eating, growing and changing in any way for years at a time, yet are still regarded as living organisms....Consider a virus: a bit of DNA or RNA encased in protein that hijacks a cell to make copies of itself. Viruses are incredibly efficient reproducers and they certainly evolve-much faster than most creatures. Yet biologists have disagreed for centuries about whether viruses belong among the ranks of the living, the inanimate or in some kind of purgatory.”**

This change in understanding of what life is and it is not is a challenge to our understanding of what Nature is and what it is not. The time has come for the religions of Abraham to redefine their meaning of *The Kingdom of God*. In fact the time has come for all of humanity to come to a new definition.

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

#### **Part VI Ecologically Destructive Institutions**

Now to the institutions that grew out of the post Sumerian/Babylonian/Egyptian thought periods energized by a “**longue durée**” that seems to keep them in place, institutions that and will in time orchestrate our “**l’histoire événementielle:**”

First a definition of the meaning of the word “Institutions.”

- **Institutions are social mechanisms structured to implement rules governing cooperative human behavior.**
- **Institutions are the concretized end product of past cultural thought considered relevant.**

Now to the two most urgent institution/questions facing our species:

- **What elements of our institutions are holding us back from implementation of actions that would enable us to meet our ecological crisis head on?**
- **At this stage in our biological development, do we humans have the innate cranial ability to make changes in them of the magnitude that would prevent impending ecological disaster?**

Another way to address this is to ask the question: Is “**longue durée**” our only path? Can we escape those institutions?

Following are a number of challenges that illustrate this difficulty. They speak to the cultural/institutional impediments working against ecological sustainability. They illustrate just how deeply our minds are locked into the **institutional socio-economic and technological structures** of our society. The “our minds” being referenced here are all of our minds. This includes the minds of many of the most ecologically enlightened individuals in our society. It runs from Harvard and MIT Ph.D.’s to Arkansas beer drinkers. Few of us can escape the power of our common cultural/institutional past. We are all trapped within its many layers; going back into our institutional beginning during the Sumerian/Babylonian/Egyptian thought period. We are fools to think otherwise. Most of us live the entire span of our lives within the confines of

this state of entrapment. It would seem that only the likes of the Buddha, Jesus, Thoreau, Gandhi and others like them have been able to find a way out.

We need to be challenging every one of our institutions. The seriousness of the ecological crisis demands this. It is not happening in any sort of uniform way. Many enlightened individuals are aware of the ecological problems but are not challenging on a broad basis the institutional assumptions that are their cause. Here are some of the challenges: (Many of them more specifically pertaining to Americans, although those of every nation should be making the same inquiry)

- **There is a cultural/institutional assumption held by many in America that the principles set forth in the Constitution by the Founding Fathers are changeless and only subject to narrow interpretation. Global ecological sustainability challenges this assumption. It says that the American Constitution must reflect both American and global needs for human planetary survival regardless of constitutional wording.**
- **There is a cultural/institutional assumption held by many in American that their form of government is superior to all others. Global ecological sustainability challenges this assumption. To the extent that other forms of government are able to direct greater attention to the welfare and evolutionary continuance of our species; they are superior to the American form.**
- **There is a cultural/institutional assumption held by many Jewish, Christian, and Muslim believers in America and throughout the world that their apocalyptic view of the future has absolute value. Global ecological sustainability challenges this assumption. It says that every religion must justify its value to society by demonstrating a positive belief in a future for our species. It argues that religious belief that opposes the idea of the continuance of our species on the planet is unethical.**
- **There is a cultural/institutional assumption held by many in American and throughout the world that says pregnancy is a human right. Global ecological sustainability challenges this assumption. It says bringing children into the world is not a right; it is a responsibility and must be fully and unhesitatingly shared by the birth parents, as well as society.**
- **There is a cultural/institutional assumption held by many in American and throughout the world that women have a right to bear as many children as they want. Global ecological sustainability challenges this assumption. It says that**

population growth cannot remain unchecked. Its size cannot be allowed to upset planetary ecological balance. To control population growth, prevention of unplanned births must take on the highest priority. Sterilization of men and women, both voluntary and under certain conditions involuntary must become the norm. Before and after pills and patches must become the norm. As a last resort, abortion must be considered where it is proven the additions to the population will become an endangerment to the planet and human survival on it.

- There is a cultural/institutional assumption held by many in American and throughout the world that the distribution of medical care should be based on the ability to pay, with limited concern for those unable to pay. Global ecological sustainability challenges this assumption. Every human life is valuable; however, when resources are limited, priority must be given to those with the potential for being the most productive members of society; in general, the young and those who have the possibility of making the greatest contribution to society. It follows that resources that support intensive care for the terminally ill should be redirected to assure the flourishing of the most ecologically productive in the population.
- There is a cultural/institutional assumption held by many in American and throughout the world that some humans are inherently superior to other humans by virtue of social or economic status and they therefore merit the special advantages they enjoy. Global ecological sustainability challenges this assumption. It says that every living human being should be afforded the greatest possible level of opportunity, to include shelter, health care, and education.
- There is a cultural/institutional assumption (even religious for some) held by many in American and throughout the world that capital markets must remain free to set prices, (Efficient Market Theory) and that this is the most efficient way to exploit and allocate world resources and to create wealth for the masses. Global ecological sustainability challenges this assumption. (See Author's Note below)

Author's Note:

The concept of the Capital Market system for the allocation of goods and services is a recent planetary development with no "natural" foundation in continuing human evolutionary terms, having arisen out of an architecture that developed during the thought period beginning with the transition from hunter/gatherer to the bronze/iron agricultural age of the Sumerian/Babylonian and Egyptian civilizations.

The concept of the Capital Market system was formulated to supply goods and services in the most efficient manner to those able to pay in currency by setting varying price points based on the quantity of the seller's supply and the buyer's

determination of utility. Planetary resource depletion and destruction (negative external costs) were never a part of the equation nor were ongoing irreparable unintended ecological consequences.

With increasing demand for the earth's natural resources arising from exponential population growth, the concept of the Capital Market system has now grown to a size where it is energizing ecologically and socially destructive forces of a magnitude never before seen in human history. Planetary resource allocation is being misappropriated on a massive scale. Irreparable planetary damage is being done. As a result, the original Capital Market supply/demand architecture is now shaking under its own weight. Left unchecked, this architecture could bring on the extinction of our species.

The primary purpose of any system of resource allocation must be to serve humanity in the broadest sense, both present and future. For a relatively short period of time this is what the concept of the Capital Market system did. Not now. In its present form it is a socially and ecologically destructive force underlying the degradation of the planet and the endangerment of all biological life, including our own.

These ecological sustainability challenges just scratch the surface. There are many others. They all call for our immediate attention. They extend into every aspect of human life—and death. They extend into every ecological corner of the planet. Unfortunately, as here discussed, they find their resistance in the deeply woven cultural and institutional fabric of our society. Few changes are being addressed today on a broad enough scale so as to make an appreciable planetary difference. **The pressing question is whether this Axial Age as it is structured institutionally is up to the task of bringing about change in the magnitude called for.** We hear no loud calls among the general public for change. Among many of the intellectual elite, there is a willingness, but not among the general population. There is no emergence of critical mass.

How much time do we have? Some highly accredited scientists say our present trajectory will present us with very serious planetary problems within the next fifty to one hundred years. They point to extreme pain and suffering, even the end of our species within the next two to three hundred years.

We must understand that the institutions that have grown out of our culture are failing us. It is the message of this chapter and this book. We must be questioning these institutions relentlessly. Their plausibility and assumed permanency has dug deep into our minds. That plausibility is working against our society's awareness of an inalterable truth which is that there is an interdependency of all Nature's forces on this planet.

Can we return to the "Horizontal"? As we go through our lives; listening to the wind in the trees, seeing the sun set, hearing the chirp of a bird, exploring the atom, can we become conscious of a presence within all that is and beyond? Can we sense that our lives are integral to the mystery of the universe? Can we sense that to continue our existence on this planet, we are being called upon to search anew?

We do not have very much time. If we do not find this pre Sumerian Nature/God, our species is doomed. We will be rejected—as have many other species in the past. So, the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas, repeated again and again in this book, now begin to haunt us:

**(41) *Whoever has something in his hand will receive more, and whoever has nothing will be deprived of even the little that he has.***

Will our society be able to turn its back on those cultural and institutional artifacts, religious and other, pieced together over the last eight thousand years now holding it back from this search? Will we be able to move away from our modern civilization's de-sacralization of Nature and return to what we were?

There is a cosmic law of consonance. It points to the entire Universe and all that constitutes it. All is sacred. It includes our planet. It includes you and me. That law finds its truth in a destructive/constructive consonance. As Jesus told us at Nag Hammadi, it is either that or nothing. He said if we do not understand this, ***we will be deprived of even the little that he (we) has (have).*** In recent years our materialist, secularist, sophist, modernist life style leaves us far away from finding it.

Is there hope? Is there something we cannot at this moment define, some cosmic agency beyond our comprehension, waiting patiently by our side, about to open our minds to a new understanding of the planet and the cosmos, something that will upend the human psyche and

prove the French Annales School of historical writing wrong; thus enabling us to avoid the horrific “l’histoire événementielle” facing our species?

It is for you the reader to decide.

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

#### **Part VII The Bridge**

This book points out the seriousness of the ecological problems confronting our species. Some are so serious that they could lead to its end. They need to be understood in their fullest context. At the present time this is not happening. Why? Many of our beliefs play a strong role in preventing us from acknowledging them. These beliefs are supported by underlying myths taken from our past. Myths become the fabric of a culture. They dig deeply into the mind. They give validity to the way we think. They do not easily go away.

One of our problems is that our Axial Age mythology has lost relevance with respect to the many ecological challenges before us. Many of our myths are working against an awareness of our interdependency with nature’s forces on this planet.

Continued hominid evolution cannot move forward without a critical mass of society being aware of the inherent danger of these myths. This awareness must extend through all thought; political, social, economic, religious. Then and only then can there be the understanding necessary for human continuity. It is an understanding that calls for a complete and total de-mythologized view of Planet Earth and our relationship to it. New myths can take their place, but they must be relevant to a new understanding of our interplanetary relationship. There is no other way. Without this there can be no species continuity. There can be no survival.



Will our society be able to turn its back on those myths that are in opposition to planetary synchronicity, harmony, continuity? Will it be able to shatter the concrete in which it has encased them?

The late Joseph Campbell observed that myth borrows from those universals that make up the stuff of the human psyche. At first myth has practical value. Then, as he pointed out, there is a danger in what he termed the “concretization” of myth.

For a deeper understanding of this, I will now turn to my description of a metaphorical village and the myths that sustained that village. I will use the imagery in this story to convey an understanding of our current ecological dilemma in all of its varied complexity. The story shows how we humans, like those in the village here described, can so easily be deceived by the power of myth once it has, as Campbell expresses it, been “concretized.” (also meaning cultural-ized, religious-ized, institutional-ized)

### **“The Bridge”**

Once upon a time there was a narrow bridge spanning a deep and dark fissure in the earth. The fissure was very wide, so the bridge was very long. It was a strong bridge, made of dry hemp and hardwood taken from the forest on a side where there was a village. The bridge had been there for a long time. In fact none of the villagers, even the elders, could recall it being built.

From years of use, the land around the village had become barren. In fact; hemp and hardwoods like that used in the bridge’s construction were nowhere to be seen. However, on the other side of the bridge, there were luxuriant fields and forests.

The men in the village would cross the bridge every day to gather the harvest from the fields on the other side. From the crossing there developed a village tradition. As the sun was rising in the morning, the wives would accompany the men to the bridge to say goodbye to them, each wife giving her husband a kiss. Then, the men would all walk together across the bridge, one in front of the other, with a sort of rhythm to their step. As the sun was setting, the men would all walk back across the bridge in the same rhythmic fashion, carrying food in baskets attached to their backs, and their wives would be there to meet them again, each wife giving her husband a kiss.

In time this became one of the sacred traditions of the village. Another tradition developed. Upon seeing their husbands approaching, the wives, giving thanks for the bounty of the harvest, would all partake in a beautiful chant. And the men, as they crossed to meet their wives too would chant; thanking their Gods for the bounty. As time passed, these chants became more harmonic and complex and included giving thanks for the bridge itself.

As the years passed, this led to tales about the bridge. Some said that the bridge was a gift from their gods. They also said that the luxuriant fields on the other side were a gift from these same gods. The story also grew that what lay below was the deep dark underworld. It was a place of no return. According to the story; the gods had come long ago to the village to build the bridge over this underworld, thus protecting the villagers from its darkness.

Proof of their god's beneficence was the growing prosperity of the village. However; over time this prosperity led to more children being born. As a result, more families were in need of food. A decision was therefore made by the elders of the village to send the young sons with their fathers across the bridge to the fields on the other side. And for a while this arrangement worked well. But then, as time passed; these sons became men and had their own families. So, even more food was needed. As a result, every year more fathers and their sons were crossing the bridge.

Unbeknownst to the fathers and the sons; their numbers—along with the weight of the harvest they were all carrying back to the village, as well as the harmonic unevenness of the increased numbers crossing, had begun to wear on the wood and strain on the hemp of the bridge. At first it was hardly noticeable, although a few of the wives in the village did take notice. They said to their husbands; you need to stop placing such a great strain on the bridge. Rather than all walking together, you should only be crossing a few at a time. And another thing; perhaps we should not be having so many children. If we had fewer babies, then in time there will be fewer crossing the bridge.

But their husbands were a stubborn lot. They replied that they had all been walking the bridge and giving them babies for many generations, and the bridge had always held the weight of all who had walked on it. They said; "the bridge held us all yesterday and it will hold us all tomorrow." At this point a number of the elders joined in with the argument that if their gods had built the bridge and given it to the village—and given them children, these gods would always be there to protect the bridge—and the village.

In spite of this argument; some of the wives—now joined by some of the younger men in the village, continued to take note of the strain on the bridge. So they continued to badger the elders, but the elders would not listen. The refrain was repeated again and again; “the bridge held us all yesterday and it will hold us all tomorrow.” In one of the discussions, an elder known for his deep spiritual understanding was heard to say: You have lost your faith; we men have been walking the bridge from the beginning of time. Our gods have always been by our side. As they have protected our bridge in the past, they will protect our bridge in the future.

Then several of the more practical elders chimed in. They said; if there is a problem, there will be ample time. We will just repair the bridge.

So, the village became very quiet and the men with their sons kept walking the bridge as they always had. The whole village then settled down into the routine it had become so used to over the many generations; the wives accompanying their husbands and young sons to the bridge as the sun was rising and meeting them as the sun was setting, and the kisses and the chants.

Now to the bitter end of this tale; it was not long after the last of the arguments that one day as the sun was setting, the wives as they had done for so long, all walked from the village to the bridge to meet their husbands and their sons. When they arrived, even those who had given the warnings and were worried about the bridge could not believe what they heard and saw. In front of their very eyes, suddenly as they stood there looking across; with a great tearing sound, their men and their sons were gone. The bridge was gone. All that was left were torn bits and pieces of hemp and broken wood hanging over the cliff. They looked far to the other side of the fissure and saw the same there. Then their eyes gazed below. There was nothing to see. All of the sudden though, like a rush of wind; echoes of screams from the darkness came up from the depths.

The women never saw their husbands and sons again. Days, weeks, months passed. The food in their village slowly disappeared. There was no way to grow new crops on the hot and dry land that had been barren for so many generations. As more days and weeks and months passed, the luxuriant fields across the bridge on the other side of the fissure became only a distant illusion of the life they had for so long enjoyed. Soon, the women and children too were all gone.

As were their gods.

## Chapter # 4

### Human Civilization – The Future

#### Part VIII Survival

**Friedrich Nietzsche wrote in *The Gay Science* that the madman when he went into the marketplace to tell everyone the news of God’s death; those going about their business missed the significance. Nor did they recognize the extent to which they themselves were implicated.**

Joseph Kearns, *The Shape of Nihilism: The Journal of Archetypal Cosmology*, Archai Press, Issue 3, San Francisco, 2011

**“In the thirty-or fifty-thousand year history of modern human beings, the human body did not change significantly, but human consciousness did. How will we change next? The answer to this question is more than of theoretical interest: it could decide the survival of our species.”**

Ervin Laszlo, *Quantum Shift in the Global Brain How the New Scientific Reality Can Change Us and Our World*. Rochester, Vermont, Inner Traditions, 2008, p 122

Friedrich Nietzsche identified a state of mind that challenged Western religious thought. He said we have killed God and we are all living in a nihilistic state. He defined this state as human existence being senseless and useless. In metaphorical form it is the message of the tale as described in *The Gay Science* Friedrich Nietzsche quote above. That tale is a harbinger of what is now being played out on a far grander scale as our species turns a blind eye to Nature and the ecological implosion threatening *Homo sapiens* planetary continuance. If we stay on this path, in time we will be no more, and our gods will be no more. All of our evolutionary progress will have been senseless. Our bridge to life—metaphorically described in this village tale—will be no more. Nietzsche’s dismal observation will have been proved correct.

Now a quote from the Pulitzer prize winning journalist and bestselling author Chris Hedges, He was fired from the New York Times for speaking out publicly early on against the Iraq war. He is one of the most brilliant independent thinkers in America today. On July 23, 2012 in Truthdig, he writes:

**“These armies of bureaucrats serve a corporate system that will quite literally kill us. They are as cold and disconnected as Mengele. They carry out minute tasks. They are docile. They are compliant. They obey. They find their self-worth in the prestige and power of the corporation, in the status of their positions and in their career promotions. They assure themselves of their own goodness through their private acts as husbands, wives, mothers and fathers. They sit on school boards. They go to Rotary. They attend church. It is moral schizophrenia. They erect walls to create an isolated consciousness. They make the lethal goals of ExxonMobil or Goldman Sachs or Raytheon or insurance companies possible. They destroy the ecosystem, the economy and the body politic and turn workingmen and women into impoverished serfs. They feel nothing. Metaphysical naiveté always ends in murder. It fragments the world. Little acts of kindness and charity mask the monstrous evil they abet. And the system rolls forward. The polar ice caps melt. The droughts rage over cropland....The sick die. The poor starve. The prisons fill. And the careerist, plodding forward, does his or her job.”**

Hedges’ dire words and the quotes above from Fredric Nietzsche and Ervin Laszlo all give us cause for extreme pessimism. They warn us of our naiveté. They make it clear that change in the way we think will have to extend far beyond any adjustments now envisioned. That change will have to penetrate all sides of our human behavior. This will call for a new form of human participatory planetary engagement, an engagement that can only emerge from the realization that everything; organic, inorganic—and metaphysical, is interconnected and interdependent. They make it clear that this change/engagement will require a complete metamorphosis of human interiority, one bringing about entirely new forms of thought and behavior. The previous parts of the chapter discussed obstacles to this adjustment. The following ones will discuss how an adjustment process could possibly come about as our species struggles for its continued existence.

One basic fact must be understood. After our materialistic reductionism has exhausted itself as a nonstarter for elimination of our pain and suffering, it is the nonlinear that will need to be heard for definition of our ultimate meaning. That is our only hope. Only the nonlinear could have changed the minds of those in the doomed metaphorical village described in Part VII of this

chapter. Only the nonlinear can change the minds of those Chris Hedges is now writing about. Linear thought has limited power; nonlinear thought has far reaching cosmic power.

**Author's Note:**

**The words “linear” and “nonlinear” will now be used throughout the remainder of this book. They are meant to make the distinction between results attached to reason (linear) and those that are not (nonlinear). Linear thought is direct in a straight line mathematical sense; i.e., two plus two always equals four, matter is the sum of its parts. It even extends to the religious dimension; god is up in the heavens, we are separate from Him down here on Planet Earth. This is the form of thought that has dominated human reasoning from the beginning of our Axial Age through to the Enlightenment, and to the present day. The word “nonlinear” speaks to a system that is dependent on the interaction of multiple elements to produce an effect the same as or different from their individual parts; in some cases with definable effect, in others not. Nonlinear thought can be synergistic. The word Synergy is used here to describe such variable interactive relationships that come together harmoniously.**

It will take an understanding of both the linear and the nonlinear to give us the solutions we so desperately need in order to bring *Homo sapiens* into a consonant biological relationship with Planet Earth and the cosmos. Only that combination of mindset will allow us to expand our knowledge of the stuff that makes up that stuff. Only nonlinear thought will we have the power to place human life in consonance with that “stuff.”

Simply knowledge of this fact is not enough. We as a society must face up to a human condition that is militating against nonlinear transformation. Nietzsche's observation illustrates the seriousness of our problem. He writes: **“those going about their business missed the significance. Nor did they recognize the extent to which they themselves were implicated.”**

This avoidance; an absence of cognition to face reality, is our great obstacle.

To find a solution for the threat to our species, we must first understand in an evolutionary biological sense what is holding us back. As pointed out again and again in this book; parts of our brains remain in a past age. The result; we are not able to judge certain kinds of risks nor are we able to envisage solutions. Only imminent threats capture our attention. We are locked into a past mindset. The historical theory *“longue durée”* tells us this is the reason that history keeps repeating itself.

We avoid those unpleasant truths about which we choose not to think. This was described in *Chapter 4 Human Civilization – The Future Part I Our Planetary Dilemma* in what this author calls our “Vesuvian Complex” defined as “the mindset of those citizens of Pompeii Herculaneum in the first century living under Mount Vesuvius.” Their refusal to face future Vesuvian danger was no different from our refusal to face the future ecological danger in front of us.

We humans today find ourselves living in a Roman “Vesuvian” world. Many voice their concerns about the planet, yet the public remains in a state of somnolence. It is not a question of intellectual incapacity. Large numbers of those who choose to remain in this somnolent state of mind are quite capable of judging the validity of the information at hand. Chris Hedges points this out when he explains that the severity of the crisis ahead is overshadowed by self-interest; so that: **“the system rolls forward. The polar ice caps melt. The droughts rage over cropland....The sick die. The poor starve. The prisons fill. And the careerist, plodding forward, does his or her job.”** These are the ones to whom Friedrich Nietzsche refers in his brilliant passage describing those in the marketplace **“going about their business.”** Today, as a result of this global narcissism, in most countries even at the highest levels of government-and in particular those in the United States, lack of clarity of vision and purpose or sense of urgency.

We only begin to wake up out of our stupor when we have the experience of pain. It must be a direct pain experience, not visualized. If somebody tells me that snakes are dangerous and can poison me and I should not be walking in the woods, only a small part of my brain, the part that focuses on future risks, will glimmer. It will not hold me back from walking in the woods. Yet, if I come across a snake in the woods, nearly all of my brain will light up with activity as I process the “threat.” Nevertheless I will continue to walk in the woods. But if on a walk I get bitten, I will then be very much afraid of walking in the woods, at least in those same woods. We are all victims of this cognitive impairment. It is in our DNA. It grew out of our evolutionary need to disregard future dangers facing us. For the early hominid, each day was a new day. The future would take care of itself. It was too much of a burden to think about threats beyond those of the moment.

Let me relate this to one of today's ecological problems; global temperature increases from CO2 world-wide and a methane feedback loop in the Arctic. (Discussed in Chapter 8 of this book) As a result of a methane feedback loop, there is a probability temperatures will reach 150 degrees

Fahrenheit (65.57 Celsius) on certain areas of the planet within this century or by the next. Many of those areas are heavily populated. Hundreds of millions, possibly billions, will die. You and I now living are not able to feel the pain that they will experience. As it was for the Romans living in the shadow of Mount Vesuvius, we can only visualize a future similar to what we are now experiencing or in any case slightly different. We can only envision the planet in the same way as it now is. Even though we hear of dire planetary temperature predictions, we cannot imagine that temperatures will be anything far beyond what they presently are.

This cognitive impairment appears in animal behavior. Have you ever seen a bear dog fearlessly chase a bear up a tree? The bear dog is unable to visualize the painful consequences of being mauled by the bear. It can only think of itself in the present tense. The bear dog assumes survival to be a “given.” It is not able to comprehend the fact that its survival is in reality not a given.

Over the coming decades, as we attempt to forecast the hominid societal changes that will be taking place in response to the ecological breakdown, we will need to keep in mind this cognitive impairment. We will need to recognize that the transition will most likely only take place after the pain has set in, only after the snake has bitten larger and larger numbers of the world population and its poison is taking hold.

The social sciences have an understanding of this but are offering little help. Among most psychologists and sociologists there exists a quiet smug reductionist materialistic certainty, based on a-priory reductionist adherence to causation. Research extends no farther than the observation of human behavior based on cognitive knee jerk response. 21<sup>st</sup> century social scientific methodology remains encapsulated in a secular reductionist materialistic past. Investigation and conclusion gives the appearance of being correct, but leaves the mystery of human behavior in the face of what is to come ecologically an unanswered question.

The social science of economics at times seems to be the most detached. The result is its complete inability to face ecological planetary reality. Economists offer an almost endless stream of mechanistic fixes ranging from buying hybrid cars, to turning the thermostat up or down, to installing solar panels, to fission or fusion, but very little that would address planetary resource and disposal ecological reality.



As for the religionists; many of their archaic doctrines turn out to be a contradiction to what this crisis is demanding. No form of structured 21<sup>st</sup> century religious belief system today is offering a plausible comprehensive long term solution as to how we *Homo sapiens* will be able to continue to exist on this planet through the next several hundred years. This is not to say many religionists are not laying out a case for addressing needed changes, and that includes the Roman Catholic Pope with his Encyclical *Laudato Si*. It is to say that the noise level and comprehensiveness is not enough to make an appreciable societal difference.

Another way to look at this human cognition problem is by way of the complexity theory of MIT Prof Emeritus Jay Forrester which is discussed as Appendix # 1 of this book. Here it is: The word “**Ecological**” is inserted to make it the subject of each of his statements. For example; his words: “Cause and effect are not closely related in time or space” becomes **Ecological** cause and effect are not closely related in time or space.

### **Characteristics of Complex Ecological Systems**

- **Ecological** cause and effect are not closely related in time or space.
- **Ecological** action is often ineffective due to application of low-leverage policies (treating the symptoms, not the problem).
- High-leverage **Ecological** policies are difficult to apply correctly.
- The cause of the **Ecological** problem is within the system.
- Collapsing **Ecological** goals results in a downward spiral.
- Conflicts arise between short-term and long-term **Ecological** goals.
- **Ecological** burdens are shifted to the intervener

## **Chapter # 4**

# Human Civilization – The Future

## Part IX Collapse

**“A very strong argument can be made that humanity has already exceeded the carrying capacity of the Earth. The Earth cannot sustain the current population at the current rate per capita usage of resources for more than 90 years. Collapse will commence before the year 2100. A very strong argument can be made that if population growth continues and if per capita use of resources continues to increase, the collapse will commence prior to 2050.”**

Jason G Brent, *HUMANS: AN ENDANGERED SPECIES*. Published by Jason G, Brent, 2011, P 29

### **A General Statement of the Tragedy of the Commons**

(From this book; Chapter # 9 “The Tragedy of the Commons” Forging a New Global Ethic for Planetary Survival.)

**“All ethical behavior must be relative to the protection and sustenance of the Earth's diverse yet mutually supporting systems of all living things.”**

Elliott, Herschel. *Ethics for a Finite World, an Essay Concerning a Sustainable Future*. Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 2005.

Now to quote from Chapter # 9 my summation Herschel Elliott ethical principles:

#### **Principle of the Finite in the Commons**

**Continual growth is impossible in any finite domain.**

**The Earth is finite: It has a limited stock of renewable fuels, minerals and biological resources, a limited through-put of energy from the sun,**

**The Earth has a finite sink for processing wastes.**

**Because continual growth is impossible in any finite domain, such continual growth on Earth will lead to the tragedy of the commons.**

**Should individuals or societies steadily increase their exploitation of the finite ecosystem supporting them; that system, regardless of the causes or ideals which drive the individuals, will eventually collapse.**

**For the first time on a global scale human beings are exceeding the sustainable land and resource availability of the Earth.**

**The tragedy of the commons is what awaits humankind if people do not begin to live as responsible members of the Earth's system of mutually sustaining life forms.**

The above quotes reflect the seriousness of the *Homo sapiens* planetary issue. They present us with an unfolding painful ecological birth-death scenario. The present day world-wide response can be described as “tepid.” Why no understanding? Why the public confusion?

First a word on Population Biology: In the scientific community, species population growth is expressed by this academic term. It deals with the study of the ecological and evolutionary aspects of the distribution and the abundance of animals. It focuses on interacting assemblages of species. The evolutionary aspect specifically focuses on genetic and environmental changes that shape observed characteristics—the phenotypes—of organisms past and present. Population Biology is a discipline with fuzzy boundaries that shade into specialized areas. It generally has stayed away from an examination of the ethical consequences of the fact that more humans mean more planetary destruction.

Underlying the expansion of the human population is the fact that more humans mean more goods and services needed. It follows that more goods and services needed leads to more planetary destruction. That fact leads to Herschel Elliott's “**Principle of the Finite in the Commons.**” The end result is species extinction.

We hear nothing about this in “Population Biology.” A solution to our population/ecological problem clearly challenges the expanding goods/services interdependency. It calls for a reversal in population growth along with measured planetary resource use by that population. Neither is occurring. Population slowdown is only appearing in the older and more advanced countries and their populations are too insignificant a part of the world-wide population problem. As a result, the consumption of goods and services continues to increase on an exponentially destructive planetary resource path.

Largely because of the subject matter; that is; sexual desire, family values and religion, in most countries, politically advanced and non-advanced, there has been a tendency to side-step the population growth issue. Even in those countries with much heralded medical advancements in contraception as well acceptance of abortion, planetary destruction in relation to overall population growth is avoided. *Homo sapiens* extinction from population growth is avoided.

There are many reasons for this. One goes far back in time. From the beginning of the hominid emergence out of the savannas of Africa, women's bodies were viewed, and even today are, as an engine of fulfillment of male desire to be used and abused according to male wishes. More recent history shows males viewing women's bodies in this way. The attitude remains universal.

This attitude has been built into our male/female human thought pattern. Among the Abrahamic religions its inherent conflict of emotion was encoded into religious law. Today we see it in Muslim Sharia Law and in Orthodox Judaism, as well as in Roman Catholicism. Even the more progressive parts of these belief systems find a male comfort in it.

In areas of our planetary debate on this male/female relationship, this is now gaining attention. The question is being asked: Should women have the right to view their bodies-and themselves, as they want and not as males tell them? It is a question finding cohesion in some quarters, but not universally. In fact, universally it is being pushed aside. Today, in most parts of the world, women continue to be seen by males as sexual objects. As a result, population continues to expand as men impregnate women and women produce children. This is placing pressures on planetary resources. It all adds up to a high degree of complexity and confusion with respect to the sexual issue.

Of course it is not only a male problem. Emotions can run high in both sexes. Some women want themselves to be viewed as "sexual objects." And then there is the natural female inclination toward maternity.

America provides an example of an advanced country where there is near total obfuscation of the seriousness of the issue. Mention of the inherent ecological problems associated with unrestrained population growth is absent from the political dialogue. Contraceptives are readily available as well abortion in some areas, but not all. Population growth continues at a moderate

pace, largely by way of immigration. (Latin immigrants have a higher birth rate—although recently leveling) Yet, overall; population is expected to reach 500 million over the next 80 years. Even for this country; measured in terms of future energy needs, climate change and population displacement due to ocean rise, it all presents a dangerous and untenable survival scenario. In spite of this future reality, discussion of population growth is carefully avoided in all quarters. Not only is there near total silence on the part of government, on the far right there is a disparaging of the institutions that are attempting to address the issue in a humane way; those such as Planned Parenthood.

In America religious belief that supports population expansion must necessarily be a part of the discussion. Unfortunately, it is not. A doctrinal problem on the Abrahamic side of the equation arises out of the Hebraic biblical mandate to multiply. This is a part of the belief system of Roman Catholicism, as well as parts of Jewish and Christian Orthodoxy; also Islam—and Mormonism. The biblical justification for this mandate should be being challenged. It is not.

Any discussion on this subject must acknowledge that the population multiplier effect is at the root of all planetary resource related problems and these problems cannot be addressed until humans change the way they think about sexuality and population growth. Each and every person on this planet is a resource consumer. Measured in terms of input/output, each human life impacts the ecology of the planet. As it is with any species, the human can only continue to exist as a unified interdependent whole by living in consonance with the resource regeneration of the planet. At present, this understanding is absent from the public conversation.

To the extent that abortion becomes a part of the solution, deep set feelings on when life begins based on ancient religious scripts and interpretations need to be brought into the open. For example; with regard to the beginning of life, early Judaism taught that life begins only after a certain period of time in the womb; yet the Roman Catholic Church later on extended the sanctity of life even to the forbidding of the prevention of it through contraception. Then, there is the idea of life as a continuum with the belief of rebirth in one form or another going on by way of reincarnation. (Isolated pockets of early Judaism too) Also, we have the Calvinistic idea of predestination for the few.

Discussion of the population multiplier problem needs to be addressed religiously out in the open. Religious leaders cannot avoid this discussion. And it must center on not just human life biologically, but on what human life is. Modern science has determined that biological consciousness does begin very soon after fertilization. External events while in the womb and then during the birth passage—as well as during the first moments of exposure to a non-liquid oxygenated world, are all of long lasting importance in the formation of the consciousness of the infant. It can therefore be logically concluded biologically that after a relatively short period of time beyond fertilization of the egg, an abortion of a fetus is the same as destroying what is accepted by modern biological science as a biological human life.

Yet, this opens up a number of questions: Is a biological human life the same as the life of what can be defined as a “person”? Leaving the biological arguments aside; what is human personhood? When does human life at some stage along the way leave the biological and become a person?

Does personhood even exist before the fertilization of the egg? Early on this question perplexed our great thinkers. Psalm 139 speaks to a “beyond biological life” for the biological human.

***In Your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.***

The implication here for the writer of this psalm is that his life always existed. Herein we have a problem. Much of the teaching in the Jewish and Christian traditions (The Koran also speaks tangentially in the same way.) indicates that reaching one’s oneness with God comes from knowing God through communion with God. This bestows personhood on the person after birth at the moment of knowing. Later scripture even says that at death those without this personhood become as if they never were, or worse suffer eternal damnation. We can therefore logically—at least from an Abrahamic point of view, define personhood not as beginning with the moment of fertilization, but conditional on a process of coming into “oneness” with God after conception by way of “personhood.”

Throughout Abrahamic religious history all kinds of definitions as to this God/personhood connection have been put forth, ranging from realization of oneness with the “other dimension”

through gnostic (inner) search to evangelical fundamentalist Christian personhood in terms of the belief that **Jesus is my personal savior and only when I acknowledge this am I saved.**

As a parenthetical note; it seems strange that those evangelical fundamentalist Christians today most vocally condemning abortion are the ones who would at the same time agree to a denial of eternal life and even descending into Hell those persons who have not subscribed to their own view of the life and death of Jesus as their personal savior.

Was Hitler a person in a relationship with God? Was Al Capone? Was Bernie Madoff? Or were they not simply undeveloped and biologically distorted forms of human life? Here we get into dangerous waters. We must not limit this discussion to these famous deviant individuals: What about the cigarette executive who designed ads telling the public that Lucky Strikes are not harmful to our health, or the Savings and Loan executive or Wall Street trader who cheated thousands out of their savings, or the politician who would turn his back on Americans who have no medical insurance, or the oil executive who launched a campaign to discredit CO2 as a global warming danger, or for that matter President George W Bush who is responsible for hundreds of thousands and even millions of lives wasted in Iraq, and more to come? Are these individuals not any more than undeveloped and cranially distorted biological forms of human life, some trying their best to be good human beings, but all under the control of primitive urges and false gods to which they had given the power to rule their thoughts and actions? They most certainly cannot be preexistent persons destined to fulfill God's purpose as defined by the Psalmist quoted above. Or by Jesus.

Central to the message of this book is that they are not "persons" under the definition given by Jesus in the Nag Hammadi Gospel of Thomas. They have not found God within. This is where the discussion today among those religious and nonreligious should be and is not.

Placing this aside for the moment and returning to the reality of the abortion debate, there is only one sensible answer and it is not sex abstention. That is contrary to the normal biological urges of human beings. It leads to both failure and psychosomatic disorder. On any scale it does not work. Therefore, given the natural biological sexual proclivity of the human being, the prevention of pregnancy either by preventing fertilization before intercourse or by disrupting it very shortly after intercourse takes on enormous importance.

Yet, we humans must understand that abortion is not the final solution. The final solution for the survival of our species is to prevent the need for abortion. And we should all understand that making abortion a crime is not a satisfactory answer. It has always led to underground abortion and to the suffering and death of impregnated females and their fetuses.

We must also come to the conclusion that both the male and female having sexual intercourse are equally and fully responsible for the future of a child not aborted. All children born must be nurtured by both parents. Every child born must have mother/father parental opportunities toward his/her future.

This takes us back full circle to the population problem as expressed by Jason G. Brent in one of the two captions that are this part of the chapter. The global reality is that given the very high number of abortions throughout the world, if all fetuses were allowed to come to term, within a very short period of time there would be a massive increase in population resulting in wide spread starvation and social unrest. (An estimated 28% of women of childbearing age in the US have had abortions.) The percentage is far higher in countries like China.

Until world society is able to recognize that the prevention of unwanted and/or unplanned birth cannot be attained without medical drug distribution and invasive procedures available to both the male and female, and also the fetus, those now resisting the reality of exponential population growth must take full responsibility for a future of global human suffering and pain of millions.

That responsibility includes all of those religionists who are now stonewalling this issue. By their intransigence they themselves are the killers of those in future generations who will be struggling to survive on an overpopulated planet. They should now be labeled by society as to what they really are; self-centered dispassionate humans.

The following note addresses a possible future control group scenario that could lead us away from this painful future. It is very hard faced. The question for the reader is; how else?

**Author's Note:**

**In the near future, as world population reaches a level where a sixth extinction becomes a known probability, a transnational "Planetary Population Control Group" similar to the UN will be given responsibility for population and ecological resource balance on Planet**



Earth. Its control will extend within the operative legal systems of its member countries for the purpose of enforcement of the following measures:

- Mothers and fathers who cannot be responsible for the nurturing and welfare of their children will have them taken away and given to responsible mentors.
- Women in pregnancy who cannot be responsible for the nurturing and welfare of the child will be forced to abort.
- Those males and females who contribute to social deterioration through unrestrained sexual activity will be sterilized.
- All AID assistance provided by the compliant countries to noncompliant countries with runaway population growth will be conditional on this premise: Infertility drugs will be put into the food that is provided.
- Noncompliant countries will have their borders sealed, international aid suspended, and their government leaders refused entry into compliant countries.

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

#### **Part X Tipping Points – Next Three Generations**

This part of the chapter will discuss the ecological time frame facing the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of many reading this book.

This future generation will be living through a number of ecological tipping points. The reason is that we humans of our own generation are in effect over-consuming many of the irreplaceable natural resources of our planet. We are depleting those elements that heretofore over millions of years had been generated and regenerated. This over-consumption extends from agricultural land to the oceans to mineral resources to energy resources. An increasing population reaching for a higher and higher living standard is literally “eating up” the planet.

Lurking beneath the surface of our insouciance are many emerging tipping points. Some will be having an impact on our society in the next ten years, some in the next hundred.

The issue of the immediate ultimate importance arises from the fact that we as a species are in effect over-consuming our planet. We are depleting those elements that heretofore had been naturally generated and regenerated. This extends throughout the single cosmic piece of rock we call Planet earth. Our increasing population reaching for a higher living standard is literally “eating up” the planet. As one resource overreach comes to its end, the next is then attacked. The process continues.

Of immediate concern for our near-term progeny is food. It has been estimated that the world will have to produce 70% more food by 2050 to feed an additional 2.3 billion people. There are already severe food shortages in many overpopulated areas of the planet. It is being accelerated in some countries as a result of decreasing snow melts in mountains adjacent to agricultural land, and the decrease in water needed to fill irrigation canals in the lower areas. As these mountain tops dry out, productive farm land below is eliminated. In some areas, an additional problem is coming from inland aquifer depletion. Also, as coastal aquifers are being encroached by sea level rises, salinity is removing them from their use for agricultural production.

All of this is now leading to an enormous drain on the food/grains needed to feed growing numbers of people in the world. At the same time it is being exacerbated by the diversion of corn for ethanol and animal feed. Compounding this is the cost of diesel fuel used for agricultural transportation and processing. This directly adds to the cost of food production. At present diesel fuel makes up as much as 25% of food cost. The result; high food prices in the developed countries and massive starvation in those countries that are not self-sufficient and/or are not generating sufficient foreign exchange to import grains.

**Author’s Note:**

**In the US more than one-third of the corn crop is used to feed livestock. Another 13 percent is exported, much of it to feed livestock as well. Another 40 percent is used to produce ethanol. The remainder goes toward food and beverage production.**

As the food crisis is building in intensity, the international economic system will come under severe strain. (Here we are looking at 20/40/80 years) Many oil producing countries will run out

of foreign exchange and will be unable to borrow internationally. As a result, there will be massive chaos and starvation in them. Little help will come from the industrialized nations. They will be too preoccupied with their own population problems; acute food shortages and the many other environmentally destructive forces in play.

Within the lifetimes of the next two or three generations a global geopolitical reality of unimaginable complexity will be come into play. Response nation by nation will be influenced by institutional rigidity built into many years of past culture. Some nations will fare better than others. All existing political systems will be put to the test. The Chinese model of “all for one and one for all” is of interest. Its New Age approach based on technical meritocracy, central planning and Confucian/Buddhist traditions may turn out to be more appropriate. We in the West must, however, understand that if China is successful—and the jury remains out on this—in all probability its approach toward the rest of the world will be Chinese centric; that is it will concentrate only on survival of its one billion plus citizens. At the same time, we should not overlook the Chinese bent toward corruption as a destabilizing influence in Chinese history. One thing is certain; given a deep Chinese resentment toward the ex-colonial West, in all probability China will seek to promote exclusive regional superiority over the West. (There are already signs of this.) Suffice it to say that China will be viewing the environmental crisis not through a Western global lens, but through its own historical religious cultural Chinese lens.

Other countries with heavy populations such as India will approach the problem in their own culture centric way; the same for those in central and northern Europe. Those within the Islamic orbit will have their own approach. The important point here is that each country, large and small, will be looking inward and not globally. Nations of the world will not be looking outward as they should. So there will be no uniform global plan that could bring about a resolution to the ecological problem. The mixed responses and acrimony we see today nation by nation are an indication of this inability to find common global purpose.

In the first stages there will be considerable pain and suffering, at first in the underdeveloped countries arising from population growth pressing on food shortages. Also for those near sea level; there will be rising oceans. Because of higher energy related costs, global commodity prices will be soaring. This will be made the worse by the shrinkage of agricultural land. Monoculture susceptibility to invasive funguses and insects also will be exacerbating the

problem as will the high cost of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. No doubt, new forms of intensive agricultural production will be introduced, but we must keep in mind that they will be at very high cost and with limitations on output and deliverability to the consumer.

Optimists often counter this food shortage argument by citing the accomplishments of Norman Bourlaug (1914-2009) over his lifetime. They make a huge mistake. Suffice it to say; there are no food miracles on the horizon with the potential to solve the problem of an expanding global population's need for food.

The good news is that as the pain spreads, some global consensus will slowly begin to take hold. A critical mass of the world population will begin to come to the realization that many of the ecologically destructive forces in play will have dire global consequences for everyone on the planet. A word of caution here; as explained above, this does not mean that the response will be uniformly global. Rather, each nation will be looking for its own survival.

In the underdeveloped countries the problem of tribal and religious genocide will raise its ugly head. In those with severely diminished food and other resources and where population pressures are excessive there will be massive violence. It will be extremely difficult to bring it to a halt. Outside help will be limited. The members of international organizations from the developed world will be preoccupied with a broad range of their own planetary challenges as they affect social and political stability in their own countries; with the result that it will be beyond their ability to intervene.

The fact is; major powers of the world today do not have a good idea as to how to reorganize world food systems, control population growth rates, and remove populations from low lying areas. There is at present no unified global plan. There is no serious thought given to long term solutions. Of immediate concern are a number of African countries now faced with starvation and civil chaos. Many in the Middle East will be next as population levels surpass the availability of food grown locally and foreign exchange to purchase food in the international marketplace declines.

What kind of future can we expect to see?

Jared Diamond sets out a picture in his best-selling book: *Collapse How Societies Choose To Fail Or Succeed* (2011 edition). Diamond studied the fate of those civilizations throughout the globe that followed the same ecological planetary path that we are now on. To quote him from his book on page 516:

**“When people are desperate, undernourished, and without hope, they blame governments, which they see as responsible for or unable to solve their problems. They try to emigrate at any cost. They fight each other over land. They kill each other. They start civil wars. They figure that they have nothing to lose, so they become terrorists, or they support or tolerate terrorism.”**

This will be made the worse as a result of a combination of global factors working together; changes in climate, sea level rise and ecological degradation. The word “global” should not be understated. Over the next 50/100 years very large areas of the Planet will be rendered uninhabitable. At the same time many of the 10/12 billion humans then alive are being forced to retreat to habitable areas. The question humanity will face is the following: Will the retreat occur peacefully or will it be accompanied by violence? Looking back at human history, the answer as Jared Diamond reminds us will be: With Violence.

At some stage in the very near future (30 to 50 years) many in the world will finally begin to accept the enormity of this problem and its interacting connectivity to ecological collapse. The numbers will become obvious to all.

Can we find some optimism in this unfolding scenario? Yes, we can. As the earth’s surface temperatures continue to rise and unpredictable weather patterns, some violent, continue to occur; increasingly large numbers of people will come to accept the idea of severe planetary disturbance. The other problems here discussed such as population increase and food supply will begin to press in. For many, Planetary breakdown will become a reality.

Increasing numbers will be challenging vested interests and demand transition. But it will be a hard fought battle. For example; solutions beginning with pricing mechanisms that reflect the true "external" costs of fossil fuels will be opposed by producers. A positive note is that this will be occurring at the same time as fossil fuels are becoming more costly to extract and refine. Alternative sources of energy will have begun to become inherently competitive no matter the political power of vested interests. On the negative side of the equation will be the environmental damage already having been done.

At this point global awareness will finally begin to have the effect of bringing some form of energy equilibrium to the planet; however, it will be too late to reverse the damage done. An examination of the time line showing how long it will take for fossil fuels to become prohibitively expensive to extract, in a sense to “run out,” (defined as remaining reserves being minimal in relation to high cost of extraction) estimated to be thirty to seventy five years, against the time line showing global surface temperature rises and then the continuation of the rises over a protracted period of time paints a frightening picture.

A few words on air and ocean temperatures are in order as there is mounting evidence that both are causing higher sea levels that could sooner than expected place enormous demands on major cities throughout the world as populations are forced to move inland. I will quote below two of today’s highly acclaimed oceanographers and a prominent *The New Yorker* columnist and Pulitzer Prize author Elizabeth Kolbert in her book; *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*. I have not met Kolbert but have met both oceanographers and discussed with them their findings. Englander and Pollack number among the many in their field of knowledge who have been expressing concern over developments in the Arctic and on the western edges of the Antarctic.

First to John Englander: His book is entitled; *High Tide On Main Street: Rising Sea Level and the Coming Coastal Crisis*. In his blog on July 17, 2013 he said that the part of the planet that could trigger the first of many oceanic calamitous events is western Antarctica and he noted that concern over that melt was first expressed by J. H. Mercer of the Institute of Polar Studies, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio in his January 26, 1978 paper entitled “West Antarctic ice sheet and CO<sub>2</sub> greenhouse effect: a threat of disaster.”

Further quoting Englander:

**“An iceberg larger than Chicago broke off from West Antarctica last week. By itself that might be news. This one deserves special attention because it broke off of Pine Bay Glacier.... Readers of my book may recognize that location. On page 59 I name that precise glacier as the weak spot of Antarctica.... John Mercer had said this was the place that could herald the big melt that would lead to catastrophic sea level rise (SLR). If Pine Bay and its sister glacier Thwaites slid into the ocean, Mercer calculated that global sea level could rise about six feet over the course of a decade or so.... Now that the oceans are 0.8 C warmer, due to the GHG (Greenhouse Gas), we have put things in melt mode, quite outside the natural cycles of the last few million years. Even if we did all the right things (energy efficiency, set aside coal and tar sands, put huge effort into renewables) we**

are past the point of stopping climate change and SLR....Even if we magically stop CO2 at 450 ppm-almost impossible-the effects of that higher level will be profound, not just in temperature, but in melting ice as it moves inexorably towards the new equilibrium....”

Next to Henry Pollack: A summary of his highly acclaimed book *A World Without Ice* follows:  
(wording approved by him)

- **Virtually every indicator is showing that the pace of anthropogenic climate change is accelerating.**
- **Global temperatures on average are rising faster and as this is occurring; the seas are warming faster, ice is melting faster, glaciers are discharging their ice into the sea faster, and the sea level is rising faster.**
- **Planet Earth has not seen a hydrological spasm of this magnitude since the extinction of 65 million years ago.**
- **Year-to-year scientific observations are providing evidence of this.**
- **An ominous indicator of note is that glacial ice from Greenland and the Antarctic Peninsula is being delivered to the sea at accelerating rates.**
- **The implications of this rapid acceleration of glacial ice loss are profound; as large masses of ice enter the sea water, abrupt rises of the sea level will occur throughout the world.**
- **The broader implications of the rapid acceleration in ice loss from Greenland and the Antarctic are that the affected ice in each region alone could contribute to more than twenty feet of global sea-level rise; together the combination could raise sea levels over forty feet, enough to emerge a three story building.**
- **In the next two decades two billion people will be adversely affected by this loss of glacial ice.**
- **At the same time loss of mountainous ice in other areas of the world will be adversely affecting the lives of many millions below those mountains.**
- **The diminishment of water from this mountain loss; as well as dropping aquifer levels, as well as salt water encroachment of aquifers along coastal areas will be severely disrupting world food supplies.**
- **Weather changes will also be depleting world food supplies.**

- **Among the body politic of the world and most notably in the United States, there is a general denial of the causes for the anthropogenic climate changes described above and the planetary/human ramifications.**
- **The lives of the seven billion *Homo sapiens* on Planet Earth are soon to be tested.**

Next a quote from *The New Yorker* writer and author Elizabeth Kolbert in her 2014 book *The Sixth Extinction An Unnatural History*. (p. 113)

**“Since the start of the industrial revolution, humans have burned through enough fossil fuels-coal, oil and natural gas to add some 365 billion metric tons of carbon to the atmosphere. Deforestation has contributed another 180 billion tons. Each year we throw up another nine billion tons or so, an amount that has been increasing by as much as six percent annually. As a result of all of this, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the air today-a little over 400 parts per million-is higher than at any other point in the last eight hundred thousand years. If current trends continue, by 2050 CO2 concentrations will top 500 parts per million, roughly double the levels of preindustrial days. It is expected that such an increase will produce an eventual average global temperature rise of between three and a half to seven degrees Fahrenheit, and this will, in turn, trigger a variety of world-altering events, including the disappearance of most remaining glaciers, the melting of the Arctic ice cap and the inundation of low-lying islands and coastal cities.”**

At the present rate, melts at the North and the South poles and glacier melts around the world are about to soon disrupt the lives of 44% of the world’s population living in the coastal areas.

Henry Pollack confirmed to me that a rise in sea level exceeding the 4 to 6 feet predictions over the next 85 years will most likely occur and could even reach 20 feet if major ice shelves in the Antarctic collapse. Recent evidence as noted above points to acceleration in melt taking place under those shelves.

In the United States; Miami, Norfolk, New Orleans and parts of the San Francisco will be the first major cities to go under. At the same time vast coastal areas up and down the East coast and the Gulf comprising wetlands along the margins of estuaries, tidal flats, coastal marshes and bayous that are now protected from the open waters will also be affected.

All of the other energy sources discovered to date have their limitations in terms of meeting the enormous amounts of energy that will be required to rebuild these inundated cities. The only source of energy developed to date in large enough quantity that could possibly replace oil, coal



and gas is atomic fission from high grade Uranium. The problem here is that high grade Uranium feed stock is geologically limited. With even a modest expansion of the number of reactors it would all run out in about fifty years. After that, questions rise as to the cost of extracting additional feed stock. Uranium energy cost input against energy output is just the beginning of the problem. Melt down will be a constant danger. The other is the problem of waste disposal. As for solar; there may in fact be enough surface area on the globe to replace the energy now produced by fossil fuels; however, there is no way to package it in transportable form. On the edge of technology we have today Tesla and Smart electric cars, but they are no match for a heavy truck or railway car. Wind power faces similar limitations. Geothermal, tidal, and all the others remain on the drawing board with little hope for any of them taking the place of fossil fuels.

Simply put; you cannot run a steel or aluminum or cement plant on wind or solar or dam or tidal power. Nor can you run a railroad or a container ship. Clearly, the solution is reduced population size and a less invasive planetary lifestyle. Unfortunately, there is little chance of that happening.

Mention should be made of the fusion process. Experimentation is going on throughout the world, but at this point there is no process that has been found to be feasible in the sense of energy output exceeding energy input.

As temperatures and waters rise and weather patterns become the more violent, there will be world-wide revulsion against the use of fossil fuels. Taxation and other methods will be used country by country to attempt to lessen use. As a result, the geopolitical disruption among the now carbon producing countries will be extremely painful. Governments that have relied on fossil fuel resources for their export revenues will lose export earnings. In addition; some will be facing the sea inundation just described. This will lead to intense civil strife. It will be made the worse by population levels in some countries well beyond food availability. The result; there will be brutal socio-economic adjustments. Because of their expanding populations based on religious tradition, those Muslim countries in the Middle East now dependent on oil export revenues to feed the populace will be disproportionately affected. Civil strife in them will bring on trans-border violence that will extend into the West. (Specifics on the Middle East are covered in the

next part of this chapter. Further comment relating to a carbon tax are covered in Chapter 8 Parts III and IV)

At this stage of the ecological collapse a world-wide food panic will set in. As a defensive measure, many countries will remove locally produced agricultural production from world markets. We already saw a harbinger of this with the Russian exit from the international grain market in 2010 due to Russian wildfires devastating crops in that country. This will occur again and again throughout the world. Mass hysteria will lead to the hoarding of food and other life sustaining necessities, even in the developed countries. Food riots will occur in those countries with shortages, certainly in countries like China and India where the margin of error in food availability to consumption is very thin.

A general rule followed by social psychologists will come into play. (Karen Armstrong speaks to this extensively in her book; *Fields of Blood Religion and The History of Violence*) where she traces a common pattern throughout history beginning with the bronze/iron agricultural age. In every civilization at some point resources become concentrated in the hands of the “privileged” classes, those who have reached the top of the pyramid. Those at the bottom become marginalized. It is always accompanied by violence.

This pattern will occur as the ecological collapse begins to take form. Those at the top will escape the first stages of the ecological breakdown as it is here being described. They will avoid much of the initial pain from the disruptions coming from food shortages, rising oceans, etc. By hoarding food and other resources and retreating to the isolation and protection of guarded estates, isolated islands, yachts, self-contained floating homes, etc., they will in effect leave the system; socially and economically isolating themselves, their families and friends from the contagion. In so doing, they will make every attempt to preserve their wealth and privilege. At the same time as people living in the middle and at the bottom of the pyramid become more and more marginalized, their numbers will be reduced in size by starvation and disease.

We already can observe this wealth pyramid taking shape on a global scale. The “privileged” class is gaining control. An Oxfam International study released January 19, 2015 by Senior Researcher Deborah Hardoon concluded that **“Global wealth is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a small wealthy elite.”** It pointed out that the richest 1 percent on the globe will

soon control more than half of the globe's total wealth and that the 80 wealthiest people in the world altogether now own \$ 1.9 trillion, nearly the same amount shared by the 3.5 billion people who occupy the bottom half of the world's income scale.

This resource concentration and physical person to person separation will be in evidence country by country. Internally as ecological pressures build, many countries will become fiercely protectionist. Global humanitarian efforts by the richer nations as we now see them will be impeded by their own lack of adequate resources. General populations will be moving *en masse* to escape starvation and civil unrest. Those that can have tight control over their borders will be putting in place measures to protect those borders. Where possible, borders will be sealed. Others with open borders will embark on military measures to hold back massive immigration pressure. It should be noted that the US military has already been drawing scenarios that encompass a range of such possibilities along southern US borders.

So for the children grandchildren and great grandchildren of the 1% billionaires; OK for a while.

For all others an uncertain future.

But then even the 1% at some stage will have to face planetary reality.

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

## **Part XI The ecological threat to/from Islam**

The ecological threats facing our civilization are being heightened through many of the originating presuppositions of the three Abrahamic religions. Because they were formulated in a prescientific age when challenges like the ones now facing human society did not exist, many believers today in Judaism, Christianity and Islam are unable to fully comprehend these threats. The one Abrahamic faith that is having the most difficulty is Islam as it is being practiced in the Middle Eastern countries. A discussion of this follows:

There is a dark cloud forming over these countries. It can be seen by the anguish in the faces of the young men filling the streets in the crowded cities. It can also be seen in the flow of refugees north into the European countries. Unrestrained population growth has left a new generation with no future. They find themselves living in a world separated from the 21<sup>st</sup> century material affluence and lifestyle of the outside world. The ancient societal family centered structure of their parents and grandparents built upon the Koran and its interpretations has left them ill-equipped to deal with the transformative demands of the new world in which they find themselves. Anger and violence is their only outlet.

At the center of the problem is the Islamic (originally Hebraic) belief and custom of large family size and the encouragement, at least among those who can afford it, of polygamy. As a result, in many countries the population has exploded as agricultural land and water resources have been depleted.

Many Muslims are asking: How could those Infidels living by the “corrupted” version of the Word; Jews and Christians, have such earthly reward and we have none? Isn’t our Islam the one true religion?

A view of Islamic history can give an answer. It is a view that remains largely unaddressed today not just by Muslims but also by Jews and Christians as they attempt to understand Islam and those who practice it. If all sides did, perhaps there would be better communication and insight into the problem. Key is this historical fact: Unlike Judaism and Christianity, Islam was not forced during the European Enlightenment in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries to question its own

doctrinal weakness. During that time period Islam lay dormant, encapsulated in its own originating doctrinal mold.

Prior to that dormancy there was, however, a high point of Islamic intellectualism. It took place during the first five hundred years after the death of The Prophet. As Europe in its medieval slumber slept, the Muslim world became an intellectual center for science, philosophy, mathematics, medicine and education. Even the Greek classics were translated and studied. But the movement died out beginning in 1299 when it was overtaken by the Ottoman Empire and then left to stagnate. One fact must be understood about this early pre Ottoman intellectual period. And this is important. It was unlike the European Enlightenment. The validity of the *Qur'an* was not questioned and the *Hadith* and *Sunna* were only studied to ascertain their meaning. They were not to be contradicted. Questioning was to be only for the purpose of interpreting and explaining the *Qur'an* and the *Hadith* and the *Sunna*.

**Author's Note:**

**Some definition of Islamic terms is necessary:**

**The Prophet Muhammad**-According to Muslim belief, He was the best exemplar for Muslims and his practices are to be adhered to in fulfilling the divine injunctions, carrying out religious rites, and molding life in accord with the will of God.

**Quran (Koran)**-The Islamic sacred book, written down in Arabic believed to be the word of God as dictated to The Prophet Muhammad by the archangel Gabriel.

**Hadith and Sunna**-(In some ways similar to Jewish Torah Commentary) Both apply to a collection of sayings and tacit approvals of The Prophet Muhammad that, with accounts of his daily life as well as various reports about his companions, constitute the major source of guidance for Muslims beyond the Koran. *Sunnah* often stands synonymous with *hadith*

**Sharia Law**-The term means "way" or path" is the legal framework within which the public and private aspects of Muslim life in accordance with the above definitions are regulated.

Now to another important fact: The intellectualism of the European Enlightenment had a far different purpose. In many ways it challenged and redefined Christianity and also Judaism. All Christian and Jewish thought was given close scrutiny and questioned intellectually. Even the core definition of God as defined by Roman Catholic and Judaic Torah doctrine was questioned. (This transition is covered in detail in *Chapter 10 Reinventing the Sacred in the Age of the Cosmos Part II The Enlightenment*)

Islam in its dormancy was then and remains today not part of the exercise. Criticism of Islam and the Koran in any form by Moslems is considered a sacrilege. It can be punishable by death.

Islam escaped this Judeo/Christian inner search; remaining encapsulated within the Ottoman Empire. The result; Islamic countries today, and particularly those in the Middle East at the center of Islamic origins, did not experience the disruption that brought about a questioning of ancient Abrahamic religious thought and the opening of the medieval mind. Islam lay in silence; in a sense a “sleeping giant.”

Then, suddenly that “sleeping giant” was awakened. After the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the discovery of oil in the Middle East, Muslims were suddenly exposed to a strange new Western world of self-critical secular intellectualism.

For this reason, many Muslims in the Middle East today and many of those who have immigrated into continental Europe, are having great difficulty meeting the challenges of a highly educated technocratic post Enlightenment European secular world where male and female are increasingly equally valued both in the family and in the workplace, and flexibility of mind and extensive educational training of all youth-without emphasis on religious doctrine as found in Islam, is encouraged.

It should be emphasized: This is not to say that all Muslims today in the Middle East or outside of it are confined by this constrictor or will be in the future. Nor is it to say that many Islamic belief/precepts do not have value in the Western world and should not be a part of the societal fabric of a future civilization, but the fact remains; today many Muslims find themselves far behind the modern Western civilizational curve.

This calcification of Islamic religious belief in the Middle East is most pronounced and could spell the end of stability in that geographic area. Exponential population growth rates add to the problem.

Even more serious is the fact that some presently “oil rich” Middle Eastern countries are close to having exhausted their oil reserves. Others with plentiful reserves will in the future be facing global pressure against the sale of oil. A turning point in human planetary carbon consciousness will be occurring as a result of the overheating of the planet. World-wide measures to reduce consumption of fossil fuels have begun. World economies will be turning against carbon based sources of energy.

As the world moves away from oil and gas as a source of energy, both Shiite and Sunni belief in the Middle Eastern countries will continue to be an impediment toward adjustment. This will be most pronounced in the fundamentalist Sunni countries. Fanatically observant Muslims there looking back to Islamic origins will retreat further into the paradisiacal womb of suicidal Islamic paradise. We are already seeing this, and it will intensify. The doctrines of earlier anti-western, anti-secular, revolutionaries such as Hassan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb and Osama bin Laden will prevail. Newly formed groups such as ISIS will take their place.

From its very beginning the idea of a utopian Islamic society coming about by way of the righteous destroying the unrighteous has been a core Islamic belief. Islamic extremists view the Western world as the enemy of this belief.

Because of state access to sophisticated weaponry, including atomic, radical groups in Islamic nations with that technology are posing a very serious threat to all human civilization.

As exponential population growth presses on the limits of land resources, some of the Middle Eastern countries-as already seen in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen will sink into chaotic disorganization. It will be very difficult for them to maintain any form of civil society. Extremist Islamic groups will attempt to dominate.

The response from the West will not be silent. Fires stoked under ancient religious animosities fueled by religious reactionary fanaticism rooted in the same ancient violent religious imagery and doctrinaire belief as Islam; that is the superior righteous destroying the inferior unrighteous

will add to the powder keg. Islam will be anxious to go into battle with secular “Infidel” western Christianity and the Nation of Israel. All of those on all sides holding to the orthodoxy of their Abrahamic religious doctrines will be poised to enter the conflict-and that includes many citizens of the United States.

Can the Middle Eastern Islamic boiling pot be brought to a simmer and then cooled down? If so, how long will it take? What will be the extent of the human suffering? These are some of the most pressing questions for our time. All indications are that the pot will continue to boil and that within Middle Eastern Islam there will be enormous human suffering over the next fifty years as population exceeds available oil revenues needed for commodity imports. There may even be an inter-Islamic atomic battle that could take the lives of millions within Islam. Terrorist activities in the West will be far more damaging than before.

The ancient forms of Islam prevailing in the Middle East and elsewhere at some point will be forced to face planetary reality. As it was with the opening of the Western mind during the Enlightenment period in Europe, the Muslim mind too will be forced open. Muslim clerics and intellectuals will be forced to accept planetary and cosmic reality. (We are seeing the beginnings of this in Egypt) The question at this moment is how much damage to the planet and to its citizens will be incurred before this reality takes place.

With ecological events unfolding-oceans rising, food shortages, etc., the bellicose voices of religious extremism in all three of the Abrahamic faiths will in time be drowned out. (This will apply to extremism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam) The violence brought on by their action and inaction will in effect wear out their planetary welcome. The shared orthodoxy among the three will bring down upon each its own demise. As with the lessons learned in past Abrahamic religious history; from the early Roman/Israel period to the Islamic Christian war period to the Crusades to the Inquisition to the more recent horrors of the holocaust and then to 9/11, and then to Iraq and Afghanistan and Syria, and then ISIS; the radical nature of covenantal exclusivist Abrahamic religious ideology will be exposed for its planetary humanistic incompatibility. The carnage left in its wake will spur a global wakeup call leading to mass condemnation of religious fanaticism in all of its forms.



As the pain and suffering continues to unfold, even moderate Abrahamic religious voices will be drowned out by the exigency of the events. They will find that their Judeo/Christian/Islamic understanding of the Cosmos and the planet and their relationship to it, grounded on ancient biblical concepts is not adequate to form the basis for the societal changes needed to meet the challenges presented by the extreme geophysical forces in play and the abruptness of those forces as they trigger enfolding ecological planetary tipping points.

Judeo/Christian/Islamic belief will be forced to adjust to the reality of an ecologically disintegrating planet with humans on it searching not for solutions confined to their past, but built on new ideas within a thought process reaching beyond. This is not to say that all religious thought will die. Many ancient texts and beliefs will find value. However, a new world-wide cosmic realism will be taking hold. To put this in just a few words:

**Past religious belief will be made to measure its value against a new form of thought that encompasses the nonlinearity of all matter and non-matter in the context of human/planetary consonance-and survival.**

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

#### **Part XII Freedom**

Eight hundred years ago the English Magna Carta (1215) introduced an idea into what now Western Society. It was about individual liberty and freedom. Encoded into its body of law was an assumption that the right of the individual to liberty is a universal “given.” The ancient authoritarian political model was no longer to be the dominant form. That Magna Carta still holds throughout Western society. Although not as deep an historical part of the cultural and

constitutional history of many nations outside of the Western world, to varying degrees it also prevails broadly in one form or another as expressed in the words “democratic governance.”

This part of the chapter will challenge the sanctity of the idea of individual liberty and freedom as now defined in the United States of America by making the case that American Democracy has become an intractable obstacle to planetary sustainability and to the continuation of our species. The reason given is that the concept rests on a belief in the right of the citizenry to decide as to its right to the use of the resources of the planet to satisfy its own self-interest

This “right” allows both the best and the worst of the human psyche to have full expression. An example of the worst of the human psyche was seen in the difficulty faced by the Obama administration on a wide range of environmental matters. The inability to enforce the Clean Air Act was evidence of this. As an example, the administration encountered difficulties imposing regulations on coal plants. It was unable to impose a per barrel oil tax when international prices dipped below \$50 per barrel. As a result of this, recognition of the disintegrative forces of “Nature” continued to be circumvented by the inadequacy of the democratic system to understand these forces and take action. Then, after Obama, with the Trump Administration, matters became even worse. Here is a startling example of this inadequacy; taking a few facts from columnist Nicholas Kristof of the NY Times on his February 13, 2016 op-ed titled “Are You A Toxic Waste Disposal Site?”

- **Because hundreds of millions of tons of toxic residue generated in the US is non-reconstitutable and non-biodegradable, it cannot be recycled back into a “natural” state.**
- **535,000 children age 1 to 5 suffer from shrunken brains and diminished IQ due to lead poisoning.**
- **US Chemical companies spend vast sums lobbying to prevent corrective legislation; \$100,000 per member of congress last year.**

The inability of an America presidency (Made the worse under the Trump Administration) to take fully corrective action that will confront critical ecological issues such as these, combined

with the inability of an American Congress to pass corrective legislation has become a threat not just to all Americans but to all of human civilization.

This Magna Carta weakness is not just confined to American Democracy. Many nations throughout the world that follow the Western ideal remain equally paralyzed.

Yet, we see real concern coming from a wide range of thought. Cosmologists, religionists, secular atheists, psychologists, physical scientists, biologists, chemists, economists and even architectural planners (cities, urban areas, transportation will have to be transfigured) are taking an interest. But there is a problem. Each thought group is looking for solutions based its own narrow range of expertise, as well as bias. As a result, action always tends toward a separation from the wholeness of the problem. Economists like their economics as it is. Political scientists like their political science as it is. Religionists like their religion as it is. This religious bias was noticeably evident in Pope Francis' 2015 LAUDATO SI which was religiously purposeful and concrete in many ways, yet vague in the area as to the need to implement measures to constrain population growth.

Then there are those who prefer to turn their eyes the other way and do not even recognize oncoming ecological reality. They rest their case on the sanctity of returning to the Magna Carta mindset and therefore belief in what is commonly described as "neo-conservatism." This in turn is supported by belief in the benefit of free and fluid "Capital Markets." David Brooks, the conservative op-ed writer for the NY Times is one of them. In op-ed after op-ed he has demonstrated an extreme "conservative" Adam Smith "hidden hand" bias, flatly refusing to acknowledge the inherent dangers in the Capital Market system and its ecological destructiveness. In typical simplistic op-ed fashion of the day he rests his case on market-based mechanisms and technology as a solution to all of our problems, citing an array of recent economic advancements and then just to make sure all bases are covered, mysteriously in one op-ed referring to something he called "regulated affluence."

As a rebuttal to David Brooks, a few summary thoughts from the Pope's Encyclical are in order:

- **In the end, a world of unrestrained consumption is at the same time a world which mistreats life in all its forms**

- **The mindset which leaves no room for sincere concern for the environment is the same mindset which lacks concern for the inclusion of the most vulnerable members of society**
- **A technological and economic development which does not leave in its wake a better world and an integrally higher quality of life cannot be considered progress**
- **It is we human beings who need to change**

It is understandable that the Pope would shy away from areas that conflict with Roman Catholic Doctrine. No such excuse can be made for David Brooks and his American “neo-conservative” colleagues. On all fronts, many even deny there is a problem.

As the biosphere deterioration becomes worse, country by country there will be broad public reaction calling for change. This has always been the case throughout history when a society is under stress. There occurs a desire to move away from the existing system and toward a form centered on the issues that are threatening the society. We saw this occur in France with Napoleon and then in Germany and Italy during the 30’ and 40’s. Generally it takes the form of a transfer of power to a person embodying a “savior archetypal image.” Democratic (Magna Carta) freedoms are diminished.

With ecological tipping points being triggered and the disputation becoming the more acute there will be a breakdown in the Democratic form of government world-wide. In their confusion the public will be calling for a transition to authoritarian rule. At the same time, the “privileged” with their power and wealth will be making every attempt to own that rule and preserve their power and wealth.

The forces of nature will be turning against humanity. Temperatures will be rising. Oceans will be rising. Billions of people will be starving. Religious sectarian violence will be spreading. We may even see atomic weapons being used. As the pain and suffering spreads, the public will come to accept the idea that only a beneficent authoritarian form of government can be capable of designing measures that will allow human life to overcome the enfolding deterioration of the biosphere that is occurring.

In America many the likes of David Brooks will nevertheless continue to resist change. Special interests will resist change. Their rationale will be the presumed sanctity of their system of “democratic” thought centered on neoliberal individual freedom and the American right to exercise that freedom through established forms of democratic governance.

To give an example of the totality of the economic changes that will be needed, here are a few words from my letter to Paul Krugman as seen in Appendix II:

**The architecture that grew out of the industrial revolution, on which capital markets today justify their operation, now finds its “raison d’être” shaking under its own weight. The cold hard fact is that this architecture has not only seen its day; it is like an insidious disease working against human survival.**

**The key fault is the unfettered operation of capital markets. These markets have grown to a size where they are energizing ecologically and socially destructive forces of a magnitude that has never before been seen in the history of the planet. Resource allocation is being misguided and misappropriated on a massive scale. Irreparable planetary damage is being done.**

**Negative external costs and positive incentives must be built into every investment decision. And these costs and incentives must be applied to every human economic activity from the mine to the chemistry lab to the assembly line to the opera house to the athletic field to the hospital. Economic outcomes with negative social and/or ecological value must be recognized. Negative externalities need to be measured and priced in up front so as to discourage, temper, or at the extreme eliminate investment.**

Recognition of the need for changes such as these has only been taking place in pockets of the world population. Some of the northern European countries give us an example. There is, however, some recent evidence of a more broad understanding; for example in China where beneficent authoritarian power over more than a billion citizens is being applied as a bulwark against self-interest and in favor of communal environmental considerations. In the 2015 agreement reached at the COP21 meeting in Paris, 195 nations including China agreed to the seriousness of the problem and pledged to take action. But the question remains; will all of this be enough? The answer is a resounding “No.”

To put it in the vernacular: The American Thomas Jefferson form of Democracy and the English Parliamentary form of Democracy will not “cut the mustard.” What will be needed is a very large number of enlightened individuals having authority to bring about change.

In the US the American constitutional system will not allow this. A form of beneficent authoritarian rule will be necessary. At some point as the environmental pain increases, America will be forced to move beyond its traditional system of government as it is codified in the US Constitution.

Forms of authoritarian enlightenment will, in time, spread and take hold throughout the world. There will be no other choice. Leaders will be searching for a way humans can continue to live on this planet in some form of planetary harmony. As this is occurring, personal freedom as understood in the present American democratic sense will come to be seen as a primary cause of the countervailing planetary ecological forces being set in motion.

It will not be a smooth ride. Unrestrained psychotic impulses built on the fear instinct and supported by a concomitant need for self-preservation will be playing a role. A quote here from the well-known philosopher Benedict de Spinoza (1632-1677) is in order:

**“Each thing, as far as it can by its own power, strives to persevere in its being.”**

Benedict de Spinoza attributes this striving to an inherent desire in all of us for self-preservation. We should expect that as ecological problems build, there will be corrupt and self-centered authoritarian rule taking over in many nations. In recent years we have seen this in many of the African countries as they emerged from colonialism.

Throughout the planet, with coastal areas being inundated, temperatures rising and agriculture disrupted, billions will be suffering. Billions will be dying. At some point, however, and after much pain and suffering, rational thought will begin to win out over psychopathic impulses, even in those nations in disarray.

From this transformation will emerge a higher level of human consciousness where voices will be saying that we are not separate from the cosmic realm but are a part of a rhythm that is in a sense “the mind” of the cosmic realm. These voices will be redefining the cosmic and planetary purpose of the human species by way of new forms of thought.

Pope Francis in his Encyclical letter speaks to this. He views each human life as a metaphysical/spiritual part of the whole-as opposed to human life being independent and separated from the whole (i.e., the planet and cosmos) as it is in contemporary reductionist

nihilistic thought. This view-not necessarily restricted to those of any religious belief or those without, will call for a change in many of the deeply rooted archetypal images that in the past formed the basis for national and global governance and human behavior.

A question remains as to the efficacy of transformational counter measures; given the enormity of the difficulties that will arise from cascading ecological developments and their seeming irreversibility. There is cause for doubt as to whether political, economic, and social change can take place fast enough to reverse the disintegrative momentum, or for that matter is even possible. We have no historical precedent to go by. Human evolutionary change has always taken very long periods of time. Adaption has been gradual. This one calls for immediate response.

On the other hand, we can also observe that there has been an acceleration of human response in recent history. Humanity would appear to be benefiting from a growing capacity for flexibility.

As the ecological breakdown over this next century continues to unfold, the future of *Homo sapiens* will lie at a critical fork on its evolutionary road; one leading to its painful end, the other to its long term survival on this planet and in the cosmos of which it is a part.

How much time do we have? Some highly accredited scientists say our present trajectory will present very serious planetary problems within the next fifty to one hundred years, and some even point to the end of our species after three hundred.

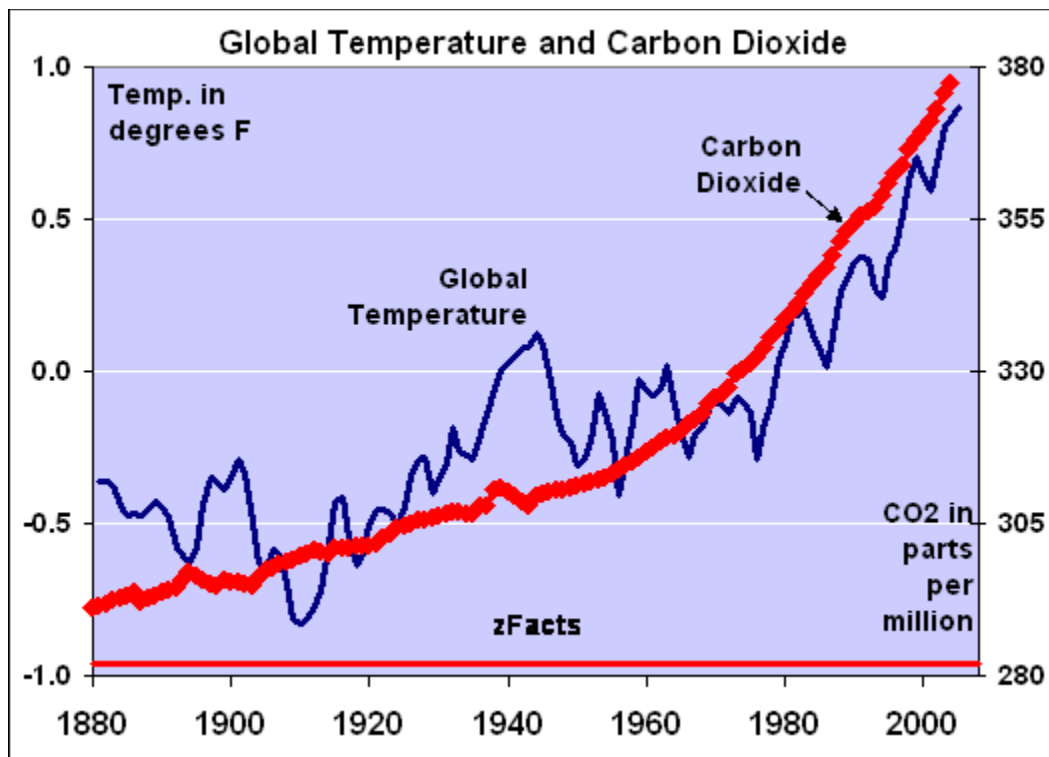
The time has come to give a close look to the validity of the Magna Carta.

## Chapter # 4

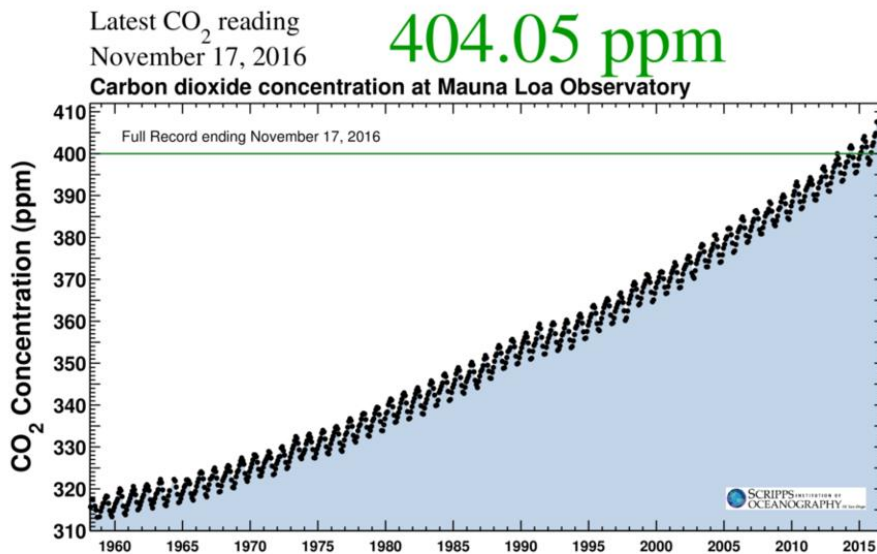
### Human Civilization – The Future

#### Part XIII A New Axial Age ?

The first graph below, widely distributed a few years ago, became a public wakeup call. It showed that CO<sub>2</sub> is the primary cause of global warming. Concentration then had risen past 380 parts per million. Global temperatures were also on the rise. This trend has continued. CO<sub>2</sub> ppm has now passed the 400 ppm level. This is shown on the next graph. As a result, recent global temperatures are now the highest in recorded history. It is estimated the 450 CO<sub>2</sub> ppm level will be reached by 2030 and temperatures will continue to rise. More recent statements by prominent scientists confirm the seriousness of this trend. We may be facing extinction. Jonathan Payne, professor of geological and environmental sciences at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California has indicated that there are parallels with the Permian extinction period. (See caption below) More detail on that possibility as well as a solution is covered in *Chapter 8*.







**"Scientists now suspect that 'the mother of all mass extinctions', the Permian extinction 251 million years ago, was of Earth's own making. And the more they learn about it, the more parallels they see to our greenhouse-gas-induced global warming. Then a chain of events culminated in oxygen-depleted oceans exhaling poison gas. 70 percent of terrestrial life disappeared. It took five million years, perhaps more, for the biosphere to recover. There may be some pretty direct parallels between the end-Permian extinction and today,' says Jonathan Payne, professor of geological and environmental sciences at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California."**

MOISES VELASQUEZ-MANOFF, Today's Unsettling Comparison to 'The Great Dying'

250 Million Years Ago, Rising Greenhouse Gas Levels Set Off Catastrophic Changes, Nov. 22, 2008

**"According to a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, January through September had a combined global land and sea surface temperature of 58.67 degrees Fahrenheit, which is 1.17 F above the 20th century average....New calculations show that the amount of melted inland ice in Greenland is 25-50% higher in 2010 than normally"**

Paul Yeager AOL News (Oct. 18, 2010) Administration release on Oct. 15, 2010

**“The surface temperature of the earth cannot vary too far in either direction, or life will disappear.”**

Brian Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Journey of the Universe*: Yale University Press, New Haven, 2011. P 56

**“Without quick action to curb CO2 emissions, global warming is likely to increase by 4 degrees Centigrade (7.2 degrees Fahrenheit) above today’s normal during the 21st century and that is dangerously close to the temperature of 6 degrees Centigrade above normal that initiated the Permian-Triassic extinction event 252 million years ago when 96%\* of all marine species and 70% of all terrestrial vertebrates were wiped out. \*(current estimate 81%)”**

A 2012 World Bank report

**“Melting ice is cooking the planet. Shrinking Arctic sea ice means the ocean is absorbing more energy from the sun, and it's now clear the effect is twice as big as thought – adding significantly to heating from greenhouse gases.”**

Jeff Hecht, Arctic thaw significantly worsens global warming risk New Scientist – Environment, Feb 18, 2014

**“In 1749, there were 270 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and today there are 410 ppm of CO2. The parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere have fluctuated between 200 and 270 for the last 800,000 years. Homo Sapiens Sapiens is only about 200,000 years old, so this is the only climate we’ve ever known. Starting in the late 1700s, human beings started behaving like a global bank of super-volcanoes, spewing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere faster than had ever occurred in the history of the earth. Hundreds of billions of metric tons of carbon dioxide, through the burning of massive amounts of coal, as well as petroleum and natural gas. Ordinarily, going from 270 ppm of CO2 to over 400 would take millions of years of heightened vulcanism.”**

Juan Cole\_Informed COMMENT

Top 5 ways Man-made Climate Change made Hurricane Harvey much Worse  
Aug. 28, 2017

Given the dismal futuristic scenario outlined above, two interconnected questions arise: Will *Homo sapiens* survive on Planet Earth? Here I will make the case that *Homo sapiens* will in all probability survive; however, only after prolonged pain and suffering of enormous proportion.

Also, the physical conditions allowing survival will be beyond our present imagination. I will also describe how this pain and suffering will bring on change and how that change necessarily will result in a planetary/cosmic interdependency far removed from the post Holocene interdependency that brought human civilization to the present religious philosophical economic political scientific industrial Age we live in today.

(The above 1972 World Bank report along with an immediate economic solution is presented in *Chapter 8 A Dangerous Zero Sum Game—The “Chicago School” vs the Planet, Part III and Part IV*)

Let us begin with a quote again from William Faulkner’s *The Sound and The Fury* as shown in the introduction.

**“I decline to accept the end of man. I refuse to accept this. I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among the creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance.”**

This pain and suffering is not new. Nor is the endurance as expressed by William Faulkner. As we moved forward past the hunter/gatherer stage, at each step of the way our species endured enormous pain and suffering. After that pain and suffering there followed adjustments in political, economic, social and religious thought and the institutions that supported that thought.

After disintegration, there always follows a “transition” leading to a new period. At first the transition moves slowly. Then it gathers steam and builds in intensity. There is never a sudden epiphany, no visitation from god or the gods above, no sudden global understanding that brings on sudden normalcy. The “histoire événementielle” as described in Part IV of this chapter is always in play.

As the ecological events here described begin to unfold and powerful planetary forces begin to cascade upon human civilization—tipping points being reached, we can conclude that the same sequence as described above will be taking place. In time, slowly and painfully change in the public mind will occur. After the damage has been done, rational thought and behavior will finally prevail, at least until the next round.

We are about to enter a period of change as a result of the pain and suffering that will come out of our present abuse of the planet. A short description of a 100/200 year scenario follows:

The first of many successive “tipping” points will have been reached. Others will rapidly follow. It will be too late to reverse the adverse forces set in motion. Drastic measures will need to be taken to sustain a limited population size (some estimates as low as one billion) on an increasingly inhospitable planet. Temperatures will be far higher than now. The coastal cities will all be gone. Acidification will have destroyed much of the fish and crustacean food stock in the oceans. Weather patterns will be extremely damaging to agricultural production. In order for humans to exist away from the harsh climatic and atmospheric conditions, self-contained enclosed structures such as Buckminster Fuller tetrahedron domes will need to be used on parts of the planet. Even space stations just above the earth housing humans capturing the Sun’s energy are a possibility although they remain in the realm of science fiction with inherent problems of their own. We must keep in mind the fact that biologically we are “earth creatures” gravitationally.

Along the way as the above scenario is unfolding, and after periods of enormous world-wide pain and suffering, a global body politic will find empowerment through a revision of collective world consciousness on an intellectual level. Groups of rational individuals will finally gain power and begin to institute meaningful change. This will be preceded by successive waves of anxiety reverberating throughout the general population. All levels of society will finally come to the realization that *Homo sapiens* may be facing its end. Ecological tipping points coming from oceans rising, food shortages and the buildup of effluent toxic residue affecting the biology of humans; as destructive they all are, will be the stimulus bringing on this new form of human consciousness and willingness to adapt and accept social, political, economic and philosophical/religious change. Expressed in metaphysical terms; there will be a change in human consciousness forging a new form of life perspective.

Just outlined is a capsule description of the transition to the end of the scenario. Reaching it will take time. Following is a time line description:

The obstinacy and lack of desire to understand being witnessed today will slowly give way to a world-wide understanding of both ecological and human planetary/cosmic reality. This will

begin to take place in 25/50 years. High speed internet will make this so. Almost every human being will be interconnected by way of the internet through visual imaging and simultaneous language translation. Scientists will be disseminating information detailing the ecological breakdown, offering “reality” explanations for the ecological disturbances. Realization that society must recognize the ecological forces working on the planet will be entering the public mind on a universal scale.

At first the “panic” stage will be slow in formation as a result of political leaders taking steps to maintain power by making their countries habitable for themselves and their constituents. A political/financial elite in each country will attempt to preserve their status quo by maintaining self-serving law and order internally through existing institutions. Ecological matters will be made important, but not all important. At the same time a broad range of internal fixes will come into play. International institutions will be taking a key role. As an example, the World Bank will be extending credits for food imports where there is starvation. On the global political level climate and other forms of ecological treaties will be signed. Humanitarian organizations will play an active role.

What is important to understand here is that all of these institutional and private “fixes” will be coming from organizations designed out of past institutional and cultural frameworks and as such they unfortunately will not be capable of solving the ecological problems in total; any more than would those frameworks from past ages such as a transplanted 3000 BCE Egyptian framework or a 400 BCE Greek framework or a 100 BCE Roman framework or a 1776 AD American framework. The point is that an entirely new societal architecture will be required.

Built into the above fabric of society, quasi political organizations will attempt to have their say. They will want to dominate the conversation in order to preempt the seemingly incompetent and ineffective state and also to protect their interests. They will use every means of coercion available to them to achieve their objectives including Orwellian methods such as marginalizing data in an attempt to exercise power over the masses. These organizations will include Army Brass, political groupings, unions, corporations and individuals with extreme privilege and wealth. In an attempt to preserve and protect their position in the face of the ecological downturn taking place, they will go to extraordinary ends to preserve their power in society. However;

more often than not, their objectives will not coincide with the public interest—or human survival—and they will ultimately fail, if for no other reason than that they will not be able to offer lasting solutions to the ecological catastrophe clearly and visibly unfolding before humanity.

As the suffering continues to build, there will be attempts in most countries—at least those not in complete chaos, to implement some form of new internal societal architecture. Spearheading this will be a new generation of enlightened individuals following new and radically advanced political, religious, social and economic formulae designed for sustainability. (Already in evidence throughout the world) After prolonged and bitter challenges from traditionalists and deniers of all sorts, these new movements country by country will at some stage take on a universal force of their own. Internet communication and educational institutions will play a large role.

The planet will see the beginning of the dominance of a new human ethic. It will come from an intellectual elite that will place value on human life lived in consonance with the energies of all life on the planet. It will remove value from any form of human behavior that destroys that value. This new ethic will begin to penetrate all human thought and action. At the end of the scenario, it will control the behavior of the body politic and thus determine the course of society. As seen in Chapter 9, it will do more than just add appendages to existing ethics and morality. Life—as well as death, will take on new meaning and purpose.

As this change is building, a new ecologically congruent authoritative leadership will be given extraordinary political power. The central organizing principal will be the setting out of rules of behavior that can assure the survival of human life on Planet Earth. Political, social and economic changes assuring survival that would not have been acceptable in years past will be readily accepted. Out of desperation there will be broad consensus.

All of this will take several hundred years of painful adjustment. In some countries there will be transition by way of democratic enlightened leadership; in others by way of top down beneficent authoritarianism. In some there will be revolution. Either way, out of the desperation some form of ecologically congruent authoritative leadership will be born. Change will occur more organically in the more advanced countries. In some others there will be total chaos.

Overpopulation and rapidly deteriorating living conditions will continue to persist throughout much of the world. In many countries there will be massive ongoing suffering. Billions will be caught in the storm. The suffering will extend from the non-privileged to the privileged.

Even those “privileged” who first gamed the system by isolating themselves and their families and friends from the contagion will be impacted by the scarcity of available resources. Additionally, outbursts of violent civil conflict will be reaching them wherever they are. This will even extend within isolated pockets in advanced countries such as the United States.

Many of the collective archetypal symbols; philosophical/religious, social, political, economic and other, grounded at the deepest level of human anthropological consciousness; symbols that had since the Sumerian period propelled humans over the many generations to think and to act as they did, that have now become antithetical to human survival, will begin to see their end, if for no reason other than from the collapse of those societies in which they have their presence. The fear of extinction will be blotting old archetypal symbols out of the collective psyche. A feeling of desperation will be driving them out.

At this stage in our discussion an important question must be addressed. Will this inevitably lead to repressive Orwellian police states or even a single world police state? The answer is No. Humans have come a long way intellectually. Cooperative action among a critical mass of the population will bring about a collective determination to foster needed changes without the violent authoritarian rule of yesteryear. At the same time one would be naïve to assume that order will come about without some forms of violent authoritarianism exercised over time in spasmodic fashion. Human innate behavior has always leaned toward this.

It must be acknowledged that even beneficent authoritarian change is fraught with the risk of failure. There is unpredictability in human affairs. The desire for more and more power is deeply ingrained in the human psyche; in combination with deception and egoistic behavior to attain and preserve that power. Sigmund Freud and his accurate analysis of human nature showed this to be true. History has proved Freud right. Given this observation, we can conclude that as environmental tipping points are reached and humanity enters into an age of ecological collapse, violent counterproductive patterns of egoistic authoritarian behavior will come to the surface. Those in authority following the path of non-violence and reason will again and again lose

control. Charismatic power-seeking individuals in nation states will take control. Counter forces will build and then erupt beyond the ability of existing beneficent authority to contain them. As this is occurring, the carnage throughout the planet could become very “ugly.” Cyber, atomic, chemical, radical religious warfare could make use of that word an understatement. We should note however that different countries and different regions of the world will be approaching the ecological collapse from a wide range of different perspectives, and the overall planetary trauma at hand will be forcing constructive solutions very broadly. At the same time, as noted above, the internet and educational facilities will be working to propagate constructive information. Additionally there will be an increasing educational level overall of the world population. International organizations also will be playing a positive role in this regard.

Therefore, there is a strong likelihood that out of the confusion a new form of global governance will evolve. Its primary function, as we see in much of governance today, will be to provide citizens with protection against themselves. (See following Gunnar Myrdal quote) From this we can hope for only one conclusion: William Faulker’s “**compassion and sacrifice and endurance**” will in the end prevail. Human strength and determination at some point along the way will trump chaos. People will come to understand that the past has been too horrific to be repeated.

This new form of governance will not find its power in the broadly based democratic process that had become a part of many past advanced Western civilizations. Nor will it follow any particular Eastern model. It will find its power within the confines of a sensitized public conversation among an informed powerful global intellectual elite centered on the care of mind, body and spirit of *Homo sapiens*, as well as all other life and all nonlife on the planet. This cadre will be heavily populated by scientists from all fields. Social theorists will assume a key role. Economic theory will take on an entirely new form. The physical sciences will become an all important part of the decision making process with the aim of assuring planetary preservation and continuation.

On a personal level, life for this elite group will necessarily be without special privilege, even to the extent of what can be described today as “monastic” or “ascetic” as we know the terms. This is an important point. We already have seen such behavior in isolated pockets of our civilization.



In support of the authority of this elite group, broad democratic representation rising out of the masses will find a voice; yet it will take a back seat to the final decisions of the authoritarian group. The non ruling human population on the planet will allow these empowered individuals to have broad powers, but only as long as they respect an understanding of determination of human survival. The masses will have come to understand that the stakes will be too high to return governance, as in the Western democratic model of the past to dominance of special interests among the economically and politically and religiously privileged determining what human life is and what it is not.

A new form of jurisprudence will arise based on penalties for crimes against Planet Earth and human society. The good of the planet and every life form on it will take precedence over all else. It will be grounded on an empirically formulated global ethic as outlined in *Chapter 9 Forging a New Global Ethic for Planetary Survival-“The Tragedy of the Commons.”* The long term survival and welfare of the human species will set the foundation for this jurisprudence. Crimes against misuse of the planet and harm to society will take on a far more clear definition than is seen today. These crimes will take center stage and make the individual personally responsible. To illustrate; expressed in today’s framework of today’s corporate structure, (The corporate form as we know it will cease to exist.) this new form of jurisprudence will take away protection of executives and employees who knowingly deceive the public and cause harm.

This reinvention of the powers of the state will grow out of past lessons learned. Ultimately, they will be accepted by a critical mass of the global population, if for no other reason than that people will see no other way to escape from the unfolding pain and suffering caused by a broken world ecological-and political/judicial-system. They will be powers giving meaning to the actions of the state in a way that transcends today’s democratic and judicial powers and directs humans to acknowledge that they live in a finite world and only by living in consonance with all of nature, and each other, can they survive. As such, the changes will be accepted universally.

Some of these futuristic ideas may seem improbable and even unthinkable to the reader in the context of the relative instability of today’s world and its political systems; however, it must be kept in mind that the veil of death will be fast closing in on all corners of human civilization and a critical mass of the population will have become very much aware of that frightening reality.

Also, one should recognize that abrupt shifts in political systems and social cohesion have occurred throughout history. For example, Alexander in his conquests forced cultural change on those in the Persian Empire. Communism in 1917 very quickly overwhelmed an ancient and solidified hierarchal Russian-as well as Chinese state. We must also keep in mind though that in almost all cases abrupt change was accompanied by extreme suffering. However, it should be recognized that change also can come without violence. Certainly the Swedish political model today is far different from what it was in that country one hundred years ago. That was accomplished without violence. With each new generation comes an advanced perspective and understanding of the world, at least among the educated. That was in fact the case with Swedish Social Democracy.

A few of Reinhold Niebuhr's thoughts from his book *Moral Man and Immoral Society* p 164 as noted in Larry Rasmussen's book; *Earth – Honoring Faith* p 94-98 can assist here as they shed some light on the difficulties that will be involved as the transition is taking place. Rasmussen quotes Niebuhr as follows:

**“There is no ethical force strong enough to place inner checks upon the use of power if its quantity is inordinate.”**

**“Evil and injustice flow from imbalances of power.”**

**“The disinherited have more of a right to fight for their (violated) rights than the powerful have to extend their (protected) rights.”**

**“The institutional power of privilege is often more covert than overt, giving it the appearance of nonviolence. This nurtures self-delusion on the part of those who wield such systematic power.”**

**“Powerful democratic nations frequently suffer from a certain naïveté and self-delusion. They fail to recognize the sure imperialism which flows from disproportions of power between more powerful nations and less powerful nations, whether domestic politics are democratic or not.”**

**“Religion normally intensifies power dynamics.”**

These quotes show that the road will not be a Swedish Social Democratic one. There will be enormous pain and suffering. However, when the obstacles here noted have been overcome and the transition is complete, the understanding of the role of each and every individual in society will be far elevated from what it is today. That role will be molded into a new understanding of common purpose; by which each person becomes an integral part of a planetary human societal

unity. This common purpose and planetary unity can be broadly defined as one where every person has the opportunity to achieve his or her societal goals within the confines/constraints of ecological planetary balance. This concept of balance will replace the western emphasis on the singularity and freedom of the human.

Nature will no longer be seen as the servant of the individual to be used and abused at will. An understanding of the “oneness” of all life on Planet Earth will take its place. Accordingly, many concepts built on our Western Abrahamic Greco-Roman past will be redefined. This will call for a new understanding and definition not only of the “personhood” of each human life but also the sacredness of all other life on the planet.

A redefined definition of common purpose and planetary unity will slowly be spreading throughout the human population. With this transformation will emerge belief in shared responsibility for broad planetary goals. A critical mass will come to realize that the more shared is this responsibility, the more stable becomes the society, and the greater the chance for the individual to achieve his or her “personhood.” Over time this understanding will become part of the fabric of governance. Out of it a human/planetary interdependency will arise, as well as a recognition of cosmic interdependency.

The following quotations from prominent thinkers place these observations into a 21<sup>st</sup> century context and show the challenges ahead. They also show the transition already beginning to take place.

**“The Scandinavian model was to institutionalize the states’ responsibility to protect people against themselves.”-Gunnar Myrdal**

**“There is no longer a place for the old style master narrative.”-Tony Jundt**

**“It is not sufficient that the state of affairs which we seek to promote should be better than the state of affairs that preceded it; it must be sufficiently better to make up for the evils of the transition.”-John Maynard Keynes**

The human species will finally have come to an understanding of a harsh reality: By its own actions and inactions it has brought on the beginning of its end. A lesson will have been learned, one forcing humans to accept the fact that their continued existence on the planet is dependent on

their ability to live in consonance with its natural rhythm, even as broken as that rhythm has become.

A metamorphosis of the human mind far surpassing others seen throughout human history will be occurring. It will be grounded on a deeper understanding of the complexity of human life as well as its planetary and cosmic purpose. Humans will see themselves as a form of intelligence able to participate in the unfolding mystery of the universe. Humanism in some form will open itself to new cosmic determinative thought. Many past philosophical and religious beliefs will be recast into this perspective. To quote, again from Larry Rasmussen's book; *Earth – Honoring Faith* p 134-135, where he quotes from an essay written by the Yale religious scholar Mary Evelyn Tucker:

**“Religions can advocate reverence for the Earth and its profound cosmological processes, respect for the Earth’s myriad species, an extension of ethics to include all life forms, restraint in the use of natural resources combined with support for effective alternative technologies and equitable redistribution of wealth...a broader acknowledgement of human responsibility for the continuity of life on our planet and help to renew the energies of hope for the transformative work to be done.”**

Clearly the religions of today have not done that. But in the future they can. To survive; any religion of the future will have to meet this test as spelled out by Mary Evelyn Tucker. If it cannot, it will be cast aside for the reason that it will lack adaptability to the new world order. As an example; a religion that defines heaven and earth in dualistic terms with the belief that heaven is in some other dimension, a tenet of Christian belief today, will not find a place in the new society. All such religious thinking will end. In its place will arise a new untarnished vision of cosmic universality and sanctity of all forms of life as being integral to that universality. All matter (substance) in the cosmos will be seen as having a complementary purpose. The desire of every person to find within him and her that complementary purpose will be the new religious force taking the place of the old. This vision of purpose will manifest itself in each person as an intense desire to fill his and her unique role—and share responsibility for the survival of not just his or her life but for all life on the planet.

There will be many who will resist. The dark side of human nature cannot suddenly be "lobotomized." Deviant behavior will continue as an interactive self-destructive part of the human psyche. And it will remain a serious social problem. However, the vast majority of

humans will learn to live their lives within a narrow band of acceptable behavior supported by rules designed to check their primitive impulses. The evolutionary drives that are the worst part of their nature and have led to consumptive abuse not only of the planet but also each other will be brought under control. As generations pass, these behavioral patterns will only be noticeable as random psychotic outbursts.

A new form of economics will take on an important role. It will not be like any form from the past; communist central planning or free-market laissez-faire. The resource-exploitive capital market system as it exists today will be transformed into a constrained algorithmic driven, yet incentive directed, market system emphasizing the equitable provision of both the material and psychological needs of all humanity. The ecological long term functionality of all the earth's resources will take on the highest priority. Today's energy intensive market driven consumerism will end. Croplands, grasslands, forests, fisheries and inorganic resources will be subject to strict surveillance and control so as to be able to meet human population needs while at the same time preventing exploitation.

As the environmental collapse becomes worse, past economic experiments such as the one that began with the Enlightenment and then the Industrial Revolution will be exposed for those parts that have become social as well as planetary failures. As an example; in the search for new economic theories, the concept of negative externalities in pricing will take on far broader meaning. Its meaning will be used to measure every human economic activity. Economic outcomes with negative social and/or ecological value will not be tolerated. The world will have learned the importance of making incorrect judgments for resource allocation. It will have learned that neither free-markets nor central planning can be trusted. It will have learned that every investment decision must lead to a socially and ecologically constructive outcome. Questions such as; is it delivering real worth to society and to the health of the planet will be intensely debated. The conclusions will determine the ultimate value and external cost of every good and service that enters the marketplace. Investment decisions that do not recognize negative externalities will not be tolerated, nor will speculation without social usefulness, nor will transactions that simply shift money and privilege around in the financial markets. An entirely new form of economic/monetary theory will emerge.

Population control will also play an important role. Family and end of life planning will assure a population size able to live within the balance of planetary sustainability.

Since many “tipping” points will already have been reached, the general population will have come to understand that as the end of the human species hangs in the balance and a return to the old way of thought is not an option, those who refuse to accept this and become a social and ecological threat to human civilization will need to be incarcerated or eliminated. And, individuals who are caught “cheating” the system will need to be removed from the system. Those with medically verified uncontrollable psychotic problems will need to be institutionalized.

Additionally, preventive wars against nations both failed and functioning that will not accept the new world order will be necessary.

There can be no compromises. The capacity of the human species to destroy the planet and its own existence on it will be well understood. Finally, after many years of denial, a new Age will have begun. Fear of extinction will drive humans to accept a new form of behavior.

We leave this part of the chapter on a cautionary note. The fact is; science has not been able to determine conclusively how far climatic tipping points could take us. Global temperatures could rise to 150 degrees Fahrenheit on vast areas of the planet and ocean waters could rise by 190/200 feet inundating land mass now inhabited by over half of the world’s population. The part of the chapter that follows; “Egyptian Reflections on our Future” in its end leaves the reader with a scenario that spells out this worst case scenario, using as metaphor the aircraft in which this author flew to Egypt and back. It also illustrates the power of religious clerics over people’s minds—in this case the Egyptian Temple priests. It is included to illustrate how we should keep our focus on the past as we move forward for clues as to how we can avoid destructive pitfalls.

The chapters after that one will set the foundation for a note of optimism in a spiritual/metaphysical sense. They single out certain positive aspects of past religious thought becoming a superposition of postmodern thought. They approach this by examining several of the non-canonical observations of Jesus of Nazareth as well as the writings of one of the most noted philosopher historians of our time, Richard Tarnas, and one of his prodigies, Keiron Le

Grice, both members of the faculty at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco.

## **Chapter # 4**

### **Human Civilization – The Future**

#### **Part XIV Egyptian reflections on our future**

***“If I came away with anything from this trip, it was that the Egyptians had thousands of years in front of them and we may have no more than another 200/300.”***

Concluding paragraph of this chapter

How much time do we have? Do we have enough to break away from those institutions that are working against our survival on this planet? My 2010 Egyptian trip gave me some insights.

Early on in the trip, I became aware that to fully understand our own history, we must first understand the more than five thousand years of Egypt's history and we must be able to sort out the differences and similarities. Ours' was influenced by a mind-frame that originated with the

beginning of the Roman domination. Egypt only experienced that influence late in its life; in the first century BCE; popularized in the movie about Julius Caesar, Mark Anthony and Cleopatra, although even before that with the Alexandrian conquest of 356-323 BCE it was influenced by early Greek thought. The important point here is that we need to recognize that the value system of Egypt before Alexander was very different from the Macedonian, Persian, Greek, Roman. It was a form of thought that extended back before then more than five thousand years.

In this chapter I will first set the stage by discussing the Roman/Greek origins of our own western civilization. Then I will move far back and compare it with that earlier Egyptian one.

Our own value system began and remains Roman at its core; worldly, secular and materialistic. The Roman one placed material self-gratification at the center of human desire. We see this today in our twenty-first century society. That Roman framework drove the western colonial powers into world conquest. As with the Roman, new lands were opened and resources exploited. This drive to conquer new lands set the standard for Western moral and ethical behavior. Almost all of our thought today can be traced to an emphasis of this Roman behaviorism. Also, as it was with the Romans, the competing forces in the marketplace are the lubricant and the brutality of competition the driver. As with the Romans, esoteric questions out of the metaphysical realm are cast aside and left to the philosophers and religionists.

In the fourth century Christianity had placed a socio/economic blessing on Roman society as defined by that society. In later years in Europe with the Enlightenment and then the Industrial Revolution, the idea of material accumulation and conquest helped to support that “blessing.” It can be seen in the enormous European cathedrals. Today in the US, we are witness to this in the message of the Christian mega churches. They say to their flock; “Think Positive, Get Rich. If Jesus could move a mountain, so can you.” It is no surprise that we see in America evangelical fundamentalist Christian voices so strongly in favor of capitalism and the industrial interests.

This was not the way the early Egyptians lived and thought. Their gods were gods of material abundance too, but of a different kind. For thousands of years the ram-headed creator god KHNOUM brought the Nile to flood. As it overflowed, the river would deposit its water and rich nutrients in the soil along its banks all the way from the first cataract over five hundred miles in the south to what is now Alexandria in the north. Then, the flood would recede leaving ample



moisture and nutrients behind to grow crops. This natural rhythm over these many years was as reliable as night and day-as were the gods the Egyptians venerated and worshiped.

We in our society do not have the sense of rhythm and continuity that the early Egyptians had. As explained above, our brains are of Roman origin. We run on a different track. Nevertheless, there are some likenesses that we share. I will now comment on these. I will begin with my impression of early Egypt from a “similarity” perspective. One monument illustrates this; namely my thoughts on the Great Pyramid of Cheops at Giza.

But first, let me go back again to the annual flooding of the Nile and the Egyptian god KHNOUM. The formula was a simple one; the priests told the people that if they worshiped and obeyed him-as well as all of the other gods so identified by those priests, they would have a good harvest; and if they did not, there would not be a good harvest. This had worked out exceedingly well for the priestly class over the thousands of years. It was also very good for the priests. Power was passed on through the family line. They lived very well. Also, they served as tax collectors for the Pharaoh.

But one very important question was left unanswered, and this brings me to an observation as to the similarities between the Egyptians and us. It concerns the Pyramid of Cheops on the Giza plateau. It was built over an approximately 20 year period ending around 2560 BCE in order to answer for Egyptians, and most importantly for the Pharaoh himself, the ultimate God question; is there an eternal life and if there is, how do we get there? This question of course had been in the Egyptian consciousness long before the quarrying of the first block of limestone at Giza, but the previous pyramid executions had all proved to be faulty. One way or another, they would self-destruct as a result of poor planning. Cheops was meant to give finality and perfection to the answer. The Pharaoh Khufu-also called Cheops, must have thought; “If I can make a perfect pyramid, the heavenly passage too will be perfect.”

Cheops became an enormous project. It is estimated that as many as 90,000 men in three month stints worked on it. The pharaoh even constructed a 157 foot long boat of cedar and buried it next to the pyramid to be used to transport him and his possessions across the waters and into the other world. The boat now sits beautifully restored in an air-controlled museum next to the pyramid.

I stood below the pyramid looking up at it. It is an overwhelming experience-it was the tallest building in the world before the construction of the Eiffel tower in Paris. I then climbed a third of the way up and entered the entrance to the burial chamber. (It is said Napoleon came out visibly ashen-my guess is it was from the cognac the night before.) For me; aside from a slight feeling of claustrophobia and a sweat from the interior high temperature and humidity, I emerged not as Napoleon did but with the thought that my initial impression of the pyramid had missed the point. Most writers only see it in terms of size, height, width, numbers of blocks, numbers of workers, and so on; in other words, not by the lasting power of its original spiritual significance, not as an attempt to answer the eternal "Heaven" question that had plagued those early Egyptians and continues to plague all humanity today.

We in the twenty-first century see ourselves as too sophisticated to fall for an ancient pyramid telling us how to get to heaven. But in the four thousand years since then have we really learned anything? Thinking about the pyramid and the level of theological thought among many Jews, Christians and Muslims now-as well as the level of theological thought in many of the other religions, I do not think we have come very far.

And this brings me to El Alamein, which I visited a week later on my way back to Cairo from Alexandria. Again I say; I do not think we have come very far. There, in the desert some of the greatest tank battles in human history were fought. The exact numbers of dead are not easily available-the nearest estimate is 30,000, but we do know that British forces totaled 230,000 men and the Axis forces 108,000. What now remains are diagrams of the battles, pictures of troops, old vehicles and a cemetery, all sitting quietly in the desert sun. As I walked through the museum and then out to the thousands of grave markers, I began to choke up. A discordant thread between the meaning of the Cheops pyramid and the graveyard at El Alamein began to form in my mind and I was overcome by a sense of sadness. At least Cheops had left the Egyptians with a positive answer to the question; how do we get to heaven? We cannot say the same for El Alamein. How do we get to Hell would be more likely.

My thoughts now turned to similarities between the Egyptian religious structure and our own. The priestly class had a strong hold on Egyptian society. The same with our society. The priestly class had the answer as to how to get to Heaven. The same with our society. Our Priests and

Popes and Rabbis and Imams claim they have the secret that can transport us into an eternal dimension.

Our guide was an Egyptian Coptic Christian. They make up 10-20% of the Egyptian population. They date back to the beginnings of Christianity. The Coptic Christians suffered from Roman domination. Now they are suffering with Islam as the dominant religion in Egypt. We talked about the Akhenaten story.

The story is as follows: Over one thousand years after Cheops there appeared the monotheist Pharaoh Akhenaten (1350-1334 BCE), known before the fifth year of his reign as Amenhotep IV, also spelled; Echnaton, Ikhnaton and Khuenaten. He had rejected the priestly God AMON, as well as all others in favor of one eternal Sun God, ATEN. (more precisely defined in contemporary terms as the one monotheistic source of all life sustaining energy) Along with his beautiful commoner bride Nefertiti, Akhenaten conveniently moved across the Nile River to the western desert at Tell-el-Amarna where he and his followers built a small city. He had challenged over 2000 years of multiple god worship on which the power of the priestly class rested its power. But, in the end his blasphemy could not escape their clutches. Upon his death-as Egyptologists have speculated-the priests murdered his young son and heir, Tutankhamen, gave the son a quick burial (My visit to his tomb in The Valley of the Kings confirmed this quickness), and then reinstating their many ancient gods, took back the power.

There is a lesson here. It is the same in all societies; the priestly class, once it has power, always acts in its own interest to preserve that power. We saw it in Jerusalem when the Jewish temple priests and Sadducees and Pharisees turned against Jesus. We saw it at the Council of Nicaea when the Christian Bishops codified the Christian religion to suit their own agenda and then declared all other views of Jesus' teaching heretical.

Is there another "Egyptian" lesson for us here? Yes there is. Unless we as a society can break the hold on us of institutionalized religion, whether Jewish, Christian or Muslim, or other, and refocus our attention-as Akhenaten attempted and ultimately failed to do, toward the transcendent cosmic dimension which is the source of all energy and in which we find our existence-again as Akhenaten had tried to do, our species will stay frozen in past aberrant behavior. Rabbis, Priests, Popes, Pastors, Imams urgently need to understand this. Their vice-like

inward hold is diverting our attention away from the greatest challenge now facing humanity; one arising from the desecration of that transcendent cosmic power's greatest gift to us; our planet. On this trip I was reminded again and again as I witnessed:

*ton by ton of CO2 being spewed into our atmosphere as I flew to Cairo and then drove in our van through the traffic jams in the streets of the cities of Egypt, crowded with automobiles, choked in exhaust, and then as I flew back to New York in our giant aircraft leaving more tons of CO2 in its trail, and as I now sit here in North Carolina in the quiet of my air-conditioned home as it sucks in electric power from antiquated coal fired power plants across the border in Tennessee.*

If I came away with anything from the trip, it was that the Egyptians had thousands of years in front of them and we may have no more than another 100/200. As the earth's temperatures in vast areas reach into the mid 100's F-which is the limit for human life, will our only legacy be the emptiness of the great pyramid of Cheops and the wind swept loneliness of the grave markers at El Alamein-and the hulk of the giant aircraft in which I flew, no longer spewing CO2 into the ecosphere, scrapped, and sitting in some desert somewhere waiting to be broken down into parts for geodesic domes or other forms of containers that will allow future generations to survive within them on our overheated planet ?

## **Chapter # 5**

### **A Clue from the Monastery at Nag Hammadi**

***Beyond Belief, The Secret Gospel of Thomas***

***The Gnostic Gospels***

***The Origin of Satan***

Elaine Pagels PhD, Department of Religion, Princeton University, scholar on early Christianity. Nominated for Pulitzer Prize.

***The Nag Hammadi Library in English***

## ***The Gospel of Jesus***

James M Robinson, Ph.D, Leader, Coptic translator, Nag Hammadi discovery

The Gospel of Thomas was found in Upper Egypt at Nag Hammadi in 1945. It was likely buried around the fourth century A.D. when the then Roman church declared it heretical. That Gospel is quoted throughout this book. The monks in the monastery had placed it, along with other “heretical” and “schismatic” writings, in a large clay jar and buried the jar in the side of a nearby cliff. That monastery was a part of the Christian Coptic community in Egypt. Members were monastic descendants of the original followers of Jesus who had gone to Egypt shortly after his death. It was written in Egyptian Coptic, a form of late Egyptian writing using Greek lettering. The writing form had become common after Alexander’s conquest three centuries before the Common Era. The Gospel of Thomas there discovered was not the original, but a copy of prior versions. By analyzing the Coptic imagery in the Greek lettering, many scholars have concluded that it may have been written shortly after the death of Jesus and could therefore possibly be the earliest gospel on record, having preceded the canonical gospels we now see in the Catholic and Protestant Bibles. It should however be noted here that there is debate among scholars as to whether it could have originated 200 years later. Nevertheless, there is no question that much of it challenges Roman Catholic as well as later Protestant orthodoxy. It can therefore be described as “heterodox,” that is different and even opposed to the established point of view of fourth century Roman Christian orthodoxy, an orthodoxy that laid the foundation for most of Christianity today.

After reading the above authors, meeting one and corresponding with the other and attending several Westar seminars covering the Nag Hammadi discovery, I posted the following to my Web Site:

A young Jewish wisdom teacher and healer from a remote province of the Roman Empire, one racked by royal ineptitude (reign of the Herod and his sons), temple corruption, religious dissension, sharp ethnic hatred and brutality, appeared on the scene. He told his followers that ***The Kingdom of God*** is not up in the Heavens, it here on Earth, both inside and outside of us. He said; we just don’t see it.

We will now examine at some depth in the following chapters the sayings of Jesus as recorded in that gospel. It is a gospel that contradicts much of present day Judeo/Christian/Islamic doctrinal thought as to our relationship to the planet, the image of God and the persona of Jesus. The eastern mysticism and metaphysics expressed dominates the argument that unless Jews, Christians and Muslims are able to rethink their religions in a Thomas gospel way; our species may only have a few centuries before it will face self-imposed extinction.

Several years ago with the research for my first book, *Holy War The Blood of Abraham*, I had become convinced that this early gospel held a secret that had been kept from Christianity by the Roman church for seventeen hundred years and now, after its discovery in 1945 was about to give us the knowledge we would need to face the greatest problem our species has ever faced; how we are to equate life and non-life on our planet within an understanding and consonance of the cosmic dimension at present and beyond.

We must understand that Nature as a communicative part of the cosmos was not a part of the thought process of his Jewish world. The Torah and the law was. We live under this same influence today. We are separated from Nature.

I will begin with a remark made by a Christian friend when I told him my butterfly story described below. His response was; "Don't be silly, insects can't communicate!" I thought; what else would one expect? He is a traditional Christian.

First to my childhood, I was told that it was up in the Heavens. (My grandfather was a Swedish Lutheran Minister) Now I know this is not true. I can see it in the sun's reflection on the leaves rustling in the wind outside of my mountain home. I can feel it on the summer rain blowing against my face. I can observe it in the spider weaving its web outside of my window. I can feel it in the worship service when I partake in the Eucharist.

Last summer, I thought I saw it in a butterfly on a butterfly bush in the front garden. My mountain home was built in the Appalachian style. It has a front porch with rocking chairs facing that garden. Early one morning my wife and I were sitting in those chairs. There suddenly appeared a beautiful orange and black butterfly from the group that was feeding on one of the

butterfly bushes. It left the others and flew onto the porch, fluttering for a few seconds, inches from my face, just as I was talking about David Crisp.

David died over the winter. He had planted our beautiful garden two years before. I liked David. Everyone did. He was one of those huge bearded mountain men you think about when you picture the Smoky Mountains in Appalachia. He was what we call a “local.” The Crisp family name goes back many generations. I had given David my book *Holy War The Blood of Abraham* when he was working on the garden and we had talked a lot about God. I remember being taken back by the openness of his questions and by the depth of his belief. His Appalachian phrasing had allowed him to express himself so much better than I. That’s the last I saw of him. Over the winter the following year, with thirty or forty relatives around his bed, he died. One of them told me that as he was dying, David kept asking for the time. He waited until twelve noon, the same hour his wife had passed on the year before. Then, with a smile on his face, he stopped breathing.

All the butterflies that had been feeding on our bush were gone the next day. Since then I have wondered; was David Crisp saying goodbye to me, was he saying it was nice knowing you and Linda. I want both of you to enjoy your garden.

Many Progressive Christians today consider the exclusion of the Gospel of Thomas from the canon of the fourth century church to have been a grave mistake for it gives insight into the way humans are to think of the *Kingdom of God* as well as Jesus himself.

It challenges the idea of a separation between heaven and earth. It says that the *Kingdom of God* is all around us, but we just don’t see it. This idea is missing today from the established faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam in their present form. A discussion of this is very important. There are far reaching ecological ramifications as to how we are to view this planet and all the life and nonlife on it.

There is another big difference. In defiance of the canonical Gospel of John, it tells us that we do not save ourselves by belief in Jesus as our personal savior; we save ourselves by going through an inner search to find who we really are and what side we have chosen to be on. The implication here is that no ecclesiastical institution or declaration of faith can save us. Only we can save ourselves.

Many scholars believe that this is the reason the Gospel of Thomas was excluded from the canon by the Roman Christian council in the fourth century and declared heretical. If one could find the Kingdom within, there would then be no need for the creedal Christianity as expressed in John 3:16 with its requirement of the declaration of belief in Jesus as one's personal savior. There would be no need even to be a member of the Roman church.

The following quotation from Elaine Pagels' book; *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas* supports this.

**"I was amazed when I went back to the Gospel of John after reading Thomas, for Thomas and John clearly draw upon similar language and images, and both, apparently, begin with similar secret teaching. But John takes this teaching to mean something so different that I wondered whether John could have written his Gospel to refute what Thomas teaches.... I was finally convinced that this is what happened."**

We will now turn to several of the "sayings" of Jesus as they were recorded in the Gospel of Thomas. These sayings take on enormous importance as we try to understand our relationship to this planet and the cosmos. They speak to life and non-life, the material and the non-material. As we think about them, we must remember that they were set in writing long before the formation of the Christian Church in Rome, possibly—as noted above, as long as three hundred years. Also, that the Gospel of Thomas' sayings were originally in Aramaic, then translated into Coptic and then in the 20<sup>th</sup> century into English; so the meanings of the words were specific to an early first century period. Suffice it to say; expressions such as "Kingdom of God" cannot and should not be taken literally. In our modern age, expressions like "cosmic dimension", "other dimension", "divine intelligence", "implicate order" and "creative power" better express their meaning. Therefore, we must see the words of Jesus as first century observations having a value that spoke to those around him at that time and in that era, and speak to us today as universal truths.

Here are five sayings from the Gospel of Thomas that deal with our relationship to the physical world that surrounds us. Jesus says to Thomas:

**(3) *The Kingdom is in inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize who you are.***



**(17) *I shall give you what no eye has seen and what no ear has heard and what no hand has touched and what has never occurred to the human mind.***

**(51) *What you look forward to has already come, but you do not recognize it.***

**(77) *I am the light that is over all things. I am all: from me all came forth, and to me all attained. Split a piece of wood; I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there.***

**(113) *His disciples said to him; When will the kingdom come? Jesus replied; it will not come by watching for it. It will not be said, look, here or Look, there! Rather, the Father's kingdom is spread out upon the earth, and people don't see it.***

These words of Jesus showed heaven and earth not separate and distinct from each other. It is interesting to observe just how modern they are. Jesus viewed the material world around us – including ourselves, as nonmaterial. He also viewed our minds as nonmaterial. He said that our minds and our bodies, as well as the physical world surrounding them, are a part of an all-encompassing ***“Kingdom is inside of you, and outside of you.”***

The remainder of this chapter will focus on the path, according to the Gospel of Thomas one must take to enter this state of being. There are profound ecological implications for humanity here. Clearly we, as humans today, have not entered this state of being, or very few of us.

An important condition need be noted: Jesus said the transition for some will be painful. We see this in the following three sayings:

**(2) *When he finds, he will become troubled.***

**(58) *Blessed is the man who has suffered and has found life.***

**(69) *Blessed are they who have been persecuted within themselves. It is they who have truly come to know the father.***

To begin to understand the significance of the Nag Hammadi discovery and its Gospel of Thomas as a way to approach our ecological problems in the twenty-first century we must understand the meaning of Jesus' call for inner struggle. When Jesus says to Thomas: ***When he finds, he will become troubled***, Jesus was referring to the abandonment of false gods worshiped,

i.e., materialism, power, one's ego, etc., gods that remove a person from the experience of being at one with the dimension to which Jesus refers as *the Kingdom of God*.

The words *when he finds* refers to finding *The Kingdom* not in some distant place in the sky, but within ourselves and all that is around us. It should be noted that this same search is often found in some of the mystical eastern religions as well as in some forms of ascetic Abrahamic belief. The individual is transported into an inner/outer dimension. The earthly physical "self" is abandoned.

Jesus makes it very clear that for many it will not be easy to become at one with this *Kingdom of God ... spread out upon the earth...* He says: *Blessed is the man who has suffered and has found life* and *Blessed are they who have been persecuted within themselves*. I would ask the reader to keep this inner struggle in mind for the remainder of this book. It is an urgent call to each of us.

Jesus was asking each of us to join in and be a part another dimensionality. Given the materialist and hedonistic society in which we live, it becomes obvious, as it was at the time of Jesus; that the pain for many will be harsh. So Jesus uses the words; *When he finds, he will become troubled*.

These words do not sit well in modern society. The very idea of *become* (ing) *troubled* brings discomfiture. We see this in the "who me worry" response among the many now being made aware of the needed lifestyle changes in order to avert ecological disaster. Any form of change in their lives that would force them to face recognition of ecological planetary reality is avoided.

An unforgiving planet, however, is demanding that we come face to face with this *he will become troubled* admonition of Jesus. Can you and I change? Can human society change? How? Again, we return to the Gospel of Thomas. Jesus is telling us that we cannot find *The Kingdom of God* until we have cast aside everything in this world that is taking us away from the "other dimensional" purpose of our lives. He is saying only then can we experience *the Kingdom of God ... spread out upon the earth*

I now ask you to take a huge visual leap; to imagine yourself as having turned away from those self-generated destructive forces that are destroying our planet. Imagine that a critical mass of

the public has also turned with you. World political power has entered into agreement on a new societal paradigm. All of humanity has gone through an inner search and experienced the pain associated with that search. People have turned their backs on the false gods of consumerism, egoism, greed and avarice that were distracting them. The world human population has been reduced to one to two billion enabling it to live in perfect union with *the Kingdom of God ... spread out upon the earth*. The air is pure. The oceans are pure. Species extinction has been arrested. Human evolution into higher and higher forms is taking its course. The same for all other species. In the words of Jesus to Thomas, we have found what is *inside* of us and what is *outside* of us. Suddenly society has come to realize; we spent thousands of years looking for *the Kingdom of God* up in the heavens, and it was not there at all. It was all along as Jesus told us *inside of you, and it is outside of you*. All Abrahamic ascension myths come to their end. God is no longer “up there.” Armageddon turns out to be no more than the result of a Freudian self-destructive psychosis. The meaning of the word “Holy Spirit” as Jesus originally defined it begins to make sense. We are at one here on Planet Earth with the eternal and the eternal is at one with us.

Can humanity live in consonance with this “Nature” Jesus talks about? Can the above scenario come to pass? Not without greater acceptance as to Jesus’ way to achieve it. Many would prefer to place the blame on a cosmic battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Others are too hedonistic to care. Others are just too stupid to understand. Others are too desperate to be concerned. Jesus identified our problem. None of us likes being *troubled*.

This chapter discussed a lost Christian gospel found near an ancient monastery at Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt. It showed how relevant the words of Jesus were to an understanding of the relationship between ourselves and the planet on which we live.

In the next chapter we will go back ten to thirty thousand years—and even possibly fifty before Nag Hammadi—to the caves in southern France where we will find the same understanding of “union” with the other dimension. Then we will transition forward to the twenty-first century and to two of the great thinkers of our age. Again we will find the same understanding. We will learn that no matter from the direction we approach the question of where it is; the *Kingdom of God* is here on earth, and it has been here from the very beginning. And it is now.

We will also learn that if there is an end to our species, we will be the ones who brought it upon ourselves, all because we would not look *within* and refused to be *troubled*. And if we are saved, it will be we who saved ourselves.

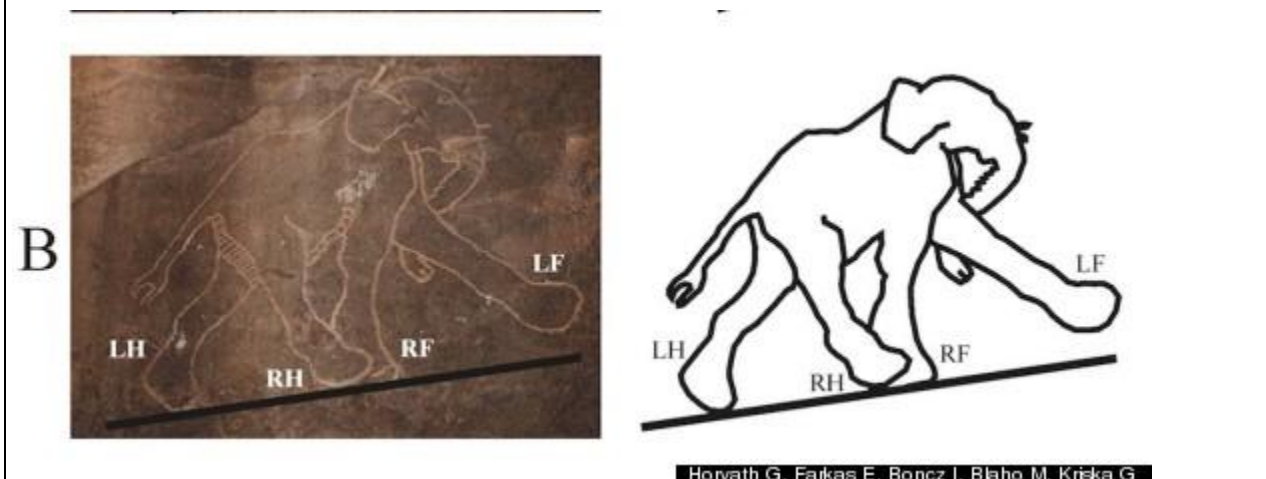
## Chapter # 6

### Back to Lascaux

#### Part I Co-Creation in the Dordogne

##### Cavemen Trump Modern Artists At Drawing Animals (PHOTOS)

LiveScience | By Stephanie Pappas | Posted: 12/06/2012 12:22 pm EST Updated: 12/06/2012 4:30 pm EST



**Paleolithic people living more than 10,000 years ago had a better artistic eye than modern painters and sculptures — at least when it came to watching how horses and other four-legged animals move.**

**A new analysis of 1,000 pieces of prehistoric and modern artwork finds that "cavemen," or people living during the upper Paleolithic period between 10,000 and 50,000 years ago, were more accurate in their depictions of four-legged animals walking than artists are today. While modern artists portray these animals walking incorrectly 57.9 percent of the time, prehistoric cave painters only made mistakes 46.2 percent of the time.**

In this book I have discussed the change in man's (women's) view of deity during the bronze/iron agricultural age; from a god or the gods being at one with nature to a god or god(s) being in a heavenly dimension apart from nature. This has been expressed using the words "horizontal" and "vertical." The position is taken that this vertical change in perspective and belief marked the beginning of the ecological planetary problems we are now facing. Over time, veneration of Nature moved to the rear, veneration of Planet Earth also. Domination of Nature moved to the fore. Now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century we find among large numbers of people throughout the world a "dichromatic" confusion over this definition. They ask; who, what is GOD? Where? Is GOD up there or down here? Jesus in his time was the product of a post bronze/iron agricultural age GOD up in the Heavens. Yet, as we can see from the Gospel of Thomas quotations in the in the previous chapter, he most clearly had not accepted the vertical Jewish view.

We will now go back in time and examine the beginning of the horizontal view, then the emergence of the vertical. The conscious "horizontal" view marked a turning point in early hominid history. *Homo erectus* after more than a million years of developing into *Homo sapiens* suddenly—at least in evolutionary time—began to demonstrate a higher level of intellect equal to that in our present day. *He (She)* progressed from decorating bones and shells and making spears and axes to the making of real art. In that art was the beginning of what we in this age call "spirituality." Also, it was an age that Jesus spoke to so eloquently when he said:

***The Kingdom is in inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize who you are.***

The Lascaux are among the most famous. (There are many others scattered throughout the area in France and Spain.) I was able to spend a full week with and a paleoanthropologist guide living in the Lascaux area. Having such a guide was absolutely necessary as most of the caves are closed to the general public. Lascaux was the first to close. The humidity arising from the breath of the thousands of visitors was creating beads of calcite on the walls. It is now the same with the others. According to my guide, in time they will all be closed to the general public. Fortunately, much of Lascaux has been reproduced in 3D in a stunning museum at nearby Les Eyzies. (A similar museum replication has opened for the Chauvet cave in France) I spent a day in the Les Eyzies museum with my guide and also with him was able to visit several caves that remain accessible.

Now to my overall impression: At the Les Eyzies museum and in the caves I visited I found myself looking back 36,000/10,000 years into my own hominid past. I learned that my ancestors, the early Cro-Magnon, were more than just copy artists. Over a period of ten, twenty, thirty thousand years before the Common Era they were creating an artistic treasure of enormous depth. It is said that even Picasso was taken by the cave walls at Lascaux. I also learned that these Cro-Magnon not only had an understanding of what we today call “religious experience,” but they also understood in their own way how to express it. I came away with the knowledge that the experience was in every way “horizontal.”

The discussion in this chapter will now center on these caves and a definition of what we in the twenty-first century call “religious experience.” As I gazed at the walls and ceilings of the many caves and saw the magnificent reproductions at the Les Eyzies museum, I became convinced that “horizontal god experience” did play a very overwhelming role. For possibly the first time in their evolutionary history *Homo sapiens* found themselves reaching beyond the everyday material world. I came to realize that the etchings were more than just art on cave walls. They were art that served an out-of-body purpose. The Cro-Magnon visiting the caves under the guidance of local Shamans were undergoing what we call a “religious experience.”

There could have been psychosomatic enhancements. Hallucinatory drugs may have played a role. What know today as psilocybin mushrooms were growing in the area and may have been used to heighten the out-of-body experience. It should be noted here that those same mushrooms are found at sites in Europe where later on some of the “Catholic” miracles are said to have occurred. One

example often cited not far from the caves described above is the apparition on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February in 1858 when Saint Bernadette Soubirous, a 14-year-old peasant girl, admitted to her mother that a "lady" (Blessed Virgin Mary) spoke to her in the cave of Massabielle in Lourdes.

Effects from such hallucinogens generally include euphoria, visual and mental images, transcendence, distorted sense of time, etc. This may be what was happening even then in the caves. Dr. James David Lewis-Williams, professor emeritus of cognitive archaeology at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, and highly respected authority in the field has argued this point. For further discussion see:

*Lone Survivor How We Came To Be The Only Humans On Earth by the noted paleoanthropologist Chris Stringer pp 155-141, 227-230*

For the Cro-Magnon in the caves, those with hallucinogens and those not, it was a religious experience aided by the shamans and expressed through a communication with the world around them. The animals so depicted on the cave walls were representational of that powerful natural "other."

An additional word about my "cave experience:" When I entered them, the walls were illuminated by neon lights. (Each section turned on by the guide as we moved through and then off as soon as we had passed.) In prehistoric times the caves were dark and cold and the only light shining on the ceilings and walls was from the white wicker in the small deer fat lamps these early humans had made from shallow indented animal bone spoons.

Now to a note I made attempting to capture these impressions It attempts to answer the question: Where did we all go so wrong?

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**Sometime in the dim past, at the caves in and around Lascaux, the first brush strokes were made. Cave painters began the great painting. Cave walls suddenly became the backdrop for the deepest reaches of the human mind. The magnificence of the cosmos was being revealed. For generation after generation people came from all around, and**

with spoon-like torches filled with white deer fat and brightly lit juniper wicks, gazed in awe at the mystery on the walls. Then time passed by, and the awesome scenes revealed on the cave walls was forgotten. With the passing of years, the brutal forces of nature sealed the caves. The awe was gone. The mystery was gone. But the curiosity did not die. In the twentieth century of our era people discovered the caves and returned to them.

Today, as we with our twenty-first century intellectual sophistication think of those caves, we ask ourselves; was it all simply a ruse by those cave painters to fool the primitive Cro-Magnon men and women and children living around them? Could this be the reason our modern minds are closed shut and we no longer experience that same awe? Or is it simply that we now know more about art and religion and the human mind than they did then? Or, should we blame those religions that followed, religions that turned the awe once felt so deeply in those caves into law; religious law? Or was it the great thinkers of our modern age like Copernicus and Galileo and Newton and then those after them from the “Enlightenment” rushing toward the conclusion that GOD was dead and that science could give us all of the answers. Is it those scientists now telling us that the awe those cave dwellers felt so strongly was no more than chemicals moving through their bloodstreams; perhaps taken from nearby mushrooms?

It was easy for the deterministic materialistic skeptics as well as all the other apologists to deride those cave paintings. For them—and for most of us too, the awe is now gone. The paintings are no more than artifacts from another age to be visited as we would visit any museum; to glimpse at the past.

In the West, during the period when they were forgotten, first our Temples, then our synagogues and then our churches and mosques had told us that GOD was not in those caves. He was elsewhere. A new meaning was given to GOD. So, with the passing of years the God revealed in those cave paintings became no more than a confusion of brush strokes laid one next to the other in no apparent order, a collage of primitive pretension, each stroke screaming on its own, a meaningless cacophony of sight.

For those from our modern era entering the caves; the subtle images rising out of the delicate chiaroscuro, cut in bas-relief and then brushed and blown onto the walls had therefore become epistemologically unrecognizable. Great art; we said yes, but of no



deep philosophical/theological value, certainly of no cosmic value leading to quantum conclusion.

We in our age were left alone with a God outside of the caves, buried in our scriptures and creeds, hidden in our synagogues, churches and mosques. No longer would we humans be able to gaze with the same deep awe as did the Cro-Magnon. For us, that revelation was gone; buried in a past age. No longer could we be satisfied with the natural simplicity of those cave images.

It was easy for the modern skeptics to be critical of this thing the early cave dwellers had come to call religion. But, that does not mean those skeptics won. Some of us were not about to give up. We would continue the search. We would go back and start with that awe felt by those who painted on the cave walls and those who went into the caves. We had a sense that what they saw all around them so long ago is still here among us. In some mysterious way it existed beyond Cro-Magnon's personhood then and it continues to exist beyond ours now.

Can we wipe the palette clean, go back to Lascaux and start all over again? Are we even able to do this? If not, why not? Can we, as they were, once again become co-creators with Nature? Will our modern civilization with its cultural and institutional codes of behavior allow us? The next part of this chapter shows this possibility.

## **Chapter # 6**

### **Back to Lascaux**

#### **Part II Richard Tarnas – Nature's unfolding truth**

**"A central implication of this worldview is that we are co-creators of a universe, biosphere, and culture of endlessly novel creativity." P 3**

The quote above from Stuart Kauffman will be examined in this chapter by bring in the writing of the twenty-first century philosopher, Richard Tarnas in his two books; *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas that Have Shaped Our World View* and *Cosmos and Psyche Intimations of a New World View*. When the first book was published in 1993 Harrison Sheppard in *The Hellenic Journal* described it as “A work of a genius...the most thrilling narrative of the West’s 3000-year odyssey in pursuit of truth accessible to a broad public of which this reviewer is aware.”

We will also compare his views with those of Jesus to Thomas in the Gospel of Thomas. This will show that the “religious” experience of “participation” in Nature has been the same over time from Lascaux to Jesus to Tarnas. Also, it will show that this is the understanding of a growing number of philosopher scientists who have abandoned Newtonian scientific certainty and accepted the likelihood of a far broader dimensional reality. Tarnas, like Jesus before him, has in a sense “wiped the palette clean.”

Richard Tarnas can be described as a postmodern secular humanist. *Cosmos and Psyche: Intimations of a New World View*, published in 2006, attest to his genius. He is not a religious person in the Western Hebraic Judeo/Christian sense or even Eastern sense. He is a philosopher/scientist. He is nevertheless deeply religious in that he recognizes a power within and beyond us. He acknowledges the same mystery felt by the cave dwellers at Lascaux. For him, it is the power of Nature revealing itself through our observation of it and interaction with it. This observation and interaction follows the admonition of Jesus to Thomas in the gospel of Thomas when Jesus tells Thomas; ***the Kingdom is inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize who you are.***

In this chapter we will see that this ***Kingdom*** Jesus talked about is the same as the ***Nature*** Richard Tarnas writes about. Jesus described it as being ***inside of you, and outside of you.*** Tarnas describes it as **nature’s unfolding truth (which) emerges only with the active**

**participation of the human mind.** What Jesus talked about and what Tarnas writes about are the same. What the cave dwellers at Lascaux experienced was the same.

It is important for us to understand that this bringing of **nature's unfolding truth** (Tarnas) *inside of you, and outside of you* (Jesus) does not come simply by declaration. It entails more than faith or creed. Nor does it come from a spiritual "high" or a hymn or the reading of the Bible or Koran. Nor does it come from a "born again" experience where the person can simply believe as the canonical Gospel of John would have it that *whosoever believes in him (Jesus Christ) shall have everlasting life.* (John 3:16) Nor does it come from any other declarative religious statement of the other Hebraic religions. It comes from an inner dimensional participatory experience growing out of the same awe felt by the Lascaux cavemen and women and their children when they entered the caves. Expressed in twenty-first century metaphysical terms; it comes from our awareness of the Cosmos and our uniqueness in being able to observe and be a part of it.

To be aware of **nature's unfolding truth**, Tarnas calls for us to **participate**. He tells us that awareness comes from this **participation**. It is the same **participation** that Jesus called for when he said to Thomas: *When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize who you are.*

Below are several quotes from *The Passion of the Western Mind*, p 434-435, that speak to this:

(The underlined headings captioning the quotes are this author's.)

### Need for participation

**"... nature's unfolding truth emerges only with the active participation of the human mind."**

### Nature's truth

**"... nature's truth realizes itself within and through the human mind."**

### Need for Cognition

“... it (Nature) comes into being through the very act of human cognition.”

### Need for inner life

“A developed inner life is ...indispensable for cognition.”

### Need for Imagination

“... from within its own depths the imagination directly contacts the creative process within nature, realizes that process within itself, and brings nature’s reality to conscious expression.”

All taken together, we can see that these observations of Tarnas follow closely the admonition of Jesus to Thomas when he said:

***(3) The Kingdom of God is inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize who you are.***

Also, we can see that it is the same experience those at Lascaux and in the caves around were experiencing and those going through the caves were experiencing. Again, the key word here is **participation** and the idea that this **participation** need be **participation** with what is inside of us and outside of us. The word **participation** assumes the inclusion of a dimension beyond.

Jesus and the Shamans were saying the same. Richard Tarnas today is saying the same. As was David Bohm, the physicist discussed at length in this book. They were/are all referring to what is now described as our lives being integral to an “implicate order.” (Expression coined by Bohm) They all expressed the idea of the need for our integration into this order as opposed to our defiance of it. Clearly our current abuse of this planet and our mindset overall in this century is a defiance of it.”

The remaining chapters of this book will continue to give definition to the words “implicate order” and what the future may hold for our species if it does not become a part of this order.

But first, here are a number of observations taken from Richard Tarnas’ first book. I will add my own observations along the way. For this purpose I have established a number of captions that

describe in a general sense the overlapping of our observations—and I presume many others in the world today.

### **At one with Nature**

Tarnas suggests here a far more complex view of Nature (spelled here with a capital N) than was recognized by the Hebrew Bible and then Christianity and Islam. It is a far more complex view than is recognized today by most of humanity. In the Hebrew Bible man was severed from the perfection of GOD's creation; Nature. Adam and Eve were expelled from *The Garden of Eden* into a hostile environment; Nature. At that moment man was given dominion over Nature, but forced to live in alienation from it. Tarnas is offering a postmodern view that contradicts this biblical view. He is saying that we must abandon the Abrahamic view of Nature. He is also implying that if we do not, we will not be able to participate with and be a part of it.

Tarnas sees the human mind not above or below Nature, but integral to its other dimensional reality. He sees the human mind as more than just a junction point between our physical selves and the comprehension of another dimension. He sees the mind both within and outside of this other dimension.

In the beginning of our organic development there was no alienation from Nature. We were a part of it and it was a part of us. The same today for the bee or spider or dolphin or oak tree or mushroom. It is only in our recent hominid history that we have purposefully become alienated from it. Each of us at every moment inherently wants to return to being in union with it. We so-called "Moderns" want to exist in the eternality of its presence. We live our lives in search of this other dimensional reality.

Tarnas is saying that the spirit of Nature reveals its own order through the human mind. Examples are the bursts of knowledge we have seen in the past from great geniuses such as Buddha, Moses, Socrates, Plato, Jesus and Einstein. Through them universal knowledge that is a part of Nature was revealed. This is being revealed with many great thinkers today. What is important to understand is that this knowledge did not originate with these individuals, it always existed. They were only the observers of this knowledge.

It is a knowledge that has existed from a source far more complex than we can understand. This is also true with music and other artistic forms of expression. For Beethoven and Einstein; music in the case of one and relativity theory in the case of the other, each universal was revealed by way of an unfolding of the human mind. It is this author's view that the same can be said of all great religious and philosophical thinkers through history; and many others without such prominence as they searched the depths of their imagination. Suddenly, there emerged a truth. These truths are constantly unfolding all around us. They have always been there. The distractions of this world and our stubbornness to change our traditional ways of thinking prevent us from seeing them.

### **To be at one with ultimate reality**

Tarnas says that the relationship of the human mind with Nature must be *participatory*. This is the same relationship to which Thomas refers in his Gospel. The Thomas archetype fits into the Tarnas archetype. Jesus tells Thomas how the searcher can become at one with the heavenly dimension. Tarnas tells us how we can be at one with Nature. We can in effect see that they both are talking about the same connectivity to the same ultimate reality.

### **No gain without pain**

Jesus tells Thomas that for many the search will be *painful*. He is referring to the need for each of us to decide the ultimate purpose of our lives, and then to choose sides, to give up the false gods we have chosen to follow; those gods we have allowed to define the way we think and the way we act, the way we define our needs and desires. This is most visible in the industrialized world of today, a world living a high consumption anti-environmental "me first" life-style. It is a life-style that leads to an existence where any kind of psychological inner soul searching, because of the pain entailed in giving up what has been taken for granted, is avoided whenever possible. The twenty-first century motto for America as well as the other advanced industrialized portions of the world has become not "no gain without pain" but "gain without pain."

This "inner search" way of approaching GOD spoken by Jesus to Thomas and the modern twenty-first century secular "inner search" way of approaching NATURE/GOD presented by Tarnas are not the same as the way of approaching GOD followed by large segments of

Christianity. This may be the reason that this group has been so slow to recognize the importance of an environmental consciousness. For these Christians, most notably in American, only belief is the requirement; belief in Jesus as one's personal savior. Islam also has shown very little environmental interest. It too makes the choice easy. In Islam, a declaration of belief is all that is necessary. These are religions that ask us to "believe" in their God—in the case of Christianity, Jesus as the Christ, but not to become a part of Him. They keep us separated from GOD's creation!

We should note here that it is the belief of all three of the religions of Abraham that at *the end of times* their God will destroy that creation.

Except for esoteric mystical fringe elements in these religions, GOD is kept at a distance in some other place and time. Life can go on as long as His laws are followed according to the letter. Adherents to these faiths enjoy keeping their God at a distance. It allows them to place emphasis on the material world in which they so comfortably live. Then they can, within the bounds of social as well as religious convention and without guilt, grab as much of it as possible for themselves. Whatever guilt they do have toward those who are less fortunate, those left by the wayside, can be assuaged by their demonstration of personal piety or selective charity. They turn their backs on the GOD Jesus talked about to Thomas. This Jesus-Thomas GOD is a GOD demanding an abandonment of all materialistic desire. Jesus during his ministry was openly critical of the wealthy. He was non secular. Again and again he pointed out to his followers that material desires separate us from the dimension that is GOD's.

### **The struggle for meaning and connectivity**

This new way of viewing GOD described by Jesus to Thomas and then in this generation by Tarnas has come to us after a long and painful religious and philosophical struggle for the meaning of human existence and the means to its connectivity with the GOD dimension within and beyond. With the beginning of the bronze/iron agricultural age came Samarian and Egyptian thought. That ultimately led to Christian thought which became an amalgamation of Hebraic and Greek classical thought. It, in various forms, then proceeded through to the later Roman period and into the Medieval Period, then the Renaissance, and then on to our Modern Age. The modern

Western World with all its scientific and other Darwinian belief, however, “then” froze history where it had been. The dualistic belief of GOD and man being in separate places held firm.

### **Eastern religious thought**

At this juncture we will turn momentarily to Eastern religious thought. In recent years it has developed into an important part of an emerging Western view. There are similarities with the teachings of Jesus as revealed in the Gospel of Thomas. It should be noted that Eastern religious thought may have come to Jesus by way of Roman influence during the so called “lost years” of his life prior to his ministry. Rome was a cauldron of Greek philosophical thought, which had much of its origins in the East. This thought was very much alive in the geographic area where Jesus lived. The intellectual language of the day in this area was Greek. Greek classical thought dominated Roman thought. In Jesus’ time there was a stark contrast between Hebraic thought and Greco-Roman-Eastern thought. Except for Kabbalah, which appeared many centuries later, (Some say even at that time) it remains a contrast that exists between Judaism and Christianity to this day. With Judaism, man does not participate with God; man exists apart from God. \

### **Man and God participatory symbiosis**

With much of Eastern-Greco thought there is an understanding that extends beyond the earthly dimension. It is entered through inner reflection. (An expression variously defined over the years as “Gnosis”) Richard Tarnas gives this his modern interpretation with the words; **nature’s unfolding truth emerges only with the active participation of the human mind**. Here he is telling us that we can be a participant in the Cosmos/Nature narrative. The word “participant” with all its implications must however be understood. Nature remains the dominant force. Man can only join in the process.

And for those religious thinkers who believe that the future can be changed through ritual—seen in primitive religions, for example rain dances, etc.—and pleading or negotiating with Nature, the words of modern philosophers like Richard Tarnas are a rejoinder. Belief in a God who directs Nature and responds to our entreaties can be a dangerous illusion.

“Nature’s unfolding truth” extends far deeper. A way to look at this is to visualize in theatrical terms many performances going on at every moment and we the observer being given the



opportunity to join any one of them. Shakespeare hinted at this when he wrote, “All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.” Shakespeare is telling us that we are a part of a performance. What he is not explicitly saying is that we have a choice as to which performance we want to join. The meaning of Shakespeare’s words can be extended in a cosmic sense into the underlying meaning of each of our lives as we play out our roles. Another way to look at this is by way of the following metaphor. We as sculptors are at every moment of our lives shaping a marble block into what it is possible to become, turning that block into *nature’s unfolding truth* (Tarnas). As we carve that block, it *emerges only with the active participation of the human (our) mind* (Tarnas). The sculpture as piece of art then at some stage emerges as nature’s unfolding truth. An example is Michelangelo’s David. It began as a marble block. The end product was not a block of marble but the statue of a man. But it had even become more than that. It had become an expression of the eternal meaning of “man,” in this case not just Renaissance man but all man in all of his physical and intellectual strength and beauty. In the meaning of these two metaphors; the player on the stage and the sculptor sculpting the statue, we find an ongoing narrative, one that gives direction and purpose to our lives on this planet and in the cosmos itself. It is a direction that opens us to our “raison d’etre” as we participate in its direction.

#### **Author’s Note:**

**This author considers the notion held by many religionists that through God’s intervention our environmental problems can be solved by praying and they will then go away. If the environment takes on a downward spiral, this God of theirs will not come to their rescue. The above statements support this author’s position by challenging, not necessarily religious belief in general, but interpretation by many religionists. Those interested in this subject should read Ervin Laszlo’s book; *Science and the Akashic Field An Integral Theory of Everything*, Rochester, Vermont, Inner Traditions, 2004. Laszlo discusses what he calls the coherent cosmic field. The book is described by Deepak Chopra as; “The most brilliant, comprehensive, and intellectually satisfying integral theory of everything that I have ever read....transcends the vision of Darwin, Newton, Einstein, the quantum pioneers, and many other scientific giants of history.”**

#### **Forfeiture**

Without a change in human consciousness, there is a high probability that the human species will, in this millennium, forfeit the most precious gift ever to be bestowed on any life form since

the formation of the universe, a gift that possibly will never be seen again. It is the gift of being human. Although there is the possibility that a similar gift will be given to some other form of life that may in time evolve on this planet after ecological balance is again achieved, there can be no certainty of this.

### **Religious Fundamentalism versus Nature**

Humanity is being asked to find solutions not by way of ancient religious beliefs, but by way of the construction of a new God/Nature/Cosmos paradigm based on a new ethic. This ethic is discussed in some detail in *Chapter 9 Forging a New Global Ethic for Planetary Survival “The Tragedy of the Commons”* It must be one based on the new reality outlined in that chapter. The new paradigm most certainly will borrow from the religions of the past, but it cannot be ruled by them. As discussed at some length in this book, the search for answers is not now coming from the religions that grew out of the Abrahamic traditions.

### **Tepid response**

World response to the changes called for remains tepid. Impending ecological dangers are only voiced by a handful of academics, international organizations, political leaders, private citizens; all in an attempt to penetrate public consciousness and make headway. But a 21<sup>st</sup> century “Impulse Society” refuses to listen. Paul Roberts’ in his book *The Impulse Society, America in the Age of Instant Gratification* describes it well as shallowness of thought in America. This also describes thought today throughout the world. We have become a secular “me me” global “impulse” society. Only a change in the universal mind can solve the “Tepid Response” problem. The obstacles are enormous. Opposing change is a Capital Market system with the prime objective of rapacious consumption and the stoking of it through advertising by penetration of the human mind. Every psychological trick is being used to attain this end. The humanistic welfare of the individual is of secondary concern or no concern at all! For managers and owners of companies, only bonuses and the bottom line count. Winning has become the new ethic. The damage to society be damned. Lacking is a unity of universal consciousness that could lead to a groundswell of public concern. On a planet facing dangerous ecological consequences arising from the exhaustion of resources, now becoming clearly apparent, we only see action taken in isolated pockets of society; here and there a march, a speech, a conference, then a TV interview

with a scientist. Most political leaders carefully step aside in order to protect careers under the control of special interests, paying lip service and no more. As a result, decisive action when taken is sporadic. Nowhere do we see a march on the Bastille; only fitful demonstrations here and there. And as for the religious leaders, most remain silent, fixated on ancient scripture and doctrine. In America, the far right of the political spectrum—heavily influenced by evangelical fundamentalist Christian apocalyptic thought, even mocks those scientists who point to the coming contagion. For them it is all in God’s hands. As this is going on, the general public, religious and not, well satisfied with its hedonistic pleasures remains silent. Greed has become the overlay of the new world religion. All of this allows Capital Markets to operate with minimal restraint; like the Titanic at “Full Speed Ahead.”

The result is a rapacious degradation of our precious planet at an accelerating pace; all leading in the near future to a six to eight foot rise in sea level, rapid acidification of the oceans, species extinction, violent and destructive weather changes, sinking aquifer levels—and the list goes on?

### **Saving humanity from itself**

At this point in history, only a breakthrough in human consciousness can save humanity. As Paul Tarnas writes in his book, what is sorely needed is:

**“From within its own depths the imagination directly contacts the creative process within nature, realizes that process within itself, and brings nature’s reality to conscious expression.”**

Is a breakthrough of consciousness into **“nature’s reality”** possible? If it is, will it be powerful enough to induce us to change and to give up much of what we now take for granted? What sort of human existence will we find on the other side of this breakthrough? And, once we find it, can it be brought into **“conscious expression”**?

These are not esoteric questions only for intellectual debate. They are real. They are the most important of our time. We are facing the possibility of the death of modern man. Can the West—and the Islamic East—shatter their most sacred beliefs about themselves and grasp this larger reality? Can all other world religions and cultures do the same? This is the question human civilization should be grappling with at this time, but is not.

### **The long awaited paradigm shift**

As discussed in a previous chapter, a broad public realization of the ecological possibility of a painful end to the human species will in all probability at some point in time provide the critical mass needed to trigger a movement towards a paradigm shift that can propel humanity past this age and into the next one. This could trigger a move toward unitary consciousness of a more complex kind than that offered up so far by human civilization. But the ecological damage will have been beyond the present human imagination.

### **The absence of a solution**

This stage of our discussion calls for us to address the questions: What if there is no such thing as a new paradigm to replace the old? What if there is no metamorphosis? What if the glimmers of a new paradigm fade as quickly as they come? Is it possible that no amount of self-discernment can save us? We know from extensive psychological research that presenting frightening scenarios to large numbers of people can tend not toward cooperation, unity, empowerment, hope, creativity and collective action but toward mass fatalism, paralysis and individualistic survivalist determination. We may already be seeing this as the ecological breakdown edges forward. What if we are stuck in the paradigm we now have, and there is no way out?

In our current era we have no past models to go by. If we examine the record of the western “isms” from our recent past, we can see how easy it is to be deceived into thinking there is a final economic and political answer.

## **Chapter # 7**

### **The Sumerian Problem**

#### **Part I Scripture**

***And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."***

Genesis 1 (English Standard Version)

***Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"***

Genesis 4 (New International Version)

***Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"***

***The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."***

***Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."***

Luke 10:25-37 (New International Version)

As we saw in the paintings at Lascaux; with the dawn of human consciousness religious experience on cave walls came into being. By way of artistic expression, Nature outside of the caves was being transformed into transcendent god-experience in the caves. This chapter will deal with that transcendent god-experience in the era after the Lascaux period, commonly known as our Axial Age and more recently the Anthropocene. It is the Age in which we now find our existence.

It will show that we need to carefully review the ideas set in motion at the beginning of our Age. Here it will point out the inadequacy of three biblical verses that illustrate this point.

Our Age began in Samaria—3500-1900 BCE—a city state between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in a city called Sumer. Its god was Anu who was the father of all the gods and lord of heaven. It was here that the Torah had its beginning. Religious experience was to take a form far removed from that of the Lascaux cave dwellers. In this new age, God belief took on the mythical structure that we understand today. Also, it incorporated a belief system and ethical law that became the foundation of our Judeo/Christian/Islamic religions. That structure to one degree or another dominates most of world civilization today. Samarian belief became associated with the belief that we exist not as equals but in an inferior state under the power and control of a heavenly (Sky) god above Planet Earth. This dualistic interpretation of heaven and earth abrogated the former hunter/gatherer Lascaux transcendental Nature belief. Nature moved to the rear of human consciousness.

The move from the horizontal Nature view to vertical God view was the outcome of a fast emerging agrarian era. With it Nature lost the relevance it once had. However, Nature was not left without status. In the Hebrew Bible God told man he was superior to Nature and He put Nature under man's control. "Dominion" is the word used in scripture. Yet, there was the implication of "stewardship" by man; a word commonly used today. (The word "stewardship" does not in fact appear in Genesis, "Dominion" does.) So Nature and man were no longer interactive equals as they had been at Lascaux and before Lascaux. A hierarchical formula was established. Man was now above Nature. And God was now above both. He still had the final say. He could bring floods and famines.

Now a general observation about Judaism and the Hebrew Bible: The greatness of Judaism among all of the religions of the time is to be seen in the depth of its exploration into the human condition as it advanced into the new Age. In a broad sense the universality of Judaism's conclusions reflected on that condition. The Cain and Abel story above is an example of the New Age dichotomy. Cain tilled the soil. His brother Abel was a hunter/gatherer. Hominid society was moving away from hunter/gatherer to agrarian. In the hunter/gatherer society man was at one with Nature. In the agrarian society man was dominant over Nature. Cain as an agrarian was dominant over Nature.

A new role for man was given by the meaning of the Cain and Abel story. No longer was man to be the hunter/gatherer. No longer was man to be in a "horizontal" relationship with Nature.

Abel was a wandering hunter/gatherer. Cain is a farmer. The old hunter/gatherer age was past. The new agrarian age had come. Cain was representative of the new agrarian age. The Nation of Israel would be following Cain's direction into this new age.

We find in Cain's response to the LORD'S question of what happened to Abel our own response when he answers; *Am I my brother's keeper?* We too find ourselves giving the same reply: We say our Age when we look at Nature: *Am I Nature's keeper?*

This raises a very important question: Are the lesson stories that came out of that Sumerian era and were recorded in the Hebrew bible adequate as metaphor to guide our thought processes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

Here is another example of such scripture: Quoting from Genesis 4, consider the words: *Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.* The Hebrew Bible tells us to do just that. And it is what we have done these last three thousand years. Mothers give birth to five, ten children and more. Attempts at family planning bring only limited interest. The Roman Catholic Church even forbids birth control. Orthodox Christians, Jews and Muslims believe it is their duty to have as many children as possible. In some countries the population level reaches the breaking point and their citizens are forced to live under horrific conditions. Millions of humans throughout the world are suffering and dying. As larger and larger numbers of the dispossessed suffer, (world population now at 7 billion plus is expected to rise to 10 billion by 2050) most of those in the

developed countries following the Judeo/Christian/Islamic family model look the other way. *Am I my brother's keeper* they say.

As exponential population growth takes place, and the biblical earth command to *subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth* becomes a problem so serious as to threaten human survival on the planet, the “stewards” find themselves in a state of confusion. They find themselves breathing foul air. Temperatures are rising as are oceans. Industrial chemicals are poisoning their bodies.

Warning signs are flashing before all our eyes. These signs point to the question of whether seven, nine, ten or even twelve billion human beings will be able to live on this planet over the next several hundred years in a symbiotic relationship with Nature that allows both our species and organic and inorganic matter to recycle and renew. We are the first species on this planet with the power to destroy the planet. This is what we are doing.

If Genesis has put us on the wrong track, what about the New Testament and the words of Jesus. Perhaps they can be of some help. Jesus said in the Good Samaritan story:

*Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?*

*The expert in the law replied; the one who had mercy on him.*

*Jesus told him, Go and do likewise.*

But then we can ask him; who is my *brother*? In the twenty-first century the answer to the question now haunts us: Is he only my biological *brother*, only my tribal *brother*, only my national *brother*, only my Jewish *brother*, only my Christian *brother*, only my Muslim *brother*? We are all *brothers* (and *sisters*) Jesus would say. But is this now the case?

First the story: A man fell among thieves, was beaten, robbed and left there half dead. A Levite and a priest passed him by, on the other side. Finally, a certain Samaritan had compassion, took the poor stranger to an inn, and saw to his care.



It is a good story. But did it go far enough? On this small planet, we are all alone under a thin and fragile biosphere of oxygen that separates all biological life from the cold blackness of a seemingly endless cosmos. What about all other life?

The Good Samaritan story tells us much. At the same time, it comfortably removes us from its own story as well as the *Cain* and *Able* story. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century it does not give us the answer we are looking for. In fact, in many ways it moves us into a state of complacency. The deeper meaning of the relationship between the human and all other life and nonlife on the planet is omitted.

And as for the mandate to *multiply*, enough said.

In Edgar Allen Poe's *The Mask of the Red Death*, as the plague was spreading throughout his kingdom, Prince Prospero thinking he could wall it out, gathered the privileged and brought them all into his castle for a great banquet, closing the gates, and yet as the evening wore on, only to find that death (in a red mask) had been there from the beginning of the banquet, dancing among all of his guests.

Is this *Red Death* among us right now as we luxuriate in the enclaves of our opulent resource driven materialistic life style, content to find all of the answers word for word in our biblical and philosophical past?

The Edgar Allen Poe tale is one that we should be taking seriously.

## **Chapter # 7**

### **The Sumerian Problem**

#### **Part II Beyond Scripture**

The world has changed since the *Dominion* command and the *Cain* and *Abel* story and the *Good Samaritan* story were given to the followers of the religions of Abraham. We now have come to understand that we are not the only form of life of consequence on this planet. There are millions upon millions of other forms of life. And we are beginning to understand that we are interdependent. All life forms are in essence *brothers* and *sisters*. And if we were biblically expected to practice *Dominion* by being “stewards,” all of the evidence at hand points to the fact that we have done a very poor job.

For an understanding of this, I will return to my Appalachian home and ask the reader to recall my story of the butterfly there recounted in *Chapter 5 A Clue from the Monastery at Nag Hammadi*. There I describe sitting on the porch early one morning with my wife, talking about David Crisp who had died over the winter, a local Appalachian from a family going back many generations and with whom I had talked “religion.” He had planted our beautiful garden two years before. Suddenly, just as the words were coming from my mouth there appeared from a butterfly group that was feeding on one of the bushes. A beautiful orange and black butterfly came to me inches from my face.

Was it a matter of Carl Jung’s synchronicity? Was David communicating with us?

Now, I will go on to describe an insect found in the corners of the ceiling of the porch; the wasp. We are told they have been around for over one hundred million years. After I built my home, wasps decided to nest in the crevices under the overhangs of the roofs and especially under the roof covering that same front porch where I was visited by the butterfly. As I was able to observe them in their nests above me, I noticed striking similarities between their behavior and that of humans. And I came to the conclusion that we share a very basic trait with them. It is the will to defend our nest, and the will to defend our territory if we have decided it is under threat. Also, I came to understand that like the wasps; if we cannot defend that territory, we like they face the possibility of annihilation.

When I asked one of the locals about them, his reply was: “If you don’t bother them, they won’t bother you.” I have found this to be true. On the other hand, I have found that if you do bother them, their behavior suddenly changes. If you invade their territory and threaten them in any way, all at once by a sudden signal I have yet to figure out, the entire nest will turn against you.

And when they do, they seem to know just where their bite will be most painful; on the back of the neck, and as I have experienced-mine. It all happens in an instant.

Seeing how they behave, the question I now found myself asking is this; how can I live with the wasps at my mountain home? The answer for me was an easy one. I will leave alone those nests that are not going to be a problem. After all, I say to myself; aren't the wasps GOD's unique and chosen creatures? What right do I have to disturb their lives? They were here in the mountains long before I built my house.

As to the ones that are a threat in areas around my house, the decision is not without some feeling of guilt. I handle them the way the US military with its drones handles Islamic terrorists: I search out the threatening wasp nests wherever they are, selecting only the ones with wasps that have the potential to strike at me, and then with a wasp sprayer I bought at the local hardware store I direct the poisonous spray to their nest and I kill those wasps.

However, as I direct the jet of my wasp sprayer at those nests, I feel badly about killing the wasps in them for I am have an uneasy feeling that says I have no right to destroy God's creation. After all, am I not the product of a Judeo/Christian Western culture that tells me: ***Thou shall not kill***. But this leaves me confused. Does this biblical mandate extend to other life such as wasps? In biblical specificity it does not; nevertheless, I still feel a sense of guilt. Yet, I know killing them is something that I have to do. I have to do it so that my family, my friends and I will not get stung and all of us can enjoy a wonderful life in the mountains. Yet, I remain confused. When I read from the Book of Genesis that God has given me ***dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth*** I find myself thinking; was not that mandate too narrow? What right do I have to kill the wasps? What right did I have to build my house in those mountains? After all, it is a second home and built only for my pleasure. Did I ever think about the CO2 that was being dumped into the ecosphere as the materials were being manufactured and being hauled? Did I ever begin to think of that? Did I ever think about the CO2 that would be spewed into the ecosphere as I drive my car three or four times a year to my mountain home? And what about the electrical heating and air conditioning fueled by coal burning plants across the mountains on the Tennessee side? My concern raises what may be the most important question now facing humanity. How much of the

planet's resources are ours to consume as we wish? Do I have the right to kill all non-human life around me just for my pleasure? What right do I have to push the planet beyond the edge of sustainability? Can I do all of this without impunity?

As I direct my wasp sprayer upward at a nest, I also find myself thinking; what if at some point all the wasps throughout the woods could communicate from nest to nest, sending out a message to attack me as I am now attacking them? What if then the millions of wasps living miles from my house could all at once come in for the attack? What if they all at once aimed their deadly stingers at my neck? What if suddenly there were so many coming at me in such numbers that I could not keep them away? Should not they too have that right after what I have done to them by invading their territory simply for my pleasure? Aren't I now the terrorist? I am the one taking over their lives, destroying their habitat.

As these thoughts are passing through my mind, I find myself thinking; is this not far more than a religious issue? Are we not talking here about the survival of our own species? Isn't the issue far larger than just my wasps? I am haunted by the last sentence of a paragraph on page 22 of Larry Rasmussen's book; *Earth – Honoring Faith*.

**“So the Tree of Life lives within us, as well as we within it, and the old fourth century Cappadocian theologians got it right: Each human being is a little universe, a microcosm of a macrocosm. We're at home in the cosmos; the cosmos is at home in us. We're creatures of the planet on which the planet's creatures inhabit and sustain us, inside and out.”**

A horrible thought crosses my mind. Those wasps at my home are a metaphor for the millions upon millions of other creatures on our planet that **“sustain us, inside and out.”** In my disregard for them as a result of my insatiable appetite, am I not then in planetary reality destroying myself?

This brings me to the twenty-first century moral/ethical/religious complexity of the issue. Returning again to the Good Samaritan story, I ask myself; who is my neighbor? Judaism and Christianity-Islam the same, as they were all originally formulated and understood are not providing me with the wisdom to grasp the whole answer to that question. According to the Cappadocian theologians; **“We're creatures of the planet on which the planet's creatures inhabit and sustain us, inside and out.”** Are they not telling me that all other creatures are my *neighbor* too; not just those of my own species? Jesus throughout his preaching-with few

exceptions-limited his lesson plan to *Homo sapiens*. That limitation clearly was a reflection of the post Sumerian Judaic and Hellenistic culture of his time. But now two thousand years later, we are being called on to understand that when *Jesus told him, Go and do likewise* this admonition applies in all life forms on this planet.

The point here is that the three biblical stories; the one about stewardship, the one about Cain and Abel and the other about the Good Samaritan walking on the road to Jericho taken literally do not give us sufficient guidance in our twenty-first century world. It is becoming more and more obvious that biblical scripts such as these do not reveal our needed knowledge on how to approach the interdependency between all of life on Planet Earth. The seriousness of this Judeo/Christian/Islamic deficiency is expressed throughout this book.

For those of the Abrahamic faiths reliance on the inerrancy and literal interpretation of scripture prevents them from coming to terms with the wrenching acknowledgement that our continuation on the planet rests on one premise and one only: The earth and its surrounding biosphere is finite. Now to one other thought permeating all three forms of Abrahamic belief that will have to be recast. At some point those Jews, Christians and Muslims with apocalyptic belief will be forced to abandon that belief, also the belief that a “Savior” will return to save them. The hard truth is that only humanity can save itself. *Homo sapiens* cannot survive on this planet unless it can live:

- **in a consonant ecological relationship**
- **in a consonant other life relationship**
- **in a consonant inter human relationship**

How can we all come to terms with this "hard truth," this reality? First we need to change the way we think about the beginnings of our religions. To say that all revelation ended in some past period is an affront to the revelatory power of the human mind. It is an affront to the capacity of that mind to comprehend what is continuing to be revealed and will continue to be revealed as our species fulfills its potential on this planet and beyond in the infinite reach of the cosmos.

We were destined to be more than what the Abrahamic religious orthodoxy has bequeathed us. As *Homo sapiens* we were created to be open to the presence of revelation. Jews and Christians,

along with Muslims-and all others-by way of a new Enlightenment must understand that this openness is ongoing, never ending.

All of us on the planet, those with religious faith and those without, must come to terms with the wrenching acknowledgement that our continuation rests on one premise and one only: The earth and its surrounding biosphere is finite. Every form of life is interdependent on its finitude.

The butterfly on my butterfly bush, the insect crawling in my garden, the wasp on my porch, the spider in my window, the deer in the woods outside of my house, the bear there too, the Wildebeest on the Serengeti, the Tuna in the ocean; they are all my neighbor. To understand this, persistent indoctrination and education toward a new global moral/ethical/religious reality is called for. Overriding the superficial meaning of ancient scriptures will have to be the deeper meaning of not just human but all life on this planet.

Change in our thought—if it does come—will be a wrenching experience. The metamorphosis will be painful. This book outlines that transition in some detail. Solutions to the problems facing the planet cannot be approached in any other way than by upsetting existing political, social, economic and religious norms and beliefs. Without an acknowledgement of the inadequacy of much of what we believe and assume to be true, we will not be able to reverse our course.

There is a shred of optimism here. We must remember that humans often surprise themselves. There is a creativity that comes to the surface at critical moments. We may be seeing glimmers of this now in the very first stages of an emerging paradigm. With momentum, this new paradigm could replace the old. It speaks to a new ethic in many ways apart from both western and eastern religious and social/political traditions. At the same time, it borrows from them. It argues against the cynicism of Sigmund Freud and his dismal analysis of human nature. It argues against the cynicism in Judeo/Christian-Islamist religious apocalyptic orthodoxy. It views the human species and Nature in a mutually beneficial and symbiotic way. It argues in favor of all that is positive and creative in men and women—and in their interaction with Nature. It tears apart many of our society's presumptions as to what is right and what is wrong—and what is “right” and what is “left” as defined in contemporary political terms.

What must you and I do to live within this evolutionary force-field, to be a part of its symbiotic harmony? First, we must accept a new civilizational global ethic, as was outlined by Herschel Elliott. (discussed in *Chapter 9 Forging a New Global Ethic for Planetary Survival - "The Tragedy of the Commons"*) This is an ethic that challenges many of our existing cultural and institutional norms.

The task will be an extremely difficult one for those who have chosen to embrace it, as it demands a form of thought that tears apart many of our society's presumptions as to what is right and what is wrong, what is ethical and what is not ethical.

**Author's Note:**

**Herschel Elliott upset much of what our civilization considers to be ethical and moral standards of human behavior. His metaphorical tale of "The Tragedy of the Commons" pictures not just the reality of a chain of events arising from our overcrowded and mismanaged planet; our "Commons" if you will, but the strong possibility of the end of our species if this "Commons" ethic is ignored. In other words, he was making the point that this is not merely an intellectual exercise. Elliott saw it as a choice between the life or the death of our human civilization.**

These ethical changes are being fiercely resisted by many in America and many throughout the world. This is to be expected as they challenge the status-quo, as well as the thought of many. They challenge the viability of much of world thought; social, political, economic and philosophical/religious.

There are a few nations where elements of this new global ethic are unfolding as a part of the political process. In them, we are seeing shades of utopian egalitarianism. There are also shades of it in the element of material abandonment found in those who follow Eastern thought. We see it in parts of central Europe and in the Northern European countries with their social democratic forms of government. These countries chose early on to combine Marxist egalitarian ideology with individual political and economic freedom. Today, they are leaders in ecological conservation. They also enjoy the highest standard of living in the world. It is important to note that this new global ethic is not spelling a return to the *isms* of the past. Those political and

economic configurations in their failure only opened the door to prove many of Sigmund Freud's observations and conclusions.

This new global ethic calls for a reassessment of many of the core values derived from Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Covenantal separateness and exclusivity come to an end. John Calvin's predestination becomes a relic of an archaic and twisted imagination. The angry punishing and judgmental Hebraic Yahweh is abandoned. A revisionist view of the life, death and teachings of Jesus unfolds, removing him from sacrificial Christian orthodoxy. The idea of a judgmental Christ as a part of the Trinity (Nicene Creed) is discarded. Islam also changes, becoming non exclusivist. Violence is expurgated word by word from the Koran. Islamic Jihadist belief ceases. Islamic fatalism ceases. Apocalyptic belief in all three of the religions ceases.

Religious belief cannot escape this scrutiny and harsh treatment. Our religions are more a part of us than we realize. As emphasized in this book, they sit in our subconscious and make us think the way we do. They are responsible for much of our political values, our societal values and our economic behavior. They are the driving force within our inner self. The early Greeks taught us this. They showed us that there is an interaction that takes place between us and the God or gods we worship. We become like them and they become like us. This interaction is dynamic and all powerful. It follows that for Jews, Christians and Muslims, and not just for those at the extremes but also for those others within the envelopment of the religious thoughts that form the fabric of their cultures; the vision of their god or gods drives their thoughts and actions. And this even includes those proud atheists who would claim to have left the orthodoxy of their familiar past religious belief.

We are all shaped by the religions that have permeated the society around us, more than we are willing to admit. For a society to change, the God or the gods that society looks up to must change. We cannot change our ethical behavior without changing our gods.

We can see glimmers of this "changing our gods" in our world today. A new GOD vision is slowly forming. It is closely related to ecological reality. Measures currently being taken to meet the threat of a disruption in the ecological balance on our planet are connected with this new vision. So far these measures have been insufficient, but they represent a beginning. As scientific evidence continues to mount, it is becoming increasingly clear that our civilization is fast moving



toward a number of ecological “tipping points” and unless it will change its God or gods, our human species will be forced to struggle for its survival.

The time has come for each of us to choose sides. One side leads to self-destruction; the other to the preservation of human civilization. Only by making the hard choices now, as painful as they may be, can the course be reversed. To save ourselves, we must see ourselves as we are. We must see our planet as it is. As the early Jewish writers did so forcefully in their day in their society, we now must expose to the light of present day the destructive impulses of our own nature.

A reinterpretation of biblical script from the past is a good start, but forging a new global ethic in our highly complex world will extend far beyond that. New narratives are needed. Our advanced technocratic world is far different from the world of several thousand years ago. There is no way that it can return to what it was when Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him or the Good Samaritan walked on the road to Jericho or even when Jesus gave us his limited command to be stewards.

Suggestions for a new narrative are made in this book. They center on an understanding of David Bohm’s cosmic Implicate Order. They are representative of ideas being formed in academia and elsewhere. They cross all disciplines; political, social, economic and religious. Some are on the way to implementation; others are only in the formative stage. They borrow from the words of Unitarian Deist John Adams when he said: **“God has given us Reason, to find out the Truth, and the real design, and true End of our Existence.”** It is this **“Reason”** that we must now employ.

We need now to begin the dialogue, before it is too late, as to what humanity must do to apply our “reason” to this cosmic consciousness and implicate order, as opposed to avoiding it, which to a very large extent is what we are all doing.

But the dialogue will have no value if it takes place only between those of our own species. It must be expanded. It must give equal voice to the millions of other life forms on this planet; **The butterfly on my butterfly bush, the insect crawling in my garden, the wasp on my porch, the spider in my window, the deer in the woods outside of my house, the bear there too, the**

**Wildebeest on the Serengeti, the Tuna in the ocean.** This will be the hardest part. We will have to acknowledge that they have just as much a right to be here as we do.

## **Chapter # 8**

### **A Dangerous Zero Sum Game—The “Chicago School” vs the Planet**

#### **Part I From Adam Smith to Milton Friedman to Alan Greenspan**

##### **Introductory Remarks**

We cannot begin to understand the magnitude of the institutional changes that will be necessary for a continuance of *Homo sapiens* on this Planet unless we are able to view them in the light of required changes in economic, political, social and religious thought. The previous chapter dealt with the inadequacy of certain presuppositions in ancient religious thought. In this chapter we will examine the inadequacy of economic thought. We will begin with a few words describing an economic concept called “negative externalities.” Negative externalities are those future costs that are not priced into the final market prices of goods and services as supply and demand establishes price points. Over the next century this will become more evident as temperatures rise on the surface of the planet. The systemic cause of the problem is a capital market system that is unable to price in those negative external costs associated with the extraction and burning of fossil fuels.

The capital market system in operation today grew out of the need to supply goods and services in the most efficient manner to those able to pay for them by setting varying price points based on the amount of the seller’s supply and the buyer’s determination of utility. Planetary resource depletion and destruction-long term negative external costs, and even the immediate ongoing cost of waste disposal were never a part of the formula. There was no input cost given to unintended ecological consequences for future generations. This blindness is now being questioned. In recent years it has become clear that unrestrained capital markets have missed pricing in many forms of negative costs. Planetary resource limitation and planetary damage has not been priced into final prices.

As the first signs of this disturbing inadequacy in our economic system have become evident, governments have attempted to respond by means of esoteric pricing mechanisms. With respect to the CO2 problem, cap-and-trade has been offered as a solution. Another approach has been to subsidize alternative forms of energy. Because of the increased cost to the consumer, initiatives such as these have found limited consensus support. We are economic creatures; the cheaper the better. As a result, CO2 emissions are continuing to be spewed into the atmosphere at increasingly dangerous levels.

This failure to price in “negative externalities” is calling for a transformation of the entire capital market system by means of re-pricing mechanisms in domestic and international capital markets that take into account all future costs. The primary purpose of the capital market system must be to serve humanity in the broadest sense. This will require a new economic theory that challenges past assumptions. Markets have no conscience; they can be constructive as well as destructive socially and ecologically. We are now finding that many past assumptions are in fact destructive socially and ecologically.

The information dealing with economics contained in this chapter and the others to follow may at times seem boringly analytical to those whose interest lay in subjects such as philosophy and religion. It is included in this book because it reaches to the heart the crisis facing the planet. A practical way to solve our earth resource use and disposal problem is absolutely necessary. It will only come by way of the implementation of economic solutions. We live in a complex world. Solutions call for multidisciplinary complexity. They require changes not only in the way we think about our place on the planet and in society philosophically but also in the way we chose to structure our lives economically vis a vis the planet itself.

We will begin with the “hidden hand” of Adam Smith. For many it has become their God. Is it a good god, or a bad god? Is this a religion? To answer these questions, we must begin with this Scottish philosopher/economist and his book; *The Wealth of Nations* published in 1776.

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One thesis of Adam Smith was that self-interest in the market place need not produce chaos, but as if guided by an *invisible hand* lead to order, in that as people strike bargains with each other, resources are drawn to ends and purposes at prices that add value to society. (He also was aware of hidden dangers from uncontrolled self-interest-a warning which has in recent years been forgotten)

In the years that followed Adam Smith, he was joined by many others; some to become the most noted and respected economists of their time. To name a few; Friedrich August Hayek, John Maynard Keynes, Milton Friedman and American Federal Reserve Chairman, Alan Greenspan.

Milton Friedman in his book *Capitalism and Freedom*, (1962) advocated minimizing the role of government in the free-market as a means of creating political and social freedom. His message was one of pure economic Libertarianism. His was a belief that struck a chord in America. It was a belief that had run through American life over its history. An entire school of economic thought at the University of Chicago grounded its economic philosophy on it. It became known as the “Chicago School.” When the laissez-faire two term president Ronald Reagan took office, he proceeded to take full advantage of it. The American public eagerly jumped onboard.

A trait all these men shared is one now being defined by modern psychology as *Optimism bias*. Milton Friedman was full of it. His confidence in himself and his theory of unfettered libertarian capitalism was stunning. Any ordinary skeptic now listening to his speeches and interviews is immediately reminded of this. *Optimism bias* describes a human brain wired for hope and optimism. Milton Friedman demonstrated it “par excellence.”

Adam Smith’s, Milton Friedman’s and Alan Greenspan’s economics had become for many a religion, or at least like a religion. There is a danger in thinking that way. Religious feeling always originates from inner experience. As this experience unfolds, it becomes the source of conviction on matters relating to the “Ultimate.” Belief then is always expressed in some form as an attachment to the ultimate. It is variously described in terms of awe, wonder, presence of God; an oceanic feeling. One feels connected to "all that there is." A sense of attachment to an "energy" field beyond the individual takes hold. This awe experience can be so profound as to totally encompass and overpower all rational thought. That is what became of Adam Smith’s *invisible hand* economics.

For these new age economists their new “religion” seemed to fit all of the necessary religious requirements. Descriptions of the experience by devotees included words like compassion, ecstatic, and life/society transforming. Many reckoned that the prosperous good life embraced by Adam Smith’s economic theory with its fervent belief in unfettered capital markets as a means to attain a prosperous life fulfilled these requirements.

Human nature is complex. We are wired for self-interest and material comfort, but we are generous and loving too. In the years following Adam Smith the popularity of his economic philosophy and reasoning tapped into that human desire for a good and prosperous life for all. As the years passed, many took the success of capital markets as a confirmation that there was indeed an innate cosmic god-like goodness behind them, and that the goodness described by Smith as an *invisible hand* would move human civilization forward.

It should also be noted here that at the time he was writing there were dismal factories and cities in the United Kingdom. Living conditions were miserable as were factory work conditions. Just the stench from the raw sewage in the cities would be enough to turn off even the most libertarian free-market economist today.

In the post Enlightenment period, with the Industrial Revolution and the maturation leading to the move away from traditional religion and towards secularism, it had seemed Smith's "economics" could even be a replacement for Hebraic and Christian traditional religious belief. The logic behind all of this followed through with Smith's theory: Free-markets are the most efficient way of matching the supply with the demand for goods and services and therefore the best mechanism for bringing peace, prosperity and happiness to the world. As the years passed, the rise in the standard of living for many was cited as proof of this. Economic reality was gradually turning Smith's market theory into a new-found religion or at least the belief for many that their God was part and parcel behind GOD's *invisible hand*.

It did not however include one religious element found to varying degrees in most religions. This can be described as a reverence toward Nature and the sanctity of the human being as an integral part of Nature. The word "Nature" as used here in this book includes all life and nonlife on the planet. Adam Smith's theory made no mention of Nature. The earth's resources were taken to be a given. They could be used and abused at the will of man. In his time that included the denigration of life in the factories and in the mines and on the streets. This perspective remains today in many parts of the world.

We humans tend to believe what our minds tell us to believe. Illusion with no foundation or a best a shaky one is created. This can be for the good or for the bad. At this point in the discussion we need a word on the behavior that generally follows once the "belief" leap is taken. Then,

what is and what is not moral/ethical finds a new foundation. There is no argument. What I say is right. What you say is wrong. Today, religiously at the extreme we have the Islamic justification for terrorism. It is with this same certainty that many of the followers of Milton Friedman argue for the economic-and moral/ethical-validity of free markets. That Friedman style of argument continues to dominate most of the world's economic thinking.

This religious-like infusion into economic thinking has left the planet and all life on it facing a lethal danger. Capital markets have now grown to a size where they are energizing ecologically destructive forces of a magnitude that has never before been seen in planetary history. Irreparable damage is being done. Resources are being misappropriated on a massive scale. In addition; waste produced through our advanced knowledge of chemistry and physics as this knowledge reinvents the earth's chemical resources is resulting in a buildup of unreconstitutable toxic residue. The biological effect of this on all life forms, including human, is now becoming apparent. As a result, the original capital market supply/demand architecture of the Adam Smith School is shaking under its own weight. Some a beginning to realize that Capital markets are becoming the leading force underlying the degradation of the planet and the endangerment of all life forms on it, including our own. A horrible thought has emerged: Left unchecked, we could be facing the extinction of our species.

Clearly something has gone terribly wrong with Adam Smith's Friedmanian/Hayek supply/demand free-market economic theory. If it is for some a religion, that religion is now proving to be a very dangerous one leading to civilization's self-destruction. Every day we are seeing more evidence of this. It is becoming the more clear that we can no longer think of the planet as a way station to a materially better world by way of the genius of capital markets. The signs of negative ecological feed-back have made that apparent.

The future of *Homo sapiens* can only be as positive as the goals it creates for itself and its ability to achieve those goals. We are learning that this will take the prudent use of our planetary resources and a careful application of our technologies. No longer can we simply rely on "free-market economics." No longer can we believe in this new GOD of the "hidden hand."

Biologically we are earth bound creatures shaped by millions of years of evolution, bound to all life and non-life on this planet. Rational introspection is what will count for our long-term

survival, not faux religious belief and irrational thought. To the extent the free-market economic theory first formulated by Adam Smith and now revised and refined by his many present day followers is no more than a material manifestation of a human self-destructive narcissistic impulse; it is a faux religion and should be identified as such. An understanding of this fact could reverse the environmentally destructive course we have taken. We desperately need a new understanding.

Our spirits are capable of awe and ever more breathtaking leaps of imagination. We can be of this mind. That is what makes us human. Exalted we are indeed, with the potential to be of the mind of the cosmos. As religion in the past has told us who and what we are, our spirits now can lead the way by showing us that there is more to life than old religion or modern secular unbounded material prosperity. Belief in Adam Smith's *invisible hand* was a faux belief. For the sake of human survival it must quickly come to an end.

## **Chapter # 8**

### **A Dangerous Zero Sum Game—The “Chicago School” vs the Planet**

#### **Part II George Soros**

In Part I of this chapter we took a close look at what is called our “capital market system” and identified belief in it as a “faux religion.” Here in Part II we will discuss a book about that system written by the famous hedge fund manager George Soros. He gives us insights into our twenty-first century capital market system as we see it in full operation?

In *The Crash of 2008 and What It Means*, Soros warns us that this immensely imposing edifice called the capital market system will in the future collapse. He says this will come about as a

result of an inherent human weakness caused by the failure of the human mind to perceive reality, to distinguish fiction from fact.

His observation ties in with two interrelated themes expressed throughout this chapter; one relating to the ecological destructiveness of our capital market system and the other our inability to understand its destructiveness. We refuse to acknowledge the fact that we will not be able to continue on in our ecologically consumptive pattern with the diminution of planetary resources at the present rate without irreparable harm being done to the entire system. We are in essence undoing billions of years of ecological balancing that allowed for humans to live on the planet and we refuse to acknowledge this.

Arresting the unfolding ecological scenario will depend on whether society will be able over the next decade to do just that, to change the way it thinks, or to put it in Soros' language; *to perceive reality*. How we think about the capital market system must be part of that process because in a sense it is at the root cause of the problem. Soros makes the bold statement in his book that deficiencies such as this arise out of the fact that how we view the market system is in a biological sense a construction of the human mind and like the human mind it is inherently flawed.

Part I of the chapter pointed out that many citizens of the world refuse to accept even a remote possibility of serious deficiencies in capital markets as a form of resource allocation. For them Adam Smith's *hidden hand* is in a sense a religion. Their belief in its perfection is reinforced by its many seemingly apparent benefits to their personal lives. If there are deficiencies, they reason they can only be minor. A trade agreement here, a trade agreement there, a securities exchange commission to keep corporations honest, capital ratios to keep banks solvent; that is all we need. After all, hasn't the industrialized world enjoyed greater material prosperity than ever before in the history of humankind?

For these modern age economic religionists, the classical economic theorist Adam Smith was the prophet of prosperity for a new industrial age. They argue that capital markets operate for "the public good." Increasing world prosperity has for them proved this theory to be correct.



One key to an understanding of the naivety of this belief in the goodness of the *Hidden Hand* can be seen in examples of its blatant deception over the last many decades. Moving to recent history, we had ENRON and then shortly thereafter banking failures that produced the 2007/2008 market crash. The inherent flaws in “laissez-faire” capital market theory were clearly revealed, and it was an ugly painful sight. The worst elements of human behavior at every level of society were revealed. We must not forget the seriousness of that crash. The entire industrialized world came very close to a complete collapse going well beyond the one in 1929. With the world economy then many times larger, the stakes were far higher. Massive unemployment and social unrest were avoided only as a result of quick action and the extreme brilliance and political bravery of a few key individuals in and out of government.

It is now clearly evident that the crash was the result of much more than the regulatory incompetence that preceded it in Washington and Europe. It was caused by the inability of many economists in and out of government prior to 2008 to understand the permanently corrosive effect of nondeterministic (indeterminate) human behavior. They believed in the self-correcting nature of free-markets. Aberrant nondeterministic human behavior to them was just a compensatory self-correcting and natural part of the formula. Financial market ups and downs were just a part of the process. All the downs were naturally self-correcting. The Yin (black) would always be canceling out the Yang (white). The raw and unvarnished fact says otherwise.

In the United States these economic theorists-as discussed in some detail in Part I of this chapter, had come from the so called “Chicago School.” The economist Milton Friedman was their hero. They all believed fervently in Adam Smith’s *invisible hand*. For them, it was the new religion of prosperity for all. Even the American Federal Reserve Bank chairman-referenced in Part I, a Chicago School believer, after the crash referred to it as essentially an unpredictable “rogue event.” In a speech before the National Italian American Foundation, Washington D.C. on October 12, 2005 titled *Economic Flexibility* chairman Greenspan dismissed warnings about another American housing bubble. He stated, “Increasingly complex financial instruments have contributed to the development of a far more flexible, efficient, and hence resilient financial system....”

The free-market conviction among many who believed in Greenspan points to the problem. And here we come to George Soros and his observation. It is an observation that on the surface now after the 2007/2008 housing bubble and collapse in the US should be self-evident to all but the most ignorant. The “Greenspans” are still with us. Soros observes that for several years prior to the crash, many in America and the world chose to disconnect from financial reality. They did this by perceiving what another and another perceived. That another someone else in turn perceived-believed-what someone else perceived. The distance between reality and belief in reality continued to widen. According to Soros, perception of reality then became what one chose to define as reality; in this case a vibrant US economy operating without restraint. Perception of reality was distorted by perception of someone else’s perception. This added level of perception of perception according to Soros produced greater and greater distortion.

His observation takes on importance when discussing not only markets but also environmental reality. People see the future as others perceive it, not necessarily as it actually will be. The perception of those “others” can be far detached from reality.

George Soros goes into a detailed explanation of “perception of perception” in his book. He coined the word “reflexivity” to explain it.

There was a third force at work prior to that crash, and it came from the reliance by economists on mathematical algorithmic formulae to predict future events. Many of them made the mistake of entering assumptions into their algorithmic equations based on inaccurate perceptions of future reality. These algorithmic equations often failed. Faith in their methodology told them that their computer programs would give them valid predictions of the future. In the end; these predictions were not valid. The Long Term Capital Management hedge fund collapse in 1998 was the most well-known example. Confidence in their own empiricism had led mathematician/economists astray. Many of their formulae produced outcomes far removed from reality. Reality turned out to an illusion of reality. Again we see parallels to environmental perceptions.

The confidence of these economists arose from the fact that they had become convinced that their algorithmic method is a safe way to measure future reality. But, algorithms are tricky. We assume that two plus two less one always equals three. But what if it does not always equal

three? What if it can also equal one, five or ten or twenty, or even zero, or even minus twenty? (Expressed in the simple formula: 2 bags of grapes plus 2 pears does not always equal 4 portions when one bag of grapes rots and one breaks open and one pear begins to rot.)

The danger in this overconfidence in economic empirical deduction was magnified during the crash. After spending decades building sophisticated models to anticipate market behavior, the world was awakened to the fact that the models did not predict the most serious crisis since 1929. In fact, they contributed to it and helped to wipe out \$50 trillion in global wealth; causing untold human suffering.

This distortion in economic thinking continues to dominate economic thought. Alan Greenspan's remarks noted above are an indication. Yet, economists like Greenspan still hold sway. 2007/2009 was a wakeup call, but America did not wake up. Now, it is facing an even far more serious crisis than that crash, and many Americans have chosen to sit on the fence. The consequences will be far reaching.

We should take note here that the down side of this distortive human thinking could be a threat to the future of humanity. The empirical projections of anthropogenic climate change and other "tipping points" projected by scientists could even be understated. This leaves open the possibility as we saw in the 2008 market collapse, of far greater global disaster than predicted.

Many Americans are having great difficulty understanding this. The view of their lives on the planet does not correspond to planetary reality. They see themselves living in an imaginary cornucopia of their own imagination, one as George Soros would put it of perception of perception; literally a joyous Walt Disney "make believe" world of limitless sensual – and material pleasure, a world is one of endless consumption. There are no limits. It is a hedonistic "me/me" world. But it is not the real world. Planet Earth is the real world. Human suffering is the real world. A history of war and turmoil is the real world. Metaphorically speaking; they find themselves chasing the wrong ball as they continue to kick it in the wrong direction.

This mindset in America is determining the course of present day governmental decision making. An example is seen in the demand for oil, gas and coal as a source of energy and the lack of political will to arrest their production in a meaningful way.

Over the past two centuries, those who believed in Adam Smith's capital market theory could comfortably align themselves with a detachment from planetary reality. Everyone was to be a winner. The financial rewards coming from carbon exploitation could be accepted without question. This exploitation was seen as an enhancement of societal meaning, as a liberating force. It was exploitation beneficial for everyone. The beneficent *invisible hand* was there for everyone. There was no downside. Some people-especially those from groups that benefited the most, understood it to be a gift from GOD.

There was no understanding of the fact that rising out of our carbon dependence, we were about to experience a series of extraneous shocks to our planet unlike anything ever before experienced, shocks that could possibly-due to runaway planetary temperatures, lead to the collapse of many forms of planetary life, including our own. Adam Smith's capital market theory had become antithetical to the survival of the human species.

The industries that grew out of the exploitation of oil, gas and coal for the world's energy needs are now being confronted by an ecological dilemma of their own making. Many people throughout the world are finally beginning to view them as the causal agents. Scientific evidence pointing to their culpability is becoming increasingly clear. It is telling us that the planet is facing the first signs of an environmental collapse as a result of excessive amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> being released into the atmosphere. The words quoted below from a report written on December 9, 2012 by Dr. Gideon Polya, professor of Biochemistry at a major Australian university, entitled "World To Exceed Pollution Budget To Avoid 2C Temperature Rise In 5 Years" are becoming more and more a part of our scientific literature. Dr. Polya writes:

**"Thus Dr Jim Yong Kim (President, World Bank Group), in his Forward to the World Bank "Turn Down the Heat" reported: "It is my hope that this report shocks us into action... This report spells out what the world would be like if it warmed by 4 degrees Celsius, which is what scientists are near-unanimously predicting by the end of the century, without serious policy changes....The 4°C scenarios are devastating: the inundation of coastal cities; increased risks for food production; potentially leading to high malnutrition rates; many dry regions becoming drier, wet regions wetter; unprecedented heat waves in many regions, especially in the tropics; substantially**

**exacerbated water scarcity in many regions; increased frequency of high-intensity tropical cyclones; and irreversible loss of biodiversity, including coral reef systems....A 4°C world can, and must, be avoided.”**

As for Adam Smith’s capital market theory; two centuries after its introduction, there is question not only as to its validity but also as to its destructively exploitive power. Capital market theory as an equilibrating agent for the supply of energy to the world is in question. A horrible thought is surfacing: Is Adam Smith’s capital market theory at odds with planetary sustainability? Given Dr Jim Yong Kim’s report quoted above, the answer is an unequivocal “yes.”

George Soros reminds us in his book that when we stray from reality, we must eventually pay the price. Denuding our planet of its resources is forcing the human species to face the possibility of a painful future. We now know that carbon dependence has a high external cost. As seen in the above report, there is growing evidence that this cost will be so high as to be beyond our imagination. Because of its degradation of the planet’s biosphere, carbon based energy has become a cancer on our planet. It is about to destroy our air, our oceans, our land. The *invisible hand* of Adam Smith as a beneficent equalizer of supply and demand for world energy is leading us into the jaws of planetary extinction. We now find that since the beginning of the industrial age we have been living a carefully crafted lie, a kind of cruel hoax.

Industry response has been to discredit the threat of global warming by means of heavily funded lobbying and advertising. As it was with the tobacco industry, its purpose is to convince the public of the irrelevance of the scientific claims. This campaign is being supported by conservative media outlets in the United States such as FOX News and the Wall Street Journal.

Today our capital markets operate on that *Optimism bias* platform. It is a platform of naivety. The longer reality of not just a financial market but a planetary crash is hidden. The possibility of catastrophic adjustment is always pushed forward into the future. But adjustment is never eliminated. In time, it arrives. There is inevitability to all corrections. The imaginary world of those who refuse to face reality is then exposed to the light of day. The dream becomes no more than what it ever was; a dream.

The longer reality that financial markets are now avoiding is of an ecological implosion from resource miss-development and miss-allocation. The COP21 Meeting and others have made that

clear. Ongoing announcements by leading scientists in the world have reinforced this view. As already discussed in this book; it is now universally accepted that for human species' survival we need to drastically cut CO2 emissions. To decrease emissions, the U.S. as the second largest in the world-China having only recently surpassed the U.S., must decrease the consumption of fossil fuels. This can only be done by imposing punitive taxes on carbon in one form or another along with offering incentives for alternative energy production. Left to its own, Adam Smith's *invisible hand* will not accomplish this. Only direct government action can.

Over the past one hundred and fifty years companies participating directly as well as indirectly in the oil, gas and coal business have benefited enormously from the energy demands of modern civilization. Their assets have experienced a phenomenal rise in value. Great personal and national wealth has been created. Ordinary investors have benefited accordingly. This is the reason changing course has become so difficult.

To save human civilization, CO2 emissions cannot continue as they are. Carbon demand eventually will have to be curtailed, even eliminated. (Discussed in the next two parts of this chapter) As this becomes more apparent, asset values of companies tied into the exploration and development of oil, gas and coal will begin their rapid decline. Governments that have relied on these natural resources for their export income will be overcome by civil strife. All of this will bring on brutal adjustments world-wide.

As they were before the 2008 crash, the general public remains oblivious to all of this. They are having too much fun in the Magic Kingdom. So the cry continues from the deniers: LIE LIE LIE, Obama's a Communist, Al Gore's a jerk, George Soros is an evil man. Donald Trump will make America great again. Regulations are killing our economy. Drill Baby Drill, Fracking is the answer. Say No to cap-and-trade. Cancel the COP21 agreement. Cancel the TPP. (Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal)

This author says to those who would deny the new world reality: You yourselves may not get burnt, but future generations will-and literally. Temperatures will rise sooner and faster than you think. Then there will be no second chance to return to normalcy. Once the heat extremes have begun, there will be no way to stop it.

Future generations will curse you for what you did to them.

## **Chapter # 8**

### **A Dangerous Zero Sum Game—The “Chicago School” vs the Planet**

#### **Part III An Increase in the Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and a Methane Hydrate Feedback Loop**

A 2012 World Bank report

“Without quick action to curb CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, global warming is likely to increase by 4 degrees Centigrade (7.2 degrees Fahrenheit) above today’s normal during the 21st century and that is dangerously close to the temperature of 6 degrees Centigrade above normal that initiated the Permian-Triassic extinction event 252 million years ago when 96%\* of all marine species and 70% of all terrestrial vertebrates were wiped out.”

\*(current estimate 81%)

“A 500 ppm concentration would most likely warm the planet by 3 to 4 degrees C (5.4 to 7.2 degrees F). The permafrost under the Arctic tundra, already softening would generally melt .... greatly enhancing the greenhouse effect.... At present rates carbon dioxide is expected to reach 500 ppm by 2050, and combined with the effects of methane and nitrous oxide, will cause a relentless push toward higher temperatures, which will release more methane from tundra regions, increasing warming in a relentless feedback cycle. Less obvious but potentially a greater cause for concern than gasses within the Arctic tundra is the enormous accumulation of methane deep within the sea..... With continued warming, the sea may give up in a geological blink the accumulation of millions of years of carbon sequestration. Destabilizing the massive accumulation of

**methane hydrates could trigger undersea landslides that in turn could set off tsunamis on a grand scale.”**

Earle, Sylvia A. *The World Is Blue How Our Fate and The Ocean's Are One*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2010. pp 169,170

We did not take the 1972 World Bank report seriously. Nor the words in 2010 of the famous oceanographer Sylvia Earle. So 500 ppm appears to be a reality.

As she points out; massive methane reserves exist below the Arctic land areas and the Arctic Ocean floor. Scientists say combined they represent 100 times the amount required to cause another Permian style major extinction event. They exist in the form of methane hydrates trapped in a frozen state. As temperatures rise from CO2 emissions and the surface ice melts, darkened Arctic land mass is being exposed to the sun. Also, melting ice exposes Arctic waters to warming. All of this will cause temperatures to rise beyond the methane hydrate freezing point on land and in the oceans

A methane hydrate feedback loop will begin to “kick in” after 2 C degrees (3.6 F). Our civilization is approaching that 2 C figure. Global temperatures will then rise rapidly. Many scientists are telling us that temperatures far in excess of 4 C degrees are predicted due to a runaway increase in CH4 as a result that feedback loop. During the Permian extinction after 6 C degrees was reached, the ocean surface waters at their extreme eventually reached more than 40 degrees Celsius. (104 degrees Fahrenheit) That led to near total planetary life extinction. Over a 100-year timeframe methane is about 35 times more potent than carbon dioxide, over 20 years 84 times more potent.

For a better understanding of the ranges in earth temperatures that support life on this planet, here are a few facts:

Earth is the third planet from the Sun, and the only one that we know of capable of supporting life. The average surface temperature on earth is about 14 C degrees, but it varies due to a number of factors. The reason is that our world's axis is tilted, which means that one hemisphere is slanted towards the Sun during certain times of the year while the other is slanted away.



This not only causes seasonal changes, but ensures that places located closer to the equator are hotter, while those located at the poles are colder. The hottest temperature ever recorded on Earth was in the deserts of Iran (70.7 C degrees) while the lowest was recorded in Antarctica (-89.2 C degrees).

These temperatures are dependent on the atmospheric conditions as we presently experience them. A change in CO<sub>2</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub> emissions from what we have had over the last million or two years of human development can and will change the equation.

A note on the Permian-Triassic: Many mitigating factors led to the extinction and there are haunting similarities to our industrial civilization. Clouds of volcanic ash may have restricted the amount of sunlight available for photosynthesis, thereby inhibiting the process of carbon fixation by plants and lowering the extraction rate of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. We are experiencing this now with industrial deforestation reducing the absorption of CO<sub>2</sub>. High amounts of carbon dioxide may have been injected into the atmosphere by the venting of volcanic gases from the eruption of flood basalts, combined with the ignition of large coal seams. Our industrial civilization by the ignition large coal and gas seams has been doing the same.

We may be reaching a turning point. Scientists have found that over the last 38 years, temperatures have warmed at an average of 0.28 C degrees (0.50 F degrees) per decade over land and 0.12 C degrees (0.22 F degrees) per decade over the oceans. During that period a vast expanse of ice in the Arctic region the size of Texas has vanished. As just pointed out, this could have dangerous consequences with respect to the emission of CH<sub>4</sub> from a methane hydrate feedback loop exacerbating the planet's entry into a period of excessively high temperatures like those that existed during the Permian-Triassic extinction.

This methane danger is not presently a part of public perception. The probability of an Arctic methane hydrate feedback loop as here referenced is being discussed inside of the scientific community; however, in that community specialization of knowledge and the emphasis on cross academic debate as to amounts and timing is hampering constructive dialogue.

Throughout the world there is, however, growing awareness of CO<sub>2</sub> induced global warming. It is now a part of the public conversation. The mix of national agreements that came out of the

2015 Paris COP21 Sustainable Innovation Forum and the concern expressed by Pope Francis in his 2015 *Laudio Si'* is evidence.

A problem relating to both CO<sub>2</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub> emissions is that ecological conferences and books, papers and lectures by forward thinking scientists are turning out to have limited influence on the general public. One can even say pulp fiction accounts of movies like *Star Wars* have more. Even the 2015 COP21 in Paris with its heightened awareness and the pronouncement of the Pope's *Laudio Si'* proved insufficient among the major polluter nations to bring their general public into a strong desire for immediate action. As a result, internal legislative initiatives have been uncertain and mixed.

This “pulp fiction” way of thought presents a real danger to our civilization. It confuses the public mind with distraction, contradiction and false equivalencies. Reality is pushed aside by immediate needs and self-gratification. As a result, for many citizens the future of our civilization can be characterized as that of a fanciful dream. Some say: Who cares; Geo-engineering will fix it. Others anxiously say; wonderful, this may be the Apocalypse we have all been waiting for. Others simply do not believe there is a problem. Others say: What do I care; I won't be around.

The fact of the matter is that there is a high probability of an “Apocalypse” on the horizon brought on by the continuation of the burning of fossil fuels and a concurrent massive release of Methane and it is not being recognized. The world community is playing “Russian Roulette” with possible outcomes too horrific to contemplate.

Immediate recognition of these outcomes among leaders of the largest carbon consumer, producer and emitter nations must take place immediately. Binding agreements that will eliminate fossil fuels as our civilization's primary energy source are essential. The consensus among many scientists is that elimination or near elimination of fossil fuels must take place within a short 10/15 year period of time. This will require the cessation of all new fossil fuel extraction projects (oil, gas and coal) and the retiring of old ones over that time period.

Is it possible? That is the question facing our 21<sup>st</sup> century Anthropocene Age. Difficult social/political challenges face our carbon dependent civilization. The “Pulp fiction” mentality

referenced above rules among the general public. Also there is an “optimism bias” among many of the political and economic elite. It even extends part way into the scientific community.

Yet there is a solution. The next part of this chapter offers one.

## **Chapter # 8**

### **A Dangerous Zero Sum Game—The “Chicago School” vs the Planet**

#### **Part IV An Economic Solution for the Increase in the Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and a Methane Hydrate Feedback Loop**

Part III of this chapter presented the problem. We will now discuss the solution. But first; some questions:

How can our 21<sup>st</sup> century world society of seven plus billion people mechanistically orchestrate a turnover from fossil fuels to renewable energy? How much time do we have? How much fossil fuel energy will be needed for the conversion? Will that amount of fossil fuel energy requirement in itself put us over the CO<sub>2</sub>/CH<sub>4</sub> feedback loop edge? Will industries such as air, automobiles, trucking, ocean shipping and metals now so reliant on fossil fuels be able to make the transition; and if so, what can be the alternative they employ? How will highly carbon consumptive basic industries such as concrete and steel make the transition? How will the citizens country by country, region by region, respond to such a state of economic disruption and reorganization?

These are questions that are not being broadly discussed in economic academia; nor in the business community nor in government. They should be. The future of our species is at stake.

There is a way that a relatively non-violent transition can take place. It will, however, require strong leadership throughout the planet at the national level. Fortunately we are beginning to see some positive signs. COP21 was a starter. It showed that there was a unity of common purpose among many world leaders.

The situation, however, is calling for far greater resolve that we are now seeing. Heads of State must come together under the articles of a newly formed multinational body with the stature of the United Nations. That organization was formed for the purpose of providing a forum for the nations of the world to achieve a unity of purpose in order to avert another world war. As humanity now faces the possibility of extinction, the need for such an organization is far greater than it was then. Within the next 36 months such an organization must economically orchestrate an increase in the cost of carbon world-wide; implemented from carbon's first moment of entry into the system and extending through to its becoming a part of derivative goods and services.

This would be a market approach. National and international markets would serve as disciplinarian through pricing. They would force alternative forms of energy to be brought into the system up and down the production/consumption line. They would achieve this by pricing in gradual increases in the price of carbon, beginning at its source. Increasing carbon cost at its source would force higher prices to be passed through to the final price of all derivative goods and services. Non-carbon derivative forms of energy would then be given the incentive to become increasingly competitive. They eventually would replace carbon. Some end products that are solely reliant on the burning of large amounts of carbon would be eliminated from the system by way of price appreciation.

There are far reaching social implications to this. Present consumers of carbon energy dependent goods and services will have to switch over to non carbon goods and services. Carbon producers will be forced out of the market. Carbon reliant socio/economic activities too will be forced out of the market. Price will force change.

This approach is congruent within the currently established framework of existing capital market systems both within nations and internationally.

But first a word on the profession of economics:

A move in the direction outlined here cannot occur without the voices of the prominent economists of our age. They can make the difference. Their profession is in control of economic thought. They can bring the public to an awareness of the seriousness of the problem and its solution by way of pricing in negative external costs.

The time has come for them to recognize this and to speak up.

Throughout the world and most notably in the Economic Departments of Western Universities, negative external costs are not being emphasized as a part of the decision making process. Maximizing total financial return is. There is little or no interest in saving the planet; becoming more efficient in raping it yes; but not in saving it.

Now to the details:

For producers of oil, gas and coal a national tax (Negative Externality Tax – let's call it NET) will be levied at the point of extraction; defined as that point where the product enters the national and/or international market. That national tax will be increased year by year over a fifteen year period. It will therefore become integral to the pricing of all domestic goods and services in the country and the export pricing of goods and services.

The tax rate established for each compliant country will serve to bring domestic and/or international price up to an internationally agreed carbon equivalent figure. That figure would be increased year by year based on an internationally agreed world-wide 15 year carbon reduction formula. Here is an example for diesel: The NET would bring the cost up to say \$70 per barrel domestically and internationally immediately and then over 15 years to say \$ 200/300 per barrel or whatever price brings global carbon emissions down to an ecologically acceptable level.

In the case above revenue from the domestic tax will first be the difference between the internal production cost and \$70 and then year by year the increasing formulaic amount. That revenue will be retained by the producing nation where it can be used for needed internal investment and social adjustments arising from higher prices for carbon consumptive consumer and industrial products. It can also be used to encourage non carbon activities and to develop non carbon sources of energy.

For those countries that refuse to comply, their exports of goods to compliant countries will be penalized (import duty taxed-let's call it IDT) by the import compliant country. Each and every import will be evaluated as to its local non taxed NET content.

Countries that import from non-compliant countries and then re-export to compliant countries will also have their exports to compliant countries taxed based on missing NET content.

Can this be accomplished? Some of the finest mathematical minds on our planet now spend their time devising algorithms for computerized trading of securities in order to exploit the weaknesses of other algorithms. The time has come for the economics profession to give these minds a new challenge, one that will benefit human civilization – and save it from the possibility of extinction.

Import duty revenues (let's call them IDR's) collected by compliant countries from non-compliant country imports can be turned over to a body such as the World Bank to be used to assist compliant nations with their difficulty in making necessary economic/social adjustments. These adjustments will fall into two categories; one the national destruction and dislocation being caused by ongoing climatic events and the other the decline nationally in fossil fuel export revenues.

Immediate examples of potential beneficiaries in the first category are a number of Island nations in the Pacific already being inundated by rising waters and Arctic settlements being affected by global warming. Most will be without internal resources to resettle population. Many other nations with low land areas being inundated by rising oceans will also need this kind of assistance.

Populations in many areas of the planet will be severely affected as fossil fuels are eliminated. Russia, Australia and the Middle Eastern countries are examples. Many Middle Eastern countries are almost totally reliant on oil revenues to pay for food imports. Such revenues will decline to the point where they will be insufficient for feeding the population. This also will have an impact on Middle Eastern oil and gas non-producers and minimal producers, those countries that have relied on grants from their wealthy neighbor producers. Egypt, reliant on neighbor contributions for food imports is a prime example. The future for Egypt looks bleak. Although extrapolating

from present trends to make predictions is always problematic, current projections are a population that will have increased from 90 million to 138 million by 2050. The Nigerian situation is even more bleak. Its petroleum industry is the largest in Africa. Its population of 186 million is expected to grow to 390 million by 2050.

Time will be needed to allow many of these countries to restructure and rebalance their economies. Others in need of assistance will be countries like India with pockets of poverty and minimal originating carbon revenue. Countries such as these will need massive injections of capital in order to restructure their industries and feed their populations. As a general rule, all nations that are unable to fund societal adjustments will need assistance.

The pricing/costing methodology here outlined will allow the world within the critical 10/15 year period to turn to carbon free sources of energy. Nation states at all levels of technological development will be given time to adjust. As they do, high carbon input products and services will leave the market and be replaced by energy input products with low or no carbon input. Societally, this will force nations at all ends of the planet to adopt a different social political economic energy structural logic from that which exists today.

It must be understood: This is just the first step toward human planetary resource control-and human survival. Pricing in of other negative externalities harmful to humanity and all other life on the planet can then come next.

To repeat what has been emphasized throughout this book. *Homo sapiens* continuation rests on this premise: The biosphere is finite. We must find a way to live in a congruent state within that finitude.

The time has come for all industrialized nations to acknowledge that the problem is planetary and it can only be solved multi-nationally.

The future of our human civilization hangs in the balance.

## Chapter # 9

### “The Tragedy of the Commons”

#### Forging a New Global Ethic for Planetary Survival

**A General Statement of the Tragedy of the Commons.**

**“All ethical behavior must be relative to the protection and sustenance of the Earth's diverse yet mutually supporting systems of all living things.”**

Elliott, Herschel. *Ethics for a Finite World, an Essay Concerning a Sustainable Future*. Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 2005

A restatement of "The Tragedy of the Commons," by Garrett Hardin (1915-2003) , which appeared in *Science*, Vol. 162, December 1968, pp. 1243-124

Garrett Hardin, *Living Within Limits*: Oxford University Press, 1993

This book would not be complete without the inclusion of two people who in some future age may very well be known as the greatest ethicists in human history; Herschel Elliott and Garrett Hardin. Their writing upsets much of what you and I consider ethical and/or moral. They framed their words in a metaphorical tale under the name; “The Tragedy of the Commons.”

The ethical behavior of our civilization is greatly influenced by several thousand years of deeply embedded mythological images in our group psyche. They are so deeply embedded that even



those individuals who profess not to believe in the validity of these images are affected by them. Only the disconnected psychotic can escape. If you are an American, read Lincoln's Gettysburg address and hear the biblical thunder in his words. Listen to President George W Bush as he described the manifest destiny of America and its people prior to the invasion of Iraq. Think through the positivistic images of the Christian television evangelists. Think deeply on the words the next time you sing "God Bless America."

These images can take many forms. Some of them personify a god or gods, some tell tales that give insight into our deepest thoughts. Whether understood as truth or metaphor; in our minds the images become real, taking on a power of their own. Some make us afraid. Some give us comfort as it was for the Psalmist who wrote; *Though I walk through the shadow of the valley of death I will fear no evil.*

An increasingly damaged planet is crying out for sweeping and permanent change in many of these past images. It is calling for a **metamorphosis** of the human mind. It is asking *Homo sapiens* to change the way it thinks.

It is calling for a new human foundation that rests on a new global ethic. Humanity must in a sense "reinvent the sacred." This chapter includes a number of statements made by Herschel Elliott outlining that new global ethic. The ethic is designed to meet the requirements of a human society living in a consonant relationship with Planet earth. It undermines and challenges existing assumptions of our twenty-first century civilization. For some readers, Elliott's ethics will be shocking as they contain echoes of both Karl Marx's egalitarian world and George Orwell's dystopian totalitarianism. But they are not a call for that Marxian or Orwellian uniformity. They are a call for a new consciousness grounded on values cleansed of the self-destructive ethics of the past and the hedonistic materialistic obsessiveness of our present global culture.

Many readers will write off the economic part of the new global ethic as being too bitter a financial pill to swallow, as it calls for personal sacrifice at a very high cost. Also, it calls for a transformation of the entire capital market system by means of a re-pricing in domestic and international capital markets that takes into account all negative externalities.

This new ethic applies equally to all nations, the wealthiest as well as the poorest. All of human society needs to embrace it. Since the crisis is global, the solutions must necessarily be global. Either we join together in a concerted effort to save this planet, or-within the present millennium we will all perish together.

The reader is warned that some of the proposals made by this author following the Elliott quotes may come across as being boringly technical; in particular those dealing with taxation and economic and legal corporate structure. They are included here because they reach to the heart of the world's problems. Solving them using Elliott's ethical standards is absolutely necessary. We live in a complex world. Solutions call for complexity. They require changes in the way we have structured every aspect of our society.

All of the ethics we now hold on to are based on comparisons to predetermined formulae grounded on the deeply embedded mythological images telling us what is "right" and what is "wrong." What does the predetermined formula say? Should I think this way or should I think that way? Should I do this or should I do that? Ultimately the answer necessarily must fit into the predetermined formulae. In the case of religion, the formula often takes on a projection coming from a God as recorded in scripture. Confusion can reign in the decision making process. Either the case does or does not fit into the God/Scripture formula. To add to the confusion, the exact conditions presenting themselves may not fit any predetermined formulae. Ethicists often cite the following example of confusion of conditions where choices run into conflict under the "do no harm formula." A child walks onto the road as I am driving down the road. Along the side of the road is a crowd of people. My choice is to run over the child in the road or turn the wheel of my car and kill some of the people in the crowd by the side of the road.

Before he died, Elliott wrote a treatise under the name; *Ethics for a Finite World, an Essay Concerning a Sustainable Future*. He challenged much of what we refer to today as the very basis for "our" ethics and morals. As just noted, ours' sets ethical standards based on one predetermined formula, one body of truth. It is a "truth" constructed over the several thousand years. Elliott says there is another body of truth. It is built on the necessity for the preservation of the human species on the planet. His ethics provides a new standard based on a new truth or set of truths. It says that **any and all behavior that furthers the continuance of the human**

**species on Planet Earth is ethical.** Then it goes the next step by saying that **any and all behavior that does not further the continuance of the human species on Planet Earth is unethical.**

A moments' thought will reveal the profundity of these two statements. Under the assumption that the planet can only support 1 to 2 billion people, a case can be made for abortions being ethical if they ultimately reduce the population of the Earth to a number within that range. Under the same reasoning; invasive contraception forced if necessary becomes mandatory. Even setting limits on medical care to the aged becomes ethical.

Can an economic/social system that does not endanger the biosphere be designed and implemented under such understandings as these? That in itself requires an ethical answer. If we are to survive, we have no choice.

Elliott's ethics were more than just words. His life reflected his words. He himself retreated into a Thoreau kind of existence in New England.

It follows that a new form of governance and jurisprudence would have to evolve under Elliott's ethical view based on penalties for crimes against humanity's continuance on the planet. Such crimes would extend into today's corporate shell of protection of executives who knowingly deceive the public and cause harm. Examples would be prosecution of Exxon executives for the ongoing disinformation on global warming, and FOX News executives for propagating misleading information as to the scientific evidence of CO2 as the cause of global warming. The same jurisprudence would apply to politicians.

To the extent that ethical or non-ethical behavior should determine the application of law, the following questions arise; should not the CEO of an oil company that produces end products that will drive global temperatures up to dangerous levels go to prison? Should not the Roman Catholic Church be brought before the Court in The Hague for its position on contraception if it can be proven that position is the cause of population explosion in certain areas of the planet with extensive environmental damage and human suffering the result? The list is endless as are the social, political, legal and philosophical/religious implications.

Herschel Elliott in his restatement of Garrett Hardin's "The Tragedy of the Commons" upset much of what our civilization considers to be ethical and moral behavior. Without a change in that behavior he points to the strong possibility of the end of our species.

Following is a summation of his ethical principles. I have changed the order of a few words—without change in meaning, in an attempt to provide brevity. The captions are mine.

## **Summation of *Ethics for a Finite World***

### **Principle of the Finite in the Commons**

- Continual growth is impossible in any finite domain.
- The Earth is finite: It has a limited stock of renewable fuels, minerals and biological resources, a limited through-put of energy from the sun,
- The Earth has a finite sink for processing wastes.
- Because continual growth is impossible in any finite domain, such continual growth on Earth will lead to the tragedy of the commons.
- Should individuals or societies steadily increase their exploitation of the finite ecosystem supporting them; that system, regardless of the causes or ideals which drive the individuals, will eventually collapse.
- For the first time on a global scale human beings are exceeding the sustainable land and resource availability of the Earth.
- The tragedy of the commons is what awaits humankind if people do not begin to live as responsible members of the Earth's system of mutually sustaining life forms.

### **Principle of Equilibrium in the Commons**

- Ecosystems are in dynamic equilibrium.

- The equilibrium of an ecosystem can usually accommodate any activity on the part of its members as long as that activity is limited in amount.
- If a sustainable equilibrium cannot be maintained, then the step-by-step destruction of the Earth's ecosystems will remain the persisting – and eventually tragic characteristic of human activity.

### **Principle of Ethics in the Commons**

- As human activity comes to dominate the Earth's ecosystems, the nature of ethics must be differently conceived.
- No ethics can be grounded in biological impossibility.
- All ethical behavior must be relative to the protection and sustenance of the Earth's diverse yet mutually supporting systems of all living things.
- Both an ethics grounded in a self-centered individualism and an ethics which builds on the need for a self-sacrificing altruism have the same inherent defects. Both have inbuilt, positive feedback mechanisms which cause a steady increase in the human exploitation of the Earth's biological resources.
- Ethics are incoherent that require ethical behavior that ends all further ethical behavior.
- An acceptable system of ethics is contingent on its ability to preserve the ecosystems which sustain it.
- When thus grounded in the nature and needs of life rather than in the abstract relationships between the elements of an *a priori* system of thought, ethics then can take its place among all the other human endeavors—science, medicine, technology, art, music, and literature.

### **Principle of Morality in the Commons**

- The stability and well-being of the Earth's biosystem has moral priority over the welfare of any of its parts, including the needs and interests of human societies and individuals in those societies.
- Tragic consequences can follow from practicing mistaken moral theories.
- An individual's behavior can no longer be judged to be moral merely because its motive conforms to unchanging ideals and principle.

- People must recognize that the moral obligations to fill all vital human needs can never cause those needs to diminish and can never cause people to stop their destructive exploitation of the environment.
- People must reject the doctrine that moral behavior can be justified by *a priori* thought which requires no knowledge of the causes of its ecological consequences.
- The environment is unlikely ever to be protected when all are free to use as much energy and to consume as many goods and services as they can afford and while society honors the moral obligation to supply the material necessities to everyone who lacks them.
- Systems of moral belief are self-refuting if, when actually practiced and enforced, they subvert the moral goals which they were intended to attain.
- People's first moral duty is to live as responsible and sustaining members of the world's community of living things.

### **Principle of Nature in the Commons**

- Nature controls any exuberant species either by drastically reducing its population or by its extinction.
- Material demands are constrained by the limited resource use which the bio-system can sustain. Exceeding this carrying capacity will cause that system to collapse into a simpler state.
- The additional stress of continued growth will make the system collapse suddenly and without warning.
- Nature has devised the means by which "to commensurate the incommensurables," that is, to resolve the conflicting needs and interests of all of the Earth's various life forms.
- Avoiding the cruel coercion of nature cannot be achieved as if by miracle or accident.
- There is no assurance that people have the will and the intelligence to live within the necessary limits of nature.

### **Principle of Excessive Consumption by Wealthy Nations in the Commons**

- The march of events toward biological tragedy is being driven by the excessive consumption of the wealthy industrialized nations.
- The citizens of these nations account for most of the destructive exploitation of land and biological resources that is occurring in every corner of the globe because of their huge and increasing appetite for luxury goods and travel, for lavish housing and gourmet foods, and for leisure and entertainment activities which have high energy and environmental costs.

### **Principle of Economic Reality in the Commons**

- When the majority of the people come to accept the modern economic ideal of a steady increase in their wealth and consumption, a collapse of the commons which sustains them is inevitable.

### **Principle of Refutation of Monotheistic Thought**

- Having been brought up or educated under the formative influence of a monotheistic religion, many believe that the ideals and principles of moral behavior can be justified non-empirically by reason or *a priori* thought. The tragedy of the commons shows the absurdity of this claim.

### **Principle of Medical Provision and Population Control in the Commons**

- Society must discover controls to prevent unlimited growth in population.
- Population is likely to remain unstable as long as individuals are free to have as many children as they want while society at large has the moral obligation to pay for food, medical care, schools, and the increase in sanitary and employment facilities necessary to support those children.
- Exhorting people voluntarily to protect the environment and to reduce their fertility is not an empirically effective means for accomplishing necessary goals.

### **Principle of Means, Ends, Holistic Goals in the Commons**

- Means must never work at cross purposes with the necessary ends.
- Means must be proved by empirical evidence to be able to attain; not to thwart necessary holistic goals.

### **Principle of Necessary Coercion**

- Necessary coercion need not be tyranny. On the contrary, effective coercion is a necessary condition for having enduring freedom for all.
- Societally enforced constraint is necessary to prevent the tragic breakdown of the Earth's bio-system.

### **Principle of the End point in the Commons**

- The continuing increase in the exploitation of the Earth's limited resources is aggregating the stresses already placed on the Earth's ecosystems. The end point will be the rapid loss of the Earth's ability to support human society in its present form.
- There is no assurance that people have the will and the intelligence to live within the necessary limits of nature.

The important question we will now consider is how these statements from Herschel Elliott apply to the America we know today, and to the world?

Following are a number of present American assumptions followed by challenges to those assumptions based on Herschel Elliott's ethical observations: My purpose here is to engage readers from all backgrounds and expertise.

A reading of these will show just how difficult the transition can/will be. Elliott took what is called an "intellectual approach." Unfortunately that does not always work. This book goes into some detail on what happens when intellectualism fails, when change is brought on by pain and suffering.

Although some of the following comments speak specifically to American changes, they speak to all nations of the world. The needed ethic is a universal ethic.

### **Political**

**\_\_\_\_\_An assumption held by many Americans is that their form of government is superior to all others. The new global ethic challenges this assumption. It says to the extent that**



other forms of government are able to direct greater attention to the welfare and continuance of our species; they are superior to the American form.

\_\_\_\_\_An assumption held by many Americans is that the dissemination of information by special interests is an acceptable form of “free speech.” The new global ethic challenges this assumption where the information works against the welfare and continuance of our species. It says dissemination of information must be built on truths, not on sophistic self-interest. It rests its argument on the principle that dissemination of information that mimics sophistic behavior is by definition inherently self-destructive. All information disseminated to the body politic must, as its ultimate goal, meet the Socratic standards of *Truth, Honesty, Goodness and Absolute Good*.

\_\_\_\_\_An assumption held by many Americans is that the principles set forth in the Constitution by the founding fathers are changeless and only subject to the most narrow interpretation. The new global ethic says that the American Constitution must reflect both American and global needs for planetary survival. It says that it was written many years ago to serve a society living in an ecologically secure world that in many respects no longer exists. Only by changes centering on the current need for planetary survival of the human species can any Constitution have lasting value. Constitutional amendments and Supreme Court decisions in America must reflect an overriding concern for the ecological survival of *Homo sapiens*.

\_\_\_\_\_America in the recent past has used the option of preemptive war in order to secure its interests. The new global ethic expands this option to cases where the ecological security of the world is at stake and all other options have been exhausted.

\_\_\_\_\_An assumption held by many Americans is that free speech and free assembly are inviolate. The new global ethic places a condition on this activity. It says that speech or assembly leading to the violation of human life is a violation of the right to life, and therefore calls for such speech or assembly to be silenced with a force commensurate to the potential for the violation of human life.

## Social

\_\_\_\_\_An existing global social assumption says pregnancy is a human right. The new global ethic says this is not so. It says bringing children into the world is not a right; it is a responsibility and it must be fully and unhesitatingly shared by the birth parents, as well as society.

\_\_\_\_\_An existing global social assumption is that women have a right to bear as many children as they want. The new global ethic says this is not so. Population growth cannot remain unchecked. Population size cannot be allowed to exceed ecological stability. To control excessive population growth, prevention of unplanned births must take on the highest priority. Sterilization of men and women, both voluntary and forced, must become the norm. Abortion also.

\_\_\_\_\_A social assumption in many parts of the world says that the distribution of medical care should be based on the ability to pay, with limited concern for those unable to pay. The new global ethic makes this unacceptable. Every human life is valuable. However, when resources are limited, priority must be given to those with the potential for being the most productive members of society; in general, the young and those who can make the greatest contribution. It follows that resources that support intensive care for the terminally ill and those with debilitating conditions should be redirected to assure the flourishing of the most productive in the population.

\_\_\_\_\_A global social assumption holds that some humans are inherently superior to other humans by virtue of social or economic status and they therefore merit the special advantages they enjoy. The new global ethic says that every human being should be afforded the greatest possible level of opportunity, including living conditions, health care, and education.

\_\_\_\_\_A global social assumption is that the purpose of education is to prepare the individual to be an economically productive member of society. The new global ethic

extends this aim to include the development of human creativity both in the sciences and the humanities, regardless of foreseeable economic return.

### **Economic**

\_\_\_\_\_An existing global economic assumption says world capital markets must remain free without interference (Efficient Market Theory) to set prices, and that this is the most efficient way to exploit and allocate world resources and to create wealth for the masses. The new global ethic challenges this assumption. Capital markets have no conscience; they can be constructive as well as destructive socially and ecologically. The primary purpose of capital markets must be to serve humanity in the broadest sense. The new global ethic points to today's capital markets as the leading force underlying the degradation of the planet and the endangerment of all life forms, including our own. It calls for ecological algorithmic formulae to be a part of all capital market pricing; with that pricing to include all negative externalities. Each negative data point along the way from resource origin to final consumption must become a part of that final pricing. Countries that refuse to price in these external costs will have their exports appropriately penalized by way of a "negative externality" tax levied by the importing country. Revenues realized from these taxes will be allocated at the local level to "clean up" local ecological degradation and at the international level to "clean up" global damage done to the planet, as well as to develop locally and globally new environmentally sound technologies.

\_\_\_\_\_An existing global economic assumption is that all speculative activity has real economic value. In particular, this applies to derivative purchases and sales in financial markets. The new global ethic acknowledges the need for these financial transactions but limits institutional and private trading volumes by the level of capital needed to support the inherent possibility of future loss. Additionally, the new global ethic demands that traders be personally liable for all losses through the end of all contracts for which they themselves benefit, extending to expiration beyond corporate employment. As severe resource shortages occur from ecological imbalances—which will intensify in the next decade,

ensuing violent swings in asset values cannot be allowed to turn derivative trading into a global environmental “crap game” at the expense of humanity.

\_\_\_\_\_An existing global economic assumption is that the limited liability corporation is inherently the most efficient form for doing business. Management partakes in rewards but escapes liability, and stockholders reap rewards while limiting their liability to capital invested. Directors are paid to scrutinize management decisions, but generally take on no or at most limited liability. The new global ethic places full corporate responsibility on management, controlling stockholders, and directors. It calls for these parties of interest to assume personal liability for the liabilities of a corporation in proportion to their interest in future gains. It calls for a body of corporate law similar to that covering General Partnerships.

\_\_\_\_\_An existing global economic assumption says that the market should freely determine the level of individual disposable income. The new global ethic challenges this assumption. It does not dismiss market factors in setting wages, but calls for progressive income and estate taxation to bring net disposable income within a band set by a predetermined ratio. The new global ethic proposed generally would follow the system used in the Scandinavian countries, begun in the thirties. This system has given these countries the highest standard of living in the world. Net income is kept within a reasonable ratio between the highest and lowest of those compensated with the difference through taxation equitably applied throughout society to improve society as a whole; such as grants to research scientists, education, job training, the arts, medical care and care for the disabled.

\_\_\_\_\_An existing global economic assumption says that the Gross National Product (GNP) of a nation can be defined by the value of goods and services produced in one year. The new global ethic says this formula is outdated, misleading, and deceptive because it does not represent true economic value to society. Clearly, the components of GNP have varying degrees of social utility, and should be so weighted to reflect this. A most egregious example was the value that derivative trading in the years preceding the crash of 2008 contributed to the GNP of America. Another is the value of those goods and services that produce

negative by-products; for example, energy products with CO2 emissions. GNP should discount harmful goods and services by a stated and revealed deduction in gross figures. The net amount should be shown as a revised GNP calculation.

## **Religious**

\_\_\_\_\_Many Jewish, Christian, and Muslim believers worldwide assume that their beliefs have absolute moral value and as such should be allowed to set the standard for political, social and economic behavior. The new global ethic challenges this assumption. It says that every religion has a responsibility to justify its value by demonstrating its positive societal role. It argues that in many ways these religions are not doing this. It points to images that are violent, narcissistic, and destructive. It argues that many Jewish, Christian and Islamic, doctrines and practices fail to provide men and women with the aspirations that would allow them to create the needed social cohesion that alone can assure human survival through the end of this millennium; nor have they addressed the violence arising from present world conflicts, nor the ecological degradation to our planet. It sees in their archaic forms many persistent anachronistic elements.

\_\_\_\_\_An assumption of religious extremists worldwide is that they have a divine mandate to dominate the national and international political process. The new global ethic says religion must remain a private matter. Religion and State must everywhere be kept separate. History, both recent and past, has shown the dangers of national and international religious domination. With modern weaponry, this danger now borders on the unthinkable. Countries governed by religious extremists must be recognized by the world community as threats to humanity. The extremists must be silenced.

## Chapter # 10

### Reinventing the Sacred in the Age of the Cosmos

#### Part I Hebraic vs Hellenic Thought

**“In the fourth and fifth century BCE excellence in everything’ was the Greek ideal.... The philosophical papers of that period have to do with conduct and virtue: virtue in the sense of excellence, not in the sense of good-versus-evil.”**

Joseph Campbell *Reflections on the Art of Living*

This chapter will trace the later history of our Axial Age and give the reader the reasons why the thought process that emerged is now being found inadequate. It will show that this thought process in its dogmatic form is proving insufficient as a guide to bring humanity out of the painful and possible terminal ecological future it is now facing. This, of course, is not to discount all knowledge that arose, but it is to say that for species survival a very significant civilizational paradigm shift ushering a new form of thought will have to occur.

As has been emphasized in this book, the problem stems from two misconceptions that led to belief contradictions as to the relationship between *Homo sapiens* and the planet. There was an inadequate understanding of the natural forces that control the functioning of the planet’s biosphere. This inadequate understanding became a part of Egyptian and Greek thought. It followed through into our thought process today. Here it is in capsule form:

- **There was no acknowledgement of the need for humans to exist on Planet Earth in recognition of a consonant co-existent relationship with Nature.**

- **There was no acknowledgement of the need for humans to exist in a consonant co-existent relationship beyond Planet Earth within the cosmos through acknowledgement of his and her oneness with the “other-dimensionality” of the cosmos.**

Following is a discussion of the origins of this misunderstanding. Without knowing how it developed, we cannot overcome it. A repeat of the description of the formation of our Axial Age, as seen in the opening pages of this book, is in order:

### **Our Axial Age**

**Some say the change occurred at the beginning of our Axial Age. It was an Age that began in the Levant around 800/200 BCE. The foundation was in fact set long before. It took place during a period known as the Holocene. That period marked the end of the age of hunter/gatherers and the beginning of the bronze/iron agricultural age.**

**At that time two civilizations began to form. By 6,000/3,000 BCE a Sumerian emerged along the lower Tigris and Euphrates rivers. There was another; an Egyptian clustered along the northern banks of the Nile. Out of them came an age that gave social, cultural, religious and institutional structure to their societies—and to ours.**

**Religious belief as it began to form was strikingly similar. Both redefined in certain terms the human relationship to Planet Earth and to the heavens beyond. Out of this came a new mindset directing humans to a God or gods whose residence was beyond; up above in the sky.**

**This new religious mindset was also telling them that Nature need no longer be revered as it had been, and that they were destined to dominate it. We humans were separate from all other life and nonlife here on earth. Not only separate, but even “chosen” was the word used by some.**

**With this change, the former horizontal transcendental attachment to Nature that had guided human biological evolutionary development for over one million years was cast aside. Herein lay a fatal flaw; one with dangerous implications for the future of our species, now pointing to the possibility of its extinction.**

**This flaw is leading many to a reexamination of our Sumerian/Egyptian past and the societal institutional structures that grew out of it. With this reexamination, it has become clear that unless we can extricate ourselves from the hold so many parts of these structures continue to have on our lives; like any other organism within the biosphere of this planet that has become alien to it, we will be rejected by it.**

**Those who are concerned are being plagued by the question of whether changes of such a wide range and magnitude are at all possible in the short period of time we have in front of us. That concern prompted the writing of this book. Based on the scientific evidence now empirically settled, it directs the discussion to the need for changes in thought and behavior that for the survival of *Homo sapiens* must take place over the next one to two hundred years; changes impacting many of the age-old institutions that support and give structure to what we as a 21<sup>st</sup> century human society believe to be our social, political, religious, economic, and ethical norms.**

It has been emphasized in the book that Judeo/Christian planetary/cosmic understanding as it came to dominate the thought process in the Axial Age held to the view of God's separation from Planet Earth; with that God being in some upward dimension. That thought separated us from the horizontal transcendental view of the earlier hunter/gatherers.

### **How Christianity missed an opportunity**

We all need to begin with an answer to the question of why Christianity three centuries after the death of Jesus incorporated the Hebraic image of God into its theology. As has now been explained in the book, there is ample evidence from the Nag Hammadi discovery that Jesus did not share that Hebraic vertical God view.

Among scholars today, there is an intense interest in the Nag Hammadi discovery. (See *Chapter 5 A Clue from the Monastery at Nag Hammadi*) Until then, scholars had only been able to speculate in vague terms as to what the "Christ" issues and the GOD identity issues really were.

A very general summary of the Nag Hammadi Jesus position follows: (Note just how "Hellenic it is.)

- **GOD is here among us**
- **Every person alive has the divine within.**
- **We received our being from the divine, the same source as Jesus.**
- **Jesus was/is not our master, only the template for our lives.**
- **We can become like him as equals.**



- **Jesus came to show us the light each of us has within.**
- **Self-knowledge is knowledge of the divine within.**
- **All those who find the light of the divine within are saved.**
- **Those who don't die as if they never were.**

It should be noted here that the above is a very general description of his views. What is important to understand is that these views provide a valuable understanding into the Jesus' insights that were eliminated in the fourth century from any possibility of entering the theology we now call Christianity. It should also be noted that these views at that time existed widely throughout the area; from Alexandria up through the Levant.

It will be left to religious historians to answer the question of why in the fourth century the then position was taken by the Roman Church. The fact remains that strong personalities at that time blocked out a different view of Jesus, and then with the backing of Constantine enforced their own brand of Hebraic Roman Christianity on the world. It was a brand of Christianity that would control the thoughts and actions of Western Society many years later. To a great extent it controls the thoughts and actions of many in Western Society today.

So, the question comes to us now: Is this the reason we are unable to understand our predicament?

Since the discovery of The Gospel of Thomas in 1945 at Nag Hammadi in Egypt, Christianity has been forced to reexamine the rationale for the selection of the writings that formed the New Testament in the fourth century and also, as a byproduct of this examination, the Roman Catholic church itself. We now see proof that in the process of establishing a system of theology that would become the Roman Catholic Church, the bishops suppressed many important resources relating to what Jesus had said. The Nag Hammadi discovery revealed that there existed a much wider range of Christian thought within the first one hundred years after his death than was previously recognized.

### **How then Roman Catholic thought was challenged**

In Western Europe with the coming of the Enlightenment, Roman Catholic thought suddenly found itself being challenged by a wide range of other thought. Hellenic thought was one. There was a contradiction between Hellenic and the Christian Roman Hebraic. That thought had preoccupied itself with sin and with evil.

Not so with the earlier Hellenic. (See Joseph Campbell captioned quote above.) With Hellenic all man had to do is to know “thymself” and search within for higher values. Hellenic thought made no mention of the “good/evil” biblical dichotomy as a description of the state of man as defined in the fourth century by Roman Catholicism.

With Hellenism, man’s intellectual impulses were given a sense of freedom not allowed under Roman Catholic Christianity. In Hellenism the will of God was removed. The highest impulses of man became the fulfillment of the will of man. With Hellenism Man was the center of the Universe.

Early Roman Christianity was not ready for this. Early on it had separated itself from Hellenic thought. It had turned its back on a neo Platonic Jesus and considered the only true doctrinal nameplate to be the authoritative legalistic Hebraic judgmental father God of the Torah. From its consolidation by Constantine in the fourth century to the beginning of the Renaissance this was the final salvation picture.

This discussion would not be complete without mention of how the sixteenth century transition took place. Few are aware of the story.

Some historical facts are in order. In 529 A.D. the Christian Roman Emperor Justinian ordered the Platonic Academy in Athens closed. It was the last bastion of Greek thought in Christendom. That year has often been used as a convenient date for being the end of the classical period and the beginning of the Middle (Dark) Ages. Although, a limited amount of Greek classical thought was in fact already been absorbed into Christianity from the writing of individuals like Paul and Augustine, Greek classical thought in general was declared to be at odds with much of Christian orthodoxy.

With the closing of the school, seven of its teachers moved to Persia where they started a new school. This new school was later to serve as a way station for transfer of the Greek classics in

their most pure form to Baghdad under the direction of the Abbasid Caliphate which was founded there in 750 A.D. The Abbasid Caliphate gradually moved all Islamic centers of learning to its capital, including the Greek classical studies. Scholarship in these studies in Baghdad then became intense, even though most Islamic scholars rejected—except for mathematics and the sciences—Greek classical thought.

Now, and this is important: About two centuries later, with Spain now under Muslim control, Cordoba, the capital of Spain, began to vie with Baghdad as a center of Greek classical studies.

Greek Classical literature was also being preserved in other cities such as Constantinople. Some were also being preserved in the Christian monasteries, but only in the most rudimentary form. As a result, throughout Christendom, the study of the Greek classics had virtually disappeared.

During this Golden Age of Islam, it was the Islamic scholars who had rediscovered the Greek classics at a time when medieval Europe had turned its back on them. Even though they were meticulously cataloging and translating these classics and studied them at great length, they resisted accepting their humanistic ideas in the context of Islamic thought. Their Koran and record of the life of Muhammad would not allow them.

Then came an event that ultimately sparked the Renaissance in Europe. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, after the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, and with Spain now under Christian control; from Cordoba these Islamic translations and commentaries on Greek classical philosophy and science were transmitted across the Pyrenees to end up in the newly founded universities in Paris, Bologna and Oxford. There they sparked a revival of Hellenistic Greek classical scholarship. The Renaissance had begun, marking a period of broadly based political, cultural, scientific and artistic creativity yet unknown in European history.

There is no question that it was the Islamic scholars who preserved these classics by translation and study and that it was their custodianship and scholarship that enabled the European Renaissance to occur when it did. This is one of the great ironies of history. Western intellectualism overall has given little credit to Islam for this historical fact.

The cultural/societal transformation in medieval Europe was enormous. Greek philosophers such as Xenophanes, Socrates, Pericles, Plato and Aristotle with their deeply penetrating observations

about the human condition once again showed themselves to be among the greatest thinkers the Western world had ever known. Their influence soon could be seen in every aspect of post medieval life. Nothing could stop them. From Michelangelo's statue of David in Florence—a replication of the Greek illustrating the perfection of the “new age man,” to the soaring architecture of the Gothic cathedrals to Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome to the French Enlightenment philosophers to the western constitutional form of government; Greek classical influence was the underlying driving force releasing a new western intellectual creativity. The power to form the future without a Roman Catholic God was being passed to the individual. The world would never be the same. Men like Aquinas, Giotto, Botticelli, Luther, Copernicus, Michelangelo, da Vinci, Galileo, to name only a few, literally exploded on to the scene.

Did this transition leave us with a society that would allow humanity to enter a new dimension of understanding, assuring our human planetary survival? Was the Enlightenment shift enough? The answer is No. None of the developments from their very beginning to the present day were able to steer humanity off its present path of planetary self-destruction.

For a further discussion of the dark side of this scientific advance we will now go to the next part of the chapter titled “The Enlightenment.”

## **Chapter # 10**

### **Reinventing the Sacred in the Age of the Cosmos**

#### **Part II The Enlightenment**

##### **Author's Note:**

**Before beginning this chapter it is necessary to review in the most basic of terminology certain expressions that grew out of the period we now call The Enlightenment. They are all in common use today.**

##### **Secular Materialism**

The expression secular materialism holds that human life has no spiritual substance, only material. There are no supernatural interventions in the course of nature. There is a rejection of the Christian assertion that the meaning of life is provided by the God of Christianity.

### Materialistic Determinism

This is the methodological approach used by Karl Marx of economics, history, moral, cultural, intellectual, vocational choices of man saying we are all determined by material factors.

### Dualism

Dualism is closely associated with the philosophy of René Descartes who held that the mind is nonphysical substance existing apart from the body. It exists apart from the material substance of the planet. His dualism at that time yet remained “theistic” in the sense that it validated perception and reasoning based on an understanding that God does exist ontologically.

### Secular Humanism

Secular humanism denies that life has any purpose other than what the human decides for him or herself. It denies the existence of God as an intervening power.

### Reductionism

Reductionism is the position that a complex system is no more than the interactive sum of its parts, and that an account of it can therefore be reduced to accounts of its individual constituents. It strongly rejects the idea of any other causality. It asserts that phenomena can only be explained in terms of inter relationship between interfacing systems.

### Religious Reductionism

Religious reductionism attempts to explain religion by assigning it to nonreligious causation such as illusion, or even a mental illness. (Neurosis, psychosis)

These definitions shown here are in their most simplistic form. They attempt to codify the enormous paradigm shift that occurred with the oncoming of the Enlightenment. It was a shift that to a large extent dominates the thought processes of our world civilization today. An inherent weakness in this shift has in recent years been our inability to comprehend many of the most serious ecological pressures facing the planet and our species. That

weakness stems from the two inherent contradictions/misconceptions as noted in Part I of this chapter discussing Judeo, Christian and Hellenic thought; namely the inability of that thought to address the relationship between *Homo sapiens* and the natural forces that govern the planet and the Cosmos.

To repeat from Part I the two inherent contradictions/misconceptions:

- **There was no acknowledgement of the need for human civilization to exist on Planet Earth in a consonant co-existent relationship with Nature.**
- **There was no acknowledgement of the need for every human to exist in a consonant co-existent relationship within the cosmos through acknowledgement of his and her oneness with its “other-dimensionality.”**

The period just before the Enlightenment, commonly referred to as The Medieval Period, was a period of codification of the outgrowth of the Christian proclamations of the Emperor Constantine after the Council of Nicaea. It was marked by a unifying common religious denominator among all men (and women) centered on a vision of a triune judgmental Hebraic God consisting of a Father God, His loving Son Jesus Christ (sacrificed on a cross for the sins of mankind) and a Holy Spirit. All knowledge of that triune vision—at least for Western Europe—resided with the Roman Catholic Church. As discussed in Part I, in His infinite wisdom God had named the leaders of that church from generation to generation—beginning with Peter, and then onward, to be the interpreters. Entry into Heaven (a very narrowly defined “skyward cosmic other-dimensionality”) for its members was available only according to Church interpretation as embodied in its pronouncements. The same applied for descent into Hell. (Again very narrowly defined)

A metaphor for this “Heaven” archetype can be seen today in the soaring Gothic towers and interiors of the cathedrals. They are scattered throughout Europe. This author on a visit to Chartres while sitting quietly inside was reduced to tears as he raised his eyes to the astounding beauty of the interior of that cathedral. It must have brought out much the same response from those worshipers coming out of the Middle Ages; except for them a far deeper and more meaningful emotion: It removed them from their own sense of sinful

worthlessness to a sense of possible transcendent Heavenly unity. Those soaring towers in their Gothic majesty were giving them hope.

The insight into the human condition introduced to the world by the Enlightenment slowly began to remove the Roman Catholic Church from the equation. The eyes of Europe were being opened to Reductionism (see definition above). With this epiphany, Europe and eventually the rest of the world would never again be the same, at least as to the definition the place of human beings on this earth.

But there remained the “cosmic other-dimensionality” problem.” The Church had rested its case on causation by the Hebraic God. Most of the great thinkers from the Enlightenment, even after they had abandoned the Church’s orthodoxy, could not give up that idea totally. The anthropic principle remained fixed in their minds. They could not totally disassociate themselves from the earlier Hebraic anthropogenic and humanly subjective view of causation. (Some, however, such as Benedict de Spinoza, a Jew, were able to abandon causation completely.)

There was greater confusion that came with the change-over. It had left human civilization with no acknowledgement of the need to function in a consonant relationship with Nature. And as for the realm beyond Nature, there was no acknowledgement of the need for humans to honor and respect any reality beyond the one they could observe.

As a result, the underlying planetary destructive power brought on by the bronze/iron agricultural age remained in full force, leaving those living in the Enlightenment era just as alien to our planet as they had been eight thousand years before with the beginning of the Axial Age.

The engine of this destructive power was the birth of what is now called the Capital Market system. (see *Chapter 8 A Dangerous Zero Sum Game—The “Chicago School” vs the Planet and Part II George Soros*) During the bronze/iron agricultural age, in its primitive form the Capital Market system had become a way of supplying goods and services to large numbers of people. Capital Market theory had no respect for the planet or any form of cosmic multi-dimensionality. As we have just discussed, neither Hebraic nor Christian nor Hellenic thought had laid down any rules governing this form of social

theory. Ethical rules were left to establish themselves without reference to past religious or philosophical belief. Through to the end of the Middle Ages it was a theory that had served humanity well. So with the Enlightenment the rules of the game were simply accepted as a part of civilizational life and God's munificence. Everyone benefited. Goods and services within accessible geographic areas were supplied to purchasers at prices that reflected the input of risk, resources and labor. Absent frequent wars—often to obtain capital market advantage—it all worked well for the material benefit of those societies on the winning end. Damage to the planet was noticeable, but not a threat to human civilization, given the world population levels and the relatively low level of overall planetary destruction.

Then, at some point after the Enlightenment, a lethal ecological weakness began to develop. Capital Markets were fast becoming a countervailing force in opposition to planetary sustainability. They were destroying the ecosphere faster than it could reconstitute itself. The planet—and humanity along with it—were being harmed by the operation of the Capital Market system. Human survival was now at risk.

The Enlightenment encouraged an open Capital Market system. It allowed the system to piece together its own rules. Human weaknesses so well expressed in Christian Hebraism which may have had application were kept out of view. Nor did Hellenism provide any help. It had been created in Greece during a period of free and open trade. Hellenism was preoccupied with an entirely different matter, the human being at ease with oneself. The point here is that neither was centered on an exploration of the relationship between *Homo sapiens* and our planet and the destructive potential of unbridled consumption. (We do, however, find a few commentaries through the years indicating awareness of the denuding of agricultural land) For most of society, the resources on the planet were looked upon as something given to humankind to exploit at will. And as to the cosmic meaning of life, that was left to religious reflection and personal decision.

With Capital Markets simple assumed to be a given, the Enlightenment philosophers turned their attention elsewhere. How did man (women) fit into this wonderful new material world? That became the challenge of the day. A number of brilliant minds in a very short period of time came up with what they thought were answers.



There was very little humility among them. They had the conviction that by way of science we humans have the ability to know everything about our planet we need to know. And all we will ever want or need to know will lead to a future of endless invention and material prosperity. Not only that; we are removed from any moral responsibility toward Nature. It exists outside of the equation. We are beyond it. This was expressed by Descartes in his famous dictum; “I think, therefore I am.” His was a mind-frame that conveniently separated us from responsibility toward all non-human life around us, removing us from the need to encompass its sacredness with ours. The planet was an endless source of non-human organic and inorganic matter placed here by God for our benefit.

The names of some of the important personages of this intellectual movement follow. We should note here that there were differences in thought between them; nevertheless, one common thread ran through most of their reasoning, and it was built on a thought process far different from that of the Middle Ages. The idea of an Hebraic God directing causality as had been expressed by Judaism and Christianity was being rejected.

**Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543)**

**Galileo Galilei (1564-1652)**

**Rene Descartes (1596-1650)**

**Benedict de Spinoza (1632-1677)**

**Isaac Newton (1642-1727)**

For a while the new thought seemed to be very logical with little or no downside. This is well expressed by the positive tone of the description of the time period as described by Brian Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker in their book; *Journey of the Universe*, p 105.

**“Spreading throughout Europe was the new idea that the universe was a vast machine run by natural laws. And the human agenda was also set anew. As Francis Bacon and others proclaimed, we modern humans with our vast intelligence had only to determine the laws governing matter for us to gain control over the entire affair.”**

Measured in terms of this new understanding, society began to benefit greatly materially; however, within the new mindset lay a very dangerous deception. We *Homo sapiens* were now able to **“to gain control over the entire affair.”** The Earth was ours to be ours as we wished. Forests could be cut. Minerals could be mined. Oceans could be fished. Coal from the mountains and then oil from the depths of the earth could be removed. Only we mattered. And as for all other forms of life, it had no value other than to be exploited. The planet as a vast resource was seen as at the disposal of *Homo sapiens*.

Then in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as the Industrial Revolution firmly took hold, the concept of negative externalities suddenly started to become a part of the conversation. (see quote below from *Appendix # II An Open Letter to Paul Krugman*)

**“Negative external costs and positive incentives must be built into every investment decision. And these costs and incentives must be applied to every human economic activity from the mine to the chemistry lab to the assembly line to the opera house to the athletic field to the hospital. Economic outcomes with negative social and/or ecological value must be recognized. Negative externalities need to be measured and priced in up front so as to discourage, temper, or at the extreme eliminate investment. Every investment decision must be internally priced to reflect its socially constructive or destructive outcome. Croplands, grasslands, forests, fisheries, inorganic resources; all of the earth’s natural resources, must be internally priced so as to prevent their exploitation and damage to the planet.”**

It seemed so simple before the idea of “negative externalities.” All we humans had to do is find out how to gain control over the planet and then the planet would be ours, an endless source of material wealth.

As for the religionists, they artfully aligned with those ancient biblical texts that had said a plentiful Earth was given by their God for man’s use and stewardship. And the word “stewardship,” as translated from those Hebraic texts, had left a lot of wiggle room!

Religionists were saying; being created in the image of God, was not man then able to decide what stewardship is and what it is not? And as for the other life on the planet, doctrinally the scriptures had never spoken ethically or morally in any other way than in terms of God giving nonhuman life to man for his use. Animals could be slaughtered and trees could be cut, all with spiritual impunity. Another conclusion then was beginning to form. Was not emergent capitalism

in the end a civilizing force providing people with life enhancing goods and services? Is this not what God wants for us?

So the Catholic Church—at first reluctantly, then with some enthusiasm, came to the conclusion that the Christian belief system fit very nicely into the new Enlightenment concept; even though that Enlightenment emphasis on materialism was not on the surface a godly one as described by Jesus in the gospels. So, as time passed that Church became quiet, content to let it all happen. As for Judaism itself, survival in its isolated communities became the rule. As for the Protestants, it all fit very well with the ideal of individual prosperity. Then as to Mohamadism; it slept quietly enshrouded within the Ottoman Empire separated from Western Civilization.

With the European Enlightenment in full steam, across the ocean to the west, the indigenous inhabitants on the great American plains (later on to be called the American Indians) were of a different mindset. In elaborate ceremonies they were praying over the souls of the buffalo they had killed and were about to consume. They believed that their prayers and chants would follow the spirit-life of the buffalo to the other dimension. Their thought as expressed in their religious ceremonies was full of the Nature around them. Nonlife too was given sanctity. Even the ground under their feet was considered to be sacred. For them, over a period of many thousands of years, they had come to an understanding that all was transcendent, the material world and the nonmaterial, the animate and the inanimate. It was all inter woven. It was all in and of itself the eternal; being revealed to man.

As the western Abrahamic post Enlightenment European invaders were arriving on the new continent, they would have none of that. They were quick to call these people who saw the earth, the water and the sky as sacred; “savages.” The new age Europeans therefore would begin their great western expansion by destroying all of Nature in front of them, including the so-called American Indians themselves. Their only interest was to find more and more wealth. Words of American Indians like those from Chief Seattle (born about 1780) of the Duwamish Tribe in Washington State were not a part of their lexicon. (Origin unclear)

**Even the rocks, which seem to be dumb and dead as they swelter in the sun along the silent shore, thrill with memories of stirring events connected with the lives of my people, and the very dust upon which you now stand responds more lovingly to their footsteps than yours, because it is rich with the blood of our ancestors, and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch. Our dead**

never forget this beautiful world that gave them being. They still love its verdant valleys, its murmuring rivers, its magnificent mountains, sequestered vales and verdant lined lakes and bays.

**Author's Note:**

Mention should be made here of the almost immediate conflict between the Western Europeans and the Indigenous Americans. It began at Jamestown. It continued in the North and then in the West. Here is an example: The Puritan Christians (not the original Mayflower "separatists") of the Massachusetts Bay Colony committed genocide in the Pequot War. The Puritan commander-in-charge John Mason wrote after one massacre of Native Americans:

"And indeed such a dreadful Terror did the Almighty let fall upon their Spirits, that they would fly from us and run into the very Flames, where many of them perished. God was above them, who laughed his Enemies and the Enemies of his People to Scorn, making them as a fiery Oven. Thus did the Lord judge among the Heathen, filling the Place with dead Bodies".

"Thus the Lord was pleased to smite our enemies in the hinder parts and to give us their land for an inheritance; who remembered us in our low estate, and redeemed us out of our enemies' hands. Let us therefore praise the Lord for his goodness and his wonderful works to the Children of men !"

In a single massacre in the 1676 King Philip's War, 600 Indians were killed.

A delighted Cotton Mather, revered pastor of the Second Church in Boston, referred to that slaughter as a "barbeque".

With the words of Chief Seattle we have a glimpse of another mindset; that of *Homo sapiens* before the bronze/iron agricultural age and the Hebraic religions that followed it. As described in Chapter 4:

**"By 26,000/12,000 BCE some, while mixing with the earlier *erectus* inhabitants, were traveling to the north into what is now Siberia and then south across the Beringian land bridge spanning the current day Bering Strait (commonly referred to as the Bering or Alaskan land bridge) and then all the way down to the most southern part of the Americas. (Some possibly by kayaks along the frigid shores)"**

Those travelers missed our bronze/iron agricultural age. It is interesting to note that the mindset of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of Thomas found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt was in many ways the same as that of Chief Seattle.

Jesus said:

**(77) *I am the light that is over all things. I am all: from me all came forth, and to me all attained. Split a piece of wood; I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there.***

Chief Seattle's words ring hollow in the ears of most today. (As do those words of Jesus here quoted) Yet there are growing numbers who find value in them. They doubt that everything behaves according to the pronouncements of the Hebraic scriptures or the Roman Catholic Church or the Enlightenment scientists and philosophers.

They find that there is a downside to the Eurocentric mind-frame as a panacea for human understanding. They find that this mind-frame even threatens the continuity of *Homo sapiens* on this planet. They are beginning to learn that once you mess around with the machinery of this planet, there is no way to turn back from outcomes. It is said; "You break it, you fix it." We are finding that we cannot fix it.

The result; we post Enlightenment peoples now find ourselves facing an ecological dilemma of enormous complexity. Planetary implosion is fast closing in upon *Homo sapiens*.

The Dualism of the Enlightenment avoided this deeper reality. It said we could live happily in two or more philosophical/religious/scientific worlds. It avoided the fact that we are living in a Universe and on a planet in that Universe where there is far more to "matter" and "other" than the way we all had so neatly defined it. It avoided the fact that there is another reality. That reality exists in a dimension beyond our ability to understand it.

And as for that dimension beyond: Science is beginning to recognize the improbability of the sequence of events and the precise timing now fourteen billion years after the Big Bang that could bring we humans in material/intellectual form to this point. That fact cannot be explained as accidental. It is so remarkable as to be beyond our imagination. Chaos theory goes out the window. Planets formed. Our planet formed. "Dark matter" formed. Waves and particles formed. You the reader formed. I formed.

Many in the world today have begun to replace the old with new belief. It is belief that life, human and all other, is meant to be lived in a state of cosmological consonance. Many are beginning to interpret this as consonance acting in the Universe within an underlying creative force with no time or space dimensionality.

With this understanding has come a new definition of the word “God” and the word “Nature.” God/Nature is seen as a destructive/creative ordering process. The challenge to each living form is being a part of that creative ordering process.

Two great intellectuals of our age with an understanding of this are Brian Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker. In their book *Journey of the Universe*, p 50-51, they envision Planet Earth as if surrounded by a membrane—the ecosphere. They view this as no different from life enclosed by the membrane in any ordinary amoeba. As in the life of an amoeba, they see human life on our planet dependent upon the same adaptive process of destruction and reformation. Wrong choices made by *Homo sapiens* here on the planet can lead to the death of the nuclei (you and me). Discernment or lack of discernment by *Homo sapiens* means either continuity of its life or non-continuity of its life. They propose that this is the way it has always been and the way it will continue to be.

We are now becoming aware that as a result of wrong choices, damage is occurring inside our membrane. The upper layers of our membrane extend to the upper reaches of the Ecosphere; the lower to the deep ocean trenches. When did the damage begin? It began with the beginning of this Axial Age as we moved out of Africa. We began to destroy all other life in our path. Then when we had finished with that, we began to destroy all nonlife. We annihilated everything in front of us. We regarded all life and nonlife outside of our own with disrespect. Then came the period we now call the Enlightenment. It further separated us religiously and philosophically from any and all biosphere responsibility. The great thinkers of the Enlightenment told us that all of the resources, everything below the earth and above it, were ours to take for our own.

The Enlightenment and the Secular Reductionist Materialistic thought that came out of it has now become a large part of our twenty first century mindset-and our problem. That thought is firmly embedded in our culture. It has left us with a prideful belief in the validity of the institutions that formed in its wake. Many of them and notably our Capital Market system-as

discussed in detail in this book-have led us into many wrong choices, ones that have placed us out of alignment with the underlying evolutionary process of life on Planet Earth.

The wiring of our brains enabled us to believe without question the validity of the thought that came out of our Axial Age, then the same with the Enlightenment. Now the question of our age is this: Can we go back and learn from earlier *Homo sapiens*?

We are now finding that there is far more to the planet and the life and the non-life on it than became a part of our consciousness with the Axial Age and the Reductionist Enlightenment mindset that grew out of it. We are beginning to observe another level to our human existence expressed by way of connectivity with a cosmic order. It is a connectivity that gives us a sense that something has carried us to the space that we now occupy, and that this “something” is asking us to be more than what we are. This “connectivity” is telling us that we are to be facilitators in a great cosmic experiment, one bringing about cosmic/planetary balance whereupon all life, not just ours, but life in every form, will be able to follow its natural evolutionary path on this planet. It is telling us that this is the single most important purpose of our lives.

## **Chapter # 10**

# Reinventing the Sacred in the Age of the Cosmos

## Part III Our industrial civilization

**“We wake up every morning over water,’ says Kamal Bhate of Nehru Camp in Delhi. The brawls can be deadly. In a nearby slum a teenage boy was recently beaten to death for cutting in line.”**

National Geographic, Special Issue, Water Our Thirsty World, April 2110 p.79

It is becoming more and more a reality not just in India, but all over the planet: Our modern industrial society is bringing on a massive humanitarian crisis. Material possessions as a result of enormous productivity are only available to a privileged segment of the world’s population. At the same time, larger and larger numbers are suffering from a damaged planet as seen in lowering fresh water tables, rising oceans, failing infrastructure. The result; billions are being left out of the equation, forced to live their lives in abject poverty.

One would expect our society to understand the parameters of this problem. It is not happening on a broad scale. Why? Why are so few disturbed?

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) in his *The Parable of the Madman* answered the question. He wrote:

**“Here the madman fell silent and again regarded his listeners; and they too were silent and stared at him in astonishment. At last he threw his lantern to the ground, and it broke and went out. ‘I have come too early,’ he said then; ‘my time has not come yet. The tremendous event is still on its way, still travelling-it has not yet reached the ears of men. Lightning and thunder require time, the light of the stars requires time, deeds require time even after they are done, before they can be seen and heard. This deed is still more distant from them than the distant stars-and yet they have done it themselves.”**

In this book using the expression “Vesuvian Complex” I begin an explanation as to the “why?” we all walk in a daze and are unable to comprehend reality. Friedrich Nietzsche describes it in



the quote noted above. I write about it referring to the mindset of those citizens of Pompeii and Herculaneum in the first century under Mount Vesuvius. They were living under the veil of what one might describe as eternal optimism. There was no inner tension.

Nor is there inner tension in today's world. The world response to the story captioned in this part of the chapter of the teenage boy in a nearby Delhi slum beaten to death for cutting in line is an example. We read it and then we forget about it. We are all too preoccupied with our own lives. His death is too far away for us to be concerned. Billions being left out of the equation, forced to live their lives in abject poverty, who cares? It's not in my backyard.

I will now discuss forces that could bring about change, release us from this fog in which we find ourselves. I will offer a way for us to remove ourselves from our Vesuvian complex. Based on a new mode of thought now being put forward by many of the "great thinkers" in our society, I will suggest a way for us to change the way we think about our relationship to the planet and to the cosmos and in doing so possibly assure the survival of our species. I will emphasize that this is a problem demanding that we change the way we think.

Let me begin on a note of hope by quoting Keiron Le Grice in his book *The Archetypal Cosmos Rediscovering the Gods in Myth, Science and Astrology* (p.33)

**"When old beliefs no longer adequately explain the actual facts of our life experience, when a myth becomes out of touch with the reality of daily lives of the people of a culture—as it has in the post-Christian world—conflict arises between personal experience and collective mythology as people struggle to accept the validity of the story they are presented with and to accept, consequently, the associated values of the culture. Then the discrepancy between professed beliefs and the lived reality of human life gives rise to what psychologist Leon Festinger has termed cognitive dissonance and acute psychological discomfort arising from an irreconcilable contradiction between our actual experiences and our understanding of how the world is supposed to be. Yet it is out of such psychological conflict and inner tension that new visions, new world views, and new myths are born. Christianity itself emerged in response to just this type of disharmony in the years following the death of Christ, and so in our own era we stand in need of a new response to the unique spiritual challenge of our time. We need a new mythic perspective."**

As discussed in this book, at a certain stage in our latter evolutionary development beginning with the first Axial Age, we moved away from an harmonious to an incongruent relationship with Nature. This incongruence was dismissed from our minds. We simply rationalized that any and all actions we took as far as Nature is concerned would be self-correcting. And for a while it

all worked out that way. Then came the 20/21<sup>st</sup> century. This rationalization reached the point of visible impending self-destruction. We began to learn that Nature is not always self-correcting. An acute psychological discomfort among many in our world was the outcome. Psychologist Leon Festinger quoted above speaks to it with the words “cognitive dissonance” and acute psychological discomfort arising from an irreconcilable contradiction between our actual experiences and our understanding of how the world is supposed to be.”

For several thousand years there was no “cognitive dissonance and acute psychological discomfort.” As has been stated in this book, humans operated under the assumption that Nature and our species each could move forward in its own way independently along its own upward self-correcting evolutionary path. It was not until recently that we saw the calculus had begun to change. The prospect of the devolution of both Nature and *Homo sapiens* working in opposition to each other was becoming a reality. The first signs of this became apparent once the Industrial Revolution had come into full form. And its human byproduct; uncontrolled population growth, accelerated that devolution, turning both into a dangerous non self-correcting imbalance, one now threatening the very survival of our species.

This has presented the greatest challenge to the human species since the very beginning of its transition into a higher form of consciousness. As a result, within the last century, many have begun to realize that we have lost control over ourselves—and the planet. We no longer understand who we are. A reversion to our religious and philosophical past is not giving us answers. In fact many of our past ideas seem to be working against us.

Clearly, the solution is to change the way we think. Keiron Le Grice says in his book quoted above that this kind of change can only come about by way of “a new mythic perspective.” He says; “we stand in need of a new response to the unique spiritual challenge of our time.” He tells us that we need to change more than just how we think in general; he says that we need to change the way we think religiously, spiritually, philosophically, ethically, morally.

Many throughout the world are aware of this need for change, but there is no coalescent critical mass. The “inner tension” referred to by Keiron Le Grice has not built up to a sufficient level among the general public. The Vesuvian complex remains too strong. Also, there is no central core of belief as to the hominid relationship with the planet and the cosmos that would bring a

critical mass of thought together. The only way to overcome this is by way of a valid religious/spiritual/philosophical argument, and that argument is not being articulated. And even if it were, there is question as to whether it could or would be followed.

Additionally, there are powerful countervailing forces at play. They mostly arise out of those strong self-serving interests resisting change that prey on a vulnerable They take advantage of a Vesuvian mentality contra-change critical mass unable to understand the issues at hand. These countervailing forces have succeeded in slowing change down if not outright blocking it. Their task is an easy one. Their audience lives by political, social, economic and religious beliefs based on old mythic forms. These mythic forms provide them with comfort—and a false Vesuvian sense of security. So, they stubbornly resist change. They say to themselves; why change something that works? Friedrich Nietzsche expressed it so well when he said **“This deed is still more distant from them than the distant stars-and yet they have done it themselves.”**

The consequences of this inaction are becoming increasingly evident. Signs of an impending ecological collapse are beginning to be seen everywhere. Nature’s response is becoming increasingly clear. Like the thundering words of an ancient god; Nature is telling us:

**No longer can I provide evolutionary balance in equal measure for your actions. Nor can I wait for you to change. So now I will take charge.**

This “Nature response” is pointing to the most perilous period ever in human history. At some stage it will be too late to avoid a succession of irreversible tipping points. We are already seeing indications of this. Unintended interconnecting consequences will soon begin to unfold when:

**Population expands, more CO2 placed in atmosphere, temperatures rise, glaciers melt, polar ice melts, oceans heat up, seas rise, coastal areas inundated, billions displaced, food shortages occur, people starve, civil war erupts, economies collapse.**

The above is a capsule description of the future facing our species. It presents a picture of gloom. It is a picture that has become disturbing to many people, including this writer. Only a

transformational change in the human psyche can come to the rescue, one that will have the power to bring about social, political, religious, ethical, moral and economic change.

Yet, there is some good news here. We have in our long history gone through many changes. They have often been accompanied by some form of societal epiphany. There was the force of the Jesus change; before that the Buddha change and then during the Enlightenment the Galileo change. Wars too have brought change. These shifts have always led to a period of societal correction. The period of change has generally begun slowly—in the case of wars a lead-up period—and then extended through into the following millennia. But now in our twenty-first century world there is a difference. Environmental tipping points are irreversible. We do not have as much time as we had in the past.

What we need to keep in mind is that throughout history from the beginning of human consciousness each change has shown an increasing acceleration. Time periods are increasingly compressed. We may now be experiencing this. There is evidence that acceleration may in fact be producing an “inner tension” that could break out into a worldwide call for change. We must keep in mind, however, the fact that change has always been accompanied by extreme political upheaval and human suffering.

We need to understand that first and foremost we must do everything in our power to avoid a sudden irreversible downward turn of ecological events. This will entail far more than the technological fixes we hear being discussed today or the organizing activities we see internationally and locally. It will call for multiple debates challenging the validity of the many revered beliefs that have been and continue to be the cause of our present inaction. That includes our religious beliefs, our economic beliefs and our political beliefs.

This demand strikes to the core of our problem. Most of us are quite satisfied with what we have chosen to believe in and what we have chosen not to believe in. We need to recognize this enormous flaw. It is a flaw that is now, through our inaction, showing the planet—and the cosmos—that we as a species are inherently pathologically, egoistically, narcissistically dangerous to ourselves. And not just to ourselves, but to all other life around us.

We are talking here about the need for a broad based societal epiphany. Only then will our species be able to separate itself from its psychosis and cease to view the planet as something to be used and abused for its own selfish purposes. Only then can humanity come to understand that Planet Earth is not its property to do with as it pleases.

Humanity must come to accept what is now being referred to as its cosmic “interconnectivity.” Quantum physicists are beginning to find empirical evidence of this interconnectivity. Many are coming to the conclusion that there are underlying patterns of interconnection and interdependence within the universe; in the form of ongoing organization. Names of prominent thinkers on the side of the physical sciences such as Albert Einstein, Werner Heisenberg, and Erwin Schroedinger come to mind. Some depth psychologists in recent years saw this as extending into and through to the human psyche. F.W.H. Meyers, William James and Carl Gustav Jung are among the most well-known. A very large number like them are now taking a more comprehensive psycho scientific view of human life. Examples are present day deep thinkers like Richard Tarnas and Ervin Laszlo discussed in this book. They see underlying causality beyond reductive mechanistic explanation. They see it as cosmic reality. All of these great intellectuals have in a sense broken through and gone beyond the barriers set up by prior religious, philosophical and scientific thought. And they are now spawning a new generation of exceptionally gifted individuals who too are reexamining past age thought. Some of current prominence like Brian Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker are discussed in this book. The common thread that runs through all of their observations is that there is an underlying causal unfolding and enfolding in the universe. Our planet and the matter/energy that constitute it are in a sense “holistic.” We humans are an integral constituent part. We are a holistic part of a holistic planet that is a holistic part of a holistic cosmos.

In opposition to this approach is the reductionist materialistic Enlightenment view discussed in Part I and II of this chapter. It has dominated the physical and social sciences over the last three hundred years. Many physical and social scientists today hold on to its mechanistic reductionist belief. For them human life has no spiritual or other dimensional substance; only material. They are what are called Secular Humanists. They deny that life has any purpose other than what the human decides for him or herself. They deny the existence of God or other metaphysical mystery as an intervening power. As such they are agnostic or atheistic. They do not recognize the

validity of any fact that cannot be scientifically proven according to their own empirical understanding of what that fact is and what that fact is not. They call all else pseudoscience. Critics accuse them of suffering from "pathological disbelief"; embodied in the statement: "even if it were true I wouldn't believe it." They are not able to accept the existence of any form of metaphysical cosmic interconnectivity. The expansive thought pattern discussed above does not sit well with them.

At the same time; most of them fall strongly into the environmentalist camp, and this has been a very positive development. Those in the area of the physical sciences have most importantly played a very necessary role in providing scientific evidence relating to the impending ecological planetary collapse.

The search for cosmic causality is not new. From the beginning of primordial human consciousness, the human species has sought some form of cosmic interconnection and/or synchronous pattern. A glimpse of this "pattern" was noticed when humans began to observe the heavens. This brought astrology into being. Early religious thought was deeply interwoven with astrological thought. It was not until the Enlightenment took hold that astrological thought was cast aside from its connection to the theological. But it has not gone away nor has it been disproved. Today astrological thought is finding resurgence among small groups of in-depth psychologists who by way of computer programs designed to identify planetary formations and match them to human history as well as to natal charts are showing astrology to be an underlying archetypal organizing force in the universe. The individual who has pioneered this is Richard Tarnas who is discussed at some length in this book.

In recent human history universal causality has been called by the name **God**, by the name **Divine Intelligence**, and by many other names. (Also astrology just mentioned) Traditionally in the Abrahamic religions this causality has been identified by using the word/letters; **He, It, I, Me, My**. Many of these name descriptions are now failing human civilization. To repeat again the statement by Keiron Le Grice:

**"When old beliefs no longer adequately explain the actual facts of our life experience, when a myth becomes out of touch with the reality of daily lives of the people of a culture—as it has in the post-Christian world...."**

Our modern civilization is calling for a redefinition of causality. Reversion to past religiosity must be redefined. In fact to a large extent past definitions are holding us back. **He/It/I/Me/My** now appears to be saying to us: **I** gave you the opportunity to participate in **My** plan for Planet Earth. For this, **I** gave you the highest form of intelligence ever given to any other form of life. Now, you are acting in defiance of **Me**. You are savaging **My** planet under the presumption that you are like **I** am and therefore you can do with it as you want. **I** regard this as an act of impunity. Planet Earth is not yours to do with as you want. So **I** am giving you one last warning. **I** am saying to you: Be careful how you treat the planet that **I** gave you. Be careful how you treat **Me**. As you treat this Planet, you are treating **Me**. Know that **I** can destroy it, and **I** can destroy you too. If you do not change your ways, **I** will do just that.

**The “histoire événementielle”** as described in Chapter 4 Part IV showed just how hard it is for human behavior to change when “**myth becomes out of touch with the reality of daily lives of the people of a culture.**” Our history has shown that change does not occur without pain and suffering. That pain and suffering is what it will take for Humans to understand that they are integral to the functioning of Planet Earth, and that their lives are intertwined with its life.

The drumbeat of past theological mythological rigidity has been and continues to dominate our world culture. It is imbedded in our “**l’histoire événementielle.**” In ecological terms, much of religious truth in this context turns out to be no truth at all; only a past age pretension of truth. One such biblical verse discussed in this book illustrative is the command to:

***Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.***

(Genesis 1: 28).

This pronouncement, for Jews, Christians and Muslims, undergirded the rationale for their expansion to every corner of the globe. It also established a predatory relationship between then existing human life and all other life on the planet. The Enlightenment and succeeding Industrial Revolution gave it its final push.

The two questions for our generation are these; and not just for the religionists, those who take Genesis 1: 28 as fact, but for all others too who comfortably follow its words: If we totally eliminate-or almost totally-*the fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and every living thing that moves on the earth*, will we end up eliminating ourselves? If we continue to *multiply and fill the earth*, at what population level will we have passed the point of our own sustainability?

At this perilous moment in planetary history it would be wise to put such religious texts aside and examine as our guide a mythological hero who has been a part of our human thought from the very beginning. Here we may find the guidance that we need. Myths take their form out of society's collective imagination—and need. Within them lay enormous insight. The myth we can use here as our guide is still active in literature today. Here it is: There is the hero who has set out to find himself. He takes a dark and dangerous journey through an uncertain underworld. There are terrifying encounters along the way. The simple form of this myth has a single Dragon. There are a series of underworld challenges with a battle against the dragon. The hero is drawn into the unknown where he is made to walk *through the valley of the shadow of death*. In the danger of the many challenging experiences, there is time and again a sense a painful separation. (metaphorically expressed as a separation from the biological womb) Then, after heroically overcoming the many challenges, the hero defeats the Dragon. The pain of separation is replaced by a sense of completeness and victory.

Is not this where we now find ourselves as we now take our “dark and dangerous journey through an uncertain underworld” and must face the future by breaking free from the umbilical cord attaching us to those political, social, economic and religious beliefs that have come to underlie our problem?

These beliefs are more a part of us than we realize. Our inability to separate ourselves from them is taking its toll. Planetary degradation is proceeding. As noted in this book; the signs are all around us. Aquifer levels are dropping. Temperatures are on the rise and may even accelerate. Glaciers are melting. Oceans are rising. Estimates are that the population will reach unsustainable levels of 10, 11, or 12 billion in the next fifty to seventy five years. The result of all of this will be massive shortages of food and water throughout the world. The breakdown of planetary stability will become apparent in many other areas.



How long will it take for humans in this, their self-constructed twenty-first century secular/religious world, to find that they are living an illusion? How long will it take for a critical mass to find the key to oneness with nature and the cosmos—and their deeper destiny as a species, a destiny that will bring *Homo sapiens* into coherent existence within the planet? Will our society choose to wait until it has literally *walk(ed) through the valley of the shadow of death* for there be a destinal epiphany?

At some point in the near future—within the next two centuries—a critical mass of humanity will be forced by ecological events to realize that the existing social, political, religious, ethical, moral and economic structures that have anchored their society for the past two millennia are seriously flawed. This critical mass will be the vanguard of a new world order; one built on a transformational synthesis of the old structures, freed from those elements that are working against a natural balance between the human species and nature. Many of the twenty-first century structures we now hold as sacrosanct will then be seen as historical relics from the past. The only question is whether this change will occur as the result of an enlightened societal transformation—similar to the great transformations of the past—or will be forced upon humanity through severe pain and suffering as a result of an environmental breakdown. We will probably see both forces in action.

These changes, however they come, will be accompanied by what can be called a “reinvention of the sacred.” At that stage of “reinvention” humans will enter into an awareness of their cosmic interconnectivity. Inner and outer worlds will merge into one. Humans will find the bright light that for so many years they had been searching. There will be a transformation in thought greater than that seen in any other period of human history. World society will come to view human life as an evolving process reaching both inward and outward toward the divine. It will see that this divine has in fact been a part of humanity all these years; humans just did not see it, nor did they understand it.

This struggle for a reinvention of the sacred has already begun. The signs are all around us. A critical mass has not yet been achieved; however, it has been slowly building. Many are already deeply committed. They are a disparate group from all forms of belief and nonbelief. These courageous human beings are exposing the dark side of our human conscious for all to see. They

are exposing the flaws in the societal structure this dark side has created. They are attempting to rout out those societal beliefs that have become the enemy of our species. For all the reasons enumerated in this chapter, it has become a task that takes great courage.

As it is with a butterfly escaping its cocoon, the shedding of our past Axial Age identity will require an arduous metamorphosis. For many it will be extremely painful. Battles will have to be fought. Expressed in biblical metaphor; our society will find itself *walk(ing) through the valley of the shadow of death*. The good news is that it will be a walk that will force change. Humans will be forced to change the way they think. It is a mistake to believe that the solution can be an engineered mechanistic one neatly packaged for human survival. Science will play an important role, but the final solution will come from within the persona, not from physical and mechanical advances. We are fools to think otherwise.

The cosmos is anxiously waiting for our species to begin this perilous final journey. It will be a final battle of cosmic proportion against the dragon. Barriers holding us back from a natural progression toward planetary stability will have to be breached. There will be massive death from starvation, disease and war, possibly atomic. Most of the major cities will be under water. There will be massive migration to higher land. The dark side of the human psyche will emerge. None of the battles will be won easily.

Our society is just beginning to find itself adrift and on the edge of this turning point. It senses that it is on the cusp of a creative breakthrough. It senses events of enduring consequence are about to unfold. One sign is the feeling of empty desperation coming from the crush of life, a feeling of; “is this all there is?” Do I really need to sit on an aircraft week after week to be with a loved one in another city? Do I really need to drive a high powered automobile over crowded freeways? Or live in a mega mansion? Or eat cherries flown in from Chile? Or meet a monthly sales quota? This is the reason so many people are confused as to the meaning of their lives.

If we look closely, we can observe that this empty desperation has deep roots. Here are some of them:

- **A secular materialistic society stripping from people an awareness of the sacredness of life**

- **Traditional metaphysical societal values being abandoned**
- **Religious beliefs and practices being found to be inauthentic**
- **Many religious institutions and their leaders abandoning the high ground of moral authority**
- **A loss of ethical meaning throughout society as to thoughts and actions**
- **A loss of family/group cultural cohesion**
- **Governments and corporations by way of disinformation working against society's long term interests**
- **Political and economic uncertainties from all of the above rippling throughout the world**

This empty desperation is creating tension. There is a feeling of instability and disconnect. It is the reason we can observe the beginning of a desire for change. To quote Keiron Le Grice once more; *“it is out of such psychological conflict and inner tension that new visions, new world views, and new myths are born.”*

At some point in the future these *“new visions, new world views, and new myths”* will become our new reality. A long waited for epiphany will unfold. Society will be released from the ancient strictures that have been dragging it down to its ecological end. We can already observe this with the beginning of a change in collective consciousness. Expressed in Christian metaphor; we are all about to witness a *second coming*.

As emphasized here and in previous chapters, this epiphany will not take place without society first being forced to suffer through a prolonged period of ecological disruption. (Epiphany need not be a sudden experience.) During that adjustment, environmental collapse will take its toll; starvation, civil and international conflict, displacement of lives. For many the whole encounter will be a terrifying one. It will force *Homo sapiens* to reach into the depths of its very being and face the dark self-destructive Freudian forces that have been a part of it from the beginning of human consciousness, forces that are now incompatible with the balance between nature and human life. All of humanity will have to summon the courage to confront these forces. Ultimate human survival will be at stake.

It is clear to most observers that the completion of this epiphany remains far out in front of us. We want it to be like the sudden one experienced by Paul on the road to Damascus, but that

unfortunately will not be the way for us. There will be several stages in ours. We are only at the very beginning of the first. There has been minimal pain so far. Ours will grind through a slowly unfolding catharsis. Only then will our species find its future in a new form of metaphysical understanding.

How much time is needed? We do not know. What we do know is that humans, being what we are, have shown again and again that they have the courage to slay not just the one dragon but all the others that follow.

When this epiphany has finally run its course, not only will humanity be living with different political, social, ethical, moral and economic structures, it will finally have discovered its deeper planetary as well as cosmic identity. This will entail an understanding of the divine vastly expanded beyond what our religions have so far provided, and expanded beyond what the physical sciences today can offer. Humans will come to recognize that all things are in and of an order in the cosmos—expressed anthropologically as a thinking calculating cosmic mind. And this “mind” will not be understood as something out there in the remoteness of space, it will be understood to be both within and beyond human consciousness. Through some form of connectedness, for reasons unknown, humans will finally come to understand that they have the ultimate privilege to be more than just biologically human.

## **Chapter # 10**

### **Reinventing the Sacred in the Age of the Cosmos**

#### **Part IV David Bohm’s Post Modern Gnosticism**

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| <p><b>First two quotes from the January 20, 1961 Inaugural address of John F. Kennedy:</b></p> |
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**“We offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.”**

**He ended it with the words:**

**“.... asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God’s work must truly be our own.”**

Many serious geo political problems were facing the country. His words were a wakeup call.

The Soviet Union with its atomic weaponry was a threat. That we can all understand. A question, however, remains; was the new President aware at that moment of an even more serious threat? Did he understand the need to recognize that the **“dark powers of destruction”** extended beyond wars and atomic bombs? We do not know. We do know there was no such reference in his address to any threat beyond the Soviet one.

However, we do know that a threat beyond became clear the following year when Rachel Carson published her seminal book *Silent Spring*. Many Americans read the book, the President too. It had become an instant best-seller and the most provocative book in decades. It began the environmental movement in America.

She had spent over six years documenting how humans were using powerful chemical pesticides before knowing the full extent of their environmental harm.

The audience at the Kennedy Inauguration was largely Christian. They saw their God as an intervener, also the provider of the American largess they so much enjoyed. But the world was rapidly changing. It was about to take that largess away from them. Rachel Carson had given them the first clue. The greatest industrial nation in the world was dangerously altering the ecological systems of Planet Earth. Post Enlightenment scientism was at fault. And many of the Christian faith were beginning to understand that Intercession would not be coming from their heavenly Deity. Nor would Apocalypse be the answer. They were saying; for species survival we are on our own.

Since then the facts have become clear. CO2 in the atmosphere is now at 400 parts per million and moving higher. Methane gas is beginning to bubble in the Arctic and it could lead to a runaway methane feedback hydrate loop. Fish in our lakes and oceans are being poisoned by Mercury. Acidification of our oceans is threatening to wipe out large populations of phytoplankton; the basis of food webs supporting fish, dolphins, whales and other marine life. There is an increasing rate of autism among our children and cancer among our adults. Melting Arctic ice and Antarctica ice caps are bringing about rising ocean levels that will within the next several generations inundate coastal cities around the world. Glaciers are continuing to melt in the Alps and Himalayas. Aquifer levels are continuing to drop under vital agricultural lands. Droughts, vast wildfires and unprecedented “Frankenstorm’s” are occurring with increasing frequency. And the list goes on.

So now over fifty years after the Kennedy address and the Carson book, many Americans are asking the question; how are we to proceed? How can we be sure of our continuance on Planet Earth?

As they try to find an answer that question, they are beginning to realize that we humans are all alone in a vast Universe and change can only come by way and through an inner search that brings the consciousness of everyone into the consciousness of the cosmos.

How can we begin this search?

Let us start with the insights of the scientist and Einstein colleague David Bohm. I have brought up his perspective in several areas of this book. Let us now examine him as a Post Modern Gnostic. In many ways his solution was one we have over the ages called early Gnostic. It is now coming back to haunt us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Inner search leading to participation in what he called Cosmic Consciousness was his way to frame an answer to the why of our presence in the Universe.

Like the early Gnostics, and those today; David Bohm saw human progression essentially as a struggle to gain wholeness, to achieve fullness of being, to discover divinity not outside in some separate dimension but both within and outside the human psyche.

He believed that space and time has a deeper level of objective reality than is understood by most humans. He saw space and time not as a reflection of a Deity, but of as a reflection of cosmic intelligence.

Bohm described this intelligence as a "holiness" (being beyond what can be grasped in thought) present in the continuing process of the cosmos moving into higher and higher forms of complexity. He wrote that this holiness is a pure and active intelligence. He further described it as reality.

He believed that the individual who uses his/her inner energy and his/her human intelligence can participate and be a part of this reality.

He would have agreed with Jesus when Jesus said in the Gospel of Thomas:

***(41) Whoever has something in his hand will receive more, and whoever has nothing will be deprived of even the little that he has.***

He believed that collectively we as a species on Planet Earth have reached the point where our universal consciousness is close to, as he phrased it; entering into a stage of cosmic transformation and also as he phrased it; "putting out the fire." He saw some of us breaking through to an understanding of this cosmic existential reality.

This reality is now becoming plainly visible. As described in this book; we suddenly find ourselves living in a state of planetary unsustainability. When the Agricultural and then Industrial Revolution took hold, by ignoring the sacredness of Nature and therefore the need to define *Homo sapiens* in relation to it, the actuality of our inner neurotic/psychotic drives was given full reign. We are now left us in a state of desperation.

David Bohm did give us some encouraging news. He saw increasingly large numbers of us breaking through to an understanding of our cosmic existential reality.

To follow this reasoning, let us began with what he referred to as the most essential building-block of matter, the particle. He considered its understanding in our world today an abstraction. He saw the whole cosmos as a singularity of particle ensembles; altogether existent in a series of stages of enfoldment and unfoldment, intermingling and interpenetrating throughout the whole of

time and space. He believed that at the very depths of the ground of their existence is energy. He described the cosmos as an "immense background of energy" with the energy of this background likened to one whole and unbroken "holomovement." He described holomovement as a cosmic consciousness carrying on the Implicate Order of the Universe.

From this holomovement emerges the action/reaction between what Bohm called the Implicate and Explicate order.

Bohm believed there is a cosmic interiority within the holomovement. It results in Implicate Order. From that order comes matter. Matter brings forth a process of enfoldment in endless feedback cycles, creating an infinite variety of manifest forms of materiality. Bohm was of the opinion that fundamental Cosmic Intelligence is the Player in this process; intelligence engaged in endless experimentation and creativity. He defined this as the Cosmic Mind, a Mind moving cyclically onward.

Where do we as humans on this Planet fit into the Bohm equation? He believed that those who use their inner energy and intelligence can be at one with this cosmic mind and its Implicate Order.

He suggested that in our Post Modern World; now for the first time in human history one can observe indications of a shaking off of, as he termed it, the "pollution of the ages" (wrong worldviews that propagate ignorance) by way of the beginning of a trusting relationship with one another. He saw this as having the capability to generate the immense power needed to ignite a cosmic consciousness in our species toward a new order.

It was Bohm's thesis that the ignorance of humanity prior to this Age has been a matter of closedmindedness. He considered closedmindedness the "darkness in the human brain," that is human ego closed to the Universal Mind and to a supreme intelligence that communicates through the mode of insight.

He believed that our species will eventually be released from this darkness upon the completion of what he called a cosmic "noogenesis." This term refers to the movement of all the elements of the cosmos, including the biological human, toward ultimate totality. Bohm noted that as



humanity takes part in this process, it will be changed by a consciousness inherent in that reality. He intuited that the human person, and humankind collectively, upon accomplishing successful noogenesis will come to fullness within the greater dimension of reality; the Cosmic Apex

Using the analogy of the transformation of the atom ultimately into the power of chain reaction, Bohm believed that those individuals who use their inner energy and intelligence can be in a position to transform humankind and that altogether after one million years or more of sapiens history humans can realize that power and reach a new consciousness.

Are we about to shake off Bohm's "pollution of the ages"? Has the "chain reaction" begun? There are signs that we are moving in the right direction.

In recent years scientists throughout the world have been coming together and defining with precision biosphere destruction. And as for necessary breakthrough in human consciousness, well before the Rachel Carson book, the psychologist Carl Jung was speaking to us about what he called "Individuation," defined as a process of transformation whereby the personal and collective unconscious are joined.

Also, movement toward cosmic consciousness since Carson's book can be seen more recently in Pope Francis' LAUDATO SI in 2015 and the COP21 meeting in Paris the same year. All of this gives us hope that a paradigm shift is in the making.

But the question remains; how close are we to having finally solved the *Homo sapiens* planetary survival problem?

No doubt; we are moving in that direction, but:

We remain far from it.

## **Chapter # 10**

### **Reinventing the Sacred in the Age of the Cosmos**

## Part V Our future

This book has been about the growing concern among many that life on our Planet may be entering a sixth mass-extinction, and you and I are the cause. Each day it is becoming the more clear that after two or more million years of human evolution, the species *Homo habilis* that became *Homo erectus* and then *Homo sapiens* has become a threat to its own survival.

As the book has outlined, the challenges confronting our species are formidable. Overcoming them will require far more than the scientific, mechanistic, stop-gap measures that just a few years ago were thought to be an acceptable way around the problem. In short, solar energy and nuclear fission will not do. Nor will fusion. Nor will tidal. No will technological climatic fixes. The planet is saying to *Homo sapiens* using the unforgiving language of nature:

***You and your mechanistic solutions are a step forward in your evolution; however, they are now at the core of your problem. You must change the way you think about everything and you must do it right now, immediately—or I will banish you from my planet.***

How did we reach this point of seemingly no return? As explained in this book, part of our problem stems from those political, social, economic and religious institutions that make up the sinew of our society. Each was put together piece by piece over the last several thousand years. The validity of each is now fixed authoritatively into our minds. They mold the way we think and the way we feel and the way we act.

Where did they come from? What are they? They arose out of our post bronze/iron agricultural Axial Age. As an example; for Americans; one cannot understand America without at the same time understanding the 1776 concept of human freedom as expressed so eloquently by Thomas Payne. One cannot understand Thomas Payne without at the same time understanding the Magna Carta. One cannot understand the Magna Carta without at the same time understanding the Enlightenment and pre Enlightenment history. One cannot understand pre Enlightenment history without at the same time understanding the emergence of Roman Catholicism. One cannot

understand the emergence of Roman Catholicism without at the same time understanding Jesus. One cannot understand Jesus without understanding Platonic and Abrahamic thought.

As pointed out in the book; much of this understanding has positive value and can provide guidance for our future. An example cited is the teaching of Jesus revealed in the Gospel of Thomas. This gospel can be seen as a breakthrough into the forthcoming Age. It can be helpful, most notably for Christians, Jews and Muslims as they reexamine their beliefs. It contradicts much of present day Abrahamic doctrinal understanding.

Christians and Jews and Muslims need to understand that this is more than just an intellectual epistemological exercise. It is a matter of their-own survival. Self-imposed extinction will be the end of all of them, as well as the religious beliefs they have chosen to follow. This is metaphorically expressed here in this book in the following quotation from *Chapter 4 Human Civilization – The Future Part VII The Bridge*:

**“The women never saw their husbands and sons again. Days, weeks, months passed. The food in their village slowly disappeared. There was no way to grow new crops on the hot and dry land. It had been barren for many generations. As more days and weeks and months passed, the luxuriant fields across the bridge on the other side of the fissure became only a distant illusion of the life they had for so long enjoyed. Soon, the women and children too were all gone.**

**As were their gods.”**

Friedrich Nietzsche in the 19<sup>th</sup> century spoke to this. He declared that we have murdered God. He stood in judgment of Judeo/Christian belief. Western civilization had rested its case on a distant God far up in the heavens. Our planet was relegated to a lesser role. Nietzsche recognized that flaw.

Returning to Friedrich Nietzsche’s observation in *The Parable of the Madman* we can see that as a result of the continuing Abrahamic dumbing-down of planetary ecological reality, we are now facing the first signs of tragic human error in the form of a sudden and dramatic reversal in planetary sustainability-and even the possibility of a sixth mass extinction. A sixty-five million year geological era known as the Cenozoic may be coming to an end.

As this book has pointed out; one way to counteract this is by way of a universal understanding of the place of *Homo sapiens* on Planet Earth and in the cosmos. This will require a reassessment of all religious belief, including atheistic nonbelief. It will also call for a rooting out of the violence and insatiable neurotic/psychotic greed that is woven into the fabric of the hominid mind. We will have to decontaminate that mind. It will call for an examination of not only our culture but also the institutions that have grown out of our culture. There is no other way that we can approach a new understanding of our relationship to the planet.

For many, this examination has already begun. And it is leading to a disquieting thought. Much of the societal architecture that humans had so carefully designed has turned out to be a failure. Pieced together over time from moral and ethical formulae based on faulty hominid abstraction; its architecture has become a countervailing force working against the forces of nature. For this reason the political/social/economic architecture is now beginning to crumble; the planet along with it.

Day by day it is becoming the more clear that a simple repair of the architecture will not be enough. The solution cannot come from an adjustment to the existing blueprint. A totally new design is called for, one that will lead to an entirely new societal structure, one that can act in concert with nature itself. It will require no less than a metamorphosis of the human mind. There is no other way that human behavior can be changed. The societal mind and the new architecture will have to become one. The pragmatic architecture that worked so well from the beginning of Sumerian civilization onward will no longer be able to serve our human purposes on a planetary level.

During the course of over one million years of evolutionary progression, from early African origins to the present day, our species steadily moved forward toward greater societal complexity. It developed tools. It developed language. It developed institutions. It multiplied; rising from just a few thousand to over seven billion in our world today. With this forward motion came moral and ethical codes of behavior that aided in our upward development. Some were formulated by religion, some by practicality. Over a period of time, these codes became institutionalized. Even war developed its own set of rules.

On a broad societal level this allowed the dark side of the human psyche to be throttled enough so as to allow for human progress. But, it left us with a problem: The “institutional checks” promulgating these codes as well as many of the codes themselves are no longer leading to forward progression of our species. They are failing us. Much of what we had assumed to be sacrosanct is being exposed for its weakness and inadequacy.

Over the centuries great philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes (1600’s) spoke to these inadequacies by expressing a dismal view of our species. Sigmund Freud was another. Hobbes said that the moral language we employ is no more than something we humans have agreed on to keep us from realizing what we really are; deceitful creatures. He described us as no more than beasts with an inclination to kill or be killed. He said that we are in constant want of things, and to get these things we will do anything we can, no matter the harm to the community. He said we use the law only to be able to bend our objectives in order to accomplish our own selfish ends.

A look at the world today would indicate that Hobbes was right in his observation. What can we do to prove him wrong? We need to break away from damaging patterns of thought. This means challenging much of what we have believed to be “sacred.” We need to change the way we think about everything; our lifestyles, our economics, our political systems, our social systems, our religions, ourselves.

An understanding of the amoeba analogy made by Brian Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker discussed in Part II of this Chapter may be of help. It has to do with cellular discernment for the evolution of life. It is a discernment that exists in all life forms, even the most primitive. It resides within the thin outer layer of every membrane of every single cell. Among a wide spectrum of matter floating alongside of it the membrane selects what can enter. It has the inherent ability to choose what can and what cannot. Each time something external makes contact, this discernment takes place. Right discernment means prolongation of the cell and the others that will arise from multiplication of the cell. Wrong discernment means the end of the life within the cell. Discernment at every step along the way means the difference between cell prolongation and death of the cell. It is the same with humans. That is the reason I began this book with the caption “Our Biosphere Vulnerability.” It describes the evolutionary process we have come through and the dangers we now face.

The piercing of the earth's biosphere membrane from an event such as a meteorite entering can and has played a role. It cannot be overcome by the selective shield of the membrane. Absent such an external event, now we are finding that our human influence within our membrane also is a determinant factor.

Can we change? Was Hobbes right? Is his definition of us all that we are? Are we irreparable? We must begin by asking; how did this evolution of the hominid all come about? We know that we are an emergent and emerging two or three billion year form of biological life. As such, we are one part of the infinite underlying creative possibilities of the universe. We know that as it has always been, from the first cellular form of life, we live in a shimmering state of disequilibrium moving in the direction of our underlying creative possibilities and we are being shaped at every moment by the forward and backward motion of this disequilibrium. To repeat again the words of David Bohm, that great theoretical physicist and colleague of Albert Einstein; there is a process of unfoldment and enfoldment occurring at every moment, over and over again. New structures are forming. Old structures are being destroyed.

We also know that we are no different from any other species in that if we were to disappear tomorrow, within another million years or more another somewhat similar species would most likely come along to take our place. Nature has the innate ability to self-organize in this process of unfoldment and enfoldment. Awesome powers of self-articulation and self-manifestation run from atom to atom, from cell to cell. The movement is always in the direction of a higher form of complexity. A process of discernment in that direction continues to take place. From unicellular organisms to the more complex such as ours, this pattern repeats itself over and over again. The Universe from its very formation fourteen billion years ago has been moving in this direction toward ever more complexity, ever more discernibility. Ecological breakdown such as what we are now facing only interrupt the process. The end of *Homo sapiens* is not necessarily the end of intelligent life on the planet. That is the way it has always been over the last four billion years from one mass extinction to another.

We as a gifted species only exist as the outcome of a forward motion toward greater and greater complexity. The same can be said for the planet itself. It is the outcome of an infinitely complex

cosmological narrative beginning with the Big Bang and then the formation of our sun and then the planet itself with its moon and plate tectonics, and now a cooling spinning mass of chemicals.

And so it goes on. To the extent that we exist as one of the constituent parts of Planet Earth, each of us living today has the opportunity to participate in its underlying forward motion by adding to the creativity of everything, organic and nonorganic. And if we choose not to do so?

Again I quote from the Gospel of Thomas found at Nag Hammadi:

***(41) Whoever has something in his hand will receive more, and whoever has nothing will be deprived of even the little that he has.***

Extending this message of Jesus to participation in the continuation of the human species, one can logically conclude that those who resist participation, when they biologically cease, become as if they never were. They die deprived of even the little that they ever had. They forfeit having had the chance to join the forward cosmic motion just described. Jesus stated this in the Gospel of Thomas as fact.

To repeat; the process of deconstruction and reconstruction throughout the universe will relentlessly carry on with or without us. It is through this process that we over millions of years ago, as one of very many other biological forms of life on the planet came into being. We became a unique biological form, in many ways unlike the others. With this came a call for moral responsibility. We can consciously participate in an ongoing construction that gives our species a sense of planetary/cosmic direction, or not participate. Each of us has the choice to be a part of that construction or not to be a part of it.

Those in our society who would choose to be in the “denier” category by-and-large are purposefully remaining oblivious to the ecological damage that is taking place. They simply do not care. Without an understanding of what they are doing, they are inviting a disequilibrium that may spell their and our end.

In this disequilibrium; you and I by navigating away from the forces of deconstruction have the opportunity to become part of an upward draft of a creative momentum. There is much at stake; even possibly the entry ultimately into some other dimension. To repeat; as Jesus said in the

gospel of Thomas: *Whoever has something in his hand will receive more.* We must also remember his other words; *whoever has nothing will be deprived of even the little that he has.*

Unlike other life forms that exist by instinct alone and require many generations to adapt to external forces, we have shown that we have the ability to change quickly. No other species has that ability. In a sense we have the gift of self-creation.

The time has come for this process to begin. How to achieve it? We have to change the way we think. To quote again from Albert Einstein at the beginning of this book:

*The problems in the world today are so enormous they cannot be solved with the level of thinking that created them.*

This is where we now find ourselves. **We must change the way we think.**

## **Chapter # 10**

### **Reinventing the Sacred in the Age of the Cosmos**

#### **Part VI The war between the Rational and Irrational mind**

As I progressed in my research, I found a ray of hope. However, I knew all along-as expressed in all of these chapters, that it would be conditional. I came to the conclusion that was the reason I wrote the book; so that each of us in our own separate way would/could understand this problem and its conditionality.

The word “conditional” as used here has far reaching implications. It implies survival/non-survival for our species in the cosmic battle that is now taking place here on this planet. We can choose to survive or we can choose not to survive.



Two words that have traditionally been used in the Judeo/Christian/Islamic world to differentiate between human choices are the words “good” and “evil.” These words have no relevance to this discussion. Freedom of human choice as it is here being used is defined not as a good/evil choice but as the choice to be a part of Nature or not to be a part of Nature, to be a part of the Implicate Order of the cosmos or not to be a part of it.

This will present a problem for many of those from the faiths that grew out of the religions of Abraham. Evil as an outside force has been fixed into their minds. They will have to rid themselves of this understanding, at least to the narrowness of its definition. “The devil made me do it” can no longer serve as an excuse. What modern science is telling us is that there is no such thing as an evil force external to our presence on this planet or working on us internally from the inside. It is our relationship to the natural forces of the planet and the cosmos that determines for us good or bad outcomes. We are either in harmony with these natural forces or we are not. The cosmic battle therefore is not a battle between Manichean good and evil; it is a battle between planetary harmony and planetary disharmony.

Humans are given the ability to define the difference between this harmony and disharmony through our ability to think rationally. The following two definitions express this:

**RATIONALITY: The intellectual process by which a human being acquires an understanding of the Implicate Order inherent in Planet Earth and the Cosmos.**

**IRRATIONALITY: The intellectual process by which a human being acquires some level of understanding of the Implicate Order inherent in Planet Earth and the Cosmos but that understanding is made imperfect by the degree to which his or her thinking is obscured.**

In *Chapter I A Lesson from Socrates*, we find a discussion of the thought process that occupies the rational mind as opposed to the thought process that occupies the irrational mind. Socrates said that rational thought rests on constants; ***Truth, Honesty, Beauty*** and ***Absolute Good***. They are unchangeable “externalities.” They are only comprehensible within the rational mind. The opposite of these Socratic constants describes the thought process within the irrational mind. Irrational thought by way of faulty imagination becomes mingled with misguided belief.

Untruths become truths. Dishonesty becomes honesty. Ugliness becomes beauty. Absolute bad becomes absolute good. I elaborate on this in that chapter where I say:

**“Socrates gave an eternal dimension to words such as; *Truth, Honesty, Beauty and Absolute Good*. He challenged the Athenians to think about them as absolutes. He told them that their real meanings were eternal and unchanging. He admonished them saying: Your truth is no longer *Truth*. Your honesty is no longer *Honesty*. Your beauty is no longer *Beauty*. Your absolute good is no longer *Absolute Good*. He showed his fellow Athenians that these words had become hollow. They had lost all meaning. He argued that the Sophists had destroyed them. He also argued that the Athenian god worship had destroyed them as well. He said that the rituals were irrelevant. They were not a reflection of eternal truths.”**

The admonishment of Socrates to the citizens of Athens becomes an admonishment to the citizens of today’s world. As it was then; this admonishment remains a criticism of our contemporary thought. But, there is a difference. Then it was just Grecian philosophical thought and no more. Today it has a far deeper meaning. It is being waged as a war between planetary/cosmic reality and planetary/cosmic unreality. We live in a far more dangerous time. Those who are arguing against the accumulating scientific information spelling out the demise of our species and the political, religious, social, economic changes called for to halt that demise are those of the “Irrational” mind. Their truth is not *Truth*. Their honesty is not *Honesty*. Their beauty is not *Beauty*. Their absolute good is not *Absolute Good*.

Given the projections of resource exploitation, rampant technological malefaction, human population growth the possibility of Planet Earth not being able to sustain human life has now begun to enter the rational mind. The implications of this unsustainability are so profound that even those who are conscious of it have difficulty grasping the finality of its implications.

Depending on which Socratic frame of mind wins this battle, one of the following three possibilities will play out:

**(A) *Homo sapiens* will continue to thrive on Planet Earth**

**(B) *Homo sapiens* will barely survive on Planet Earth**

**(C) *Homo sapiens* will not survive but will perish from Planet Earth**

Where are we heading; (A), (B) or (C) ?

Tragically, a cognitive impairment is holding us back from comprehending the meaning of these three possibilities. Past philosophers (Not much is heard now about Socrates) give us little help. Nor do our social sciences. Nor do our religions. In fact, one insists on our welcoming humanity's *end of times*.

Behind this “cognitive impairment” is an acid brew of our own making rapidly penetrating the planet’s thin and fragile biosphere. As discussed in some detail in this book, out of it is emerging a kind of risk previously unknown in human history.

Many among the planet's human population have an intuitive comprehension of what is going on but they remain in a zombie-like state, confused and unable to understand fully the implications. There is almost no recognition of the fact that planetary ecological events do not always move forward in arithmetic progression with ample time for correction; that Nature works by its own rules. And that it can and often does accelerate without notice from “slow” to “fast” to “chaos.”

This cognitive impairment is holding humans back from visualizing “fast” and “chaos” forming just over the horizon. As this is being written, ecological tipping points are beginning to form. One is rising temperatures resulting in melting ice that will result in rising oceans engulfing coastal land areas. Then another is the ricochet effect of massive population displacement from those areas at a time when resettlement becomes cost prohibitive; then another relates to future food availability. These mark just the beginning. We may be facing a convergence of many others, as revealed in this book.

In the early years, as indicators began to appear; throughout the world there seemed to be a sense of optimism about the whole thing. “Eat less meat, burn less gas, stop polluting the rivers” was the rational cry of the environmentalists. Then, in recent years, a sense of panic began to set in. Among not only the scientists themselves, but also among many others in the world community, a general feeling of pessimism began to form. We were missing the mark. We were all headed for the cliff. Something more is needed to be done. It slowly became clear that at some point the ecosystem of the planet will not be able to provide an environment for the continued life and development of *Homo sapiens*. Many were beginning to realize that there are no “technological” fixes on the horizon. The changes will be coming on so suddenly and with such severity that if

humans do survive, it will most likely be in a restricted form so alienated from events around them that further development will be severely restricted.

One of the reasons for this inaction is that the industrial revolution, begun only recently in our history, has taken control over our minds. Human functionality is now being measured in terms of economic utility. In the final analysis, the market is the new religion that dominates and controls. Old institutional systems, religious and other, developed prior to the Industrial Revolution have been overtaken

The problem extends to all levels throughout our society. Life is just too comfortable to change the way we live and the way we think. As stated in Chapter 4:

**“Only a limited number in our world society seem to be fully aware of this growing shadow. Even with the planet now under threat, there is only casual interest on the part of the general public. Many are, however, at least beginning to have discomfiture. Yet, when these “many” turn on their air conditioners, drive their cars, take a cruise, it all seems to be a part of normal twenty-first century life. And as for the private “jet-setters,” that’s another story. Material comforts not just for them but for almost everyone with the means are considered an entitlement. *Homo economicus* we have all become.”**

At this point in our discussion, a few words on the concept of “embeddedness” are in order as this seems to capture the intractability of the human problem. The institutional systems developed as a result of Industrial Revolution are now so embedded in world society as to be immovable. Here is a quote from Ruben Nelson, well-known futurologist and Executive Director of Foresight, Canada. He expresses this very well:

**“I want to reinforce the reality of what you call our ‘embeddedness’ in the cultures (and forms of civilization) of our birth and formation. Such ‘embeddedness’ is simply a fact of human life. Persons presuppose a functioning culture within which and by which persons are formed. And, yes, the default view assumed and encouraged by all cultures is that its grasp on reality is solid enough that the persons formed within it can just relax, make themselves comfortable and live according to and without resistance to the way reality is seen, experienced, thought through, and responded to.**

**“All cultures, including our own in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, take for granted that their construction of the world is the real world. The culture that forms us is not only comfortable for those that formed, it appears as being natural. It is the real way the real world is. Life as we know it is comfortable because our concave fits the convex of our culture.**

**“Of course, there is now a very small percentage of folks in our culture and around the world who acknowledge the socially constructed nature of social and societal realities. However, in no culture or sub-culture (not even in the academy) is this orientation so deeply and widely ingested that a meta-understanding of a new societal construction and a new human embeddedness can set the foundation for the emergence of a new meta-culture that can deal routinely, openly, knowledgeably and skillfully with the new work of our time....”**

At this turning point in planetary history, the point Ruben Nelson makes is one we should all be taking very seriously. In the face of our predicament, we *Homo sapiens* are showing ourselves unable to take action. If **“not even in the academy”** do we find an understanding, then are we finished? We have evidence of what has happened in the past. Nature rules, species die out. An author quoted in this book, Jared Diamond, has devoted his entire career to writing about it. In *Chapter 9 “The Tragedy of the Commons” Forging a New Global Ethic for Planetary Survival* this author speaks to this disharmony with nature in ethical detail.

When I began this book I had the intuitive feeling that although the ominous ecological findings were very serious and enormous pain and suffering would follow, events as they unfolded would be met by an uneven yet upward evolutionary progression of thought and action, and in the end this progress would mollify any possibility of a deadly outcome. It would all lead to a continuation of our species. All of this was to be a part of the enfoldment/unfoldment process described by the great theoretical physicist David Bohm. I wrote:

**“In all of our awkwardness, we as a species on the planet would be moving into a higher form of complexity; from our present post Mesopotamian age of planetary dysfunction and self-destruction to a state of planetary and even possibly cosmic unity.”**

Was I wrong? Once the ecological tipping points are reached; a rise in sea level, loss of carbon based energy needed to rebuild, and worse than that the start of a Methane Hydrate Feedback Loop, what then? In the thousands if not millions of years it will take for the planet to readjust ecologically, will our species, as so many have in the past, die out? Or is it possible we will pass through these events more or less intact? Will our future be (A) or (B), or will it be (C) ? In this book I use the extreme metaphorical example of human life confined to self-contained enclosed structures such as Buckminster Fuller’s tetrahedron domes or even space stations just above the earth capturing the Sun’s energy. That is option (B).

To find an answer to this question of whether *Homo sapiens* will be able to pass through this period intact biologically we need to return to the two words discussed above: **rationality** and **irrationality**. I will begin here with a second quote in this book from Benedict de Spinoza scholar Dr. Renato Bellu, Professor Emeritus at The City University of New York.

**“We must continue our definition of these two words with the great seventeenth Jewish-Dutch philosopher Benedict de Spinoza. He laid the groundwork for the 18th century Enlightenment and modern Abrahamic biblical criticism. He came to be considered one of the great rationalists of 17th-century philosophy. Albert Einstein and the physicist David Bohm both essentially came to the same conclusions as he did on the meaning of the word rationalism. Spinoza opposed Descartes’s mind–body dualism that removed ‘being’ from the earthly dimension.**

**“Spinoza earned recognition as one of Western philosophy’s most important contributors. In his Ethics, he wrote an indisputable Latin masterpiece, and one in which he refined conceptions of medieval philosophy. Philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel said of all contemporary philosophers, ‘you are either a Spinozist or not a philosopher at all.’ Spinoza equated God (infinite substance) with Nature, consistent with his belief in an impersonal deity.**

**“Once you take out all the trimmings, Bohm’s ‘gnosis’ of a vision discerning the characteristics of an evolving cosmos in process, his theory is precisely the same as Spinoza’s concept of ‘Natura Naturans’, that is the self-causing activity of what he calls Substance or God, defined as ‘what is in itself and is conceived through itself,’ as contrasted to ‘Natura Naturata’ (What Bohm calls the explicate order). I’m certain Bohm’s thinking, as that of Einstein and many other physicists was affected by Spinoza. The following quote might be very revealing:**

**‘Albert Einstein named Spinoza as the philosopher who exerted the most influence on his world view (Weltanschauung). Spinoza equated God (infinite substance) with Nature, consistent with Einstein’s belief in an impersonal deity. In 1929, Einstein was asked in a telegram by Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein whether he believed in God. Einstein responded by telegram:**

**‘I believe in Spinoza’s God who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of what exists, not in a God who concerns himself with the fates and actions of human beings.’**

**“My belief is that human progress (positive change in mankind) occurs because of the ultimate rationality inherent, as a potentiality, in all human beings as attributes of Substance. However, nothing can change eternal, infinite Substance. Man can only change his level of understanding, which differs in each individual, but this fact does not imply an ultimate purpose for human actions. The Cosmos is what it is—Eternal—and Substance consists of an infinity of attributes of which each one expresses an eternal and infinite essence.”**

**Author’s Note:**

**Bohm (1917-1992) and his friendship with Albert Einstein. (1879-1955)**

**It is said Bohm met often with Einstein (38 years his senior) when they were both teaching at Princeton. This was unusual as it is also said Einstein in his later years had few close friends among the faculty. During that period Bohm was called before the McCarthy Committee to testify against some of his colleagues about their ties to communism. He, too, was active in various leagues. Bohm refused to testify and as a result was declared "persona non grata." In 1957 he moved to the U.K. where he taught at the University of Bristol and spent the rest of his life. No doubt, the two had deep conversations about Spinoza. In recent years Bohm has gained great fame, as he was able to express very complex quantum findings in words at least some could understand.**

As we ponder all of this and look at the various ecological life-sustaining and not life-sustaining scenarios that could ultimately play-out, we must understand that we are viewing it all from the perspective of where we are at this one moment in time. The rational versus irrational battle has not yet been settled. Also, although the scientific peer reviewed ecological information is largely correct, some questions remain as to the long term implications of what is occurring. This further confuses the debate. And the confusion is exacerbated by the constant and unrelenting sophistic obfuscation in the media over the validity of what information we have. This has left the general public in a state of comprehensive/incomprehensive flux. The deep seriousness of the changes in front of them as outlined in this book has not begun to be recognized.

Progress is further held back by a religious/philosophical part of the debate. It is expressed in the unrelenting battle between the Spinoza/Einstein/Bohm concept of GOD as infinite substance at one with Nature against judgmental Abrahamic Heaven/Earth belief. The religious traditions built on that later view are playing a large part in the problem of "embeddedness" here discussed. Attitudinally among the general public in the West and in the Muslim world this has become a major barrier to ecological understanding.

Nevertheless, this God image is not the only problem. Our attitudes encompass a wide range of past thought. As strong as the God image has been and continues to be, many of our political, social and economic institutions over history have grown independent of that God image. As such, they are following their own course.

The ecological imbalances in front of us are in the formative stage. We have only just begun to witness the first signs of far greater significance; a few tornados, draughts and snow storms, melting of ice, mass starvation in dysfunctional African and Middle Eastern nations. As we

become more aware of the long term implications, larger and larger numbers of humanity will begin to understand the cause of it all being the result of not one single weakness, but many weaknesses inherent in our present-day culture and the institutions that have grown out of that culture.

We as a society are traveling in uncharted territory morally, ethically and religiously. We are moving in the direction of self-annihilation. The good news is that there is still time for change to take place. At this moment no major tipping point has yet been reached. Still, the pessimists are right; our species has not shown itself up to the task of facing the ecological challenges in front of it, mainly because of a stubborn embeddedness of thought and behavior-as Ruben Nelson points out-built upon its many thousands of years of past cultural history. They are right in pointing out that the response to the threats to our continued existence on the planet have been anemic. They are right in saying that at this point irrational thought would appear to be the winner. They are right in pointing out that a host of lethal forces such as rising oceans, acidification of them, radioactivity from nuclear war, methane gas (CH<sub>4</sub>) bubbling out of warming tundra and oceans, mass starvation from desertification, aquifers running dry, rampant disease from overpopulation; all these and many others taken together could in quick time deliver a fatal blow to humanity equal to the Permian-Triassic extinction 245 million years ago.

But, as the pain increases and the frightful ecological scenarios begin to play out and take their toll, one cannot assume that there will not be a breakdown in the embeddedness of past values and the irrational thought and behaviour now holding humanity back. So we must also factor in the possibility that a critical mass of the world population-or even limited to an all-powerful controlling group, may be able to reverse the course before it is too late, moving *Homo sapiens* into a new Age unlike the dysfunctional unnatural one that began with the bronze/iron agricultural age and persists to this day.

How much time do we have? Very little. We have undone and are continuing to undo much of what the planet has given us. Many of our greatest scientific thinkers are talking about an end even in the next 200 to 300 years, or at least a total civilizational breakdown by then. But, like any war in its initial stages-and that is exactly what we are discussing here, the battle is not won or lost until it is all over.



## **ADDENDUM**

### **SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS ON RELIGIOUS THOUGHT**

In recent years the inherent danger in biosphere degradation as a result of human activities has been forcing many scientists and nonscientists to focus attention on the relationship between our human species and our planet. Many are concluding that we humans have become an ecological force acting contrary to biosphere stabilization/regeneration and that this is so serious it could lead to our extinction. Renowned physicist Stephen Hawking in 2017 sounded the alarm when he predicted that we have less than 600 years before the planet turns into, as he described it; “a sizzling fireball.” In 1992; 1,700 scientists warned about the catastrophic impact of human actions on the environment and predicted the same high temperature warning as a consequence of our dependence on fossil fuels and deforestation. The report updated in 2017 by 15,000 scientists expressed even greater concern. A chapter in this book supports these predictions, beginning with reference to a 1972 World Bank report that noted the possibility of a repeat of an extinction event like the Permian Triassic. It goes into detail as to how, as a result of the release of massive methane reserves below the Arctic land areas and the Arctic Ocean floor, Hawking’s “sizzling fireball.” scenario could unfold.

Even with Hawking and many scientists like him raising the alarm, few among the general public are expressing concern. This has been particularly evident in America. So a question is arising among the “those” who are expressing concern: What is the reason for this public insouciance? Why is it we are only able to focus on the immediacy of our existence? Is it that as a species we are inherently neurotically dangerous to ourselves?

Religious belief underlies much of the world’s thought process and behavior. It set the foundation for many of the world’s political, legal, social and economic institutions. These institutions reflect and reinforce how we think. Can we find an answer here?

Keeping this in mind we will focus in this addendum on the interaction between Abrahamic religious belief and planetary sustainability. That belief system has been the prime mover behind

Western civilization and the institutions that have now grown out of it. We will attempt to answer these questions:

**Are there human species survival non-survival implications underlying Abrahamic religious belief? The original implication was non-survival. (Apocalyptic) Are its beliefs now moving away from that implication and toward survival? If so, are they moving fast enough?**

Many-but not all-of those of the Abrahamic faiths are coming to view their GOD not as their religions had first identified “HIM.” They are now envisioning their GOD as a form of transcendental intelligence underlying the passage of all life and nonlife from the “Big Bang” onward toward higher and higher complexity. This understanding has occurred largely as a result of knowledge gained from scientific discoveries made over the last 600 years as well as advances in theological and philosophical thought.

As this great debate carried on, two forms of modern thought emerged. One gave up on any form of “GOD” direction at all. Those with this thought are now being called Atheistic Reductionists. They eliminate religion altogether from the evolutionary process. They view the cosmos as devoid of subjectivity and meaning. What is just is. If it all goes down, it goes down. Another form of thought stayed with the idea of a GOD direction and transcendental GOD complexity, but not as originally scripturally understood. It held to the belief that our species is under the influence of a “GOD” power and that the purpose of our lives is to be integral to its implicit purpose. Today those with this form of thought see themselves as the responsible party to move cosmic complexity forward toward that purpose. They also see our species as failing in this regard.

This has allowed them, at the same time, to continue to believe that this power has an awareness of their own actions and inactions. They do not agree with Albert Einstein as quoted below. They believe that this power is aware of and concerns itself with the fates and actions of each and every human being both while living and then gone.

Dr. Renato Bellu’s quoting Einstein in *Chapter 10 Reinventing the Sacred in the Age of the Cosmos Part VI The war between the Rational and Irrational mind*

**Albert Einstein**

**“I believe in Spinoza's God who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of what exists, not in a God who concerns himself with the fates and actions of human beings.”**

This book centers on the pressing question of whether those of the Abrahamic faiths, even those out-of-the-box thinkers outlined above, as well as the nonbelievers, understand to the full extent the challenge now facing human civilization. The following quotation from *Chapter 4 Human Civilization – The Future Part XI The ecological threat to/from Islam* deals with this.

**“Judeo/Christian/Islamic belief is now being forced to adjust to the reality of an ecologically disintegrating planet with humans on it searching not for solutions restricted to their past, but built on new ideas within a thought process reaching beyond....Past religious belief in all three of the religions of Abraham will be made to measure its value against a new form of thought that encompasses the nonlinearity of all matter and non-matter in the context of human/planetary consonance-and survival.”**

This addendum began with a question about the Abrahamic religions: **“The original implication was non-survival. (Apocalyptic) Are its beliefs now moving away from that implication and toward survival? If so, are they moving fast enough? ”** The answer is “No.” The reason is that in our world society Abrahamic belief in its original form continues to be a molder of large areas of world culture and the institutions in support of that culture. Also, Abrahamic belief institutionally controls the belief system and culture of roughly 1.5 Billion Muslims, a belief system and culture that remains rooted in the Abrahamic past. As a result, in one form or another Abrahamic belief continues to dominate the world’s political, social and economic institutions as a mix of the ancient and modern.

About culture; the Canadian futurologist Ruben Nelson quoted in this book writes:

**“All cultures, including our own in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, take for granted that their construction of the world is the real world. The culture that forms us is not only comfortable for those that formed, it appears as being natural. It is the real way the real world is. Life as we know it is comfortable because our concave fits the convex of our culture.”**

Most citizens of the world today accede to the existing foundational **concave/convex** mold that has been set for them. That includes those who think of themselves as not being within the mold. It also includes those who think they are moving away from the mold. For example, “Liberal” Pope Francis in his 2015 *Laudio Si’* stayed in the mold when he spoke about environmental degradation. He left out reference to one of the most deadly planetary present and future dangers;

namely exponential population growth. Also, his words about changes needed in our economic system were fuzzy at best. The same kind of criticism can also be made with respect to the conclusions of the members at the 2015 COP21 meetings in Paris. There was heightened awareness of the ecological problems, but no urgent call for radical change in the political/social/economic systems in their home countries. (The same can be said for subsequent meetings)

Nevertheless, and on a note of optimism; there has been some notable change among many. Following are four Roman Catholic deep thinkers who expressed in their time a contrarian view of much of Roman Catholic Church doctrine. They called for the Church to step out of its institutional mold:

**Meister Eckhart ( 1260-1328 )**

**Thomas Berry ( 1914-2009 )**

**Thomas Merton ( 1915-1968 )**

**Matthew Fox ( 1940 )**

Their breakaway can be expressed as a disavowal of the dominant Abrahamic belief that the God as defined in the Torah and the Old and the New Testament-and the Koran, is a god residing in some other dimension above and beyond Planet Earth.

Stepping back well before them and before that into the bronze/iron/agricultural age, this book goes into detail as to how an entirely different hominid understanding had been a part of our thought process from the beginning of human consciousness. And it suggests there are now signs we may be returning to that earlier understanding. Before our Axial Age we had defined the GOD mystery as GOD everywhere and in everything. GOD was inside of us and outside of us. GOD was inside all life and non-life and outside all life and non-life.

When did the understanding change? As this book explains, in Egypt and in the Levant there appeared what this author calls a “Rorschach test god”, that is a god-personification of the human mind; a metaphorical reflection of the best and the worst in each of us.

This book says that the Abrahamic god did not start out that way. As described in *Chapter 3 The Anthropomorphic God of Abraham*, the original Hebraic definition was not anthropomorphic.

Here it is:

**“When YHWH was revealed to Moses on Mt. Horeb/Mt. Sinai, this was not the definition. YHWH was *I AM THAT I AM*. (also translated as *I SHALL BE WHAT I SHALL BE*) Then, as the Nation of Israel moved forward in time, the definition began to change. He expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Then, in anger He brought on a great flood showing humanity that He would punish those who disappointed Him. Years later with the advent of Christianity, He would sacrifice His own son as expiation for the sin of man. One hundred years after that, He would have John in the Book of Revelation outline in gruesome detail how He will destroy all of humanity for a second time, allowing only a select few to join Him in eternity. Then in the seventh century with the advent of Islam, He continued to change. The original Hebraic definition was no longer undefinable; He had become a fearful, loving, controlling, punishing, judgmental god for all noncompliant Jews, Christians and Muslims, as well as all non-believers, He had become a capricious god hidden far off in the heavens.”**

This Abrahamic understanding of god has led to sinister outcomes. One now looming in front of humanity relates to the ecological destruction of our planet.

The danger in this GOD belief is that among many adherents planetary destruction is of no concern. In the long run the planet is disposable. These religionists believe that we are all sinful, depraved human beings in search of salvation and that this salvation will come only to a select few at *the end of times* when their God will bring a fiery end to our planet. Such belief can have dire consequences. Today, many Christians and Jews, as well as Muslims, think that *the end of times* is coming fast upon us. These believers think of humanity as living in a defeatist ecological conundrum. So they further reason; if my God will destroy our planet, why should I be concerned about Nature and the environment, why should I even listen to the dire predictions of the scientists? Who cares? It is all in God’s hands anyway.

In order for human life to continue on this planet, these believers need to rid ourselves of how their **YHWH** is defined. If they do not, the dark side of their Freudian psychotic intentionality may become our planet’s future reality. Freud’s “id” (Not their GOD) will be proven to be their controller.

Finding a way out of this dilemma will call for a breakthrough in 21<sup>st</sup> century religious thought at all levels. As stated above, this is in fact occurring within some Abrahamic religious communities. But not fast enough.

Over the years there have been many such breakthroughs. They force us to abandon existing belief. We are left only with the new one. We saw this in early Judaism. Then with the presence of Jesus of Nazareth and his opposition to Temple orthodoxy and Roman hegemony we saw it again. But, as is often the case; the message later becomes ensnared in creeds and sacraments and rituals on the religious side and political legal structures on the social side, leaving only vestiges of the original thought breakthrough. This is typical of all such breakthroughs. The purity of thought becomes conscripted by adherents who then use that thought for their own advantage. This book gives a number of examples, even going back to ancient Egypt and the Pharaoh Akhenaten.

The first sign of such a cognitive breakthrough is now appearing on the horizon. The breakthrough is being defined by many individuals as an emerging cosmic consciousness revealing an underlying “Implicate Order.” With recent advancements in the physical sciences, and particularly in the areas of quantum physics and cosmology, many scientists and nonscientists alike are beginning to recognize that there is such a thing as order in the Cosmos. They are making strides in attempting to define it. As noted in this book, David Bohm, the great theoretical physicist and colleague of Albert Einstein spoke of it in terms of an unbroken cosmic wholeness, with everything animate and inanimate having, as he described it; “an inseparable quantum interconnectedness” in a continuing process of cosmic “enfoldment” and “unfoldment.” Breakthroughs in thought such as these are marking the beginning of a transition from our present state of planetary ecological dysfunction into a state of planetary ecological accommodation.

This can even be described in Abrahamic terms as a “revelation.” *Homo sapiens* may be about to step out of its earthly shoes and into its Cosmic one. That transition implies the need for a restructuring of world political, social, economic and religious thought as well as human behavior so that our species can move toward Bohm’s “enfoldment” and “unfoldment.” Can it be achieved? It can, but humanity will have to view the planet and the continuance of all forms of

life on it in an entirely different way from the way it has in the past. At the same time, it will have to abandon much of its past doctrinaire religious belief, as to a large extent this has been the glue pressing our species onto its past **concave/convex** perception of reality, a perception now become contradictory to its sustainability on Planet Earth.

Such a movement is now beginning to gain momentum. It was evident in the thought process of those four Roman Catholics noted above. It can be seen in the early writings of Enlightenment philosophers such as Spinoza. A breakthrough in America came with the so-called transcendentalists who openly challenged the doctrinaire religious orthodoxy of the time. Another breakthrough came with American “in-depth-psychologists” such as F.W.H. Meyers and William James. Their challenge to the then European school of reductionist behavioristic psychology soon gained momentum and led to the work of Carl Jung in Switzerland and others around the world in the form of a post-empirical behaviorist movement opening the field of transpersonal depth psychology.

This is not to say that the movement has sufficient momentum. Freudian atheistic reductionist behavioristic psychology placed limitations on the human psyche. Those limitations still prevail in much of social science academia. Dangerous flaws in such reductionist atheistic behavioristic psychology have in recent years lead to human pain and suffering for the entire world to see.

An understanding of a cosmic other dimensionality goes far back in time, as far back as the Upanishads and the Eastern thought that grew out of it. It can be seen in the Greek Platonic thought. It may have extended even further back as is evident in the Lascaux cave region of France discussed in this book.

With the discovery in 1945 of the “lost” Gospel of Thomas at Nag Hammadi, Egypt we can observe that Jesus was strongly influenced by such an esoteric form of thought. It is interesting to note that there is speculation among some scholars that a form of eastern thought could have come to Jesus in his formative years from contact with Roman intellectuals in Sepphoris, a model Roman city/town about five miles from where his family lived in Nazareth. Jesus may even have experienced Greek theater in the amphitheater there. Father and son may have been applying the father’s trade. (There is conjecture that his father was not a cabinet maker but a scaffold builder) So it is possible that Jesus as a youth could have spent much of his time there.

**Author's Note:**

**There is some debate among Christian "traditionalists" over Sepphoris having been an influence. Although archaeological studies have not successfully been able to date its precise condition during the first thirty years of Jesus' life, we do know that it was a large Roman city and near his home; also a center for both Jewish and Roman intellectualism. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that Hellenistic and other thought was present among the local Jewish and Roman citizens.**

Another possible influence on Jesus should be mentioned here. We do have some solid evidence of this. During the short period of Jesus' ministry, Qumran Essene thought in one form or other existed throughout a wide geographic area beyond the colony at Qumran. It may have been an influence on Jesus during his formative years. In fact his cousin, John the Baptist, may have at some point been influenced by Essene thought. It was anti-Temple and in some respects what we would call esoteric. To quote from Stephan A. Hoeller in his book *Jung and the Lost Gospels Insights into the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi Library*, p 38:

**"There was only one organization in existence that could have served as the foundation for this rapidly developing structure, and it was the order of the Essenes. Centered in its monastic headquarters by the Dead Sea, but extending all over Judea and in all likelihood into Egypt, Rome and Asia Minor, the Essene organization served as a ready-made matrix on which the new Christian association of communities could be built."**

However one frames the mindset of those in and around Jerusalem at that time-and later on as Paul found when he finally reached Rome and came upon an already established Jesus community, there was an undercurrent of esoteric Essene as well as neo Platonic Greek and Alexandrian thought existing beyond the doctrinal interior Temple Judaic Hebraic, and it had taken hold. It was laying the groundwork for the words of Jesus and its subsequent rapid spread.

**The important observation here is this: There are indications now in our present age, as there were at the time of Jesus, that a new foundation is beginning to form.** Many in the world today are joining in with the understanding that there is an all-inclusive material and non-material cosmic inner/outer dimensionality to this planet and to the Universe and within it an enfolding/unfolding order. Many are also concluding that our civilization in its present form socially, politically, philosophically, religiously and economically is not meeting the test of being a part of that order.



How do we become a part of it, at one with that order; *The Kingdom of GOD* as Jesus used the expression back then in the Gospel of Thomas? In that gospel Jesus pointed to a way for each of us to become part of an inner/outer cosmic determinative consciousness.

A word of warning: Jesus spoke of it in conditional terms. He used the words: *When you come to know yourselves*. He said that actualization calls for self-realization. Jesus was calling for no less than a metamorphosis of human thought on an inner-individual level in order for *The Kingdom of God* on this Earth to be revealed.

Observations here in this book on the work of the modern thinker Richard Tarnas show this same conditionality. Tarnas uses the word “participation” in the context of the “need” to partake in a unity waiting to be realized. He calls for this through contact with the creative process within “Nature.” He writes in his book—as quoted in *Chapter 6 Back to Lascaux Part II Richard Tarnas – Nature’s unfolding truth*

**“From within its own depths the imagination directly contacts the creative process within nature, realizes that process within itself, and brings nature’s reality to conscious expression.”**

We see the same train of thought from Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas:

***(3) The Kingdom of God is inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize who you are.***

***(77) I am the light that is over all things. I am all: from me all came forth, and to me all attained. Split a piece of wood; I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there***

This book throughout reflects the importance of the meaning of these two sayings of Jesus-and those of other great thinkers. Unfortunately most of the world is living and thinking well out of that mind frame.

Only a universal mind-change of earth shattering magnitude can save our species from impending extinction. Friedrich Nietzsche warned us about the dangers of our present insouciance. As quoted again and again in this book, he wrote in *The Gay Science*:

**“The madman when he went into the marketplace to tell everyone the news of God’s death; those going about their business missed the significance. Nor did they recognize the extent to which they themselves were implicated.”**

We need to understand that we are those there in that marketplace. We are the **implicated**.

In closing I will quote from Matthew Fox (Roman Catholic scholar noted above) in his book *A Way To God Thomas Merton's Spiritual Journey* p.201 where he quotes Thomas Berry discussing the ideas of Thomas Merton. It centers on this same theme.

**“There is a certain futility in the efforts being made, truly sincere, dedicated, and intelligent efforts-to remedy our environmental devastation simply by achieving renewable sources of energy and by reducing the deleterious impact of the industrial world. The difficulty is that the natural world is seen primarily for human use, not as a mode of sacred presence primarily to be communed with in wonder and beauty and intimacy. In our present attitude, the natural world remains a commodity to be bought and sold, not a sacred reality to be venerated....”**

Can humanity change the way it thinks? There are signs that it can. Changes in the biosphere adverse to human survival are becoming the more visible. World thought is becoming aware of these changes. Larger and larger numbers are demanding that something be done. Many of those with religion and those not are coming to the realization that the natural world is not a commodity to be bought and sold. It is a sacred reality to be venerated. There is a growing realization among these many that the world economic system in place does not recognize that sacredness.

Here are a few last words from this author on how you and I possibly can begin to meet this challenge:

**The cosmos is conscious. Lift up a stone, you will find it there. Gaze into the night sky, you will find it there. Split an atom; you will find it there. See a butterfly, you will find it there. Watch a spider, you will find it there. Look at the person next to you, you will find it there. Look at yourself, you will find it there.**

**You and everything in and around you, living and non-living, is bounded by this cosmic consciousness.**

**Within that consciousness is an implicate order. Within that implicate order is intelligence. Within that intelligence is endless and timeless cosmic creativity.**

**The sole purpose of your life from birth to death is to become a part of that endless and timeless cosmic creativity.**

**How you ask? First, you must rid yourself of society's validation. You must look for validation within and beyond yourself.**

**Then and only then will you be able to realize who you are and who you can become; not here one moment and then gone the next, but a part of endless and timeless cosmic creativity.**

**Then and only then will you find that you are not inconsequential.**

**Then and only then will you find a life purpose separate from the distractions that surround you.**

**Then and only then can your thoughts, your actions, your very being become the creative force they were meant to be.**

**Then and only then will you find your path, one where your life's possibilities are without limit.**

**Then and only then will you be able to connect with an intelligence both within and beyond your consciousness.**

**Then and only then will you begin to understand that you are singularly endowed with the ultimate privilege to be more than just another biological form of life on the planet.**

**Then and only then will you find the meaning of your existence.**

My purpose in this book has been to open this possibility. I hope I have succeeded to some degree in doing so.

David Anderson

## **Appendix # I**

### **Joseph Campbell's Monomyth**

The late Joseph Campbell spoke about the possibility of humanity moving toward the completion of the third phase of a classic mythical journey; one where the hero faces a series of trials, at the end leading to inner awareness and change. Campbell said that this journey has patterned the life story of humanity from the beginning of time. Accordingly, the fact that many are just now beginning to experience this "inner awareness" may be a sign of our approaching the final stage of our own monomyth; our own final trial.

Avoidance of the trial is not a choice. Nor are piecemeal responses to the challenge.

All of this has brought into focus a horrifying contemporary thought. Are we *Homo sapiens* incapable of going through the final trial? What will happen if we, in an evolutionary sense, are not far enough along the biological/psychological curve?

A glance at recent history shows just how dysfunctional we are. Tens of millions perished in a First and Second World War. Millions of Jews were murdered in the German Holocaust. Stalin embarked on a brutal murderous assault of Russian society. The same was true in China. The death toll in each country ran into the tens of millions. Then in the name of freedom and democracy; what did we witness in Korea and Viet Nam? Then in Iraq millions of lives were destroyed. With a Shiite in Iraq having stoked hatred among its Sunni population, radical Islamic ISIS now spreads its violence beyond Iraq borders. Meanwhile, an atomic Iran just sits there; ruled by an Islamic apocalyptic theocracy waiting for *the end of times* when the Mahdi (along with Jesus) will appear.

American hands are far from clean. Americans are murdering Americans. Gun violence and incarceration in America break all international records. Many Americans die from lack of medical care. And then there are the self-styled American mega rich, who rely on subtle sophist manipulation. Their political lackeys fund disinformation campaigns against scientific warnings of the imminent threat of global warming, with no concern for the many millions of Americans living in coastal communities as well as those in other nations living in low lying areas of the planet, all facing untold future suffering by way of ocean inundation.

How do we explain this? This we now know: We exit the birth canal eugenically flawed. History past and present shows this to be true. There are exceptions, but they are just that; exceptions.

The Abrahamic religions defined our dysfunction broadly in terms of a human weakness overcome by evil. That definition came before the recent social and physical sciences were able to more precisely define it as the manifestation of many potentially dangerous and often self-destructive controlling human urges. Freud defined them as the “id.”

What is the “id”? It is the dark and inaccessible part of us. We can only approach the id with analogies. We call it a chaos, a cauldron full of seething excitations. It is filled with energy. It has no organization. It produces no collective will, but only a striving to bring about the satisfaction of our instinctual needs.

Regardless of definition, one empirical observation can be made; we are a species that is dangerous to itself and to all other life around it.

Could we see, regardless of the id, the time when day-to-day living for all of humanity is a “heaven on earth experience,” where both human and planetary harmony prevails?

There is a measure of hope. We now find ourselves living in an age able to understand the weaknesses of eight thousand years of our political, social, religious and economic thought and the institutions that arose from that thought. And we are becoming aware of the fact that we remain captive of much of that thought. We are beginning to understand that the thought came from the minds of fallible human beings with the very same human dysfunctions that Freud described. As this self-evaluation moves forward, we are finding that many of the presuppositions we assumed were built on "inherent truths" were built not built on "inherent truths" at all. In fact, they have become the cause of our problem.

Out of this realization, there is some evidence that a new ethics centered on the sacredness of all life, not just human, is slowly beginning to form, as well as an awareness of the sacredness of all nonlife.

How will Joseph Campbell's classic mythical journey end? Is this beginning of awareness a first sign? Are we about to see a new human societal/planetary formulation? Four possible changes within our human capacity, beginning with the biological and extending into the intellectual lie in front of us and are possible:

- **With recent developments in selective eugenics, behavioral change can occur by way of carefully planned reproductive selection. Over succeeding generations through controlled embryo selection, by weeding out harmful traits, a physiological/psychological superior human is possible.**
- **With emphasis on the above selective reproductive sperm/egg combination, together with planned global population levels brought down from the present seven plus to less than two billion, all living in consonance with the Gaia rhythm of Planet Earth, a new planetary human reality that will allow each person to reach his and her life potential is possible.**
- **With a deeper understanding of the complexity of human life as well as its planetary and cosmic purpose, there is the possibility humans will come to understand themselves communally as a form of intelligence able to participate in the unfolding cosmic mystery of the universe.**

- **If all the above unfolds, naturalistic humanism in some form will in all likelihood become the opening for new thought to include many past philosophical and religious thoughts and beliefs, but recast into a new human/planetary/cosmic perspective.**

The only question is whether all of this will/can be achieved through human intellect and rational thought or, if we humans refuse to accept change-aided and abetted by psychopathic narcissists and their obedient followers-as we have seen in the past and continue to see, change will not occur.

So the question begins to haunt us: Is Campbell's hero soon to be called on to face the enemy in a final great cosmic battle? Are we approaching that time? What kind of battle will it be?

There is a growing uneasiness throughout the world, a feeling that we may be approaching "that time." There is concern that our planetary dysfunction extends even beyond the science based ecological precursor signs in front of us. Many are saying that we as a species have become a threat not only to our planet but to our own future existence.

What makes it hard to understand is due to the fact that the threat is so multifaceted and complex.

Many are nevertheless beginning to realize that for the first time in human history we are exceeding planetary resource availability and renewability and it is taking place at an accelerating rate. Many are wondering; at what point will we have passed our own sustainability? At what point will the planet turn against us?

The final answer comes from this question:

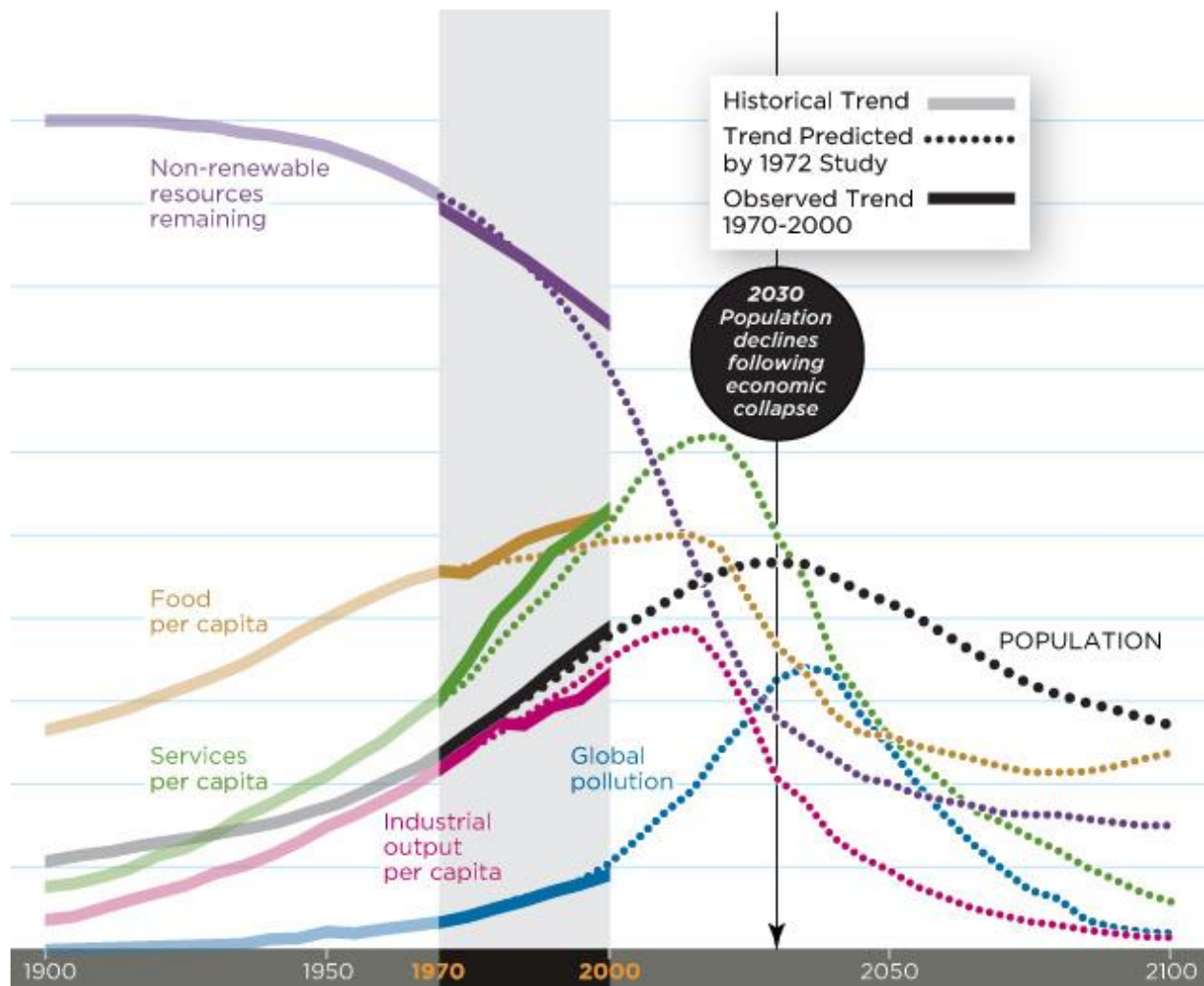
How will Joseph Campbell's classic mythical journey end?

## **Appendix # II**

### **Looking Back on the Limits to Growth**

**Written by MIT researchers for The Club of Rome, the following study used computers to model certain possible future scenarios. Now, forty years after its release, concerns about overpopulation and the environment as shown in this study should be at the forefront of the mind of humanity. They are not. A business-as-usual scenario assumed by the study**

estimated that if we continued consume more than nature was capable of providing, a global economic collapse will occur.



## Characteristics of Complex Systems

Our problem is illustrated by the following nonlinear feedback computer program of MIT Prof Emeritus Jay Forrester, pioneer of System Dynamics, now known as complexity theory, as it was used for the publication in 1972 of "The Limits of Growth" by The Club of Rome. According to Professor Forrester; intuitively obvious "solutions" to social problems are apt to fall into one of several traps set by the character of complex systems.

- Cause and effect are not closely related in time or space.
- Action is often ineffective due to application of low-leverage policies (treating the symptoms, not the problem).
- High-leverage policies are difficult to apply correctly.
- The cause of the problem is within the system.
- Collapsing goals results in a downward spiral.
- Conflicts arise between short-term and long-term goals.

## Appendix # III

### An Open Letter to Paul Krugman

Dear Dr. Krugman,

For many years now I have been reading your op-eds in the New York Times. In my mind you are one Nobel Prize economist who speaks the truth to the weaknesses and strengths of past and present economic theory. With all due respect though; let me suggest that the time has come for you and the many other economists following your thoughts to step out of your shoes and take a long hard look at a fatal flaw in the economic theory that the world has accepted for so long as having intrinsic value.

You and they need to begin an articulation within your profession of new economic theory that will meet the pressing planetary challenges confronting our species.

I do not see this happening.

The architecture that grew out of the industrial revolution, on which capital markets today justify their operation, now finds its “raison d’etre” shaking under its own weight. The cold hard fact is that this architecture has not only seen its day; it is like an insidious disease working against human survival.

All around us there are indications of the failure of past economic theory; from the recent debacle on Wall Street to unemployment on Main Street, from the toxic tar sands in Canada to the overfishing of tuna in the oceans, from the increasing CO<sub>2</sub> in the biosphere to the acidification of the oceans. And this failure extends well beyond these few observations. Planet Earth is telling us something. It is pointing to its rejection of our capital market economic system.

The key fault is the unfettered operation of capital markets. These markets have grown to a size where they are energizing ecologically and socially destructive forces of a magnitude that has never before been seen in the history of the planet. Resource allocation is being misguided and misappropriated on a



massive scale. Irreparable planetary damage is being done. Fingers can be pointed in many directions for this such as human greed, political dysfunction, just plain stupidity; however, the rules under which capital markets have been operating since they took form from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution onward must take primary blame.

Your profession has come forward with no new ideas to stem the tide. You and those like you need to be thinking and writing and speaking about new economic theory. It is not happening. Physical scientists throughout the world have been describing the ecological problems with great clarity; it is time for economists to offer economic solutions. So far, there is only silence.

Boiled down into a few words; our resource exploitive capital market system needs to be transformed into a constrained yet incentive directed algorithmic driven market system emphasizing the equitable and humanistic provision of both the material and psychological needs of all humanity. The long lasting functionality of all the earth's resources to meet these needs must take on the highest priority. Every element of today's energy intensive market driven consumerism must be made to meet this planetary survival/functionality test.

How can we mechanistically achieve this? Negative external costs and positive incentives must be built into every investment decision. And these costs and incentives must be applied to every human economic activity from the mine to the chemistry lab to the assembly line to the opera house to the athletic field to the hospital. Economic outcomes with negative social and/or ecological value must be recognized. Negative Externalities need to be measured and priced in up front so as to discourage, temper, or at the extreme eliminate investment.

Every investment decision must be internally priced to reflect its socially constructive or destructive outcome. Croplands, grasslands, forests, fisheries, inorganic resources; all of the earth's natural resources, must be internally priced so as to prevent their exploitation and damage to the planet.

In our present world, none this is happening on a broad enough scale to make a difference. We see punitive cigarette and liquor taxes and some others like them, but across the board, any form of build-in of "negative external" cost reflecting ecological considerations is almost nil. Disincentives/Incentives in vital areas like energy have been poorly handled. The most simple questions such as; is this or that delivering real worth to society and to the health of the planet are being avoided. As I am certain you are aware; some progress is being made in northern Europe, but I am sure you will agree with me that on a world scale it is insignificant.

Humanity is crying out for an entirely new form of economic/monetary theory. Social/political theory must necessarily be a part. A response is coming from some enlightened intellectuals in the world community; however, there is at present no universal consensus, nor are there long term solutions at hand. Our species remains in gridlock. Your economics profession remains notably silent, content on using its advanced theories of algorithms for trading purposes, but not for the above.

How much time do we have to come up with a revised capital market system? Some highly accredited scientists say our present trajectory will present very serious planetary problems within the next fifty years and they even point to the end of our species after three hundred.

Will our great and great-great grandchildren find themselves at the bottom of Dante's inferno with no escape? There is this possibility. The time has come for humanity to recognize that unless it can change the way it prices what it desires to consume, the biblical prophecy of *the end of times* may very well prove to be self-fulfilling.

Respectfully yours,

David Anderson

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