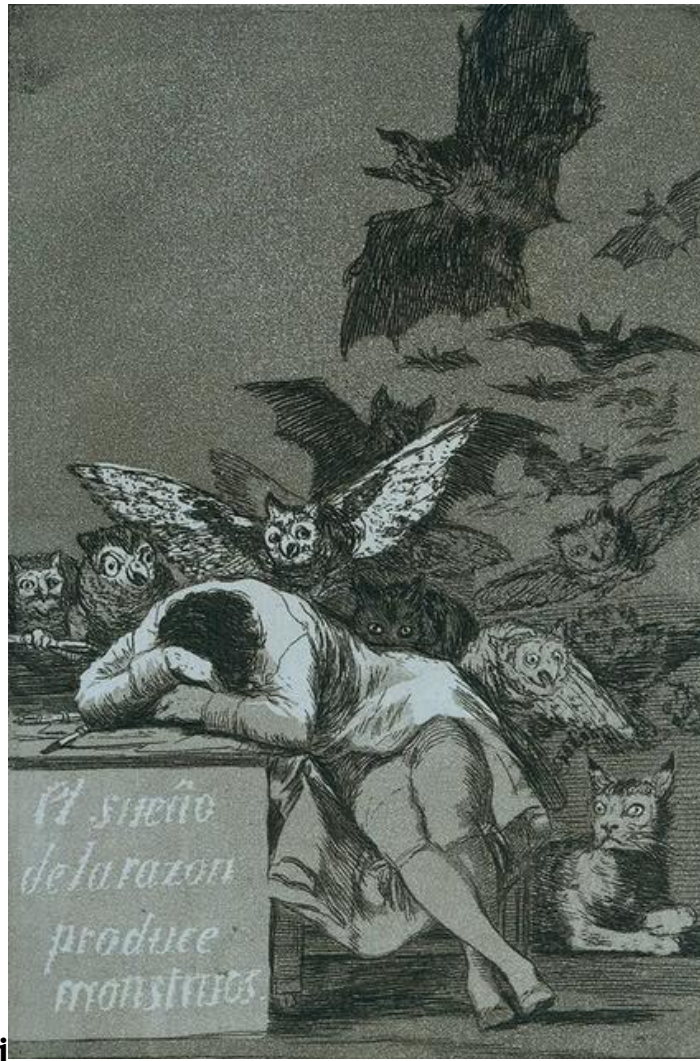


On Those Who Hate Science and Reason:
Anti-Science and Irrationalism in Guenon, Wolfgang Smith and other
Creationist Reactionaries.

“Faith is believing what you
know just ain’t so”—Mark Twain

“Don’t let it get you down, its
only castles burning”--- Neil Young



**Francisco de Goya,
"The Sleep of reason Produces Monsters" (1799)**

This essay is in eight parts as follows

1.Science verses Religion in History

2. Reality is not a Construction

3.Science defeats Fundamentalism and Traditionalism

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5.Louis Agassiz, Ananda Coomaraswamy and the Spiritual Fiction of “Virgin Nature”

6.Darwins Triumph over Religion and Anti-Science

7.Wolfgang Smith and Creationist Anti-Science.

8.Quantum Quackery and Fictional Essences

1.Science verses Religion in History

Here I want to write about a subject that was dear to me since the beginning of my quest when I was a teen. How is science to be considered? And why are the traditional doctrines, fundamentalists, reality constructionists, romantics, medieval philosophers, New Agers and religion in general, so wrong about it. I explored doubts about science at great length, and gave it a fair hearing. I finally decided the doubters of science were wrong. So these are my conclusions about haters of science, with some characteristic people used as examples of the more general trend.

The sleep of reason does produce monsters, and since there are no actual monsters, as I tell my children, what is meant by the word ‘monstrous’ is obvious to reasonable adults: monsters are in fact: dangerous politics, war, murder, selfishness, greed, power, religion and delusional superstitions. Goya was right, what is really scary is people’s ability to be deluded and to harm each other as a result of mistaken beliefs. Many people live in ready-made delusions of one kind or another, be it religions, free market capitalism or Marxism. I think Mark Twain understood this too in his last decades. I have shown this over and over in this book. Religion is the delusional mistake of various social systems and not really the result of evolution, by Darwinian natural selection. Religion was not selected for by evolution, or I should say. It is a product of culture. Some analysts try to say that cultural products are “by products” of brain or body faculties, indirectly, perhaps, but they are not directly caused by evolution. Evolution did not suggest that people deny global warming, or that they endanger others by believing

bogus conspiracy theories about the dangers of vaccines against measles, mumps or Chicken pox. Ignorance creates these delusions, just as it creates the hatred of decent science. Of course there is badly done science, or corporate science, but Darwin did not create that either. Evolution did not select for corrupt CEOs, indeed, they are their own creation and one we must downsize if the earth is to survive with us on it.

Darwin's illnesses were largely caused by his anxious fears and understanding about just what backlash his theory would unleash. Creationists are still attacking him 150 years later. He knew that the cultural apparatus was sustained by religious fictions and feared their assault on him and his work. There was good reason to fear this reprisal. The Pandora's box of delusions I have tried to critique in this book is just this panoply of malice and delusional dreams that haunts the bitter and escapist hearts of men and women even now. There is little or no evidence that religion confers potential reproductive advantages on anyone, on the contrary. Religion appears to have aided enormously in creating war and divisions between groups, doing great harm to both ourselves, other peoples, and other species.

That religion is a delusional product of social stratification and injustice means that it is of unfortunate group of behaviors that accrued over of human history and attached to us as part of our social make up. It is a welling up of frustrated needs and power hungry urges forced into testosterone-pumped transcendent fictions and seizing on populations because of political prejudice and the ease with which they attack the imagination. The fact that religions all over the world are fading and dying, shows that it is a sort of 'mental virus', as Dawkins awkwardly called it, is mutable and can be overcome. Dawkins idea of a mental virus of course, is just a metaphor, like the concept of memes.

Religions are not really "memes" and can be easily dissolved by

education.¹ This is great news. It does not have to be eradicated by another religious ideology. Marxism foolishly tried to get rid the world of religion, but it did so religiously thus proving the political nature of all religions. It was one toxic system of belief fighting others. Politics too, can be a “disease” of the brain, metaphorically speaking. It can be a will to harm others through ideology and doctrine. To undo religion only requires that it be illuminated by the light of reason and good living. It is not really part of us, but merely an accretion grown from our rather incomplete development, a mistake of the heart that grows by dint of wishes and false hopes, narrow minds and the refusal to follow evidence. Undoing religion requires real self-examination, inquiry and a deep love of life and the world. One has to be willing to admit one has been wrong.

The religious or symbolist view of the universe that is common to the religions has been dead since Galileo and Leeuwenhoek , killed by the microscope and the telescope, in addition to thousands of other inventions and the whole panoply of scientific thought that tests itself against reality. Science is not a “meme” either, but an “intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment”. The importance he is the stress on reality. A system of knowledge like, say, the means to deform species by the profit motive by misusing genetic ideas is not really science, but the corporate abuse of science. One has to carefully distinguish science from its abuses.

. Indeed, there is little that matters in human history, since 1500, that does not have the progress of science and the diminishment of religion at its root. As far as the future is concerned, little matters but independent scientific thought, trying to grasp how nature and humans can work towards each other in a symbiotic and self-sustaining way. Religion, business and politics are clearly

¹ In actual usage memes are merely mental play toys, play ideas, handles or names or a” system of behavior that may be considered to be passed from one individual to another by non-genetic means, especially imitation”, like swear words, fads, fashions and the like, Meme theory cannot handle something as complex as religion.. Religions are long term systems of social control. Dismantling them is a complex social process.

in the way of progress. But there are many who refuse to believe it. So there are reactionaries and retrograde leaps backwards, and one religion after another, one political fiction or corporate or civil religion after another crops up, each claiming to be legitimate, but failing after a short period of time.

Indeed, it can be said that by the 21st century religion is in severe decline and it survives mostly as a reactionary force, defending unjust social arrangements of the political right in many countries. The idea of countries itself is questionable and has its own sad history. The Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the far right Islamist parties in many countries; the Jewish state, the traditionalists, the American far right Christians; Catholics still living as if 12th century dogmas are all real problems; Hindus still virtually supporting the outlawed caste system; Native Americans still promoting pre-Columbus superstitions-- in all these and other cases, religion is backed up against a wall, backwards, slipping into magical thinking or supporting wealth and social injustice against science and progress. For some years in the 1980's, liberation theology helped progressives in Latin America, but that is an exception that proves the rule. The mainstream religions around the world are failing, reactionary, dogmatically holding to increasingly irrational positions. Traditionalism is just one of many reactionary ideologies.

E.O Wilson writes that religion was a sort of 'mental trap' for humans that is being slowly replaced by more objective views. Once we realize that the religions are finished, the question of why religion happened at all becomes very interesting. Evolutionary theory is finally addressing why religion happened at all. It is clear that religion is not genetically encoded, which means it had nothing to do with our evolution as a species. This is to say that some aspect of our bodily and genetic make-up was misused or deformed by mental and cultural processes, and so went awry due to social pressures and the will to power. David Sloan Wilson, along with E.O. Wilson, claims that "group selection" is part of the reason that religion happened to humans. I have doubts that is true, but it is an interesting question. It is true that religion helped humans survive the attacks of outlying groups. But the idea that

groups select genes is farfetched. Steven Pinker disputes this with many good reasons, while Richard Dawkins also attacks E.O Wilson rather vociferously.² Pinker claims that “much of the work on group selection has been funded by the John Templeton Foundation, an enormously wealthy organization with an agenda to harmonize faith and science”. This would indeed suggest that the thesis is probably invalid, as science should not be done to serve and ideological “faith”. In any case, competing hypotheses are not uncommon in science, and eventually physical truth will trump well-funded ideology. It seems likely group selection theory is merely another failed and bankrolled hypothesis.

Dawkins claims religion is a “by product” of the tendency of children to believe their parents, and thus religion is a result of gullibility and the abuse of the innocent. This seems a sound though incomplete, theory, the “by product” theory being highly questionable. Religion is fundamentally an abuse of trust and exploits the vulnerable, despite the fact that it occasionally helps people. Dawkins is right there. These are very live questions. But Stephen Jay Gould’s concept of ‘by-product’—he invented the idea--- seems to have little meaning. What is exciting about science is it is alive with such questions, real questions, while religion deals with mostly with dead issues and mythic fictions.³

In this this essay I will show how science has trumped religion again and again, even while religion has mounted unsuccessful attacks on science. Not much has been written of the attacks on Science over the centuries,

² Steven Pinker claims that only individuals are selected in Darwinian natural selection, not groups.. He says at the end of a long essay that “both Dawkins and Wilson are outliers who fail to recognize that the days of pitting kin selection against group selection are over.” I have no idea what is the truth here, though I incline more to Pinker than Dawkins, but the questions are interesting on both sides, as there is healthy had livingly debate going on about the evolutionary origins of religion. This is live science. Here is Pinker’s essay:

<http://edge.org/conversation/the-false-allure-of-group-selection>

³ For instance, religion wants to be an equal partner with science in schools, but then it really has nothing to offer. There are no botanists who can talk about the kinds of plants growing I the Garden of Eden. How did Three Toes Sloths get to the Amazon from Mount Arahath after the flood? Religion has no answers to such questions because these stories are myths. The notion that these mythic stories should be taught to kids in schools is wishful thinking.

particularly in the last century. I will write an overview of some of this opposition to science here. ⁴ It is clear that atheism is increasingly succeeding in our culture because religion and the group or cult psychology it fostered has ceased to be useful for human beings.

Science is about verifiable evidence and not authority or intuition. Those who still are guided by the twin delusions of authority and intuition go astray of the truth. Foolish writers like John Milton write as if the Bible were truth⁵. Walt Whitman thought American history was involved with Manifest Destiny, as if God were on the side of those who killed indigenous people or Railroad tycoons who helped extirpate the Bison. Whitman imagines himself in Leaves of Grass as a god like being who says “I contradict myself because I am big. I contradict myself because I contain all the opposites, because I am all”. But this is narcissistic hyperbole and very much in keeping with the ideology of American exceptionalism and the growth of bloated corporations. Whitman expresses what in fact is an ideology or a civil religion. The magnifying social function fo such transcendentalist hyperbole is obvious.

Toxic and corporate religions like Scientology grew up as a mirror of the unjust corporate state in America, protected by the guarantee of the “freedom to be deluded”. clause in the first amendment. ⁶ One does not wish to stop the

⁴ This chapter is very long and could be a book on its own, but it does belong with the foregoing and is a natural consequence of what comes before this, so I keep it here.

⁵ I looked through Paradise Lost the other day and though well done. I thought it a ridiculous book of poetry, in many ways, A good craftsman surely and that is worth a lot in my view, but ridiculous subject. Indeed, after science it is hard to take much poetry seriously. Milton was influenced by the Cromwell Revolution in England, and was anti monarchy, but still retains enough of the old absolutist ideology to write Paradise Lost. Blake wrote that “The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels & God, and at liberty when of Devils & Hell, is because he was a true Poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it.” But this is a romantic view of him, though Blake is right that he is an ambiguous character. But his poetry like Dante is still the poetry of the ruling class, and fails on that account to do just to those in real need..

⁶ The freedom of religion clause in the Constitution has allowed cults or religions to proliferate wildly in America, and even to infringe upon the Constitution itself. The first amendment states “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof” This first

free exercise of thought, but distinguishing truth and delusion from insidious and deceptive or illegal practices is far more difficult than merely listing beliefs. What kind of society gives religions rights, but denies rights to animals and nature in general? The problem of cults and corporate persons, and these is little difference, is systemic and part of capitalism. The oceans and the animals in them are real yet have no rights, while any religious cult is given free reign and allowed legal rights. Such a system is backwards and serves unjust elites, as religion always has.

Science has alone shown real progress over the last 500 years. There are those cranks and reactionaries who deny that real progress has been achieved, but it is undeniable. People live longer, children are saved, and millions of other benefits accrue to us from science, too numerous to mention. But even without these benefits, the fact of gaining pure knowledge of say, Venus Flytraps, or pink Dolphins, all the species of wasps, DNA or the fact of galaxies-- all this is priceless. Science is not just cutting edge science, nanotechnology or particle physics. These areas might be questionable. Science can be about washing clothes in a better way or doing carpentry. After the discovery of plate tectonics, the facts of photo synthesis or the videos and photos of the sun that are now available on the NASA website, religion is increasingly pathetic. Of course what is lost in religion is the unjust presumption of human supremacy. We are one of many beings all of whom have rights now. We are not corporate overlords who rule all with the dogmatic fanaticism of Jesus of Muhammad. It is so hard for those who are addicted to the ideology of human supremacy to

part is fine, but the second part is a guarantee of cult proliferation and galloping irrationalism. The freedom to be deluded and convince others to be deluded. This is partly what makes America so much more gullible and prone to religious fictions than Europe. There are other reasons too, namely the constant bombardment of advertisers teaching the public to believe all sorts of nonsense to get them to buy products they don't need, as well as a very poor education system, pummeled by efforts to privatize education and destroy free access to it. Living in American is sometimes like living in a Hieronymus Bosch painting, as delusions proliferate everywhere ..

I would contend furthermore that corporations are basically religious entities since they claim to be "persons" when actually this is a religious fiction. Corporations should be taxed and regulated as much as religions, or even more so than people. Their off shore activities should be heavily taxed so they cannot force salve labor on foreign populations bankrupting local populations..

give it up, even if they are otherwise enlightened. Just as the Christ myth made fanatical supremacists of Christians, so corporate ideology makes corporate boards and CEO believe in their own power and supremacy. This is not science. Ideologies attract people by the vision they provide of ultimate power or pride and it can be very hard to see through this.⁷

But there has been a contingent of people who hated science ever since science began under the Greeks. Early Christian bigots who hated science, evidently, were among those who murdered the great female Alexandrine teacher and scientist, Hypatia. The Inquisition infamously persecuted Galileo and many others for free inquiry into the nature of the universe.



Galileo persecuted by the Inquisition

If the traditionalists had their way the Inquisition would be brought back. Indeed, the traditionalists are a school of reactionary and right wing thought that goes back to the Inquisition and before. The Inquisition was partly created by Innocent III in order to stop the rising desire for inquiry and critical thinking. The Renaissance was an expansion of knowledge soon opposed by such painting and book burning cranks like Savonarola of the. The

⁷ A good example of this is Noam Chomsky who adopts a Cartesian notion of human supremacy quite in opposition to his otherwise interesting political views. I include a chapter on Chomsky after this one partly to use him as an example of an enlightened man who went astray of science in various ways.

Reformation in Germany, England and Holland was a step forward toward reform, but was opposed by the Counter-Reformation in which the Church sought to roll back these reforms, resulting in such reactionary blunders as the condemnation of Galileo.⁸ The council of Trent and the Inquisition were both engines of the Counter Reformation and sought to reverse the forward looking Reformation. Traditionalists of the 20th century would quote the Council of Trent and the Inquisition as good things, but of course they were not. Neither the declaration of transubstantiation, which claimed that Christ is "really, truly, substantially present" in the consecrated forms, or the Index of books condemned by the Vatican were going to stem the tide of real evidence now pouring forth all over Europe. Thomas More was not going to stop it either. While portrayed as a martyr in a famous movie, actually, he had an aristocratic hatred of Protestantism used of torture, burning Protestants at the stake for the heresy of reading certain books.

The Faust myth was an effort to stem the same tide, condemning inquiry and curiosity. It scared many into submission no doubt. By the 1800's, the most extreme counter-Enlightenment fulminator against reason and science is Joseph De Maistre. De Maistre was one of the more prominent "throne-and-altar" conservatives who vehemently opposed Enlightenment ideas of social fairness, human rights and science. In De Maistre's case the hatred for science and reason had to do with a fundamentalist notion of tradition which only allowed knowledge to proceed if it were first defined and laid out by theology and approved by the patrician caste.⁹ De Maistre longed for a return to the

⁸ The Church saw, rightly, that Aristotle's philosophy as a threat and condemned Aristotle's Physics and his Metaphysics between 1209 and 1215, under Innocent the 3rd. This foolish move presaged the censure of Galileo some centuries later. But the condemnation of Aristotle was mere demagoguery. It soon became clear that Aristotle would not be gotten rid of so easily.

⁹ A similar counter revolutionary is Edmund Burke, a darling of far right American federalists and corporate demagogues to this day. Burke writes that "The laws of commerce are the laws of Nature, and therefore the laws of God." Quoted in Marx Das Kapital) (E. Burke, l.c., pp.31,32) In – this is obscene and rank elitism is a form of fascism. Basically this is the point of view of corporate CEO's and other elitist sociopaths and 'trickle down' economists . It is quite true of course that money and gods have a lot in common, indeed, they are both fictional abstractions that primarily serve the upper classes. Christ even

irrational faith of the Middle ages, especially the 12th century, when Innocent III and others initiated the Inquisition. Presaging today's holocaust deniers, he wrote extensively trying to justify the Inquisition, which itself was partly an attempt to stamp out free inquiry, which he also opposed. The rise of the universities was part of the effort to set up free inquiry in opposition to the dogmatic Church. Indeed, free inquiry has been opposed first by the Church, then by the aristocracy and lately by corporations. The effort to control science so it serves only the powerful is old and still present with us. This must be resisted.

To be against science is not at all the same as to be against religion. Religion is the science of the unreal, and has no equality with science, which is the study of the real. The term 'anti-religion' is as questionable as the term "atheism". It is questionable as to what exactly what an atheist is against? There is nothing there to be opposed to or "anti" or against in religion since it is all based on superstitious emptiness. I am not anti-god since there is no god to begin with. Dawkins is certainly opposed to superstition and delusion and does not apologize for it. Dawkins' atheism is very pointed and based on sound arguments, unlike his detractors who are invariably emotional and full of hate. I am not a friend of religion but do not think of myself as anti-religion, exactly since it is not clear what that would be. I hope the delusions of religions disappear one mind at a time, but it is not likely it will soon. There is also the question of the evolution of religion, which is a very interesting subject, Why did it evolve, and why is atheism evolving to replace it? It is good news that so many historical gods are dead and gone, as it will eventually happen that the myths of Jesus and Buddha and Allah will fall into ruin too, like the Greek or Aztec Gods, who have vanished from history. Then the real questions of why

implied this when he said, I think with no ambiguity, to "give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to god the things that are gods". Money, gods and property are attempts by the rich to give themselves immortality. This is true even in Marxist versions of money and power, where the state seeks immortality. Burke was rightly condemned by Tom Paine for his efforts to subvert the gains of the French Revolution. Marx wrote against Burke as well. Far right ideologue like William Buckley liked his effort to keep the rich, rich and the poor, poor. Burke's support of "meritocracy" also tends to support only those who have means, not the ones who might be most able, given the chance.

religion can begin in earnest. ¹⁰

Tracing the history of the religious delusions is informative. As I mentioned, the traditionalists are descended from the romanticism and the Counter-Enlightenment, such as the religious reaction of De Maistre, hence their opposition to academic study, free inquiry and science. They want dogma, no peer review and no testing against reality. They want to return to the discredited “Realism” of the Platonic Scholastics of the 13th century and before or the counter Reformationists of the 15-1600s. Like the Inquisitors of old, they hate the Nominalism of that time and the growth of science out of such thinkers as William of Occam, Roger Bacon, Francis Bacon and Descartes. The hatred of Newton or science has its origins in medieval irrationalism and the Inquisition. It grows by leaps and bounds in reaction to the French Revolution. As I discussed earlier in this book, anti-science thinking originates in the reaction of Romanticism to the Enlightenment, French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. This movement is often referred to as the 'counter-enlightenment'. ¹¹ The fight to oppose science is partly Church originated. But it extends into far right ideologues of many stripes. Adam Lee correctly writes that Creationists and other science haters think “everything has been going downhill since the Enlightenment. The willingness of people to think for themselves, to question authority, to investigate the world for truth - they see all this as a disastrous trend, one that only takes us farther from their ideal vision of a medieval, theocratic state.” ¹² Darwin is thus a breath of fresh air

¹⁰ David Sloan Wilson provides the flowing list of interesting scholars on the subject of the evolution of religion. Few of them are in religious studies, as one would expect. But these people are doing interesting research on religion as an evolutionary phenomena. “ While evolution was never entirely absent as a perspective, the modern version became prominent at the beginning of the 21st century with books such as *Religion Explained* by Pascal Boyer, *In Gods We Trust* by Scott Atran, and my own *Darwin's Cathedral*. The field has burgeoned since then; a partial list of prominent names includes Jesse Bering, Michael Blume (ETVOL'S religious editor), Joseph Bulbulia, Joseph Henrich, Dominic Johnson, Arah Norenzayan, Anthony Slingerland, Richard Sosis, and Harvey Whitehouse.”

¹¹ The counter-enlightenment continues today in the Creationists, haters of Charles Darwin, and the Republican Party, which would bring back slavery if it could and turn our society into a caste elitism with CEO'S playing the part of the “Guardians”.

¹² http://www.alternet.org/belief/152349/why_the_anti-science_creationist_movement_is_so_dangerous/?page=entire

blowing on humanity the same wind of clarity and science that Occam only dreams of. There is a real world here on earth and it can be studied and has been studied, however imperfectly. Opposition to authoritarian systems is a good thing and goes with the open endedness of science.

But there are who hated science during the Enlightenment period such as romantics, Jean Jacques Rousseau or William Blake.¹³ These men are, in various ways, and in degrees, reactionaries of the 'counter-Enlightenment'.¹⁴ Rousseau thought that science would create immorality and would lead to corruptions of various kinds. It is hard to see how knowing the truth about the world will corrupt people. Indeed, science leads to a common sense rationalism that is very ethical.

William Blake is an ambiguous case in the history of the Enlightenment and is partly opposes anti-scientific tendencies. Blake embodies well the divided mind of romanticism struggling between the liberating progressivism of science and the backward medieval desire for fictional gods and apocalypse. His inability to understand Newton is a vestige of his irrational medievalism, whereas Blake's endorsement of a character like Tom Paine show his reasonable and common sense side.¹⁵ Paine was a an amazing man far ahead

¹³ W.H. Auden wrote humorously that Blake "Broke off relations in a curse, with the Newtonian Universe". This is true and his reasons for doing so do not seem either clear or cogent.

¹⁴ Blake is a complex case, because though he fulminated against science, he was very much man of the enlightenment in other ways, as his relation to Tom Paine suggests. He and Paine share a dislike of conventional religion as well as an apocalyptic political belief system. I remember talking to Martin Lings about Blake, who disliked Blake because he was too liberal and open minded, too questioning of the orthodox spirituality that attracted Lings to fascists like Federico Franco. Blake's politics are what I like about him. But his anti-science opinions are ridiculous. I have met far too many poets who are anti-science. Many poets mistakenly believe their precious "inner life" will dissolve if they study chemistry or botany.

This is just foolishness. Poets are in many cases, religious reactionaries, whose spirituality is anti-scientific. As I pointed out earlier in this book, Bertrand Russell rightly thought that romanticism has strong roots in religion and allies itself easily with a kind of fascist reaction.

¹⁵ There is a difference between a Blake, a Tom Paine and the systems of power and social control. Blake and Paine, however imperfectly, were concerned with human rights more than with power. Paine in particular was involved in opposing tyranny in the US, England and France. He served a year in prison in France, was hounded out of England by government death threats- Blake helped him escape, and returned to the US where he was driven increasingly to the margins by men hungry for power, such as Washington and Adams, who would not help him in his times of trouble, even though Paine had done so much to further the American Revolution. Paine is an early example of an historical trend of American elites

of his time. An atheist, more or less, and a man of deep respect for human rights. Tom Paine was perhaps the best of the revolutionary heroes of America, his Common Sense having been a huge influence of the American Revolution.. He also had some influence on the English left and lived in the France in the 1790's to help the French Revolution. Certainly this makes him one of the greatest men of that age in three nations and far ahead of his time. Farther ahead than Blake. Indeed, there is no other man of that time as prescient and insightful and with as much scope of interests as Paine.

Blake's misunderstanding of Newton was caused by Blake's rather backwards tendencies.¹⁶ He blamed the wrong man. He thought Newton was a minion of the cruel industrialists or "mechanists" that polluted the sky of 19th century England, part of what created the "Chartered streets" of London where the "chartered Thames doth flow". But actually what caused the misery on the streets of London in the 19th century was not Newton, but the Scrooge like Industrialists, slave traders and land speculators, bankers and manufacturers who Dickens so much deplored, and satirized in books like Our Mutual Friend. There is nothing wrong with machines or the wrongly called Mechanistic view.¹⁷

trying to discredit, hound, persecute and marginalize the American movement towards equality and human rights. Those who fought for an end to slavery, women's rights, anti-war movements, nature's rights or environmental concerns, as well as anti- corporatism or the recent "Occupy" movement have always been opposed by corporate elites and demagogues from McCarthyism to today's republicans, bent on destroying the middle class and democracy.

¹⁶ Blake views are somewhat akin to left-wing critiques of science. Some of these state that science has a "bourgeois" and/or Eurocentric and/or masculinist world-view. While this criticisms may be true of some corporate science, it is certainly not true of science per se, which is quite open to women's rights or other peoples in other cultures. The jungles of Borneo still obey Darwinian biological processes. Darwinism generalized across borders and in this sense is "universal".

¹⁷ A good example of a bad history of science is David Fideler, inspired by Platonic thought, he mistakes the harms done by capitalism for science as a whole. Nature is mechanistic in some ways and not mechanistic in others, but this hardly means there are "souls" or divinities as Fideler tends to suppose. Machines can be used for good or ill and it hardly makes sense to condemn machines when it is the men who use them that are most at fault. His Luddite position is not thought out very well. Organic thought is very much a part of Darwinian thought, a fact that escapes Fideler. He is right to question Descartes, but that is one mistaken man and hardly all of science, Nature does not exist to be exploited and decent science takes this into account, in ecology, animal rights, biology, environmentalism and elsewhere. Fideler is a religious thinker who wrote a book on Jesus, calling him the "Sun of God". He is a Platonist, who imagines that higher level of cognition exists and esoteric knowledge, or gnosis, is possible in

I admire Blake in some ways, but in others doubt him and his need of a religious or mythical system.

Newton, as a scientist, if not as a man, was not an industrialist. He was Master of the Mint for a time and evidently had 11 counterfeiters executed. He obviously liked having power, which is not his best quality, and Newton had many unattractive personal qualities. But his science is amazing and has truly universal implications, whatever his biography. As a man he was very confused alchemist and religious crank, like Blake. But his science stands out from all that nonsense and is something very different. His optics and his physics are still largely true and verifiable. His alchemy is merely embarrassing as are Blake's apocalyptic fantasies. In short, Blake is a mixed case among the early haters of science. This ambiguity might be reflected in Blake's portrait of him below. It is an idealized portrait, not at all negative, full of light and intelligence, and almost abalone in color. There is love of Newton in this picture, quite at odds with his negative writings about him. It is possible to see Blake as a divided man who might have been right in his art but wrong in his polemics. De Maistre is different in that he was foolishly against science in the most irrational and reactionary way, apparently down to his core, and this indicates religious obsession and fundamentalist thinking, as Isaiah Berlin shows in his brilliant and scintillating portrait of De Maistre.

which "the mind becomes unified with the object of the knowledge." He is quoting Plato of course. This is a fantasy view as is his concept of the "soul" ..



Blake's portrait of Newton

Blake did not understand what the early Marx came to see fairly clearly, and that is that 'free enterprise' capitalism was responsible for most of the misery of the 19th century in Europe and America. This misery is not imaginary. A society governed by men of profit will be mostly poor. Money invariably decreases the quality of things and makes them of less use and worth. Like gods, money is a fiction and a very harmful one. Marx was smart enough to see that science had to be part of the way out of poverty and exploitation. But Marx is a quasi-religious thinker too, a romantic like Blake. His notion of man as god is merely another religious construct. The problem with Marx is not so much his analysis of capitalism but his solution to the evil

of it. He merely replaces the rapaciousness of corporate capitalists, with the rapaciousness of the state. The Marxist embrace of science easily becomes trumped by dogma as we learned with Lysenkoism. Lysenkoism is a term used to describe the Soviet Union's distorted abuse of science by political or ideological motives. Creationism and Traditionalism are similar efforts to rewrite science in terms of ideology. They are a sort of metaphysical Lysenkoism. The Bush White House also sought to distort science by means of ideology in similar ways. ¹⁸ Corporate anti-science does the same thing: they rewrite science to accord with their PR lies and the bottom line thinking of shareholder greed.

2. Reality is not a Construction

There is another more recent fashion for anti-science that arises out of those who believe the obviously false view that reality is a human "construction". Buddhism and Zen encourage this view, as Buddhism posits a nothingness as a sort of abstract god, from which all things are to be seen, in a sort of grey state of impersonal distance and alienation. Contemplative distance is always a pose of superiority to reality. Reality is what matters, not the state Yuval Harari, who is a Buddhist of some kind, calls the "common imagination" which is just Corbin's "imaginal world" restated. ¹⁹ People really do suffer and their suffering is not an illusion. The notion of human subjectivity as the ultimate creator of reality is false. One can see why such an idea arose, when the religions were dying and science seemed to be taking over. This partly a result

¹⁸ Against a huge scientific consensus, Bush denied global warming and tried to set up bogus science to advance his claims and thereby move forward the ambitions of the very corrupt Oil and Coal corporations, who are most responsible for the harm to be done by global warming. The best book on this might be Naomi Klein's This Changes Everything. She shows how these corporations are perhaps the most destructive on earth and how some of the environmental groups are in corporate pockets. She references The Nature Conservancy, WWF, the World Wildlife Fund, (WWF) and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), all of which have partially been bankrolled by Oil companies.

¹⁹ Harari's book, Sapiens, is very interesting, though I have many qualms about it. It shares some overlap with what I have been writing in these books, though he does not really understand religion, I think. But I have only just started reading his book and have not finished it. (sept, 2015) I am about done with these three books, It is too bad I had not seen his book earlier.

of Kant's have idealistic views, though Hans Vaihinger may have been one of the first to invent the idea of 'reality'; as a complete fiction. This is nonsense of course, but many new agers, science bashers, LSD takers, poets and adults sunk in make believe still believe this.²⁰ Science is not religion and is not merely a "world view", and there is an element of good science that is "objective", which means that real aspects of the world are accurately described and explained, measured and experiments can be verified or not falsified.²¹

Berkeley was wrong, the tree that falls in the forest does indeed exist or fall whether a person sees it or not. Actually, animals see it or live off its remains.²² Reality is not a myth or the creation of "theory laden" men each describing the elephant by different terms. Chang Tzu was mistaken too, we do not suddenly wake up as a butterfly dreaming we are a man. Cells really do exist, photosynthesis is a real process, the earth definitely goes around the sun as you can see easily by just observing a lunar eclipse. When Wolfgang Smith says "the "mythical element" in science cannot be exorcised"²³, he is merely

²⁰ Carl Jung and James Hillman both explore the idea of the world as a spiritual fictions made up by humans, which they want to encourage. The notion of religion as a "useful fiction" of course was seriously entertained by Schuon and other cult leaders who knew how to exploit such fictions. Novelists exploit this idea too. Junk novels take up a large proportion of the used bookstore shelf space, and this is because the need of escape is so great. Make believe has a small place in a child's life, as long as it is directed and one teaches them the difference between reality and fictions. But the rampant myth making that is thrust on kids in our society leaves them in dreams and ill prepares them for the real world.

²¹ Thomas Kuhn's relativist idea of paradigms is not very helpful and probably mistaken.

²² The Bishop writes that

"But, say you, surely there is nothing easier than for me to imagine trees, for instance, in a park [...] and nobody by to perceive them. [...] The objects of sense exist only when they are perceived; the trees therefore are in the garden [...] no longer than while there is somebody by to perceive them."

, ---this is silly. He does not realize that the Red Squirrel or the House Wren is always a worthy witness? The falling tree produces sound whether anyone hears it or not. The world of nature far outstrips the vagaries of human perception, which is deformed by the human dependence on abstract language. The genetic language of natural selection is much wiser and truer than any human language.

²³ Wolfgang Smith "Science and Myth the Hidden Connection". Sophia Journal, Summer. 2001 What Smith does in this essay as in most of his writings is draw vast and general conclusions based on the most questionable and ambiguous areas of abstract and theoretical science, such as quantum mechanics, where even those who understand it say they don't understand it. But if you really look at the facts of the matter it is clear he simply is making it all up as he goes along. His conclusions are set up from the beginning and he fits the facts to serve his ideology. His ideology is that 'Religion alone matters' and he lies about science to get this predetermined result. He says that myths and religions and other such" fictions may be indispensable" and it is clear that for Smith this is certainly true. He was a man living in the thick of

indulging in a fiction that grows from his own ignorance about science. Certainly it is true that presuppositions, class or cultural origins, and ethnic culture effects how one sees the world to varying degrees. No one is completely objective. But science is about evidence and not authority or intuition. Science is nonfiction and seeks to explain realities in an objective way, unlike religion which is fiction and based on delusions and inventions of imagination. The process of study and inquiry in science is an unfolding in time and slowly the mythical conceits of individual scientists get weeded out of the science itself. But facts remain facts and some are more objective or accurate than others. It is foolish to abolish objectivity. Accuracy is important, as is measurement when it is possible. There is reality out there as is obvious by any study of animals or stars demonstrates. The post-modernist” movement’s attempt to marginalize reality itself has failed.²⁴

Like other ‘post-modernists’ Heidegger's critique of reason and science foolishly tries to negate the subject/object or sense/knowledge division. He repudiates the idea that that facts exist outside or separately from the process of thinking and speaking of them. He does not accept that mind independent facts exist. Of course, the entire world and the millions of species do exist and this non-human reality has primary rights. Heidegger’s view is anthropocentric. Human centered solipsism is attractive to an increasingly inward and narcissist culture from the 1970s to the present. It is also what makes Heidegger a friend of the Nazis since his philosophy is one of escape, not of outward objective conditions and denies any political concern with the poor.

delusions. Smith is proud to live in myth and delusion as he says himself, for “outside of the sacred there can be no certainty, no absolute and abiding truth”. Living in this delusion is the cause of his life as for most of the traditionalists, as well as the Taliban, the Unibomber, the Inquisitors and other cultists, Marxists, Nazis, and true believers and fanatics of many different stripes and creeds.

²⁴ Constructivist epistemology posits the idea that reality is human created. This is another form of narcissistic anthropocentrism and cannot be squared with science or with the facts of evolution. Variants of this view are held by many: Vico ,James Joyce, Ernst von Glasersfeld Gregory Bateson to a degree, Berkeley, Marx and Kant. The fact of the independent existence of animals and their obvious existence apart from us shows the fact of human involvement in reality. Animals are who we are. We are of this earth and of other species and no religious delusion or epistemological narcissism is able to abrogate this fact.

This is true of Foucault too, who is close to being a fascist himself with his love of power and violence. Even Chomsky has solipsist elements in his philosophy. Solipsism is largely a city phenomenon, as people who live in cities think nothing else exists on earth but people, and nature, the lives of non-human species, the earth itself, scarcely exists for them, locked as they are in TV, computers and the world of media control, brands, corporate media and propaganda. To the subjective solipsist, all images are equal and all things are images, and little has reality except mind and self. This is a breeding ground of illusions.

The notion that 'truth' or reality is a construction and not verified against a concrete reality is certainly fashionable. But is it accurate? The obvious answer is no. All texts are not equal, and Darwin's Origin is not at all the same sort of book as the Bible, which is a tissue of mythic "facts". Darwin has evidence to defend it, and the Bible has little or no evidence to defend it, indeed, it appears by the evidence that Jesus did not even exist and the Old Testament is largely mythic fiction too.. Reading tea leaves and Tarot cards is not the same as doing blood tests or looking at a retina scan. Relativists like Derrida and other post modernists think that all things are attempts to get power over others and so all objectivity is an illusion. This is mistaken. The New York art world is awash in this sort of feast of delusions, a feeding frenzy of illusions created to keep the ultra-rich living in a permanently deluded state. Corporate art is largely made of these inchoate ideas, ideas which have nothing as their base and which are expressed in an art that expressing nothing, or nearly nothing.

I am not very fond of constructivist epistemologies. I once thought they had a lot of truth to them, but that conviction has diminished over time, as I began to see how delusions are perpetuated in many areas of life: in literature, art, TV, PR, politics, advertising, marketing. Once I abandoned religion in 1991, I began to fight with the chimera of mis-perception that most people live in. The capitalists want people to "create their own reality" as a means of keeping people buying as much stuff as possible to fill the emptiness with. Thus the

'reality is a construction' idea was so central to 1990's culture, and continues on to this day in various forms.

I can see this fight going on in my 1997 book the Empire of the Intellect. I would make a lot of changes in that book if I rewrote it now. I was still clinging to the idea that the world is somehow our creation. What as our creation was the delusion that we are supreme. While it is true that our languages and upbringing condition how we see to a degree, we do not make up the existence of our world, and only science has ever tried to study things as they are. Reality is with us and we must face the facts of it. Leonardo grasped this quite clearly. He could do nearly anything just using the principle of simple machines. Bird species certainly exist, photosynthesis happens, rain falls, death happens, nature and the sun are there, the stars and our mortality and our children to help us beyond our own lives. Life is the only immortality there is. Reality is out there and can be known to a deepening degree.²⁵

People do construct theories about it and sometimes their class, culture, or sex plays a role in how and what they see. But science has a way of bringing such errors into the open eventually. Science is a process of refinement and of making our theories correspond more and more with what is actually out there. This is what science is all about and it has been fantastically successful.

There is a growing body of knowledge that is independent of subjective

²⁵ An essay by Thomas Nagel's states that we cannot know what it is like to be a bat. This subjectivist speciesism is very harmful. Daniel Dennett sides with this speciesist point of view, and with Nagel's rather empty essay, and is proud of his ignorance of other animals. Actually bat experts have been learning more and more just exactly what it is like to be a bat. Science is able to see more and more with empathy into the lives of actual beings. I helped a bat hibernate in my garage last winter when he fell off his perch and we put him back in his torpor and put a cloth over him to help him preserve warmth. I thought about Nagel's' essay a lot and think he is quite mistaken. Bats are amazing beings and the more one learns about them the more one knows them. Indeed, what matters increasingly is the study of the small minority, the small living things of earth. All life matters and all life has rights. Bats can be understood and must be. They are dying off at alarming rates. To understand their point of view and needs is vital in saving them. It appears that the worst culprit in bat population declines is aerial spraying of pesticides for west Nile virus and bird flu. The pesticide suppresses the immune systems and they become weakened and susceptible to the fungus that causes 'white nose syndrome '. Understanding the point of view of other species is what Nature's Rights is all about. It is not merely about doing for nature what benefits humans, but recognizing the biotic commons, the earth has rights, and not merely the human commons, where humans especially property owners are given specific dominating rights..

fictions. No one knows reality in entirety, certainly. But the beauty of science is in its tentative and provisional conclusions and its willingness to adapt when new evidence arrives. This is not to say that science is always right. Scientists make mistakes. They rely too much on math and have no evidence to back up their theories, or they posit an “ether” that is not there. But these are errors that tend to get corrected eventually. The undoing of religion frees us to real self-examination, inquiry and a deep love of life and the world. There is real hope in this, as I think as Leonardo and Darwin saw. The world without religion is amazing and wonderful, fearful and incredible place. Human beings become part fo a very complex world and one where we can no longer excuse our penchant to destroy and harm our world.

Culture too can have its narcissistic tendencies. There is an anti-science tendency that even visits some left-wing writers based on mistaken notions of quantum mechanics or Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle.²⁶ Many people think, wrongly , that science equals sub- atomic particle physics or speculative theories of string theory. But actually speculative physics is not very important. Nor are ideas about a so far mythical “unified field” very important. This is merely metaphysics by another name. Physics was really something when Einstein and Bohr were alive and so many discoveries were made. But in recent years it has become prone to speculations of an often questionable kind.

Einstein criticized one physicist for having very good math but doing very poor physics. This is often true now. There is no basis in reality for the ‘many universes’ theory, for instance, yet many hold to it as if were real. Even the theory of the Big Bang, which at least has a little evidence in its favor, is hugely exaggerated, often to the point of competing with religious dogma. One suspects this dogmatism has something unconsciously religious in it. No one knows anything about the origins of the universe, or how big or old it is, in

²⁶ Heisenberg's and Godel's ideas are often joined in new age theories of reality construction. New Age thinkers like to try to make a lot out of Godel's Incompleteness theorem. Dan Willard has started unraveling Godel's idea on this, showing that causation in arithmetical systems is rather more complex than Gödel thought..

fact. We can only see out to the “event horizon” some 13 billion light years away. Humans only see the limits of their own viewpoint. No one knows what is more than 13 or 42 billion light years away. We do not even know what such numbers really mean, just as we did not know what was beyond Spain in 1491. These are more or less wild speculations based on incompletely understood facts. This is not science, but speculations.

The Multiverse theory is even more fictional and premature than theories of the origin of the universe. They turn the universe into a mathematical mind game. This is where modern math approaches theology in its arcane speculations and while the credibility of science is undermined by such fancies, it is not undone. Stenger tries to trace the origins of the Multiverse idea in his new book, God and the Multiverse, but it seems he may be imagining things that are not there. The multiverse idea violates Occams razor, which states in Russell’s formulation of it, “Whenever possible, substitute constructions out of known entities for inferences to unknown entities.” Metaphysics loves to make elaborate distinctions where there are no differences, and now science is doing that too, or at least a few mathematical physicists are. Such mistakes often occur at the limits of human perception, where human’s start inventing things that are not there. Such mirages occur all the time in metaphysics. Now in the far reaches of math. It makes sense that such errors would occur in theories that concern the farthest remove of both quantum and cosmological questions. One has to be careful of speculations on the edges of math, the universe and the atom, as all sorts of things can be projected into these empty and unknown areas. The good thing about science is that eventually these theories, such as Ether or the Multiverse, might either prove true or get deleted from science when evidence does not support them. Until that happens extreme skepticism is warranted.

The Multiverse idea, like the big bang or the seeming wave/particle paradox of light might inspire some people’s religious longings. But real science does not indicate that at all. The wave particle paradox is simply the behavioral

effect of particles that travel in waves, like sea drops travel in the sea waves. There is nothing mystical in it. It is the facts that matter in nature. People study the tree canopy in the Amazon, bird population declines or how to make a better way to clean water. These are real questions. How does the muscles in the body fit together, how does the heart work, how do hummingbirds fly? These are real questions that have answers. One should beware of thinking of physics as the first science. It really isn't. In the Newtonian realm there are deep certainties, but beyond that, there are more questions than answers. Biology, astronomy or geology are far more interesting than ultimate physics, as they deal with matters that are less speculative. The multiverse idea is clearly a hypertrophy of the heaven idea, or of the idea that 'other worlds' actually exist. Various physicists cannot help making this stuff up, even when the evidence does not support it. There is no life after death just as there are no alternate worlds or universes, as far as anyone knows. But the hatred of the actual world and its difficult and factual painfulness is culturally so deep and intractable, it persists even into cosmological physics, too swayed by mathematical speculations that are not grounded in facts..

Strictly understood, quantum mechanics has made real discoveries. But a lot of ink has been spent trying to extract moral or 'spiritual' values from quantum principles. This not only questionable but specious. Those who abuse quantum mechanics with magical speculations suppose its odd mathematical paradoxes are open to opportunist use. They want to see the universe as our creation and so imagine we are opportunistic narcissists. Barely understood quantum strangeness is really not fair fodder for such occult appetites. The science behind it is highly speculative and hardly certain enough to give anyone this sort of platform on which to speculate further. Or it is simply misunderstood. This does not stop those who wish to use quantum physics for all sorts of nefarious occult and mystic adventures.²⁷ There are hundreds of

²⁷ Huston Smith wrote, for instance in an "Open Letter to Richard Dawkins" that "An increasing number of physicists are now beginning to say that the world looks more like a big

New Age books written out of magical speculations about quantum mechanics, all of them more or less questionable. But I will speak more of the abuse of quantum mechanics later.

The notion that reality is a “construction” of our belief systems is fashionable among many in the leftist, new age and right-wing religion camps. It is obvious why. Attacking science as being merely a fantasy enables religious and new Age fantasists to thrive. If reality is a construction than creationism and science are equally bids for power over people’s minds. Actually good science is not at all fantasy and not a “construction”. As Alan Sokal said, who arranged a delightful hoax to satirize post- modernist ideologues who do not think there is an reality out there---

“there exists an external world, that there exist objective truths about that world, and that my job is to discover some of them.”

A scientist tries to find things out about reality and things and his discoveries have real results. The problem with the “ reality- is-a-construction” theory of is that it denies evidence, demonstration and science. It is a largely academic theory, divorced form nature and reality, and holds that reality is a human movie made for narcissist mirror lovers. Religions want reality to be a construction so they can manage people’s perceptions and control minds Science wants to improve lives for humans and nature and tries to make

thought than a big thing. Thought requires a thinker. Where does that leave you atheists ?” The universe is not a thought. The cult of disembodied “consciousness” is a favorite ploy of religionists. This typically nasty and pretentious comment underscores what perennialism was all about. Huston Smith is merely employing magical thinking and the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. Actually, there are few if any real physicists who employ this sort of religious speech and even fewer, if any, that accept the nonsense that Huston and Wolfgang Smith write. The notion that the universe requires a creator is fiction, it doesn’t. That is an argument by analogy, which is misapplied to physical things. In any case the intelligence that is obvious in the universe is a result of physical matter, time and space itself not of any gods..

discoveries to aid our understanding of the actual. Science wants to remove fictions not enhance them as religion does. Mark Sedgwick, for instance, ends his Against the Modern World with a fashionable pronouncement that mimics the “reality-is-a-construction” views of post modernists. He says that “rational scientific discourse is only one of the ways that human beings construct their stories about reality” .²⁸ This supposes that some shared delusional system of beliefs is somehow be equal to the evidence compiled, say, to show how a given body of a given weight falls through space according to $F=MA$. There is nothing commensurate between the theory of gravity or evolution and the fictive world of Sufism. Ibn Arabi’s or Rumi’s silly theories about god have no more validity than do astrology or Tarot as compared to Chemistry.. Chemistry matters, the fictions of Rumi and astrology or Tarot do not. Both Sufism and astrology are based on little or no physical evidence. New Agers are free to make the world over in the image of their own confusion. But this hardly means that reality is confused. The reality is a construction appears to allow everyone endless freedom when actually it wants to lock everyone in the prison of delusions. Thinkers like Sedgwick, Rorty,²⁹ Foucault and Feyerabend and many other post-modernists are simply imagining things in the jail of their illusions.

Chomsky says of post-modernism that is meaningless because it adds nothing to analytical or empirical knowledge. He asks why postmodernist intellectuals won't respond as

"people in physics, math, biology, linguistics, and other fields are happy to do when someone asks them, seriously, what are the principles of their theories, on what evidence are they based, what do they explain that wasn't already obvious, etc.? These are fair requests for anyone to

²⁸ Sedgwick quotes Douglas Allen

²⁹ If I understand him the philosopher Richard Rorty thought that there no objective point of reference from which we can make judgment regarding reality except insofar as such judgment are human centered judgments made by the community of thinkers. IN this case reality is a sort of commissar system decided by the guild of academics, which seems not very accurate. Reality is the fact of nature and we learn from nature primarily when we do science.

make. If they can't be met, then I'd suggest recourse to Hume's advice in similar circumstances: to the flames."

This is correct. This is not to say that Chomsky himself is able to supply needed explanations about his work when they are asked. His linguistics have many features that are more based on his personal illusions than on empirical evidence.³⁰ But Sufism, Creationism, astrology, perennialism, Christianity, Islam, Taoism – and perhaps even some of Chomsky's own theories--- to the flames!

Those who push the idea that 'reality is a construction' believe that facts of astronomical physics are supposed to be commensurate with whatever it might be, Taoism say, or racist Phrenology. Islam is supposed to be equal to chemistry or geology. Far right fundamentalist Christians and their pathetic theory of pseudo-scientific creationism is supposed to be equal to the amazingly detailed and vast theory of evolution. It is like comparing the fictional 'Virgin Birth' or 'Barbie dolls' to Da Vinci's notebooks. There was no Virgin Mary who gave birth without conception just as Barbie dolls are fictive women. Da Vinci's drawings are not fake but real, actual anatomy and real science, amazingly done with incredible skill and exactness. Some of his drawings have not be equaled by anyone to this day.³¹ Da Vinci added to reality, whereas the Barbie/Virgin fictions add to the glut of delusions. Science and myth are in no way equal or commensurate, the one is real and the other, fake, pretend, delusional.

A peculiar prejudice among post modernists is that all things are equal. Yoga and science are seen as somehow equal "worldviews". Grimm's fairy tales

³⁰ See Steven Pinker's *The faculty of language: what's special about it?*, which is a great critique of Chomsky failings as a Linguist and John Searle's "The End of the Revolution". There is also Dan Dennett's *Darwin's Dangerous Idea*. See chapter below this for more.

http://www1.cs.columbia.edu/~sbenus/Teaching/TheorLx/Pinker_jackendoff_human_language.pdf

³¹ the drawings at Windsor can be seen here:

http://www.academia.edu/4033683/Leonardo_da_Vinci_anatomical_drawings

are certainly not equal to the enormous strides made in genetics since the discovery of DNA. Saturday morning cartoons are hardly the same thing as the science used to cure diseases through vaccines. The Paranoid fantasies of Guenon, Gurdjieff, Christ and other magicians of the illusory are hardly equal to going to the moon or seeking real and objective understanding the sun and galaxies through astronomical science and advances in telescopes and radio, ultraviolet and infrared devices. We have come to understand how plants create food from sunlight and how cells replicate, how plate tectonics work and how all life is important in its way. Even something seemingly simple like making pottery is full of science and has far more in it than Tibetan prayer systems, which are mythical.

Reality is not a construction so much as it is a discovery.³² The study of plants has expanded vastly in recent years, with botanical studies being done across all continents, while religion flounders in 12th century decay. The insanity of Christian fantasies of the Virgin Birth, Christ's justifications of slavery or Muhammad's abusive ideas about women are hardly equal to the Emancipation Proclamation, women's rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or invention of the computer and the electric light.

Scientific facts are not "stories and myths" in Richard Rorty's language. There is nothing commensurate between the fact of Luna Moth evolution and the fiction of astrology or the beliefs on Confucians or Taoists. Modern physics, Chemistry or Ornithology have made amazing and real discoveries, unlike astrology or Taoism which have discovered nothing. The proposal that mere stories are the same as science "has all the advantages of theft over honest toil," as Bertrand Russell rightly said.³³ Religion sells meaning that has no

³² I have been looking forward to the 'age of discovery' finally coming to an end. We are close to that. After that there is no more excuse for exploitation. Discovery was partly a capitalist phenomenon, where the seekers went in, found gold, slaves, tobacco, potatoes, pelts, insects to use or and trees to cut down and speculated on them as commodities. This increased to the point when whole planet has been abused to a degree that is no longer sustainable and the exploiters need to be forcibly retired. This is a good thing and then we will have to allow for protection of species and lands. Then the idea that all species have rights will matter. This ought to be soon.

³³ Quoted in Chomsky here:

basis in fact. No doubt it comforts a few desperate people, as Chomsky rather foolishly claims in its defense, but that is hardly worth all the misery and mayhem religion creates. Science trades in facts that are facts, make of them what you will. Religion comforts sorrows at the expense of truth and ends by creating even more misery than would have been the case had it never created so many lies.

The idea that science is to be opposed is useful only to those who despise the truth and the improvements that arise from finding out about our world and ourselves. As Chomsky notes, opposing science only serves to help “deprive oppressed people not only of the joys of understanding and insight, but also of tools of emancipation” and one should add, decent food, healthy water and medicines that work.

Moreover, if there is any legitimate critique of science it has to do with the abuse of science by corporations or governments. 53 of 100 of the world’s largest economies are corporations like Wal-Mart or ATT. Wal-Mart is bigger than Greece or Israel and its five owners are wealthier than the bottom 30% of all Americans combined. Such exploitive people should be taxed to the extreme. These truly obscene facts show how corrupt capitalism is. It is as foolish to abandon science to unjust corporate interests who will abuse it as it is to say that science is really equal to astrology or Mary Baker Eddy’s ‘Science of Faith’. It is also foolish, Chomsky writes, to claim that

“the "project of the Enlightenment" is dead, that we must abandon the "illusions" of science and rationality--a message that will gladden the hearts of the powerful, delighted to monopolize these instruments for their own use.”

Chomsky is right here. The traditionalists are very happy to encourage many to abandon science to the unjust and to give the world over the corporate or

institutional control. Most religion serves the ruling classes. Being frightening is a standard tactic of right wing regimes, The world is going to hell, they all say, so you must obey us. Traditionalists want the world destroyed. Profane people deserve to die, Schuon thought. Schuon even told his followers that a special and exclusive heaven awaited them alone in the afterlife, a sort of traditionalist spa and private nudist garden suburb reserved only for them, since they were all so holy and even the walls of heaven will painted with the Sherwin Williams golden glow paint like they used in their houses in Bloomington, Indiana.

Islam is based on the Koran which is fiction and the Virgin Birth is as much a fabrication as cartoons and fairy tales. In the quote above Sedgwick is being ridiculous, -- a delusional post-modernist---in the final paragraph of his book. There is nothing commensurate between the incredible science behind evolution and DNA and the make-believe that constitutes religious books like the Bible or Koran or the superstitions that lie at the base of Taoist or Native religions. There is nothing commensurate between the discovery of DNA and the outrageous fact that King David murdered Uriah so that he could take his wife Bathsheba who he had had seen bathing. The first has helped millions, the second is merely a sordid tale in a book of make believe adult cartoons. How do you compare the discovery of human blood circulation by Hooke and Da Vinci to the fantasies of Muhammad in the Koran justifying the convenient immorality of his marriage to a nine-year-old girl? How do you compare the saving of millions of lives due to cardiology to the ridiculous notion that Christ's body is in a wafer as if it were real flesh and blood that Catholics eat like cannibals at a symbolic ceremonial feast or wedding called the "Eucharist". The creation of the fiction of Christ's transcendental body produced the frightful result that ordinary human bodies were reduced to the "vessel of sin" that priests loved to speak of. Our bodies are all that we have and what, in fact we are, and the heritage of the abusive Christian idea of the body has helped kill people and hurt many others . The Eucharistic rite is a placebo ceremony that has never conclusively "saved" anybody. What it does so is attempt to put

the Church ideology inside people's bodies, and that is what Schuon was trying to do too, both in his mantric invocations and in his attempt to get others to worship his body as a "healing of the wombs". In various ways all the religions try to coopt the body as a locus of their power and control.

Many academics in the humanities are careerists and do not have to justify their beliefs by any sort of criteria of evidence and peer review. What is needed is a much more rigorous notion of inquiry in the humanities, with much more critical views of human centered perceptions. The notion that the religious view of reality are somehow equal to science is nonsense. Thus, even the supposed exegetes of Traditionalism, like Sedgwick, are out in the ozone when it comes to science. Post-modernists like Sedgwick seek to diminish science to nothing more than just one among many competing narratives, all equally valid. This foolishness has no evidence to support it. None of the traditionalist has made any efforts to understand Guenon and his followers in relation to the actuality and reality of the world that science describes so well.

This hatred of evidence and fact is in the writings of the Brazilian Traditionalist Mateus Soares de Azevedo, for instance. Azevedo ought to be devoting all this energies to stopping the wholesale destruction of the Amazon Rainforest by his country and working with biologists to catalogue the disappearing species. Brazil is one of the biggest contributors to global warming because they burn down the rain forest at alarming rates, causing the weather patterns of the equatorial regions to change. They are also at the top of the list of countries that abuse and export animals in the animal trade. Parrots and Macaws are going extinct because of their negligence and cruelty. Instead, Azevedo wastes his life trying to support religious reactionaries and backwards creationists. That is good for the greedy destroyers of forest in his country but bad for all the species being killed. Azevedo flatters the dead Schuon and has evidently joined the little rag tag group of fanatics and survivalists that is left of the Schuon cult. Azevedo is a classic cult follower whose passionate and emotional attachment to a particular fictional viewpoint or perspective coupled

with the automatic dismissal of all other views makes him a Schuonian fundamentalist. Virtually everything he has to say is born of the Schuon cult and Schuon followers Nasr, Oldmeadow and others. In his book, Fundamentalism in Islam, Christianity, and Modern Thought, Azevedo imagines that Darwin is a fundamentalist and further imagines Schuon was an opened minded man. This is humorous and shows that he doesn't know anything about Schuon and hasn't read Darwin. His book is an attempt to revive credibility for the broken and dying world of traditionalist fundamentalism. As Legenhausen (see above) has rightly pointed out, traditionalist thought is even more fundamentalist than the Taliban, the fanatical group of far right Muslims that ruled Afghanistan for years, terrorizing women and keeping girls from going to school. Azevedo writes that he admires the reactionary religion of those who deny Vatican 2. Those who deny the modernization fo the catholic Church are throw backs to aristocratism creationists and the theofascism of Innocent III. His is an extreme case of fundamentalist reaction. This is an hypocritical and anti-science book allied closely with creationist and fundamentalism. Like other religious conservatives Azevedo would like to live in the darkness of dogmatism and deny the science that gave us the light bulb.

3. Science Defeats Fundamentalism and Traditionalism Fundamentalism is a reality construction--- a fiction---, unlike science, which is factual, non-fiction and not, in the main, a "reality construction". Fundamentalism is a strict adherence to specific theological doctrines typically in reaction against science and enlightenment. Theological doctrines are merely the encrusted fantasy of ruling castes or elites who codified their world view in dogmatic pronouncements. Schuon was in favor of most forms of theological conservatism and hated science and modernism. Robert Lifton refers to this as "ideological Totalism", which is what Schuon's system is, as a form of 'fundamentalist totalism'. Azevedo follows the general pattern of the Schuon cult and likes to accuse others of what he is. He is a fundamentalist. He falsely

claims that Richard Dawkins is a fundamentalist. He erroneously claims there is a “science fundamentalism”.

The notion of that there is such a thing as an "atheist fundamentalist" is "a silly play upon words," says Sam Harris. Harris notes that "when it comes to the ancient Greek gods, everyone is an atheist and no one is asked to justify that to pagans who want to believe in Zeus."³⁴ Azevedo is a far right Christian fanatic and Schuon groupie whose god is as questionable as Greek gods. Obviously, Azevedo understands little about science. As Dawkins has said

“We believe in evolution because the evidence supports it, and we would abandon it overnight if new evidence arose to dispute it. No real fundamentalist would ever say anything like that”

There are miles and reams of papers written in factual support of evolution, but virtually nothing of substance written on the factual life of Christ, who probably did not exist. Certainly, there are those who have abused science, be they polluters, poisoners of the oceans, pharmaceutical companies or the makers of the atom bomb, and it could be said they are part of what been called “Big Science”. In service of Big Science some companies like Fizer or others have been found to write bogus papers and cheat on clinical trials. Since this company deals drugs it would not be entirely mistaken to call them drug dealers or perhaps glorified drug dealers. They work with CIA-like secrecy, as well as government protection, to protect their brands. Heads of banks and oil company executives, write legislation against global warming submitted by congressman to Congress, in acts of corruption. Oil and coal corporations have spent millions lying about Global Warming to the public as Naomi Klein shows

³⁴ The term “atheist “ has many absurd features. Why should one who does not believe in a fictional god have to be defined as something negative?. Theism is the absurdity, not those who refuse to bow to the gods. People who believe in Santa absurdly feel they have the right to try to impose this absurdity on everyone. The same is true of Jesus or Buddha. This willingness to believe the absurd is no doubt a function of the social self which grew up as a survival mechanism in ancient times. Children or the young will believe the absurdity put out by the elders, just because they are elder. Atheism is misnamed, it really is just a normal way of seeing the world without fictions.

in her books. But bad science is not science, nor is a corrupt democracy good government. Science is not about cheating or faking evidence. A fundamentalist is a man who had a blind obedience to scriptures regardless of evidence. As Cowboy capitalists, particular Republicans tend to be fundamentalist in a similar way: they pursue their dream of ultimate wealth no matter what people say or how anyone suffers what those react. The planet is being ruined and millions led to suffer by profiteers, yet hardly anyone questions banks energy or the gods that support them. Far from being fundamentalists, “atheists”,--- let’s call them reasonists, naturalists or realists as opposed to delusional irrationalists--- are people who have a commitment to exploring evidence, and a readiness to embrace change. Science done properly is the opposite of fundamentalism, and has little to do with far right religion, corrupt Congress, the WTO or oil executives.

Azevedo could have saved himself embarrassment and trouble if he had just read Richard Dawkins excellent chapter “Fundamentalism and the Subversion of Science” in his book The God Delusion. Dawkins points out that he is a scientist not because he follows dogmas in books like the Bible or Koran but because “ I have studied the evidence”. ³⁵ He says “I am hostile to fundamentalist religion because it actively debauches the scientific enterprise” . He also notes that the Afghan Taliban resembles the American Taliban (i.e. Christian Fundamentalists) in that both share the same “narrow bigotry, heartless cruelty and sheer nastiness”. ³⁶ The Schuon cult has similar dogmatic beliefs in Schuon’s divinity and in the spurious religion of “gnosis”. The religious values Azevedo tries to propagandize in his writings on Schuon and other traditionalists are based on no real evidence, but merely subjective dogmas, inherited fictions and cult inspired irrational enthusiasms. The Schuon cult is all about adulation of Schuon as Big Brother of their thoughts. For them Schuon is the Mao of the Major Religions. Religious values are based

³⁵ Dawkins, Richard. The God Delusion. NY, Houghton Mifflin. 2006. page282

³⁶ Ibid, pg.288. The Taliban in Pakistan recently murdered 100 children and 47 workers in a school. They were opposed to them learning anything other than the Koran and the Sharia. (Dec. 2014)

on superstitions. They are incoherent, unreasonable and valuable only to priests, cults and their deluded followers. Science on the other hand demands something much more accurate and well observed, more rigorous than mere superstition and irrational belief. To really understand scientifically you have to go outside and look. It is not good reading Thomas Aquinas, he gives you nothing. You have to watch the facts of the world, immerse yourself in them. Scientists have an accurate and precise standard of objective and testable evidence, as informed as possible by study and the scientific method. There is nothing like this in religion, which rejects that its theses be tested or falsified by review or even questioned. Dawkins notes that those who accuse him a fundamentalism are not used to being criticized. He says:

“The illusion of intemperance [in Dawkins’s book the God Delusion] flows from the unspoken convention that faith is uniquely privileged: off limits to attack. In a criticism of religion, even clarity ceases to be a virtue and begins to sound like aggressive hostility.” ³⁷

Dawkins is right, religion pretends to be immune to criticism. Many people are afraid of the fiction of hell. Others fear of speaking ill of fictional inventions like Muhammad of Christ, whose absurd visions and miracles never happened. Large groups of irrational people are scary. Muslim hoards, right wing Christians, or Jews is Gaza with automatic rifles or the Schuon cult in Bloomington, Indiana with endless money and lawyers are all groups of fundamentalists willing to kill, sue or harm others for their fictitious beliefs. Yet, absurdly, religion is defined as a private right in the Constitution, so anyone can believe any nonsense they wish and the state will protect this nonsense. The separation of Church and state is always under attack by religions who want to create an American corporate, Christian theocracy, not too different than the white supremacist state longed for by the KKK. Trade

³⁷ <http://richarddawkins.net/articles/1071>

agreements, like GATT, NAFTA or TPP are written in secret help spread the corporate take-over of the earth, spreading corporate power to every nation, making workers into powerless puppets of CEO greed.

The Schuon cult and other cults, survive only by being very secretive. Secrecy increases abuses, encourages unethical behavior, protects those who are selfish or who mean harm, and acts to increase the likelihood of distrust, resistance, conflict and war. If people knew all the nonsense that goes on in destructive or other cults or corporate boardrooms they would be closed down immediately. But once bad governments, bad corporations or fundamentalist fanatics cross the line and pander their delusions in public they are fair game. They do all they can to destroy freedom of speech, but secrets have a way of coming out and few groups succeed in concealing the harm they do for long.

Those who say science is a fundamentalism understand neither science nor fundamentalism. Mindless followers of a cult leader are unable to think for himself or to look at evidence, though many end up leaving such organizations or rebelling against it. Secrecy produces whistleblowers who want to tell the truth.

I got to know the Traditionalists pretty well and they were fanatics at secrecy. They also pride themselves on their ignorance and call it a virtue. The Schuon cult is likewise not open to any sort of critical thinking. It is a cult or a totalistic system of irrational believers which does not allow any freedom of thought. Schuon claimed to be both beyond fundamentalism and to be anti-science, as well as infallible and that is supposed to end all discussion. Actually Schuon was a fundamentalist about himself—I mean that his claim to infallibility rests on nothing other than empty assertion of his own subjective delusions. He claims on the basis of the fabricated and mystified notion of the “intellect” to be god or an incarnation of god. From this irrational nonsense is born Schuon’s hatred of science. The hatred of science proves his ignorant rebellion against reason and the rules of evidence. Resisting the evidence of science is itself evidence of clinging to subjective delusions.

When I really started measuring Guenon and the traditionalists against objective criteria, I began to see how insane and decadent these men, and their defenders, really were. So I looked long and hard and how they thought of science, and figured out that they are not just mistaken about it, but are vacant of real knowledge, as well as self-destructive. Science is the great adventure of the last 500 years. To seek to destroy or subvert it is not just closed-minded, but inhumane and insane. Religion is in decadent decline, as the Schuon cult itself proves, and has contributed nothing to our culture in the last few hundred years. The followers and exegetes of Guenon are really 'out there', not as galaxies are, indeed, really out there, but 'out there' in the sense of deluded in a mental impairment that is self-destructive. The hatred of rationality is real and renders them delusional in their devotion to irrational superstitions.

When it comes to science, Frithjof Schuon, Rama Coomaraswamy, Rene Guenon were ignorant men, as ignorant as the creationists. It is hard to say this fact any other way. Their abysmal refusal to inquire into what has been learned in recent centuries is a testament to their arrogant ignorance. Guenon claims that 'Metaphysics is what is beyond , and is therefore supernatural.'" This is merely circular reasoning based on false premises. There is nothing supernatural in Guenon or his followers---- I could see that well enough for myself with my own eyes. The followers of Guenon and Schuon merely indulge in adult make believe.

Guenon claims that Science is rational knowledge, and rational knowledge is "indirect knowledge". But this is dead wrong, Science gives us direct knowledge and religion merely inflated fantasy and indirect intuitions that have little or no evidence to back them up. Guenon claims that reason is a strictly human faculty and the "Intellect" and the Intellect is therefore beyond the human. is "beyond reason". In other words he claims to be in touch with superhuman Truth that is beyond humanity. But this too is merely pathologically subjective bravado. There is no faculty called the "divine

intellect” . The “Intellect” is that is merely a fictive faculty invented to exalt men like Schuon and Guenon. There is no truth to any of Guenon’s fantasies.

The more I looked into this the more I felt how ridiculous the implacable certainties of the Traditionalists are. Guenon had some training in Mathematics.³⁸ But Math is not science. There are many mathematicians who don’t know anything about science. A number of traditionalists are mathematicians and their understanding of science is as wrongheaded and shallow as Guenon.³⁹ Guenon’s effort for found math upon his fictional metaphysical ideology fails at every point. He had no real understanding of science at all. His whole notion of science leading to debasement, “dissolution” and “solidification” and a “Great Parody” finally arising to try to destroy tradition is utter nonsense, mere propagandistic fiction, born of a twisted Manichean ideology that falls back to medieval dogmas. He has it all backwards. The truth is that science, real science of the sort Galileo, Harvey or Mendel did, renders the weight of life lighter. It has improved our condition on earth in ways that are still unreckoned. It brought about the ‘enlightenment’ , which has brought real improvements to the lives of people on earth. What good will come in the future will also be from science, not from religion.

A. J. Ayer was largely right when he said that “Everything that cannot be

³⁸ Guenon’s view of Mathematics should be studied more critically than it has been. I will indicate some of its vacuity here: He subscribed to a basically medieval notion of math which is symbolist, Platonic and metaphysical. Such medieval notions of math were discredited long ago. Such views of math are held by very few nowadays, for many good reasons. The belief that math is in some measure a human construction born of an attempt to understand the actual, physical world is a more prevalent and more accurate view. This is not to say that math does not correspond to real things. Four apples are indeed four apples. Guenon’s background in math and his weakness in science led him to many false conclusions. Guenon wrote a book on Principles of Infinitesimal Calculus and his writings are full of medieval notions of mathematical symbolism. Various Guenonian and Schuonians I have met have speculated that post-modern mathematical systems, such as Laws of Form, by G. Spencer Brown, might reflect Guenonian values. Wolfgang Smith has tried to adapt some of Guenon’s ideas to physics, with very questionable results. Quantum mechanics does not reflect the ideology of Thomas Aquinas and the Catholic Church as Smith imagines. Guenon’s attempt to advance metaphysical distinction between the infinite thing and of the indefinite thing and demonstrate the difference between a traditional science and a “profane” science is very pretentious and spurious. For more on this see rest of this essay...
[../ArtInNature_New/knowledge_power_book/guenon.asp -_ftnref23#_ftnref23](http://ArtInNature_New/knowledge_power_book/guenon.asp -_ftnref23#_ftnref23)

³⁹ I’m referring to Denis Constaes and Wolfgang Smith here

verified by the method of science is meaningless.” Science is a rarefied and sophisticated use of reason. He should have softened this rather doctrinaire statement by replacing ‘meaningless’ with ‘questionable’. There is meaning outside science, in poetry and art and in all that science does not yet understand, but the further you get from science the more ignorance and myth, falsehoods and superstition take over. Indeed, most of what is valuable in art and poetry is based on accurate observation and is close to science in one way or another. That is why it is very important to stay close to science in all one’s studies, even in art and poetry and even if one is studying, say the history of religions. ⁴⁰

Progress is not evil as Guenon imagines, on the contrary. There has been extraordinary progress since Aquinas or Plato. Most of what is called science was done in ancient times by ordinary people. They invented simple machines and pottery, metallurgy and boats. The origins of science are also to be found first in the Greeks and Romans, among Thales, Archimedes, Aristotle, Eratosthenes, Hipparchus, and many others. Abelard began to question the validity of Platonic ideas in the 1200’s, C.E.. Aristotle’s proto-scientific skepticism began to erode both Platonism and the Church in the 1300’s. Indeed, the Church so feared Aristotle that they had to declare in 1277 that “God’s absolute power” transcended any principles of logic that Aristotle or anyone else might place on it. So one can cite Aristotle as one of the forces that propelled the origins of science. This obvious power play even damaged Aquinas’ reputation, the Church thereby shooting itself in the foot again. Aristotle was a bad choice for the Church and ultimately discredited the whole institution, for the betterment of all, it turned out.

⁴⁰ The history of poetry is largely the history of devotion to irrationality and systems of power in institutions. Ovid writes in praise of Augustus, Dante writes to glorify medieval dogmas and fictions of the Catholic Church, Ezra Pound glorifies Mussolini, Hirschman tries to glorify Stalin, Rumi glorifies the Muslim state and non-existent beloved “Beyond”. Even Allen Ginsberg’s Buddhism is romantic nonsense.



William of Occam

The Church failed so miserably in the Crusades, killing a million or more people, that it lost a lot of credibility. The Church had become little more than a mercenary cult, and a taxing agency, selling fake “Indulgences” as expensive tickets to suffer less in the “afterlife”.⁴¹ Few could fail to see how corrupt the Church was. In today’s world the Church is like our corporations, which seek to keep polluting by buying carbon offsets, usually in poor countries, so that they can keep emitting toxic chemicals into the atmosphere. The carbon credit system is a modern sale of indulgences and is involves similar corruption and magical thinking, enabling the rich to keep doing harm while pretending they are doing good. Anyone with any sense sought reform or

⁴¹ The sale of indulgences prefigures the corruption of today’s insurance companies. Insurance corporations like the Catholic Church, got their start in profiting from the risks of others. Some of the first insurance companies speculate on slave ships and their bloody cargo. insure companies were developed so that the rich would not have to take risks, just and the sale of Indulgences insured that the rich would not go to “hell”. There is as yet no Martin Luther or protestant rebellion condemning the evil of insurance companies in the U.S. Other countries have wisely thrown them out of health care, recognizing how parasitical and harmful they are.

rebellion against the church of those days, just as today stopping corporations from destroying our earth is very important.

The Catholic Church proved its impotence when it could do nothing effective about the plague, which may have killed up to 100 million people . The best known and perhaps worst of the Plagues was in 1347, when there were very high death rates which ironically give the poor greater power, as workers were scarce. This temporary lessening of suffering for the poor would help science and democracy quite a bit. But there were many outbreaks over several centuries. It became plain that if humans were to be free of the horrors around them it will have to be through evidence and the pursuit of fact. The Church opposed this free inquiry and there are many legal impediments put up against it. Those in power want inequality and for those who have too much, usually acquired by very questionable means, to keep it.

The scholastics like Aquinas (1225 –1274) had tried to rationalize Aristotle as a Churchman, but clearly something better than dogma was needed to find out what nature was really doing. The fatal misunderstanding of Aristotle would lead to the crack up of the Aquinas vision of reality and the rise of science. The fictions of religion began to be addressed by such men as William of Occam (1288 – c. 1348), Da Vinci, Francis Bacon and Rene Descartes. However much the latter two men may be questionable, and they are, they still deserve credit for advancing the experimental method.

Occam was a pioneer of nominalism and argued against the Platonic position that held that supra-individual universals, essences, or forms are real. In any case, the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 decided the issue of the Church's stand on the subject of universals and this was reinforced by Trent. This subject was the central philosophical issue of the Middle Ages. The Church decided in favor of the Realist position, more or less, rather than the Nominalist position. The Realist position was essentially Platonic, and summarized in the Scholastic formula, **Universalia Ante Rem**; the universal is prior to the particular thing, or the idea comes before the physical. In the

philosophy of Aquinas and others, a more Aristotelian concept of universals would be combined, rather ambiguously, with the Platonic position. It was this ambiguity that led to the Realist/Nominalist controversy over the subject of universals and made the question of universals central to the controversy over the nature of the eucharist. The Nominalist attacked this very ambiguity, since it was by no means clear how Christ could enter the Eucharistic host and become one with its substance without being contained also in its material substance. The Nominalists asked how Christ could become bread and wine when the bread and wine were not literally Christ. The standard reaction of the Church, as far back as St. Paul and Augustine, was that this paradox was a great mystery and it would be a grave sin, indeed perhaps the unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost itself, to question this divine mystery. This mystagogic, obscurantist strategy was effective, but appealed more to fear than reason. The Church of this time was fast becoming the central and totalistic power over the entire European continent, while yet the recent translation of Aristotle and new economic benefits had encouraged many to try to reason for themselves. Thus, even while the church was trying to use reason to justify its power and legitimacy, which was based on the Eucharist, others were using this same reason to question the authority of the Church and bring into question the Eucharist.

As I discussed in a previous chapter, the Nominalist position, at least in its clearer forms, as in Berengar (c.999-1088), Rocellinus(c.1050-1131) and William of Occam(d.1347) was derived almost entirely from Aristotle, and tended to deny the reality of the Platonic universals, claiming universals were conceptual abstractions from particular things. Thus the Nominalists claimed the opposite of the realists and in the corresponding scholastic formula, claimed that “ **Universalia Post Rem**”—or universals come after things.⁴² It is this latter view that is obviously the true one, though, it can be stated that that was not easy to know in the 14th century. The Nominalist position formed the

⁴² (Sartre would later express this as “existence precedes essence” which is obviously true.

conceptual basis of what would become science. This is not to say that Nominalism was a scientific position, rather it expressed the possibility in idea form of what would become science in practice two centuries later, between the period of Roger and Francis Bacon, Da Vinci, Galileo and Newton.

Science grows of this rejection of Platonism and universals. Occam's Razor was the idea that one should not "multiply entities beyond necessity" which was certainly necessary in a time when Aquinas' Summa Theologica helped create a plethora of Church doctrines which hardly anyone could entirely understand or count. This "reductionism" was a good thing and resulted eventually in Descartes' call for "clear and distinct ideas" and this leads us to a reason and eventually science. Occam was excommunicated from the increasingly corrupt Church, to his credit, and took refuge in the Germanic states, where the Protestant rebellion would eventually flower.

Bertrand Russell states of Occam that because of his insistence of "studying logic and human knowledge without reference to theology and metaphysics, Occam's work encouraged scientific research.⁴³ Da Vinci of course, is really the first fully developed scientist, far ahead of his time in so many things. One need only read his amazing notebooks with some care to see that the scientific mentality of reliance on experiment is already well formed in Leonardo. Science really begins in art and not in language and poetry, which are too close to religion. Indeed, Leonardo does not speak well of poetry and I daresay he might be right about it in some ways. Leonardo worked with math and applied it to the motions of water and air movement, flight and mechanics. He discovered some things about geology and had a sort of proto-theory of evolution. His studies of the human body were far ahead do his time.

Leonardo is an exception and a hundred years pass after his death

⁴³ See Russell, History of Philosophy page 475. See also the chapters on the "Eclipse of the Papacy" and "The Rise of Science" in this books which are all excellent. Indeed, I love this book and have been reading it since my teens. It has to be the best, clearest and most helpful history of philosophy ever written.

before Francis Bacon and Descartes start formalizing the scientific method. Bacon is blamed, along with Descartes for being the father of “reductionism” but there is nothing wrong with reductionism particularly if it is the delusions of myth and religion that are being reduced. Mysticism helps no one. If the opposite of reductionism is holistic transcendentalism, I will gladly take reductionism, as the transcendent does not exist. If you examine for instance this sentence by Arthur Versluis:

Contemporary society is based on what we may call objectification, meaning that our investigations into and control of our world derives from our regarding all that surrounds us as objects to be manipulated, from which we believe that we are separate. -⁴⁴

This sentence is full of false and tacit suppositions. There is a notion that “union” with a deity is possible, which is ridiculous, Versluis has no evidence of this at all, no one does. Indeed, all evidence suggests such unions are fictitious. There is an assumption that scientists are separate from nature, and I do not know one who would say so. There is an assumption that subjectivity is somehow superior, which is unlikely, and there is an assumption that all humans want to do is manipulate objects, which is false and certainly false regarding our world. There are people who objectify things, but not because of science. Business objectifies things for the sake of greed, true. But business is closer to religion than to science.

Biology is not there to manipulate objects but to reflect and understand nature: paramecium photosynthesis, Honeycreepers, viruses. Not that there is anything wrong with moving objects, even young children move objects with intentions. This is a tacit criticism of technology in Versluis’s statement, when technology is neutral and depends on how and why someone uses it. Versluis’

⁴⁴ From Versluis Arthur, Restoring Paradise, pg 19
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/134215558/Arthur-Versluis-Restoring-Paradise-Western-Esotericism-Literature-Art-And-Consciousness>

writing is full of these caricatures and misunderstandings about science. He does this to try to vaunt his specious ideas about esoterica and mystical narcissism and denigrate science and objectivity.

Since Descartes is a favourite philosopher to bash among new age spiritualists, esotericists, anti-materialists and “metaphysical” thinkers it might be useful to pause and digress here over various peoples misuse of abuse of Descartes, from Guenon to Chomsky. Using Descartes as a whipping boy or as an excuse for dogmatism is a common theme in the last 75 years from Guenon to Gary Zukav and Chomsky. Some of these thinkers use him as an example of what is to be hated and others misuse him as a shining star of their own delusions. I think the actual Descartes has his faults but is not an especially good example to follow either, while with moderation he must be credited importance to the history of science. Leonardo was also quite a good mathematician and had a better understanding of actual science than Descartes did. Indeed, it is a mistake to see Descartes as one of the founders of science when Leonardo understood it so much better a hundred years before Descartes

But there is much of value in Descartes. Recalling the Nazi Martin Heidegger's critique of the Cartesian ego, Guenon's abuse and hatred of Descartes is misguided. Rene Descartes is a common victim of religious minded New Agers and conservatives. He is blamed for all sorts of things he didn't do. Frithjof Capra, for instance, the writer of Tao of Physics is another who denigrates Descartes as a “reductionist”, as if simplicity were a bad thing. Making things simpler is not a fault, but to be praised. Descartes devotion to clarity and distinct ideas tested against reality is very important. While Descartes has his faults his drive to create a science based on observation and reason is not one of them. Indeed, I praise Descartes for his effort to find clear and simple truths. It has had great benefits on curing disease and solving technical problems in engineering and mechanics, art and biology.

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But, whatever his faults Descartes did begin the process that led to

science and this overall is a good, even for animals. Descartes was not at all the bad man and nor was he the beginning of the kali Yuga as Guenon's fiction abusively implies. On the contrary. Descartes frames and summarizes the early scientific impulse marvelously well. He created a philosophy that helps impel science toward the future. For that he really is an important thinker. It is logical that a backward thinker like Guenon would hate him. Chomsky's abuse of Descartes ideas are harder to explain and I explore that in another essay later in this book.⁴⁵

So, Descartes and Bacon helped create science, in their several ways and very imperfectly. Bacon is merely following out the logic of Occam's Razor and the attempt of science to be clear and distinct in its search for evidence and fact. There is no fault there, though one can well understand why the obscurantists, esoterists, holists New Agers and myth lovers would hate simplicity, and factuality. There has been an anti-science, anti-Enlightenment and anti-reason campaign by the far right since the 13th century nominalists

⁴⁵ (see my next chapter on Chomsky and his linguistic theory as it relates to animals. To summarize here: The consensus seems to be that Chomsky went astray by denying Darwin too much. He clung too heavily to Stephen Jay Gould and an irrational rationalism that had rejected too many aspects of empiricism and environmentalism in favor of a rationalistic formalism. This left Chomsky open to irrational ideas like thinking himself as a prophet of sorts. He extols 'mysteries', comes close to Platonism and flirts with bizarre ideas of the origins of language that tend to be non adaptationist.. Chomsky writes for instance that

He is trying to show that language may be an accident of brain development that might have intended the language parts of the brain for other uses. But it shows Chomsky's ignorance of nature. The growth of language might be like the development of rudimentary wings. These exist in flying Squirrels for instance, or ancient dinosaurs birds like Microraptor. Both gliders, these are very effective as flying mechanisms though far from being full-fledged wings as yet. There are other fossils that exhibit early flight. The 'language of birds or monkeys is certainly analogous to human communication in many ways., yet Chomsky bizarrely considers human language to not be about communications primarily. He is probably wrong here. It is hard to consider Chomsky a Darwinist, though he occasionally does show lip service to it, as he must. He theorizes about the evolution of the eye, though the dynamics of this are well plotted. But he has certainly refused to follow out all the Darwinian implications of language, staying strictly with a rather dogmatic genetic formalism which is not easily susceptible to scientific testing and inquiry,--- which is why it is right to question if he is a scientist at all. I hope that after Chomsky dies Darwinian theories of language will be pursued in earnest with much more research on animals. v

began to question Aquinas, Platonism and the Church. Savonarola, De Maistre, Guenon and other reactionary cranks have always opposed science and tend towards Platonism. It took a long time for science to achieve the spectacular results it has given us since Da Vinci. It was not until the 19th century also that the term scientist was created by the naturalist William Whewell. It is not until the industrial revolution and the late 19th century that science begins to change the face of society in a major way. The mix up of science with capitalism and communism has disastrous consequences in some cases, but all in all science a force for the good.

Quite apart from the fact that science is the study of things as they are and this has incalculable value---science has led to real and extremely valuable gains for people in almost every domain. Science has not led to ‘solidification’, ‘subversion’ or ‘dissolution’, as Guenon claims. Indeed, it is Guenon who is the subversive, trying to destroy science and erect bogus and dead systems of knowledge as a ‘support’ for his irrational religious ideology. Some of his poorly expressed critiques of modern inhumanity have small grains of truth in them, but many have said this much better without all the paranoid theories and exaggerations, spiritual projections and magnified superstitions. Guenon was an Counter-Enlightenment reactionary, one of hundreds, and as Darrin McMahon shows,⁴⁶ the Counter-Enlightenment was an international, and thoroughly modern affair. Guenon is a modernist reactionary, despite his nostalgic, regressive ideology. His ideology serves the far right, which itself is the product of reaction to the Enlightenment.⁴⁷ This fact is completely lost on

⁴⁶ Enemies of the Enlightenment

The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity,

⁴⁷ McMahon, Darrin, Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity, Oxford 2002

he notes that these reactionaries included "militant clergy, members of the *parti d,vot*, unenlightened aristocrats, traditionalist *bourgeois*, Sorbonne censors, conservative *parlementaires*, recalcitrant journalists, and many others ... the so-called fanatics of the Enlightenment catechism" pg 6

One reviewer notes that “he also contradicts Isaiah Berlin's emphasis on Germany and philosophy,

his followers, who haven't a clue as to who they are reading or why. The Counter-Enlightenment is still with us and very powerful. It gives us creationism and the global warming deniers, among many others. It scarcely matters if Guenon is part of it or not. The far right serves power, and seeks in all cases to limit human rights, nature, democracy, freedom, equality and social justice. Opposing the ideals of the French, American and Scientific revolutions is what the traditional movement was always about.

Vaccines have saved millions, and the world is far better understood now than during the Dark Ages Guenon admired: life expectancies are much longer; child mortality is largely eliminated in western countries and much lowered elsewhere.⁴⁸ Indeed, religion opposed progress and made life difficult. People died young without decent health care, women suffered more with many children before contraception was available or pediatrics became a viable and helpful science. People were denied basic rights, good food and left to languish in poverty and early deaths. The "good old days" were not so good, most women lost children or died in childbirth, men could get a small cut, which could easily go septic and kill them. There were no anesthetics and amputation might mean death. A broken bone was life threatening. Diseases were rampant

McMahon stresses the extent to which the Counter-Enlightenment was French and religious." Actually it was probably both French and German. And occurs in England, Holland and other countries as well.

⁴⁸ An example of this is Schuon's ignorance of medicine and his foolish belief in homeopathy led to prolonged sufferings and an earlier death for Schuon according to Doctor Rama Coomaraswamy who knew a few things about cardiology. Rama told me Schuon's belief in homeopathy (an utterly empty and fictitious form of medicine that has no proven advantage) led to Schuon having many heart events, which could have been avoided. Rama wrote me that "I also considered his attachment to homeopathy silly as this methodology only dates back to the 17th century and can hardly be called traditional. Also, he was having fainting spells and both I and one of the physician faukara who was a cardiologist felt he needed a pace maker (I have put in hundreds), but this was ruled out of court [by the cult]." In the Schuon cult it was said that "to be a disciple of the Shakyh, you must believe in homeopathy". Schuon had silent ischemia and it could have been treated if Schuon had not been so stubbornly ignorant and dogmatic in his stand toward modern medicine. Schuon's own meanness and narrow-mindedness led to his increased suffering in his last years. He regularly blamed his heart problems on anyone who might be in his way. He blamed his wives at various times, Joseph Epes Brown, his neighbor who put up a no trespassing sign, me at one point, Maude Murray at other points and others at other times. Actually his physical ailments could have been treated and he would have been a less bitter and nasty old man. His own narrow-mindedness was at the root of his later illnesses

and life expectancy was very low. Religious societies promoted---and still promote--- ignorance and irrational superstitions and myths, which kept people in deep fear and poverty. Modern men in Afghanistan beat girls who try to go to school or who try to get out of the veil. The veil itself is a misogynist imposition.

As Christopher Hitchens has rightly said: “Religion has run out of justifications.... and no longer offers an explanation of anything important.”⁴⁹ Science might be restricted as to what it can study—but when done well it is clear and light by comparison to the bogus tenebrous and imaginary “gnosis” of the old days. The ‘sages’ of old knew very little, in fact, and a lot of what they claimed to know now seems quaintly absurd, escapist and embarrassing. Science is about evidence, not about out dated Aristotelian ‘essences’ or Platonic or Sufi “archetypes”.⁵⁰ It brings us into the possibility of a more satisfying, creative way of life and thought and it addresses reality. Only pseudo-science and religion fabricate reality rather than seek to face it head on.

Chomsky has said that outside of the ‘hard sciences’ of biology, physics and chemistry “theoretical knowledge rapidly tails off and reliance on intuition and experience correspondingly increases, and it's correspondingly easier for error to perpetuate”.⁵¹ Regarding the social sciences Chomsky writes that they “don't have anything remotely like the explanatory character that parts of the natural sciences have developed since the 17th century revolutions”. Chomsky’s own linguistics has done little to explain language, indeed, Darwin’s commentary on the nature of language seems far deeper to me than

⁴⁹ Hitchens, Christopher. God is Not Great Twelve 2007. Pg. 282

⁵⁰ The epistemological anarchism that characterized Paul Feyerabend and others appealed to some traditionalists. Schuon, I was told, liked some aspects of alternative and reactionary Platonist science philosophers like Alexander Koyre. The whole notion of Platonist archetypes as an alternative to science has been utterly demolished by science, but that did not prevent Schuon from still believing in it fanatically and with a sort of personal devotion that made him impose archetypes even in close relationships to others. A woman who fit his favorite sex fantasies was called “fulfilling her archetype”, for instance, when really she just was his fantasy projection.

⁵¹ <http://www.chomsky.info/onchomsky/1996----.htm> This is true of Chomsky’s own science work in linguistics which has questionable formalistic and quasi-Platonistic features.

Chomsky's increasingly discredited theory.⁵²

Religious studies has even less accuracy than social sciences and perpetuates errors upon errors, so many in fact that no one should take most academic scholars of religion seriously about anything. The traditionalist academics should not be taken seriously, indeed, I advocate that they be removed from universities: they belong in right wing think tanks or churches and mosques. They are cultish 'true believers' not purveyors of enlightened information about the, real world. Neither the traditionalists nor many academic religious studies professors admit that there is no empirical basis for any of the major claims of the religions. Scientific methods need to be applied more rigorously to the study of religion.

The vast unknown domains of space and time, beyond the Quasars, or beneath the atoms are certainly beyond science and definitely beyond religion, whose answers to ultimate questions are absurd failures. The "meaning of existence" is accessible to science as science provides more and more keys to understanding life on earth, our biology our brains and those of other species. But the specific meaning of any single person's existence is not so easy to determine. The challenge of life and of society is to provide opportunity to answer just this question for everyone and not just the ultra-rich or the hereditarily privileged. What answers there are to ultimate questions are simply outside religions legitimate claim to answer anything about them. What

⁵² For instance his idea of universal grammar is discredited. Children do not have grammar hardwired into their brains as Chomsky thought. Another example is his FLN and FLB distinction, which tries to separate human from animal communications, and which enshrines little more than speciesist prejudice. Many people have complained that Chomsky stands in the way of advancement in language study. In Politics the only political theory that Chomsky has somewhat approved of is that of his associate Michael Albert. It is called Parecon and the society it envisions seems to be a top down sort of Parecon politicizing of the economy, such that wealth no longer controls, but rather fame and usefulness do, This has features not a whole lot different than other systems controlled by committee, such as Maoism. David Schweikart calls Albert' system "a system obsessed with comparison ("Is your job complex more empowering than mine?), with monitoring (You are not working at average intensity, mate--get with the program), with the details of consumption (How many rolls of toilet paper will I need next year? Why are some of my neighbors still using the kind not made of recycled paper?)". (Nonsense on Stilts, Znet) Chomsky and Albert are very overbearing people and run a sort of cult. I would have serious doubt about any society they designed. The society Chomsky made and Z Magazine and Z Net is already questionable enough.

answers there are, are best had from science or from commonplace observations by disinterested or ordinary people, who have no professional philosophy to sell. So when Plato or Aquinas, Eliade or Huston Smith, Guenon or Schuon or any of their followers pretend to certain answers about “multiple states of Being” or “Beyond Being” or “God” or existence, one can be quite sure that they what comes out of their mouths or pens is poppycock or utter fiction. They speak of these things with absolute certainty and even claim infallibility about them. That is the sure sign that they are charlatans, promoters of make-believe, constructors of fabricated delusions.

4. **Corporate Science**

That said, there is also a basic distinction between real science and corporate science or what is sometimes called “big science” and real science. Corporations abuse science by distorting it to serve the economic interests of the upper classes. Monsanto is a good example. They create seeds, which are genetically engineered, to insure that their product glyphosate or Roundup is then sprayed on their glyphosate resistant corn and soybean crops, and the poison kills all the weeds except “their” corn and soy. One horrendous result of this destructive process is that now monarch butterflies are 90% down in population and milkweed is suffering. This toxic atrocity should be stopped. This is an abuse of nature and science.

Those who critique science for merely reflecting the ideology of dominant economic groups within society are partly correct. But science is not ideology and it is important to separate science itself from the abuse of it. Corporations deform science in the pursuit of profit motives. A lot of the science used by corporations is done by academics and government research. Corporations who exploit this research should be required by law to give back to the society that enriched them with scientific knowledge. But that rarely happens. Microsoft for instance was allowed to exploit a lot of the research that was done by the government and should be required to pay us back. But they don't --- they just continue exploiting and maneuvering for profit. The obscene control

of government for big business profits corrupts both universities and science and less and less science is done by non-corporate people. This practice is destroying both science and the university system.⁵³

Science is the pursuit of objective and disinterested knowledge and often this is not the science of Haliburton or IBM. Haliburton sought to profit through the Iraqi and Afghani wars and IBM was deeply involved in helping the third Reich process the extermination of Jews by supply support the Nazi's with early computers to use in concentration camps.⁵⁴ Science is what was given us by Newton, Hooke, Huygens, Einstein, Russell, and Darwin as well as the countless anonymous researchers who go unheralded: the science that has given us ornithology, physics, thermodynamics, ecology, astronomy, microbiology, photosynthesis and plate tectonics. I mean science that is socially enlightened and fair, driven by evidence and not profit driven. A great deal of science has been created by amateurs and enlightened citizens, who are not looking to create dynastic wealth machines as the corporations do.

There is reason to be suspicious of corporate science. It is not driven by actual science but by Free Market Fundamentalism.⁵⁵ In her book Merchants of

⁵³ The anti-intellectualism of the corporate sector is very alarming. There are increasing attempts both to destroy the public schools and to undermine the system of academic freedom and tenure set up in the universities. There are real and dangerous efforts to privatize schools and to make students virtually indentured servants to corporations with huge college debts to CEO exploiters.

⁵⁴ See Edwin Black's *IBM and the Holocaust: The Strategic Alliance between Nazi Germany and America's Most Powerful Corporation*

⁵⁵ An interesting book on global warming and the causes of it in market fundamentalism is Naomi Oreskes The Collapse of Western Civilization, a dystopian book about the actual causes of the global warming threat. There is an online version here:

<http://gailepranckunaite.com/Naomi%20Oreskes-The-Collapse-of-%20Western-Civilization-2014.pdf>
'Here is her definition of market fundamentalism

“Free Market Fundamentalism—and its various strands and interpretations known as free market fundamentalism, neoliberalism, laissez-faire economics, and laissez-faire capitalism—was a two-pronged ideological system. The first prong held that societal needs were served most efficiently in a free market economic system. Guided by the “invisible hand” of the marketplace, individuals would freely respond to each other’s needs, establishing a net balance between solutions (“supply”) and needs (“demand”). The second prong of the philosophy maintained that free markets were not merely

Doubt, Naomi Oreskes she shows how scientists, who might have once had decent careers, ended up being paid to lie about things like Cigarettes or Tobacco, Acid Rain, Nuclear Energy or Global Warming so corrupt corporations could continue raking in huge profits that harmed people or the planet. The goal of “doubt mongering” she says, was to stave off government regulation. They abused science to help serve an ideology of profits. Genetic firms want to deform animals for profit; indeed, this is already being done, altering genetic structures to serve the profit motive of CEOs and shareholders instead of the good of the animals, cells or genes thus altered. CEO’s are defined as legal persons, but animals are not, they are legal things, so they can be used and abused nearly endlessly.⁵⁶ This is unethical. BP executives pollute the entire Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi Delta and get away with it because congress will not address corporate crime sufficiently enough to stop it. This also is unethical. Apple computers pays its workers less than 10% of its earnings, having little or no profit sharing, making the CEOs richer than Louis the 14th.⁵⁷

a good or even the best manner of satisfying material wants: they were the *only* manner of doing so that did not threaten personal freedom.”

She argues that market fundamentalism leads to the denial of science which leads to destruction of environment and the ability use resources wisely and this leads to catastrophic global warming, flood and deserts, mass migrations, millions of deaths and extinctions and the necessity of big government to regulate the abusers. Neoliberalism fails the earth and people.

⁵⁶ Corporations and various religions have set up the idea of entities that are not beings defined as legal persons, such as Corporations, Hindu idols, or the holy books of the Sikh religion. These are absurd constructions, but animals, who have many aspects that are more developed than humans, are not given personhood, when obviously an Otter, Chimp, Dolphin or Raccoon is a person by any reasonable definition. These would have rights, and gods are corporations should not, they are merely constructions of elaborate linguistic or legal rhetoric.

⁵⁷ An investigation of ten supplier Samsung factories who work for Apple corporation showed that Apple corporation is guilty of egregious violations of workers rights. Among them are Exhausting working conditions. Almost all factories require most workers to work standing for the entirety of their shift, including during regular overtime shifts that last 11 to 12 hours. Workers have jumped to their deaths, and are threatened with termination if they talk. There was also found to be a ‘lack of any effective complaint mechanisms,
unfair and unreasonable rules,
inhumane treatment of workers,
lack of worker safety,

China makes many of the Apple products and there are no independent labor unions allowed in China, insuring immunity to corporate CEO's. There are few environmental restrictions, so American corporations, like Walmart, Apple and others can exploit workers almost like slaves. Therefore, there is real concern about corporate science, they have restored the slave system in the name of market fundamentalism.

Corporations in the coal and oil industries flood the market with advertisements that support rightwing politicians and which attack government bodies that impose environmental regulations that these polluting and 'fracking' companies do not like. They help create global warming, killing of species and harm to the planet. The science that supports environmental regulation is attacked as well. Anti -science arguments are used to hide corporate abuse and insure profits. We need a socially responsible and ethical science, as well as ways of regulating and punishing CEO who profit from such abuses and lies. We need more watchdogs to monitor corporate science. Bogus scientific papers appear in peer-reviewed journals actually written by academic hacks, paid by corporations to deny the facts and perpetuate corporate profits.

With the rise of science, charlatan priests and wizards lost their jobs or their jobs got much harder. They want their jobs back and fight mightily to discredit science with mystifications and lies. The job of debunking pseudo-science and phony metaphysicians is never ending. Guenon and other religious writers know little about science. He only knew that their role was diminished by it and they fight hard to promote pseudo-science by any means necessary. Dogma produces reactionary Inquisitors and 'witch-hunters', not impartial scientists who weigh actual evidence. Guenon attacks pseudo-religions like

and employment of children.”

<http://www.chinalaborwatch.org/report/64>

Theosophy, a cult he had himself been a member of through Encausse and is wrong in many of his criticisms. Guenon's own bogus theories are no better and probably even worse than Blavatsky.⁵⁸ He supports 'orthodox religions' without any understanding that orthodoxy itself is a fictional concept, mere undemonstrated dogma passed down as fact. He hated science and tries to use his hatred of it to exalt defunct elite classes. In the end it is obvious that Guenon was a quack and his followers dupes of a charlatan.

There is certain friendliness between traditionalism and corporatism, since corporations are not beholden to the scientific method and peer review but only to profit and the market. Religion can help sell things and ignorance is desirable to those who dislike an open society where anything can be questioned. This can be seen in the career of Hossein Nasr and his son. Papa Nasr fawned and courted the Shah of Iran and his wife and then when the Shah fell under the weight of his own corruption, Nasr started fawning up the power structure United States, seeking influence among Republicans in Washington D.C.. He also has courted Prince Charles of Britain, helping turn this parasitical and inept prince into a born again traditionalist, as it were. Nasr's son now advises reactionary administrations in the U.S. government, no questions asked about his father's immoral and theofascist past.⁵⁹

Many Sufi groups, Zen monasteries, or Taoist groups exercised just this sort of sycophantic relationship to the upper classes of the kings and princes of old. Religion is mostly the mythos that supports the injustices of the upper classes or the belief system that accustoms the poor to their suffering. Religion tries to

⁵⁸ Richard Smoley pokes some fun at Guenon's rather absurd attacks on Blavatsky, who he is so much like in some many ways--- in an essay that makes both Guenon, Blavatsky and Smoley look rather silly, with their beliefs in "psychic corpses" and transmigrating souls though animals and other nonsense of this kind. See

<http://www.theosophical.org/publications/1696>

⁵⁹ At one point in 2015, I received various letters from anonymous people claiming crimes committed by Nasr. There was no evidence for these crimes, so it appeared it might be a hoax, perhaps meant to entrap, or perhaps meant to slander Nasr, I never knew which. Internal evidence suggested the claims came from inside the Nasr or Schuon cults themselves. In either case, it suggested corruption in the Schuon and Nasr groups. I reported these claims to the appropriate authorities.

make the poor used to being ripped off by the rich. “the poor we always have with us” the mythic Christ is supposed to have said. The way to stave off revolution, the rich think, is to habituate the poor to early death and sickness, hunger and poverty. Feed them sports and lotteries, ‘bread and circuses’, T.V., computer games and gadgets, as well as myths and religions to keep them quiet. Let the women read escapist novels and the men compete over who knows the most football players names.

Corporations imitate religions and seek to imitate the aristocrats of old. Corporations claim, falsely to be “persons” and have the rights of persons.⁶⁰ However, of course a corporation never dies like a real person, so it is a quasi-immortal person. The corporate claim to be a person is a charade, a joke, a religious or mythical claim—an abstract claim. A corporation is not a person in exactly the same way that Christ is not a person: both are props, myths, fictions, social constructions that serve interests. The Supreme Court claim that a corporation is a person is a metaphysical claim and virtually sets up corporations as deathless gods. This is yet another proof about how corrupt the Supreme Court is. This should be stopped. It subverts democracy and destroys equality, giving the CEO’s and boards of these entities way too much power, which they inevitably abuse. Indeed, most of the harms that occur in our world today, from diabetes related obesity to housing speculators driving up the price of houses creating a foreclosure crisis, to environmental disasters and global warming are due to the injustices created by corporate power and the myth of the corporate person.

⁶⁰ John Locke writes about the need to aristocrats to create a source of wealth beyond change. The idea was to create through capitalism a permanent and risk free market system that would insure that the rich stay rich. The early insurance companies were created to try to do just this, insuring slave ships from the frequent losses of sunken ships. Slaves were thrown overboard due to sickness in the middle passage. How could the rich stay rich when such losses occurred. The system of insurance was meant to preserve wealthy upper despite suffering caused to the poor. The real world incompetence and cruelty of the rich sought to inure itself form risk so as to create a caste system..



Destroying Forests and Polluting the Air.

Photo by author taken in Eureka California, 2006

The ideology of the corporation has been installed in American law and government by big business. The support of academics, particularly economics professors, for the system of financial corruption is well documented.⁶¹

Schuon claimed to be a prophet of sorts- a ‘personality’ a sort of incorporated brand. And this is bogus too, just as Microsoft, IBM or BP claiming to be a being--- a metaphysical person--- is bogus. Christ being a trinity is also a bogus idea, a fiction, for of the same mania for abstract

⁶¹ See Charles Ferguson, Predator Nation: Corporate Criminals, Political Corruption, and the Hijacking of America.

magnifications. The purpose of the Christ image was to “leverage” the Church with the idea of transcendence. This magnification or ‘leveraging’ helped create the illusion of an infallible church or state that enables aristocrats to take unjust wealth and power. Schuon “leveraged” himself in a similar way, trying to piggy back on the god idea, making something out of nothing.⁶²

Corporations often support a culture of nostalgic monarchism or borderline fascist governments, since CEO’s are granted the status of arbitrary dictators, who hire and fire at will. Jesus is the model CEO of imaginary “other world” who can put people in hell or heaven at will. Corporations have affinities both with traditional religious and imperial institutions and modern scientific or academic institutions. Guenon would say that corporations are too “modern” and “anti-traditional”, but actually they are upholders of conservative values in many cases. Both Guenonism and corporate globalism adopt a method of operation that is both transcendentalist and colonialist.. Guenon ideology allies itself easily with post-modern irrationalism, which is a sort of escapism. They oppose Vatican 2, which had real reform in it, which led to the Church in Central and South American adopting a real concern for the poor, which has led to real reforms of the governments there. Vatican 2 ‘liberation theologians’ much hated by Traditionalists, wanted to go back to the pacifist Jesus⁶³ and to

⁶² Banks leveraged assets in the recent financial crisis and this magnifies both gains of banks and the losses of house buyers. Banks basically stole money from ordinary people to pay for their own corrupt dealings and then they raided the population further in bogus “bailouts”. They made a system of “extend and pretend” a quaint phrase for financial lying and profiteering. Religion is based on similar falsehoods, created to try to erect the ‘leveraged’ power of an institution like the Church or the caste system in India or the system of power in influence in Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia or Iran. These are all unjust systems of power justified by myths. Metaphysics is basically the intellectualized fictions used to do the ‘leveraging’ so that people will believe the delusions.

⁶³ The early Jesus, liberation theology held, was a pacifist unlike the Roman church after the 4th century C.E., which allied itself with the persecutors rather than the persecuted. It is this concern with the poor that made it impossible for the Trappist monk Thomas Merton to ally himself with the Schuonians, even after their effort of ‘colonize” him and bring him into their fold failed. Merton was a man of the left, not of the far right like Schuon. He did want to create an ecumenical movement to help religion revive when it obviously was failing. There is a book claiming he was really a closet case traditionalist, but this is a misreading of the facts. The traditionalists sought to expropriate him but failed.

I also doubt that the early images or writings about Jesus describe a pacifist are accurate. “ I came

help the poor. In Nicaragua for instance the Sandinistas educated virtually the whole country and enabled millions to learn to read. The traditionalists opposed such praiseworthy things and allied themselves with corporate hierarchies which opposed Liberation Theology and thus any real help for the poor in South and Central America. By implication they also allied themselves with Corporate U.S. policy on land reform that would address the huge disparities in wealth in those countries.

It is interesting to note that one part of Vatican 2 was an effort to return to the original gospels notion of the rights of the poor – (the gospels also deny these same rights, ---“the poor you always have with you”, Christ says)) and this was picked up by the Liberation theology movement as a call to democratize places like Latin America. This is what Rama Coomaraswamy hated about Vatican 2. His hatred of Vatican 2 was totally political, a hatred of “democratizing tendencies”, as he called it. Chomsky likes Vatican 2 also for political reasons as leftist religion helped bring about human rights in some Latin countries. It is unusual for religion to have this positive effect. It hardly makes religion true, it makes religion useful in this one case,-- useful for human rights. Chomsky’s mistake is to support religion as a useful thing and question atheism across the board simply because religion is useful in a few cases. ⁶⁴

Wolfgang Smith is one thinker that has been prominent as a foe of science and a favorite of the traditionalists. He too opposes Vatican 2 and

not to bring peace but a sword” Christ is supposed to have said. Jesus probably never existed.: he appears to be a mythic mouthpiece for resistance movements to Roman rule and Jewish splinter cults, but then becomes a Roman creation, serving the state, so various cults can use humans as their symbol.. Paul is key in this of course, and the Gospels appear to be a response to Paul rather than background to him Christ later became a poster boy for empire. Merton is a champion of resistance and not tradition, the politics of the left and not the right.

⁶⁴ There are other cases where religion is “useful” as in its occasional feeding of the poor in soup kitchens or its very occasional visiting of the elderly. But these useful endeavors tend to be soporifics for the great harm it does in supporting the existing systems that causing these same injustices. Those on the far right think religion should take care of social injustices while the far right should exploit anyone they please for profit. There are people in the Schuon cult who think exactly this as well as those at large.

liberation theology, just as he opposed Teilhard de Chardin's attempt to take the backward Catholic Church out of the dark ages as regards science and evolution.⁶⁵ He writes that science and Post-modernism are somehow akin, proving he knows very little about post-modernism or science. The main premise of post-modernism is that it denies the value of objectivity and thus of science. The idea that facts and evidence matter is science--- but the idea that everything boils down to subjective interest and perspectives⁶⁶ is merely post-modernist nonsense.. Post modernism—and Smith is an anti-scientific post-modernist--- is an ally of corporate ideology in that it encourages escapism and an alliance between inquiry and religion, very much along the lines of the fuzzy and inchoate Wolfgang Smith and Hossein Nasr. It is no mistake Nasr and Smith favors far right republicans.⁶⁷ They are men who support repression and injustice, irrational creationism and social repression.⁶⁸ Corporations benefit

⁶⁵ I'm not a big fan of Teilhard De Chardin's ideas on science, which at best verge on a sort fantasy half based in facts, rather like the books of Annie Dillard that are part spiritual fantasy part nature meditation and who was influenced by De Chardin. But De Chardin understood more about science than Smith did, whose understanding of evolutionary facts is non-existent. The attack on de Chardin, is really a right ring attack on the Enlightenment and wish to return to a medieval form of theofascism. De Chardin was harassed and attacked by the Church for many years, persecuted might be the word and Smith continues this unjust persecution viciously. De Chardin's effort to combine Catholicism and biology just doesn't work very well. That is not a capital offence as Smith treats it, it is merely a result that is not very pleasing to anyone who knows nature pretty well

⁶⁶ This is a definition of relativism,, which is very rare. Science is not relativistic, in this sense. Science does deny the fictional "absolute" which really is a Hegelian or Germanic construction that Schuon, Guenon, Smith and others try to universalize. The absolute is a universalized fiction, a postulate, not a reality that anyone has demonstrated. There is no such thing, in fact, it exists only as a fiction.

⁶⁷ The republican party in America is the party of far right Christian and many Protestants and Catholics and is strongly the party fo racism, the ultra-rich and the "anti-science party", as the journalist Paul Krugman dubbed it. Not only do they ignorantly oppose the facts of evolution and reject climate change, as well scientific medicine in favor of quackery like the anti-vaccine movement or homeopathy. They oppose anything that big business opposes, even if it is an outright lie. The Republicans are the party of ignorant arrogance and injustice. The growth of their power since the Reagan administration threatens much of that has been good in American history and now threatens the planet itself through global warming.

⁶⁸ Once when I was visiting Smith he launched into a moralistic tirade against the pop singer Madonna. I have never been that crazy about Madonna's songs, but Smith was livid to the point of really fanatical hatred of her, calling her part of the anti-Christ, a parody of the Virgin and a "whore", and so on. It was clear to me that Smith was a man of deep and confused sexuality who had an irrational animus about this women he never met, but probably was attracted to.

from such religious escapism since it helps keep people blissfully ignorant of how the world is being raped by big business for profits. That is why so many business now encourage workers to practice Buddhism or why far right Catholics and Protestants are patriotic. Yoga and meditation are good to clear the mind and create a positive attitude so that one does not question corporate power or unjust profiteering.⁶⁹ Repressive institutions try to suppress independent and critical thinking. Science depends on critical and independent thought.

Science, when well done, is not about class interests and certainly it is not a spiritual ideology. Science seeks the truth in the physical and actual world. Any really good scientist does his or her work to study the earth or the universe out of objective concern. The gathering of facts requires a certain love, attention to detail, recognition of the rights of what is studied. According to the Schuon, Guenon and Wolfgang Smith and the Catholic Church, as well as the traditionalists, “relativism”⁷⁰ is a denial of absolute truth, and this leads to

⁶⁹ There is no really good attempt to critique Buddhism similar to Russell’s critique of Christianity or Ibn Warraq’s critique of Islam. Zen clearly has some fascist overtones in its militarism, endorsement of violence and samurai service to the authoritarian Emperor of the Japanese state. Tibetan Buddhism is also highly questionable in its totalitarian over-lording of the people of that area. It used cruelty extensively. It also is deeply misogynistic religion setting up a hierarchy of men. Victor and Victoria Trimondi have at least begun a critique of Buddhism, as in their critique of the Dalia Lama here.

<http://www.naderlibrary.com/shadow.dalai.htm>

The Trimondi’s discuss for instance the “Japan expert, geopolitician and Deutsche Akademie President Karl Haushofer. He emphasized the appropriateness of Shinto state fascism as a model for National Socialism. The German teachers of Zen Buddhism, Eugen Herrigel and Karlfried Dürckheim, propounded a link between National Socialism and Zen philosophy. Herrigel evidently joined the Nazi party in 1937. Schuon quotes his writings somewhere. He wrote *Zen and the Art of Archery* and *Zen and the Art of Flower Arranging*.

⁷⁰ I discussed this in a long footnote earlier in this book. There are different kinds of “relativism”. Some people confuse it with the theory of relativity or with moral and cultural relativism, all of which are

moral license and a denial of the possibility of sin and god. This is a silly argument that has no merit. Sin is an anachronistic concept. There are no absolutes and all that exists is “relative” and to condemn all “relativism” is to condemn the world of related things itself. It is this hatred of the relative that I object to in religions as it means a hatred of us and the world we live in.

Those who claim knowledge of the imaginary “Absolute” create a ‘relativism’ as a kind of evil which really is a hatred for all that is contingent or relative. The Relative is merely all that exists and really that is all there is. The “Absolute” is a fiction. To be a relativist in this sense is not only rational, it is the only real alternative to embrace with one’s whole heart.. There is nothing wrong with ‘relativity’. Everything is relative to everything else, in the sense that all things in the universe have relations. The religious hatred of the relative world is a delusional hatred which posits non-existent “absolutes” which denigrate the real world where we all actually live. The whole notion of “metaphysics” is really irrelevant to science. Indeed, metaphysics generally is a bogus area of study that involves projecting onto the facts of existence non-existent truths that are pure inventions. Science must resist such projections

different things. Some hate relativism and what they mean is they hate science because science needs no posit of imaginary “principles” to get the universe going.. Schuon hated “relativism” but was a moral relativist himself, however, and allowed himself all sorts of hypocritical license which would not allow to others. Of course sometimes those who say they hate relativism really mean they hate moral relativism which means they hate selfish behavior. But again, Schuon was one of the most selfish people I ever met so he allowed himself to be a moral relativist, taking extreme liberties for himself while denying them to others.. Schuon opposed the “relative “to the “absolute”, which is a false opposition or a false choice since there is no demonstrable absolute, expect maybe gravity or the inevitability of taxes. Isaiah Berlin said not to “confuse our own constructions with eternal laws or divine decrees”. And this “is one of the most fatal delusions of men.” There is some truth to this sort of relativism, since people do influence the views of the world that they have. However, this sort of cultural relativism is limited too , as science at its best seeks to be adequate to reality, or to describe real things and facts. Reality is not a construction, DNA does exist and has measureable effects on organisms inheritance structures. When religions condemn “relativism” means they condemn the “contingent world”, ---the world of things depending on other things. To such people only the imaginary “absolute” matters, which means that only the imaginary matters, reality was a lesser thing. This view denigrates the whole universe, and sees it as merely symbolic. Hating the relative in this sense is perverse, destructive and malicious. It is the hatred of all that really matters. This hatred of the ‘ten thousand things” or “original sin” is a mental disease that is common to all the major religions. Most thinkers who hate relativism, basically hate the world and want to posit an imaginary monotheistic or polytheists god or gods. Relativism is then hatred for all that is contingent or relative.

as a matter of course and embrace relativism as a virtue, which in fact it is, as is “reductionism”..

Of course when one really analyzes New Age hatred of relativism and reductionism a very different picture emerges. They hate these tendencies because they really hate science and wrongly blame the harms done by Big Science on science itself. The problem is capitalism,--which is hardly science at all. New Agers seek an escape from the reality of life into myth and esoterism, aromatherapy, pyramids, cosmic consciousness, the Dalai Lama or any fuzzy thinking that will put them in touch with the “spirit within”. This is narcissistic escapism and is a great aid to the capitalistic expansion which wants no democracy, fairness or human and nature’s rights and wants to give all to the rich at the expense of everyone else.

Schuon and Guenon thought themselves great “metaphysicians” which basically means they were great pretenders, promoters of a far right ideology, who lived lives inventing ideas about things that don’t exist. Not only is science far more moral than religion ever was, it has much better results. Science is not at all opposed to moral concerns. On the contrary there is a lot of work⁷¹ that shows that ethics grows out of nature itself quite without any need religions. Some of the most ethically minded people in the world are “atheists”—by which I mean naturalists, or reasonists,⁷² who are devoted to the actual, scientists, who resist delusional and irrational systems. I think of myself as a naturalist, in all these senses of that term, not just the

⁷¹ See Sam Harris [The Moral Landscape](#) or Marc Hauser’s [Moral Minds](#). This is a burgeoning new field. Harris and Hauser are two of many that are looking into the subject. Hauser has been discredited in various circles and resigned from Harvard. I’m not sure why. He was closely associated with Chomsky. But his book [Moral Minds](#) has some interesting ideas in it. Whether Hauser fudged some of his evidence or not in other domains does not affect what he says in this book. Hauser’s book [Animal Minds](#) is interesting to but rather limited to a laboratory understanding of animals. I don’t think much can be understood about animals in labs. Animals have to be studied in the environments where they evolved. , Like Hitchens he seems to have some political views that support the state in the US. This deserves to be questioned. Also, see Darwin’s Chapter 3 in *Descent of Man*, for a discussion of the evolution of animals and language that goes well beyond Chomsky and Hauser.

⁷² I heard a man use this term in the conference called *Beyond Belief 2007* and liked it. I did not hear what his name was.

philosophical sense, which is rather narrow. I also mean by it that I am concerned with nature and animals.

Many scientists opposed the nuclear threats of the cold war as well as concerns with environmental issues, many oppose corporate dominance in resource extraction or health care. Science seeks survival for all species, not just humans. When science is corrupted it is corrupted by power and wealth and the ideologies that serve these. Science is a good thing: wishing to know why plants flower or how to grow food better, or how to alleviate the suffering of the sick are all honest motives. When science has become harmful is because it became institutionalized and was co-opted to the interests of corporate, racist or nationalist powers, or it was turned itself to the service of making guns, money and bombs. In these cases it is not science that is at fault, it is systems of power, or corrupt individuals.

Science and reason are the main tools that we have to deflate power. Post-modernism gives away science and re-embraces the irrational, acting as if the world were entirely the creation of our minds. Science is essential to understand what corporations are doing to our world. We need to be able to do science ourselves to study and defend our earth from global warming, pollution, destruction of habitats and environmental degradations of all kinds. The only way to limit the destructiveness of science is by use of the techniques science employs, namely evidence based inquiry sound logic, induction, deduction and accurate and empirical observation. There is no world beyond this world. All we have are these rivers, animals, plants and our own bodies.

The notion that "tradition" can do anything to address the environmental crisis, the ravages of inequality and over population is mistaken. Noam Chomsky's point that the environmental problems of our time

“are not the result of "technology," but of the institutional structures in which technology is used. A hammer can be used to smash someone's skull in, or to build a house. The hammer doesn't care. Technology is

typically neutral; social institutions are not. To the (very limited) extent that I understand what is written about these matters [Post-modernism, “gnosis” Traditionalism etc.] in the literature you are referring to, it seems to attribute to technology what should be attributed to institutions of power and privilege, and thus serves to protect these institutions, by shifting attention away from them. I've often suspected that this service to power and privilege may help account for the warm reception given to these doctrines in the ideological institutions, universities, etc. ⁷³

Chomsky is right.. Chomsky points out that postmodernists, ---and the traditionalists are an extremist wing of the post-modernist movement,--- are apologists for unjust forms of power. This is true of traditionalists and academic proselytizers of religion, like Huston Smith, Wolfgang Smith, Schuon, Evola, Arthur Versluis, Mircea Eliade and many others. As corporate example of this abuse of science is the Koch brothers. Greenpeace says that between 1997 and 2008 Koch Industries donated nearly \$48 million to groups which doubt or oppose the theory of anthropogenic global warming. Koch Industries is a corrupt oil and chemical company that has been trying to use their wealth to skew science in favor of their profit margins.

Keeping science out of the hands of the corrupt is a never ending task and can only be done with the cooperation of an educated society and an enlightened government as well as a university system not compromised by corporate influence. Chomsky points out that:

"there is no alternative to the common sense procedures that we come to call "science" as they are pursued with greater care and reach deeper insight: try to construct explanatory principles that yield insight

⁷³ This appeared on ZNet, in a section called Science Wars, where Chomsky often replies' to questions See <http://www.zmag.org>

and understanding, test them against relevant evidence, keep an open mind about alternatives, work cooperatively with others"

The question is how far we can go to allow diversity of views at the same time as we respect the common sense procedures of science. Paul Feyerabend, seems to think we should even include religion in such a tolerant allowance of diversity.⁷⁴ I don't agree with this----Stephen Jay Gould's notion of "overlapping magisteria" is false because there is nothing commensurate between the facts of science and the fictions of religion. But at one point, I even thought to study with Feyerabend in 1986. He was already gone from Berkeley at that point. Feyerabend was a gadfly and promoted greater freedom for science on the one hand and on the other he was a impishly dadaesque character prone to perverse jokes. I am glad now that I did not study with him. His notion that "anything goes" went too far.⁷⁵ Rather than making science

⁷⁴ Feyerabend is sometimes read as being "anti-science". He is anti-science at the same time as he is pro-freedom, and sees science as a tyrant. There is reason to doubt the abuse of science, if not science as such, insofar as science becomes Big Science and rolls over nature or people in pursuit of weapons systems, nuclear reactors, military applications, drug therapies or medicine that do harm or other profit driven science. One writer says that Feyerabend "does not claim that science is dogma, but rather that science has become dogmatic", as does any ideology which gains an effective monopoly. Feyerabend supports liberty of thought, and this puts him at odds with those who insist that scientific reasoning is *the* superior mode of thought". Liberty of thought is fine, and the scientific method allows for freedom, but being wrong about or promoting nonsense is still nonsense. I think that science is the most reasonable form of thought. Feyerabend is often merely a Dadaist and joker, and sometimes a reactionary who plays into the hands of those who hate science and truth. In this he is to be faulted. There is no question however but that science is "superior" in the sense that it has real truth in it and not dogma. It does not make sense that one should judge how a car battery works on the basis of whether or not Jesus was born from a virgin. Religion is not reasonable. Make believe can never be equal to actuality and realism. There is no reason to include fictions in a reasonable way of thinking. It simply is not part of the question. Religion is irrelevant whenever the actual and the relevant are at issue. I doubt Feyerabend understood this. Indeed, he seems ridiculous to me in many of his arguments. But there was a poetry in him. The part of Feyerabend I liked was the part that loved ordinary life, as exemplified in his autobiography, which has a delightful picture of him washing dishes. I think science and ordinary life grow from the same actualities. They are what matters---the study of our world and the living in our world.. . but that means that Feyerabend's comments about science are more or less irrelevant and what is interesting in him has to do with personality and a certain personal willingness to play the jester to power. I have always enjoyed that sort of courage.

⁷⁵ See his [Against Method](#) and [Science in Free Society](#). Read his essay "Aristotle not a Dead Dog".. Feyerabend's philosophy goes too far and would import irrational ideologies within the reach of science, which is not a good idea at all.

better, I think we would have opened it up to all sorts of nonsense. Certainly science should be questioned, that is how science improves. But it is not possible to understand the world we live in by quoting archaic Hindu texts, promoting the Tao of Physics or creating secretive cults. It would not serve anyone to or perpetuate the myths and superstitions that were the engines of the patriarchal ideologies of past cultures. Unlike Plato, Aristotle has many interesting qualities, but that hardly makes his backwards and false views about nature and animals tenable today.

To take another example: Zen served the repressive and warlike samurai class in Japan just as it serves the New Age business class in the United states today. This hardly means that Zen is really a viable way of life for today. It just means that systems of myth and emotional manipulation are transferable form one culture to another. Schuon supported the Japanese fascists during World War 2, just as Martin Lings advocates that the Spanish Fascist Franco should be the model of the traditionalist dictator or autocrat . So too, Guenon's service to power and privilege is clear in his support of retrogressive religious and political views that would plunge us back into the Dark Ages of superstition and ignorance. Guenon and Schuon's rabid fantasies of world destruction merely demonstrate how much they hate our world and how little they understood nature. Indeed, both Guenon and Schuon reduce nature to a symbol, which is to misunderstand nature entirely. There is nothing symbolic in the Chambered Nautilus, the giraffe, the flower called Bee balm or the Inchworm. The idea of "seeing God everywhere" is not about nature but about a system of mind control that envelopes everything in the delusion of a god who does not exist. By reducing nature to merely a symbol the traditionalists not only degrade nature but women too. Women become merely a symbol in their system. As Byron rightly said,

“I’ve seen much finer women, ripe and real
than all the nonsense of their stone ideal”⁷⁶

So it is about time someone write about the distorted and abusive misunderstanding and slanderous treatment of science by Traditionalists and others. The subject of debunking the full extent of the science haters has never been addressed adequately as far as I know. I cannot debunk all of it here either, but I think I can expand the critique of it further. There have been wonderful debunking’s of Creationism and the religions, but not of the sophistry of traditional hatred of science.

Rene Guenon scoffed at modern sciences which have progressed and increased the knowledge of the world. He called them “profane” sciences, in the Crisis of the Modern World, and says “profane” science is only the “residues” of sacred sciences which been largely lost to us. This is utter nonsense. Guenon is a confidence-man who makes things up like any snake oil salesman. Astrology and alchemy are bunk and hokum and no amount of symbolist mystification can redeem them from the trash heap of dead and disproven knowledge. Guenon’s “esoterism” is fiction. Mythopoeic fictions and symbolisms are merely the unjust dross of former dictatorships and unjust social systems. What is actually being dished out of Guenon’s gruesome kitchen is the slop and dross of former unjust systems of dead knowledge, the ‘garbage’ of caste and

⁷⁶ Quoted in Kenneth Clark’s The Nude, pg. 488. I don’t mean to disparage the beauty of Greek sculpture here, which is amazing in so many examples. But Platonic idealization in the human figure is partly a Renaissance and 19th century fabrication. But there are various systems of knowledge where women are reduced to symbols and even when the symbols are ‘sublime’ the net result is to denigrate actual women, as happens in Buddhism, Hinduism, Catholicism and American fundamentalism. Another example of this absurd Platonism is Schuon’s idea of the widening of the chest, which he liked to do himself, to make himself look bigger and King like. Schuon thought he was a Monarch or Emperor too, some days. Kenneth Clark notes that this absurd widening of the chest was used in Roman sculpture of Caesars to make them look bigger and more godlike and Michelangelo inflates his figures in the same absurd way. All these figures are quite literally full of hot air. Politics is at the root of Michelangelo’s bloated figures this once again shows that religion and politics are two sides of the same coin.

The statue Clark mentions is of Emperor Trebonianus Gallus. (pg 485)

inquisitions, discriminatory and classist thinking, elitist and militarist fictions of the idle rich.

Guenon dreams of a fabricated and idealized mathematics or science that relates back to his favorite religious ideas. But actually math has evolved away from religion as it became more refined. Mathematicians came to know that numbers are tools not a Platonic and metaphysical eternal truth. Guenon's idea of math is a useless and ineffectual fiction. It was dogmatic minds like Guenon's that stood in the way of real science. Guenon was a paranoid and paranoid people often project their worst fears on to what they hate. Guenon's hatred of science is a paranoid projection of his own twisted ambitions. The fact is that religion is what "solidifies" ignorance, it is religion that is trying to unsuccessfully "subvert" the good of science, human rights and democracy. The "Great Wall" Guenon invented in his imagination is really just the wall of ignorance, Platonism, religion and myth which he and his followers seek to impose upon others. Guenonism is romantic irrationalism and anti-intellectualism gone rampant. It is a system of archaic and elitist ignorance

Traditionalism is also a fundamentalist irrationalism. A good deal of the killing going on in our world today is related to religion and the ignorance it fosters. Guenon was wrong; the great 'dissolution' is not an approaching apocalypse, but rather the slow, welcome dying of religious superstitions. Guenon's fevered mind imagined existence of a mythical "counter-initiation"—a mysterious hidden force whose sole purpose was to oppose the superior forces of true spiritual initiation in the world. Of course, there are no "true initiations"—all that is mythology too. Guenon insisted that esoteric "initiation" into traditional wisdom was handed down orally by non-literary means. I have seen what this really means in the Schuon cult and other religions and it is bogus: nothing worthwhile is handed down: it is all smoke in mirrors—make believe and empty ritual. All Schuon provides his followers are many "texts" and books, the six "themes of meditation" and the "alchemy" and in these 'teachings' are ignorance and narrow-minded superstition, as well as cultic

thinking.⁷⁷ The same is true of Tibetan, Hindu or new age Gurus as well as 'born again' cults. Mystagogical cults "transmit" or pass down "traditions" which are bundles of social instructions and "spiritual" fictions, illusions and make believe. The five times a day prayers of Moslems, the ablutions and other rituals, have the purpose of controlling minds and behavior and making sure that everyone submits, surrenders and bows to the same social forces, the same sultan or king, the same unjust dynasty of oil billionaires. These mental viruses, or imposed mental habits, prayers rituals and mantras are passed from one generation to another and this process is called spiritual method or 'sacramental' "initiation".

The whole mystagogy about "initiation" that Guenon created was farcical. He himself was 'initiated' into Sufism by Ivan Aguéli, another orientalist pretender. Even if Guenon had been initiated in more 'authentic' way, it would scarcely matter, since the whole concept of 'Initiation' that Guenon cultured, as

⁷⁷ As an example of the actual meaning of Schuon's notion of the "intellect" and how this is really a pathological subjectivity it might be useful to quote something from my account of 1991. Schuon's narcissistic notion of himself was reaffirmed one day in the 1970's:

"Maude told me that sometime during the late 1970's Schuon was praying the Moslem prayers in the apartment of Maude and John Murray in Pully, Switzerland. Schuon got up in the middle of the prayers to write something down, something she rarely saw him do. Later on she found out that he had been praying to understand the nature of the Prophet. He had a vision, while praying, of the inner nature of the Prophet as a constellation of six stars. These six stars were the six themes (purity, spiritual activity, contentment, fervor, discernment, identity). He realized the six themes were a spiritual portrait of the Prophet" and the Prophet was Schuon himself. As a result of this vision Schuon wrote the "Mystery of the Prophetic Substance". This essay, as is more or less true of all of Schuon's writings, is self-referential." In other words the cornerstone of Schuon's spiritual method, the heart of his teachings is really just a subjective delusion, born of his imagination . "

Schuon had Vision of the Virgin in 1965 made him sure he was a great prophet, and was the son of the Virgin Mary. He writes of this vision conclude the that"

"On my way to Morocco in 1965, when I was suffering from asthma and feeling ill to the point of death - owing to causes of a moral order - there occurred... the contact with the Blessed Virgin. This had as its immediate result the almost irresistible urge to be naked like her little child; from this even onwards I went naked as often as possible... A few years later this mystery came upon me again, and it did so in connection with the irresistible awareness that I am not a man like other men."

a central concept, is a fiction, a falsehood, a mystification, based on superstitious, magical thinking and ceremonial sleight of hand. There are no 'authentic' traditions passed down by "initiates", there are merely clubs of people—mostly men's clubs--- who pretend to pass down invisible spiritual 'essences' or states of being to one another. Actually nothing is passed along except nomenclature, superstition, social postures and delusions. Indeed the very idea of "essences" is suspect and muddle-headed. The "essence" of something is merely a fuzzy headed generalization about it--- an obtuse surmise made of vague definitions.

Having participated in Schuon's initiations myself, I can tell the reader that the whole process was pretense and mumbo jumbo, mere ceremony held by men in service of their own conceit. Schuon merely held his hand over my hand and it meant nothing at all. 70 people were there and they all thought it was marvelous, "blessed" someone said, but actually it was utterly meaningless and the whole crowd was deluded, including me. It scarcely mattered that Schuon himself declared himself "Shaykh" based on bogus dreams⁷⁸ and that he had no real "silsalah" or authentic lineage to justify his claim to be a spiritual Master. Even if he had been a direct descendent of Muhammad, Jesus or Buddha themselves, he still would have been a phony. There is no proof that Jesus and Muhammad were actual people or later fabrications. The violent history of the major religions would suggest they were later fabrications .

Initiations are just so much mumbo jumbo, magical thinking erected into a ceremony. There was no spirit for Schuon to give to anyone, it was all smoke and mirrors and the illusion of reality. The notion of "authentic tradition" is based on hearsay fictions and bogus transference of non-existent and virtual "spiritual powers". Guenon was right that religion is based on these initiations,

⁷⁸ There is an existing Dream Book that records the dreams that supposedly proved that Schuon was a spiritual master and all they really prove is the gullibility, delusions and obsessions of some of his followers,. These are merely silly irrational fantasies that suggest nothing so much as the gullibility of Schuon's followers, drugged into guru worship by ceremony, cult machinations and Schuon's wives and functionaries.. This is an absurd book that shows clearly the superstitious and subjective nature of the Schuon cult. Sufi groups of many kinds rely on just such fabrications of dreams an 'visions'.

but he was ignorant of just how bogus his own initiations actually were. Gods who don't exist do not answer prayers.⁷⁹ Zen masters like to beat their students as part of their initiation, rather as College fraternities "haze" their followers. Ceremonies are events where all that takes place is that the participants delude themselves that it means something. Graduating from a university has real meaning if the student has mastered a certain body of real knowledge. A religious initiation is mastery in a vanity.

Like Schuon, Guenon cultured the initiation delusion very carefully all of his life, claiming 'invisible spiritual masters' to bolster his prestige and promote himself. Indeed this is perhaps the central delusion and purpose of his entire work. There will not be written records to document the content of 'initiatic' wisdom. The great claims to wisdom in Guenon Schuon and Evola are really just pathological claims to fake "wisdom". These were sick men claiming to lead a remnant of the world to apocalyptic health.

Like Evola, Guenon viewed these 'counter-initiatory' or "Satanic" forces as real, when, in fact, one man's Satan is another man's god, as Blake showed. Guenon saw gods, demons, and other imaginary forces as existing on many levels, "multiple states so being" of innumerable types, of varied, immaterial forms and varied intelligence. These angels and demons could act through individual human beings. All this is this is paranoid nonsense, adult make believe. There is no satanic force acting through anyone. There are no hierarchy of angels. Gods die, like all illusions.

Guenon is one of the last of the charlatan promoters of Big Myths of the Religions. His attempt to blacken science in his book Reign of Quantity and elsewhere does not stand up to the truth. Religious traditions are undermined by the fact that they are not true and this untruth has been

⁷⁹ In his book God Delusion Dawkins records scientific tests of prayer efficacy and the results showed that prayer does absolutely nothing for people. "there was no difference between those that we prayed for and those that were not". (pg 61-66) IN other words prayer is a waste of time and it would be far better if people did something, anything at all, to get out of negative situations, rather than pray.

demonstrated time and time again. Guenon's contention that Hinduism and its horrendous caste system is incontestably true is absurd. The idea that castes are formed because the moral actions of one's ancestors –their "Karma"---- determined their low or high social standing, has no evidence to back it up whatever. The system of karma and caste was developed to justify and excuse the injustices of the upper classes. These and many other myths promoted by religions are slowly unraveling as people become educated and see through the charade.

Guenon's opposition to science arises from his myopic concern with fake initiations and imaginary counter-initiations, demons and angels, castes and gods. For Guenon only the Immutable is real. There is nothing in the universe that is exempt from change yet Guenon thinks he knows better.⁸⁰ His notion that science is "luciferian" is extremely foolish, bigoted and misguided. It might be worth noting here that Guenon's name, interestingly, is identical to the rare Sub-Saharan monkey called the Guenon, which occurs in various species (Cercopithecus), such as the Red Eared or Moustached Guenon. It is a highly endangered monkey in many places. The opposition of the Traditionalists to the origin of humans in monkey-like animals is thus rather humorous, since the real Guenon is a monkey who evolved from other monkeys and sadly in need of our help. Guenon hated the theory of evolution and rightly feared it, as it undermines all the metaphysical nonsense he believed in. In any case, the theory of evolution has enormous geological and physical evidence. The fossil record is worldwide and grows every year and the recent DNA record grows vast. Everyday facts are discovered that back up the theory of evolution. It is

⁸⁰ In Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power in the chapter called "The Revolt of the Kshatriyas," Guénon writes, "Among almost all peoples and throughout diverse epochs – and with mounting frequency as we approach our times – the wielders of temporal power have tried... to free themselves of all superior authority, claiming to hold their power alone, and so to separate completely the spiritual from the temporal." This is the basis of the caste system erected on a fictional notion of "immutable Being". Violating such a fiction is not wrong at all. But Guenon acts as if a huge crime were committed. The crime for Guenon is to bring charlatan metaphysics into question, which is hardly a crime, indeed, it is a duty.

factual, enormous and intricate theory that is bolstered and proven at every turn and challenge. It is unassailable. Creationism has been proven manifestly false with more evidence pouring in every year against it. Indeed, Creationism has been proven mistaken so many times, it is a wonder anyone brings it up at all.

5.Louis Agassiz, Ananda Coomaraswamy and the Spiritual Fiction of “Virgin Nature”

One of Frithjof Schuon's disciples, John Murray, as well as Schuon himself, both admired the work of the 19th Swiss paleontologist and geologist Louis Agassiz (1807 - 1873) He was an enemy of Darwinism, early on, and believed that nature was god's hierarchical creation, and merely symbolic, and that animals manifested divine ‘Platonic archetypes’. Agassiz thought that nature was composed of a spiritual taxonomic scheme derived from these basic prototypes. He also was a racist of the worst sort and supported the southern Plantation ownership of slaves against the northern abolitionists. Agassiz's ideas were firmly trounced by Darwin, indeed, as Darwin's Sacred Cause shows. Darwin's science defeated all archetypal theories, and this includes such theories as those of Plato, Jung, Guenon and Schuon. The nominalist contention that Plato’s Eidos or Ideas were bogus generalizations was proven by Darwin. Darwin in way is a vindication of William of Occam. Darwinism also defeats decisively both creationism and slavery and all other caste systems point by point. There is no real difference between various races of homo sapiens. We are closely connected to animals. There is no reality to the myth that humans are a species apart from nature. There is no reality to the idea of caste. Caste, Platonistic “essences” and of the feudal ‘estates” all wither. These were forms of economic discrimination that we unjust and rightly condemned.

Following Guenon and inspired by mistaken ideas such as those propounded by Agassiz, Schuon despised science. Schuon imagines, for instance, that “modern science is a totalitarian rationalism that eliminates both

Revelation and Intellect.”⁸¹ Science is indeed triumphant over religion and metaphysics, but otherwise the statement wrong in nearly every word. As I have shown elsewhere “revelation” and the “divine intellect’ are bogus faculties that are arbitrary and imaginary. Science does not eliminate them; it merely pays them no attention because they are empty constructions of superstitious minds. Moreover, science is not even remotely totalitarian. Totalitarianism or “totalism’, by definition, is an arbitrary imposition of authority from above. Science is not authoritarian at all. Indeed if anyone was a totalist, it is Schuon and the transcendental worship of immutability.

The truth is that Schuon was a totalitarian. Totalism of all kinds are the exact opposite of science. Science is doubt generated, careful, evidence based gathering of facts from actual experiments, which can be repeated by others who might falsify or verify the conclusion. There is nothing totalistic about science.

I watched how Schuon acted as a person. His idea of the “Intellect”--- which I discussed with him at length on many occasions---- was nothing more than the arbitrary subjective whim of a man bent on a totalistic ideology and an authoritarian world-view. He felt something in his body or brain and it must be true because the “Intellect” told him. He claimed that he could’ intuit matters far beyond others because his mind opened up to gods, or the esoteric principles behind gods. He was a rather lonely and pathetic old man, intolerant, irascible, and prone to excessive outbursts of anger. Being open to the “heart-intellect” as he called it, is merely being open to one’s own imaginative psychology. Revelation too, is merely a fancy reiteration of the subjective ‘intellect’, erected into a social principle. The fakery of the “Intellect” is well exemplified in the Koran where Muhammad has visions to justify his illicit desires for other men’s wives. Schuon had similar ‘visions’—indeed he was aping Muhammad--- that were merely bogus “revelations”. Schuon imagines that man did not evolve from the wonderful bodies of Chimps and Apes (

⁸¹ Schuon, Light on the Ancient Worlds p117.

actually, Lucy, australopithecus afarensis) but rather came from some undisclosed gaseous invertebrate from outer-space. Schuon writes that

”_Original man was not a simian being barely capable of speaking and standing upright; he was a quasi-immaterial being enclosed in an aura still celestial, but deposited on earth; an aura similar to the "chariot of fire" of Elijah or the "cloud" that enveloped Christ's ascension. That is to say, our conception of the origin of mankind is based on the doctrine of the projection of the archetypes ab intra; thus our position is that of classical emanationism - in the Neoplatonic or gnostic sense of the term - which avoids the pitfall of anthropomorphism while agreeing with the theological conception of creatio ex nihilo. Evolutionism is the very negation of the archetypes and consequently of the divine Intellect; it is therefore the negation of an entire dimension of the real, namely that of form, of the static, of the immutable; concretely speaking, it is as if one wished to make a fabric of the wefts only, omitting the warps.

These very ignorant, fictional fantasies of being “deposited on earth” by some alien god--- are asserted without the slightest proof, as are most of Schuon’s and Guenon’s pronouncements. This is “revelation” via the “intellect”. The dolman of the “Intellect” is negated by facts, Darwinism and science, as is right and good. The Bible, Bhagavad Gita and other religious texts are full of just this sort of nonsense, pronounced in oracular sentences. The notion of the Divine Intellect is bogus as I have shown throughout this book. The notion of man being a “quasi-immaterial being enclosed in an aura still celestial” is delusional fantasy. Nature is nowhere woven of material wefts and invisible “immutable” warps. That too is Schuon’s fantasy. His notion of “vertical and horizontal” realities is merely Euclidean geometry misapplied and abused. His notion of Archetypal form is Neo-Platonist nonsense.

You can see Schuon disdainful repugnance for the actualities of nature

though out his writings. He says for instance that “the evolutionary leap from matter to intelligence is the most arbitrary, the most inconceivable and the most foolish hypothesis possible, “⁸² ---a statement that shows a man who cannot appreciate how lovely it is that a butterfly evolved such beautiful wings or how a chimps deft hands speak of how human dexterity evolved or how bats can echolocate in a way no other animal can, except perhaps the platypus, that sees with its mouth or beak, as it were. Actual experiences of nature are foreign to the traditionalists—except when they “stand before virgin nature” like some dumb and raptured postulant. I saw this when I lived in Bloomington. All these cult followers prattled about “virgin nature” all the time, imitating Schuon, but couldn’t tell a woodpecker from a bat or a maple tree from an oak. Schuon’s own knowledge of nature was pathetic. I asked him what he love din nature and he could not tell me anything specific.

Schuon only likes “virgin nature” as he always calls it, in language that shows he is a throwback to 19th century German and American sexist fictions about young damsel Native American Virgins in natural settings. ⁸³ The idea of “virgin” nature is absurd, sex is a constant activity on earth, and none of it is ‘virgin’. Schuon thought, wrongly, that nature is an “Icon” and knew little or nothing about actual nature. In fact, Schuon’s thought is human centered and demeaning towards animals and nature. Schuon writes that “this inconceivable absurdity, evolutionism,... has the miracle of consciousness springing from a heap of earth or pebbles,” ⁸⁴ Did we come from rocks and stones? What do you see if you through a microscope? I don’t think anyone in the Schuon cult knew much about microscopes or realized that, absolutely, consciousness grew from pebbles and stones. I am proud to have come from

⁸² F. Schuon: "Consequences Flowing from the Mystery of Subjectivity" Studies in Comparative Religion XI, iv, 1977; pp197-198. This is an interesting essay as it shows how Schuon divinizes his subjectivity. Whitall Perry rightly deduced that Schuon’s god was really just the apotheosis or abstracted “Idea” in the Platonic sense of Schuon’s subjectivity. This was true of William James too, as I showed at the beginning of this book--- indeed, religion is really the culture of subjective delusions.

⁸³ This is a common motif in Schuon’s art

⁸⁴ [./ArtInNature_New/knowledge power book/guenon.asp - _ftnref26#_ftnref26](#)Schuon, Divine to the Human, p. 5-6.

earth and rocks, Geology is an amazing science. Notice Schuon's disdain for living soil and hatred of all that is fertile and bedrock on our planet. He denigrates the Cosmos, as all the traditionalists do. They love nature only insofar as it pretends to be a symbol of something else "beyond".

Nature is not symbolic. Of course, earth certainly did not come from a fictional Zeus, Poseidon or Allah, as Schuon dreams. In fact, precisely what is amazing about evolution is that it shows that consciousness did indeed come from pebbles and earth. The genetic unfolding of an organism in the fetus is a bottom-up development. This is a fact that disturbs all those who want nature to be a hierarchy or "great chain of being" with gods at the top. But the fact is that nature and evolution are not a "top-down" hierarchical "blue print" but unfold cell by cell from the inside out in a process sometimes called "self-assembly".⁸⁵ The traditionalist antipathy to biology is due to their ignorance of nature and its operations. Evolution is a self-development of genes and cells into organisms. Ananda Coomaraswamy had it totally wrong when he wrote

Nature, for example in the statement "Art imitates nature in her manner of operation," does not refer to any visible part of our environment; and when Plato says "according to nature," he does not mean "as things behave," but as they should behave, not "sinning against nature." The traditional Nature is Mother Nature, that principle by which things are "natured," by which, for example, a horse is horsy and by which a man is human. Art is an imitation of the nature of things, not of their appearances.

AKC is mistaken. Art is an imitation of reality, not Platonic fictions⁸⁶ and dreamy delusions from the Pre-Raphaelites that so influenced Ananda.

⁸⁵ For more on this see Dawkins, Richard. [The Greatest Show on Earth : The Evidence for Evolution](#)

⁸⁶ Plato's taste in art was awful. Plato hated poetry, particularly that of Homer. What he liked was poetry that praised the state and as AKC says "and what he praised was the canonical art of Egypt in which "these modes (of representation) that are by nature correct had been held for ever sacred."" In other words Plato admired systems of mind control and an art that served the unjustly rich. This is pretty much where the theories of AKC go too. Plato advocates a theofascist poetry not too different to that of Muhammad.

Coomaraswamy was deeply influenced by the utopian nostalgia of John Ruskin and William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement of the 19th century. Ruskin is to a large degree a reactionary Platonist. John Everett Millias was right to question Ruskin, who he said, “theorizes about the vastness of space but looks at a lovely little stream with practical contempt”⁸⁷ There is no reality to the idea that nature is composed of “essences” and “appearances” as Ruskin and AKC thought. These fictitious categories have been undone by science. The sentence that ‘art imitates nature in its workings’ comes from Aquinas, who got it from Aristotle.⁸⁸ as Edward Crooks rightly said, “Aristotle cannot be said, then, to unreservedly support the theology, ontology, or philosophy of mind that Coomaraswamy theorized.”, Nor can Coomaraswamy’s theory of art be trusted to yield anything of value.⁸⁹ Coomaraswamy misunderstood the notion of art and the “imitation of nature and its method of operation”, which is

Poetry tends toward religion, as Nietzsche himself wrote ironically, in his Zarathustra, which is itself a very inflated poem. Nietzsche was aware that poets tend to create divine ‘symbols and symbols are lies about reality. So Poets “all muddle their water that it may seem deep” and what the muddle is about is gods, when there are none. Nietzsche says, “all gods are poet-symbolizations, poet-sophistications.” Yes, that is exactly the problem with poetry; it invents what does not exist and supports this non-existence with exalted speech. It becomes propaganda at same level. Jesus Muhammad, Rumi, Dante, Milton, and Nietzsche all created such symbolizations, false inferences, with the intended to deceive others, like Plato’s ‘noble lie’.. “Poets lie too much”, Nietzsche says. Part of the purpose of this book is to unmask some of these lies. Truth is more important than poetry and is some slight poetry remains after the search for truth, well, that is what has concerned myself in recent years. But this tends to express itself more in art than in language.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Cooper, Suzanne Fagence, Effie, The Passionate Lives of Effie Gray, John Ruskin and John Everett Millias. This is a very interesting book, and an excellent history of Effie and John Millais and the context of their lives.

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⁸⁸ *Ars imitatur naturam in sua operatione*
: ‘art imitates nature in its workings’ (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* [ST],117).

⁸⁹ See

http://york.academia.edu/EdCrooks/Papers/1235766/John_Cages_Entanglement_with_the_Ideas_of_Coomaraswamy

Crooks quotes Partha Mitter (1984: 49-50) who concluded that “Coomaraswamy’s ‘particular metaphysical approach has stood in the way of appreciating the intensely human art of ancient India... The image of Indian art he thus held up was more a mirror to his own soul than to a tradition existing in India’.” Pg 80 There is truth in this. AKC was a narcissist. The metaphysical doctrines of India upheld and justified a truly horrendous social system and that still causing great harms and is slowly being dissolved and reconstructed.

Darwinian and not spiritual. While I like craft and think that technology can be seriously misused, I know AKC was unfortunately skewed by Guenonian thought. When Aristotle was referring to physical and material workings in nature, he was not talking about Platonist or metaphysical dreams, which he denied. Ed Crooks concludes his discussion of Coomaraswamy and John Cage with this accurate statement. "Coomaraswamy's views on Traditional society were a mixture of brahmanic elitism, Catholic hierarchism, and European reaction". Exactly right: AKC is all about caste, dogma and theofascism. The Arts and Crafts movement made some great furniture and architecture, there is no doubt about that, and it helped restore the idea of well-made objects and I admire it for that, but AKC had little to do with that. .

There is nothing hierarchical about nature. Species are responsible for their own evolution. Gods have nothing to do with it. We made ourselves develop over the eons by our striving and reaching for new ways to survive and thrive. That is why the earth is so lovable and earth, sea and sky are so dear, despite the evident chaos and violence. Schuon misses the whole point of the wonder of being alive on earth and the wonder of being related to Chimps and Sea-stars. ⁹⁰ The notion that what is perceived with the senses are merely shadows – not the reality of things, but only their appearances, is nonsense that derives from Plato. Coomaraswamy repeats this nonsense as if were holy writ. In fact, Plato despised nature as a "barbaric slough" and Christian ideology despised nature as "original sin" and without the ridiculous idealizations to which Plato and Coomaraswamy were prone.

⁹⁰ I remember one day when Catherine Schuon had me at their house—as she often did--- to do some gardening and I was clearing a little pathway just outside the back of Schuon's house, between Schuon's and Jones' house--- and I found little seashell in the dirt. This little seashell proves everything Schuon denied. It shows that there were once inland seas 500 miles from the current oceans and that eons have passed since those Devonian or Jurassic ages, and, humorously, Schuon's own land contained on it refutations of his anti-evolutionary ideology. I also found a beautiful iridescent skink on their house, and Mrs. Schuon had never seen one and was scared of it. I told her how lovely and rare they are in the east and told her she was lucky to see it. Once the Schuons found a black snake in their kitchen and claimed it was a sign from heaven that their cult was under threat or some nonsense, Actually it was merely *Pantherophis Obsoletus*, or the common Black Snake which lives all over the Midwest, which looks for cool areas to sleep. These people had little understanding of nature and a ready willingness to believe the most superstitious nonsense.

Mysticism is opposed to nature in its factual and ordinary realities, the realities of evolution that produce cnidarians and harbor porpoises, ungulates and whales, for instance. The traditionalists are mostly ignorant of nature and ignorant of science as are the religions in general. You can see this in mystics like Meister Eckhart who writes that

All creatures are merely nothing...I do not say that they are little or ought: they are nothing. That which has no entity is not. All creatures have no being for their being depends of the presence of God”

This silly willingness to see all nature as nothing—and “god” as all is typical of a mysticism that negates nature in favor of human centered delusions. The mystical traditions from Sufism to Negative Theology and Vedanta to Zen do this. There is no evidence at all that there is such a ‘god” on whom all Porpoises or Golden Tamarinds monkeys depend. The notion of god creating the animals is pure fiction. Animals are not symbols. They are self-existing species whose existence is largely a result of their own struggles and efforts to survive in the larger context of nature. This is not opinion but demonstrable science. Eckhart, with a typical irrationalism so often found in mystics, leaps to the unwarranted conclusion that “creatures” are “nothing” on the basis of a misunderstanding and a surmise. There is no evidence for this. Beings are not “creatures” and defining them as such already presupposes that there is a “Creator”. There is no evidence at all that animals were created by any deity.

No wonder Eckhart was favorite darling of Traditionalists such as Ananda Coomaraswamy and Frithjof Schuon, who also think that nature is “nothing” unless it is seen as merely a symbol of god. Schuon used animals as mere props and symbols. Eagles, Elk and Lions were supposed to be “noble” whereas other animals were of a lower caste or a “lesser archetype” as Schuon said on occasion. Schuon had no understanding of animals in actual environments at

all. All Schuon knew about animals was clichés and conventions, stereotypes and essentializations. In Schuon's various paintings in which animals are present they are merely badly drawn symbols of qualities that his idealized humans (namely FS himself) are supposed to claim as their own. So the 'noble' elk sits on a hill in one of Schuon's works overlooking a nude young woman. The elk is Schuon himself of course, posing as master of the Harem. Schuon thought he looked like an eagle, because of his big nose, which he tried to interpret perhaps too charitably as having raptor like qualities .

6.Darwin's Triumph Over Religion, Speciesism and Anti-Science.

____ Paul Waldau's interesting Specter of Speciesism demonstrates how Buddhism and Christianity view animals as revealed in the language of their primary religious documents. He shows how these two religions participate in the moral error known as speciesism. He suggests that a more complete critical examination of the attitudes towards animals is warranted. This book is merely a rather weak beginning of a comparative critique of how religion has promoted the disparagement, denigration and ill-treatment animals across the millennia. A much deeper history of speciesism is sorely needed. Much more inquiry should be done. Christianity was horrendous in its abusive equation of animals with the body, the body with women and women with evil. This is true of Hinduism too. There is a misperception that because Hinduism protected a few symbolic species like cattle, that it is generous towards animals, but actually Hindu texts are full of speciesism, denigrating animals via notions of karma and reincarnation, --the idea that bad people would be punished by coming back as animals. The same is true of Buddhism. Buddhism upholds compassion as its highest value but excused killing people not Buddhist on the grounds they were "wicked men of wrong views" considered the equivalent of non-human animals".⁹¹ Waldau notes that "the karma notion is built on the

⁹¹ Quoted in Waldau pg. 288

scaffolding of the logically prior notion of a hierarchy”.⁹² This is an understatement. The idea of Karma is a fiction not a “law” that has been built on prejudice that favors humans. The Buddhists create imaginary “levels” where humans are considered in a “privileged state”, beyond compare. There is no logical basis for this elect status and indeed, only human think that this is the case. Darwin shows in Origin of the Species quite clearly that nature has no hierarchy and that evolution happens slowly over time from one species to another. There is no hierarchy of species.

Darwin himself deduced from this that animals should have rights. While he was not a vegetarian, Darwin was committed to protecting animals from cruelty. His biography shows that he regularly came across cases of cruelty to farm animals , One biographer, Janet Browne, says that Darwin was a local magistrate in the Downe House area and he “was inexorable in imposing fines and punishment.” on those who abused animals . Adrian Desmond records similar things in his biography. Darwin’s son Francis Darwin writes of his father that

“The remembrance of screams, or other sounds heard in Brazil, when he was powerless to interfere with what he believed to be the torture of a slave, haunted him for years, especially at night. In smaller matters, where he could interfere, he did so vigorously. He returned one day from his walk pale and faint from having seen a horse ill-used, and from the agitation of violently remonstrating with the man. On another occasion he saw a horse-breaker teaching his son to ride, the little boy was frightened and the man was rough; my father stopped, and jumping out of the carriage reproved the man in no measured terms.”⁹³

Adrian Desmond maintains, with a great deal of evidence, that Darwin’s theory has implications against slavery. Darwin came to understand the evolution is not hierarchical and that slavery is an affront to humanity. He was clearly an advocate for animal rights. Darwin’s relation to animals is much more complex

⁹² Waldau pg. 283

⁹³ <http://thedispersalofdarwin.wordpress.com/category/huxley/>

and nuanced than you indicate. Various writers have said that Darwin favored animal experiments and speciesism. But this is not true. He wanted to limit animal experimentation as much as possible while still preserving the right of science to make relevant and justified inquiries. Darwin went far to do this. Adrian Desmond notes in his books Darwin's Sacred Cause that Darwin was helpful in getting a Bill passed through Parliament called the "Cruelty to Animals Act of 1876" which limited vivisection. Darwin wrote to Joseph Hooker, then-President of the Royal Society,

"I worked all the time in London on the vivisection question . . . The object is to protect animals, and at the same time not to injure Physiology," and he had already enlisted the support of "some half-dozen eminent scientific men."

David Feller notes that "Darwin's attempt to enact legislation to regulate physiological experimentation was the action of an animal advocate attempting to work from within the scientific community."⁹⁴ This is accurate, as Darwin was trying to find a middle way between science and animal rights. The fact that he tried to do this is certainly to his credit and makes me admire him more. Certainly he did not go far enough, as he advocated more killing of animals than he would do if he lived now, but that would be a lot of expect of him to thinks as we do now, at that time. The 19th century may be the most lethal period of animals killing in human history up to that time, though the current advance of killing far surpasses the 19th century.⁹⁵ While Darwin was alive 30-60 million bison were exterminated on the great Plains of America.

⁹⁴ See David Allen Feller "Dog fight: Darwin as animal advocate in the antivivisection controversy of 1875"

http://www.academia.edu/4707358/Dog_fight_Darwin_as_animal_advocate_in_the_antivivisection_controversy_of_1875

⁹⁵ A restaurant called Foster's Bighorn in Rio Vista, California has 300 animal heads, which show well the toxic trophy hunting exploitive mentality of the time. My Dad took me there when I was a kid and I



Bison Bones 1870

Ruthless hunting of Whales, fish like Whitefish, Sturgeon and Lake Trout in the Great Lakes, Beaver, African animals, and birds like Egrets are birds with rare feathers decimated world populations in the service of greed. The feather trade alone did great harm to millions of birds: W.T. Hornaday wrote in out Vanishing Wildlife that:

“From the trackless jungles of New Guinea, round the world both ways to the snow-capped peaks of the Andes, no unprotected bird is safe. The humming-birds of Brazil, the egrets of the world at large, the rare birds of paradise, the toucan, the eagle, the condor and the emu, all are being exterminated to swell the annual profits of the millinery trade. The case

have never forgotten the repulsive killing that was done to create this place. I would like to see animal rights activists shut this place down. Serial killing like this needs to be stopped.

is far more serious than the world at large knows, or even suspects. But for the profits, the birds would be safe; and no unprotected wild species can long escape the hounds of Commerce. “ (W. T. Hornaday 1913)⁹⁶

But Darwin was more on the side of nature’s rights than most at that time and that makes him a person, like Jeremy Bentham, Thoreau or some American feminists in the 19th century who saw that women animals and slaves all are beings and not property to be exploited by men for power or wealth. What needs to be done of course, is that the cult of the CEO must to be stopped and the boards and shareholder system stopped or heavily regulated. Profits should be shared among all the workers and not go to some parasitical CEO who exploits them. People who profit from such systems will wail and cry when this is done, but it has to be done if the earth and its many beings are to survive.

Darwin’s views on nature and animals reverse the trend since Aristotle and the Bible than “Man” is the measure of all things. Darwin concludes that animals and all natural beings are the measure of themselves and do what they can to further all their own kinds. Darwin’s conclusions are really a revolutionary insights that are grounded in scientific fact and not myth. And the end of his life he was clearly trying to explore animal intelligence, and doing so in ways that granted intelligence even to worms and jelly fish. This is a point

⁹⁶ “At the height of “feather fashions” in the UK (around 1901-1910) 14, 362, 000 pounds of exotic feathers were imported into the United Kingdom at a total valuation of £19, 923, 000.[3] A single 1892 order of feathers by a London dealer (either a plumassier or a milliner) included 6,000 bird of paradise, 40,000 hummingbird and 360,000 various East Indian bird feathers. In 1902 an auction in London sold 1,608 30 ounce packages of heron (including the great heron and egret varieties) plumes. Each ounce of plume required the use of four herons, therefore each package used the plumes of 120 herons, for a grand total of 192, 960 herons killed.” Quoted from Murderous Millinery <http://fashioningfeathers.com/murderous-millinery/>

see also Barry Kent MacKay here:

<http://www.animalliberationfront.com/Philosophy/Opinionatedly/FurandFeathers.htm>

of view largely lost to today's science, which is often speciesist in a way Darwin never was.⁹⁷

The hatred of nature and women found in Hindu, Buddhist, Moslem and Christian texts was not part of Darwin's make up. The Pali Canon says that the "enlightened" man is one that can say "I never again will lie in the womb"⁹⁸. Such an idea assumes that both women and nature are repulsive and to be avoided by monks and men like the Buddha. The misogynist fiction in Buddhism is that such men are imagined to be beyond birth. Few women or animals are shown in Mahayana depictions of "Pure Lands". Heaven or "the Pure Land" is a place of male fantasy and is a place of speciesism and misogyny. The truth is that no one is beyond birth and the whole mythology here is rife with hatred of nature and prejudice against animals. Mythologies structure social prejudice and how they do so is still largely unknown. The brain or linguistic structures made necessary by the structure of the brain seem to necessitate myths in the absence of a more thorough education system. Hence the importance of education...

The idea of karma in Buddhism and Hinduism contributes to the horrors of animal abuse that India and China have shown in respect to the illegal animal trade and the treatment of animals in general in those countries. The Chinese have largely wiped out the animals called Saiga, for instance, deer like ungulate of the Mongolian steppe.⁹⁹ 11 species of sharks are endangered due to the Chinese mania for shark fins soup, among other reasons. Technology has given humans lethal means to kill off other species very quickly and a

⁹⁷ See the letters of G.J. Romanes to and from Darwin and Romanes' books on Animal Intelligence and Mental Evolution in Animals., both of which Darwin was aware of and whose point of view had his sympathy. Romanes work is sometime marred by his religious views, but he is worth looking at as he shows clearly how far Darwin was going late in life into the issues around animal intelligence and comparing animals favorably to humans.

⁹⁸ See Pali Canon: Sn 1.2 PTS: Sn 18-34 Dhaniya Sutta: Dhaniya the Cattleman
<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.1.02.than.html>

⁹⁹ Chinese medicine is partly to blame for this extermination even though the horns have no medical value at all. Chinese medicine is a delusional system of remedies and quack diagnoses.

corresponding ethic that in not speciesist has not gained strength enough to stop large scale destruction off habitats and species that live on them.

Christianity is no better than Buddhism or Hinduism in respect of animals. Indeed, the Church Fathers are atrocious in their attitudes toward them. Augustine for instance writes that

Man's nature is midway between angels and beasts in such a way that, if he should remain in subjection to his Lord and with dutiful obedience to his commandments, he will pass into the company of angels, obtaining, with no intervening death, a blissful immortality that has no limit; but if he should make proud and disobedient use of his free will, and go counter to the Lord his God, he was to live like a beast, at the mercy of death, enthralled by lust and doomed to eternal punishment after death.¹⁰⁰

This is a passage so full of delusory thinking that is it hard to disentangle. There are no angels and the allusions to heaven and hell are obviously meant to threaten. The prejudice against animals is reprehensible and undeserved, like a racism applied to species, hence a speciesism. Animals are placed in a constructed set of delusory inventions that are meant to control minds and hold them in subjection. Indeed the whole of the passage is primarily concerned with subjection. The main concern of much of Augustine is justifying the unjust power of the Church's in his City of God. He writes that

¹⁰⁰ Quoted from Augustine's City of God, 12:22? in Waldau, Specter of Speciesism, sent to me by the author. Waldau has a whole chapter, "Other Animals in the Christian Tradition" on Church fathers and their rather atrocious attitudes toward animals. The same abusive comments about animals can be found I the Philokalia and elsewhere in Clement of Alexandria, Iranaeus, Justin Martyr and many early Christian writers. In the Philokalia for instance, animals are nearly always referred to as being equivalent to "corrupt animal body" or being 'passionate" like and animal. The equation of animals with evil, the corrupt and the shameful body are legion in Christian texts. All this is false. The notion that Christians have soul that is superior to animals is ridiculous. These attitudes have led to whole sale slaughter of animals. .

"Christ himself shows that to refrain from the killing of animals and the destroying of plants is the height of superstition, for judging that there is no common rights between us and the beasts and trees, he sent devils into a herd of swine and with a curse withered the tree on which he found no fruit.." ¹⁰¹

Augustine foolishly draws moral teachings from the superstitious fictions of the Bible, when in fact they are self-serving stories. The Christian hatred of animals has its roots in this sort of fiction.

Aquinas says similar things about animals. He says that "animals are ordered to man's use in the natural course of things...Consequently, man uses them without any injustice, either by killing them or by employing them in any other way."¹⁰² This willingness to cause suffering to non-human species is very disturbing. Such a passage must have appealed to Descartes, who was also cruel to animals.

In any case, another writer Val Plumwood also discusses the fact that traditional metaphysical and religious systems like Platonism (and Hinduism by implication) tend toward an extreme sexism and speciesist denigration of women, as well as prejudice against animals, the body and nature. Plumwood goes deeper than Waldau, who is too religious in his sensibility and thus excuses religions for some pretty horrible practices. Plumwood writes about patriarchal metaphysics in her excellent Feminism and the Mastery of Nature.¹⁰³ My conclusion is that sexism, misogyny, speciesism and prejudice against lower classes, nature and animals generalize across all the major religions: Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Confucianism and others. This

¹⁰¹ Augustine *The Catholic and Manichaean Ways of Life* (The Fathers of the Church, Volume 56. Chapter 17 part 54.

¹⁰² Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 111 pt. 2, 112.

¹⁰³ Another book that addresses the abusive attitudes toward animals common in western culture is John Livingston's Rogue Primate and his excellent attack on conservation biology The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation. See also the work of Carolyn Merchant for yet another eco-feminist perspective. Science needs to be as open about itself insofar as real evidence can ring some of its basic assumptions into question. I think Plumwood and Livingston are right that science has been all too willing to be subservient to a male dominating and patriarchal perspective.

confirms earlier research I did in the 1990's on symbol systems in general.

Then I wrote:

“Symbol systems and belief systems are generated out of human needs and aspirations. What is believed in is not the important question. The important question is why it is believed. Why is there a need to believe in something? Belief, seen this way is nearly synonymous with desire. One creates and sustains beliefs out of need and compensatory drives. One must dismantle symbols and ideas into their motives and intentions. One does not want to suffer: therefor one believes or helps create and sustain the idea of an abstract and symbolic ‘god’ who is merciful and comforting. One does not want to die, therefore one's ‘god’ is immortal or one seeks fame and certain, total knowledge. One does not want to be betrayed by others, so ‘god’ is the 'Loving Friend', the Beloved, the faithful. One does not want to be weak and ignorant so the god one creates and sustains, or the god one inherits is all knowing and all powerful.....The desires that motivate abstract symbols systems can be altered, modified, negotiated or changed. The symbols and institutions that sustain them are less changeable and easily turn into hardened sources of injustice, repression and cold indifference. The eternal realm of ideas is imaginary, but cultures have invested this realm with reality, usually by force of violence. Those who do not accept the forced imposition of systems of belief tend to be harassed or killed. Believers in symbols systems tend to demonize those that question the source of their power. Knowledge systems and the power they provide to individuals distorts these individuals beyond their ordinarily human state, creating personages of them they could never have been by themselves. Knowledge systems magnify individuals through institutions and the institutions generate far more destruction than would have been possible for a single individual. The value of human rights is that it is individual, concrete and resists the tendency of belief systems to become hardened

into abstractions and institutions that encourage and magnify the commission of injustices.”

However, I came to realize that this analysis is not complete. The question of human rights leaves out how humans treat nature and animals. Judith Butler notes that feminists rejected the idea that biology is destiny, but then developed an account of patriarchal culture which assumed that masculine and feminine genders would inevitably be built, by culture, upon 'male' and 'female' bodies. She goes too far to reject male and female bodies as real categories, since these principles interact everywhere in nature, sometimes even in the same being. Some eels for instance turn from males into female as they get older. Male and female still exist even if they change. Butler is certainly right that there is heavy cultural conditioning, on this matter, but wrong to think that gender is not a natural fact. But that said, Plumwood goes deeper and notes that the same ideological, symbolic and economic systems that harm humans also harm animals and nature. The critique of systems of knowledge and power that is at the basis of human rights concerns must be extended to include a concern with animals and nature. Darwinism goes beyond the superficial humanism of Foucaultian analysis and cuts through all this metaphysical prejudice and bigotry and liberates us to pursue the search for truth about nature within the context of an ethical understanding of the world and the mind. Darwin's evolutionary theory implies both a radical rejection of religious and institutional dogmatism and a continuity between all species and habitats. Human rights and natures' right are joined in an enlightened Darwinism.

The anti-science movement was already lively in Rousseau. He thought that science was a sinister power, and that 'savage man' was more moral than a society full of art and sciences. Rousseau claimed that science was a destructive influence and civilization was harmful to human beings. This absurd view was not too far from other anti-science thinkers such as De Maistre who thought that a return to the inquisition and the moral dogmatism

of the Middle Ages was a good thing. The claim that science or atheism leads to immorality has been soundly trounced by Dawkins, Harris and others, so I will not answer that here.

Guenon's ideas grow directly and indirectly out of reactionaries like Rousseau and De Maistre. Guenon's ideas are the basis of most of the absurdities written by the Traditionalists about evolution. The traditionalists, uniformly and with no originality, claim that is that the "the greater cannot come from the less", meaning that the human notion of god cannot have come from earth and cells. This is false, since in fact the monotheistic idea of a god is merely a few thousand years old and is only held by certain kinds of cultures that have certain kinds of hierarchical, patriarchal and unjust social arrangements. The god idea is a minor construction in the history of the human race. Darwin said that the "love of the deity is an effect of the organization of the brain" and this may be exactly right, as anomalies in the brain's structure appear to have enabled humans to express themselves through language.¹⁰⁴ Religion is at least partly a result of the peculiar linguistic fact of words being easily merged as abstract concepts and generalized into a magnified artificial mental space without much testing against reality. How language works in the brain and how it evolved is still largely unknown. Gods

¹⁰⁴ Those who hate Darwin like to quote this as if he said something bad. But actually the brain is a marvel that is still little understood. The British brain surgeon Henry Marsh aid that the brain is "a mystery,..., as great as the stars at night and the universe around us". This is not a mystical statement but an objective one.

The Greeks and Romans gathered some knowledge of the human body, but it was not till only 500 years ago that people started grasping elementary things about how the body/brain works. Leonardo was one of the first. Evolution made us rather dense when it comes to our own bodies. Religion deserves much blame for preventing inquiry about this. Much of what goes on in us is largely unknown to us. This fact explains why people have such weird and false ideas about the importance of human subjectivity and create bizarre and largely false notions of Chakra's, Galen's "Humors", or the Chinese notions of Chi (Qi) meridians or Channels. These superstitious ideas dominated medicine for millennia. While Taoists or New Agers still believe this nonsense, there is no doubt it is nonsense. Now that they are supplanted, we begin to grasp that the mind is the brain and that the complex relation fo mind and body is still only in its infancy as knowledge. The understanding of animal bodies is also in its infancy, though it is clear that we have much more in common with them than we knew until recently, as the speciesism inherent in religion and science have permitted to understand. Chinese medicine has helped decimate animals populations like the Saiga, the Sun Bear, Sharks and many others.

appear to be partly the result of the magnified confusions of language misunderstood.¹⁰⁵ Gods are a kind of mental slippage, or an illusion created by the abstract character of linguistic vagueness and over generality. Human pour their emotions into the empty symbols as if they were real.

Therefore, Guenon was wrong, the god idea is not “greater” than the facts of evolution. On the contrary, the god idea is a created fiction, serviceable to certain sorts of social arrangements—it is just an infinitesimal part of evolution if it is part of it at all, strictly speaking. It is merely a cultural fiction created to sustain certain types of societies in certain settings. The fossil and DNA record is increasingly clear on the origin of species. It is very exciting each time new bones are discovered in the Rift valley or elsewhere in Africa or New dinosaur birds re discovered in China or another continent ¹⁰⁶ The Traditionalists absurd writings on evolution ultimately underscore the shallow anti-intellectuality of the Traditionalists and their inability to understand or be open to direct evidence.

In Reign of Quantity Guenon bases his understanding of nature on the arcane Scholastic idea of essence. He says that

¹⁰⁵ A lot of religion results from the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. For instance the idea of being refers to mere existence which we all possess, worm to man. But Being, as such, is an abstract idea, which doesn't actually exist, but the concept seems real, because we can think it. Actually it is merely a fiction created by abstracting the idea of existing from the beings that actually do exist. Existence is not an actuality but merely an abstract concept. There is no such things as “Being” in an abstract sense,, there are only beings who exist. Religions grow partly form just this sort of confusion. Heidegger in particular thrives on the confusion of Being and beings. But even the bible is full of this sort of nonsense as when god defines himself to Moses and says that “ I Am That I Am” this notion that being is its own justification and causes its own existence is ludicrous. The whole of Judeo Christian metaphysics stems from this play on concepts and words. Religions get created by just this sort of abstraction inherent in misunderstood language.

¹⁰⁶ There are thousands of such “missing links” that turn up frequently. Recent examples are the amazing early bird/reptile fossils found in China. Hans Thewissen has identified a series of intermediate fossil ‘links’ documenting whale’s dramatic evolutionary transition from land to sea. The Cleveland Museum of Natural History recently discovered another link in the chain of early apes between chimps and homo sapiens. There was Ardi who is 4.4 million years ago and then Khadanoomoo, who was 3.6 million years ago. There are other australopithicus afarensis fossilized bones that have been found. These exciting areas in modern biology and paleontology, but there are untold areas of other sorts of research opening up new and expanding areas for science all the time.

“the explanation of things must proceedfrom the essential side [of things]... this is equivalent to saying that every explanation must proceed from above downwards and not from below upwards and this observation has special relevance at this point, for it immediately give the reason why modern science actually lacks all explanatory value”

What Guenon is really saying here is that he is on a witch hunt against Darwin, as are all the traditionalists. He is saying any truth about reality must be dictated by dogma, by theology and metaphysics, and physical evidence, science (“from below”) must be ignored or rejected. The ‘spatial symbolism’ employed here is bogus. The idea of below and above are fictitious. The notion of a “vertical” hierarchy of values, an up and down to reality is purely imaginary. There is no god “up there” nor is the physical world ‘down there’. All that is adult make believe. Up there is our sun and the milky way out to Andromeda galaxy and Quasars. “Down there” is our earth, fertile top soil, generous plants, the mantle, plate tectonics, paramecia and our beloved earth.

So the followers of Guenon go on repeating his nonsense as if it actually said something real, when he merely fudged and fiddled with words to create a charlatan’s view of reality. Hossein Nasr has written that “an 'ism' of great danger to Islam... is Darwinism,”. Yes, Darwin has already defeated Nasr and Islam. Nasr and his son Vali, who thinks the same nonsense, just have not figured it out yet. Science has been invading Islamic countries for some time and they are allowing experiments, free thought and open inquiry. I am not sure about conservatives in the medieval schools of Qum, Cairo and Mecca, where the clerics reign. Many appear to be quite reactionary. Yet, staunchly backwards, Hossein Nasr, a fearful and defensive author, defends Islamic creationism by saying

"let me say at the beginning that I have studied not only physics but also geology and paleontology at Harvard, and so it is with this background that I reject the ordinary understanding of the Darwinian theory of evolution even on scientific grounds. "

This is just means he has not studied it, actually. He misunderstood it. Nasr merely shows what an ignoramus he is about physics geology and paleontology, and Darwin. His writings show he just did not learn much of anything in his studies. He is another one on a witch-hunt against Darwin and science. Nasr once told me on the phone that he is a man "on a mountain top", and that he understands things most people do not. Yeah, right. In fact, he is a man on a tiny mountain in a deep abysmal chasm of pretence among other blustering poseurs. Nasr understands very little. He believes in the discredited ideology or "intelligent design". Nasr has no idea what he is talking about and merely mouths the same defeated creationism that all the traditionalists parrot back and forth to each other. Darwin himself rejected Intelligent design when he wrote

"The old argument of design in nature, as given by Paley, which formerly seemed to me so conclusive, fails, now that the law of natural selection had been discovered. We can no longer argue that, for instance, the beautiful hinge of a bivalve shell must have been made by an intelligent being, like the hinge of a door by man. There seems to be no more design in the variability of organic beings and in the action of natural selection, than in the course which the wind blows. Everything in nature is the result of fixed laws.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin pg 87*

None of the traditionalists has any real knowledge of nature, biological science or evolution, I got to know these men pretty well, and they don't know much about evolution at all, they merely puff themselves up and repeat dogmatic arguments that stem from Plato, Guenon, Schuon, Agassiz and others. Martin Lings for instance utters the incredibly ignorant statement that it is almost "certain that man did not evolve from some lower animal." ¹⁰⁸ I knew Lings well enough to know that he had no scientific education or understanding at all. Rama Coomaraswamy writes in the same ignorant vein, indeed all these writers write the same nonsense over and over, repeating each other's falsehoods: Rama writes:

"Evolution is of course quite absurd from both the scientific and philosophical viewpoint. From the scientific viewpoint: not only is there absolutely no proof in favor of evolution, but all the evidence is against it. Geology, biology, mathematics, genetics and all the other scientific disciplines speak to the fixity of the species, the impossibility of chance and the absurdity of transformism. No intermediary forms between species has ever been found. There is much talk of "missing links." The problem with missing links is that they are missing! To believe in evolution is to believe that the greater can come out of the less" ¹⁰⁹

The ignorance of these statements is really staggering. Not only are there incredibly amounts of evidence for the origin of the human species in animals, there is more and more every year. There are thousands of "intermediate" species, more found all the time, so the notion of "missing links" is really just a

¹⁰⁸ [The Transformist Illusion](#) by Douglas Dewar. Review by Martin Lings. Lings approved of the discredited ideas of Dewar as do most of the traditionalists.

http://www.studiesincomparativereligion.com/Public/articles/review_of-The_Transformist_Illusion.aspx Book Reviews

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.the-pope.com/tracultc.html>

misunderstanding that the fossil record, in fact, is more and more complete every year. There are the amazing finds of new dinosaur fossils in China, which prove birds came from dinosaurs. Just a few years ago, in 2011 paleontologists turned up, Ardi, a common ancestor linking humans and apes. She is 4.4million years old. The work of Dr. Hans Thewissen on whales is quite extraordinary too. He has found many links in the tree leading to whales of Pakicetus to Ambulocetus and Sperm Whales. There is amazing proof here. One need only look at the evolving back legs of whales to see that indeed they were once land animals. The back legs become useless and detach from the spine over millions of years of fossils and still exist as relics inside contemporary whales. I found in none of these traditionalists any real understating of plants or animals or any deep understanding of the sciences. They oppose what they do not understand and write about it with uniform and dogmatic ignorance.

Religion is still alive, but only in the sense that delusions still live in one who is insane. Zaiuddin Sardar has written that religion has been largely superseded by science and that the altercations between science and religion is

“ not merely philosophical debates; these are real-life issues forcing human beings to make choices which affect the most fundamental aspects of existence.”... “Modern science has created a belief system in which there is no room for the Divine. This belief system comes with its own values and ethics and attempts of create a Weltanschauung parallel to and in competition with the religious worldview.”

But this shows a deep misunderstanding of the facts.. Science is not merely a “belief system” and science and religion are not at all “parallel”. If science is white, and religion is black, it is not at all a matter or seeing things in too black and white terms, but in the fact that religion is merely an absence of light,

ironically, there is no reality there. So there is only white and the absence of white. Religion cannot possibly compete with science on any subject. Sardar is too ambiguous about science. For him, evidently, science is not an objective phenomenon or activity but a cultural activity.¹¹⁰ He still wants to make science comply with the Koran, which it will never do and be real. He is still implying religion has some ultimate reality when it does not. He tries to lessen the facts of science, which are not merely subjective “beliefs”. Science is objective in most of its operations and facts gathering. Sure science makes mistakes and is incomplete, but this is because it is an ongoing investigation, not a dogma or a finished thing. This the beauty of it. The attempt to defend religion is bound to fail, whatever quarter it comes from. The only justification for religion that has some credence is the notion that some people find comfort in the delusions, this is true, they do. Religion supplies a certain opiate comfort. This cannot be denied, but in that case, religious books should be sold at the pharmacy and not taught to college kids, except as part of myth and fiction.

There are various anti-science screeds by the traditionalists: besides Wolfgang Smith’s, Cosmos and Transcendence as well as his Teilhardism and the New Religions, and his more recent The Wisdom of Ancient Cosmology there are these: Titus Burckhardt’s essay "Traditional Cosmology and the Modern World" Guenon’s essay "Sacred and Profane Science" as well as his Reign of Quantity, Martin Ling’s Ancient Beliefs Modern Superstitions as well as writings by Schuon, Whitall Perry and Seyyed Hossien Nasr. All these men, (yes, all men, no women) have all written absurd, silly and empty denials of evolution, all of them making more or less the same discredited claims as Dewar, indeed, most of them inspired by Dewar. They all pretend to show how traditional ("sacred") science tied its knowledge to a ‘higher spiritual reality’---

¹¹⁰ Stephen Jay Gould took a similar position. Gould was an evolutionist, but at the same time he honored religion. His essay “Non-overlapping Magisteria” suggests that his Darwinian understanding of biology is very weak. It is hard to imagine how he came to that conclusion, Also, in the end I think this ambiguous equivocation may have made his science likewise questionable. I speak more of this in an essay called “Chomsky’s Cartesian Speciesism”.

which does not exist and which required priests to administer. Guenon sums up their case when he says

"Modern science, arising out of an arbitrary limitation of knowledge within a certain particular order which is indeed the most inferior of all, namely that of material or sensible reality, has as a consequence forfeited all intellectual value, so long that is to say as one uses the word intellectuality in all the fullness of its true meaning and refuses to participate in the 'rationalist' error, or to reject intellectual intuition, which amounts to the same thing."

First look at the language. It is easy to unpack. This is typical Guenon. The phrase "within a certain particular order" is gobbledygook. It means, in his lexicon, that there are other states of being, angels, gods and so on up to "Beyond Being" – but all this make believe is left out, and Guenon doesn't have to explain it: his followers accept this nonsense. He is really talking about the inventions of superstitious minds, which he rides his thought on as if on a roller coaster of mind made delusions. But angels, 'Beyond Being' and Guenon's other "multiple states" are all fiction, yet Guenon always speaks as if such nonsense were fact when in fact it is – well---let's call it gobbledygook.

Now, next look at the use of the word "inferior". What he is saying is that the sensible order – that is your life, your mother, your eyes, your children, your earth, home, even the trees in your back yard and the food you eat—indeed, everything that really matters ---is less than the order of gobbledygook. He is saying that all that you are, and all your children are and the world you live in, is based on this utterly empty, elitist and world-demeaning gobbledygook. What matters he says is the fiction making "Intellect" which no one has proven exists and which is merely a postulate of the superstitious mind. He concludes that "modern science.... has as a consequence forfeited all intellectual value". Excuse me? "Intellectual value" here means the value of

gobbledygook.

Science has merely forfeited Guenon's delusional use of his mind. And thank goodness for that...Science has striven to help human lives, and has done more than any knowledge system to help human life, ever. There has been no progress of any real value on earth that did not have its origin in some sort of science like basis in inquiry and experience. What did Guenon do to help anyone? Nothing at all....He sat in Cairo destroying the world in his heated and paranoid imaginings. His whole argument against evolution is based on bad logic and false premises!

...Guenon's hatred of the sensible and material is of course the source of the misogyny that visits all the traditionalists in varying degrees. For them women are 'matter' as opposed to "form"—they take Plato's archaic archetypal ideas seriously. The dislike of the earth and prejudice in favor of vague "intellectual intuition"¹¹¹ makes the traditionalists into mystical romantics. Bent of plying their esoteric ware as if it were reality when in fact it is merely fiction. If you carefully follow out their arguments you find that they have nothing with which to replace science. Schuon tries to replace science with his penis, which was supposed to "heal the wombs" whatever that means. They were not wounded, to begin with. Rama Coomaraswamy wanted to replace science with little white Catholic wafers that are not even nutritionally useful. A lot of good that has ever done humanity. Guenon thought you should escape into an orthodox religion and let your mind atrophy in constant prayer.

They argue in favor of things that don't exist or are merely imaginary and do so in the most pompous possible language. I noticed Rama's absurd obsessions with evil and exorcism early in 1991 and realized he was kooky and

¹¹¹ I studied this concept at great length in the person of Schuon and other traditionalists and determined finally that what they mean by this is arbitrary subjectivity. The "intellect" in their parlance is really just the "Imaginal" fiction (to use Corbin's term) of being receptive to what in fact is merely a sub-consciousness. What they call "metaphysics" is really just narcissistic imagination projected into hierarchies and systematic cosmological schemes. You can see this in all their works. Schuon's primordial gatherings were attempts to imitate the revolving of planets with Schuon as the 'sun center'. This is what happens when you combine irrational 'esoteric' Perennialism, with misunderstandings of real science.

abused his education in psychology with all sorts of superstitious nonsense. They want you to pray orthodox prayers, and go to ceremonies, Temples, Churches and Mosques and do other magical things that are all based on superstitions and fictions. Rama believed Schuon was evil. He was not a good man certainly but evil is also a fiction, whereas will to power or pedophilia, both of which Schuon were involved in, is not fiction.

The traditionalists arguments purported to defeat science are basically the same as the failed arguments of the creationists which have been refuted thoroughly by many people. Ernst Mayr, Stephen Jay Gould, Richard Dawkins, Darwin, Einstein, Pasteur, Hooke, Halley, Christian Barnard, Stephen Hawking or many others has written, discovered, opened up new cures, pushed back the curtain of fear and mystery and revealed to us evolution, physics, the human body, DNA, Plate Tectonics the Milky way and so much else. Over 9000 birds species all over the earth have been extensively studied an many preserved against extinction. Herbaria exist in museums with hundreds of thousands of plants to be studied and learned form. None of the traditionalists have done anything at all compared to all that science has done. None of the traditionalists have anything even remotely plausible to say against the facts of science or its promise for more understanding of our earth and universe, including ourselves. None of the Traditionalists know much about the actual facts of nature or the evolutionary record, vast areas which have proven to be the most fertile areas of research in the last few centuries. None of them have understood the slightest bit about comparative anatomy of species, the derivation of one species form another by natural selection, the adaptations that bring about evolutionary change or the endless and amazing libraries of evidence that prove evolution. The scientific record prospers and becomes more extensive and more complete every day, whereas the advances of traditional ideology stagnate and decay into cults and backward publishing companies run by bitter and destructively small minds, furiously writing

essays , posting their junk onto Wikipedia to try to turn back the tide and return us to the Dark Ages. ¹¹²

7. Wolfgang Smith and the Creationist Delusion

I think of all the traditionalists writers the one that summarizes all the nonsense written by them about science ---even he even goes beyond them into the dark recesses of the Post-modern, fundamentalist and or creationist muddle-headedness ---is Wolfgang Smith. So I'll spend a good deal of the rest of this essay discussing him. Most of what I say about Smith ideas about science is also true of Schuon. Nasr, Lings and Guenon's ideas on science.

Wolfgang Smith was a mathematician as well as an extreme right wing Catholic. Last time I talked to him, nearly 20 years ago now he was going to move to Coeur D'Alene Idaho in an effort to live near a monastic catholic environment where they do archaic catholic rituals, which Smith thought were alone valid. Not sure if he did that. Rama Coomaraswamy told me a few years back that Smith lives in Camarillo Ca. In 2004 Smith gave \$300. 00 to the Republican party, at a time when it had already been shown that Bush lied about WMD's, had tortured thousands of people in secret prisons and killed thousands upon thousands in a horrible war that was mostly about oil. ¹¹³ Smith shows himself in this action to be true to form, as all the traditionalists line up with far right or quasi-fascist governments. Bush was a neo-fascist of a

¹¹² A typical example of the ignorance propounded by the traditionalists is this idea by Harry Oldmeadow and Australian disciple of Schuon. He writes "The Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment were all incubators of ideas and values which first ravaged Christendom and then spread throughout the world like so many bacilli." Actually we only know about the taxonomic order Bacilli because of science and the theory of evolution in addition to the Renaissance and Enlightenment. The discovery of germs and the disease they have produced has saved many millions. Oldmeadow would rather them dead evidently and call the Renaissance a baccilli instead. I have doubts a man this ignorant should be allowed to teach children. Great scientists like Robert Hooke 1635 –1703 who discovered cells or Anton von Leuwenhoek 1632 – 1723 who developed the microscope and discovered bacteria among other things. Both of these were amazing men and did for more for humanity than Guenon of any of the followers will ever do. It is often staggers me how ignorant and pompous these men can be <http://religioperennis.org/documents/Oldmeadow/Critiques.pdf>

¹¹³ <http://www.city-data.com/elec/elec-CAMARILLO-CA.html>

sort and used war, torture and racism as part of his policies, which invariably served the ultra-rich, far-right religion and a corrupt financial sector of banks and corporations that harm people with wild speculations .

In any case, Smith struck me in my many conversations with him as clearly more interested in religious ritual in a fundamentalist sort of way and hated science. Dogma and ritual performance were put prior to evidence. Smith's Catholicism, devoted to the thesis that the current catholic church is a fraud and various fringe cults on the perimeter of the church, such as the Society of St. Pius X,¹¹⁴ are the "real" church. He was also a devotee of the writing of Eric Voegelin, another far right Catholic, whose philosophy echoes Guenon in that he was also an extremist who condemns the entire world after the Enlightenment. Voegelin says he wished to create a "philosophical framework that reconciled [the] Roman Catholic faith with [. . .] conservative politics."¹¹⁵ These are a part of a crowd of rare intellectuals devoted to ideas of utter backwardness and lacking all evidence in their favor.

The blurb about Smith that appears on all of his books calls Smith a scientist: it is usually quoted that Smith was a prodigy, graduated very young,

¹¹⁴ The Society of St. Pius the X (SSPX) is a far right catholic movement founded by Marcel Lefebvre. Smith liked this group. Rama Coomaraswamy liked the SSPV, which is even more reactionary. They believe that the Church after Vatican 2 in 1963 ceased to be a valid church because they changed the mass and become more democratic. They have monarchist leanings and wish to return to the Church of Innocent the III if possible. Obsessed with evil and hating all things modern, they are virulent, nostalgic and consider everything not totally orthodox to be evil. They have been accused of anti-Semitism.. Lefebvre approval or support for a restoration of an absolutist French monarchy, the Vichy government (1940–1944), and the party of Jean-Marie le Pen. This makes the traditionalist church a neo fascist organization, more or less. The SSPV is even worse, in my opinion.

¹¹⁵ Voegelin is the opposite of Arthur Versluis, in that he hated the gnosticism that Versluis loves. Voegelin saw similarities between ancient Gnosticism and modernist political theories, particularly Marxism and Nazism. The root of the "gnostic alienation from the cosmos", as he called it, results in the gnostics believing that "the world and humanity can be fundamentally transformed and perfected through the intervention of a chosen group of people (an elite), a man-god, or men-Gods" (Wikipedia) Voegelin thinks only that Catholic Church can save us of course. He created a religious and biased history that is part ideology. He is a Platonist as one would expect. See his multi volume Order and History"

went to Cornell, got a PHD in math and did work in aerodynamics and “helped lay groundwork for the reentry problem” ---but that appears to have been long, long ago. I can't locate very much work by him in science except a few mathematical texts mostly done in the 1960's, with a few as late as 1980. So it appears that his reputation as a scientist is over-drawn as regards the early part of his career. His abilities as a scientist appear to have failed him quite early, if they existed at all. He has a Master's in physics and PHD in Mathematics, which means he knows a lot about math but, judging by his writings, not very much about science and virtually nothing about biology. This is unfortunate and quantum mechanics already shows many problems that are due to it being too mathematical and many things not yet proven to be real in fact. Math on its own is not reality, or nature, and to pretend it is to misunderstand science. Smith was not a good critical source for science because he just did not know enough. The man who I got to know was mostly interested in hating science and researching arcane spiritual subjects from Aquinas to Abbe Stephan. His point of view was really with the creationists, and he misunderstood science.

He doesn't know nearly what he claims to know. He was a bit of a child prodigy and thought we would do well in science. He didn't do as well as he hoped, judging by his academic record. What I suspect is that he grew bitter about science because he did not become famous. The traditionalists offered him instant 'gnosis' and a sort of sneering elitism which compensated him for his failure elsewhere. The knowledge Perennialism offers is knowledge of a bogus kind, but of a kind that seems real to those that are in the cultish atmosphere around Schuon or Nasr. Smith's attachment to far-right Catholicism also gave him a sense of his imaginary superiority and made him feel part of the 'remnant of the chosen ones'. In any case, no one who really studied science deeply, understood its method or grasped the necessity of falsification, criticism and rationality could possibly write the stuff Smith has written about evolution and physics. He is no scientist. Whatever education he once had has long ago fallen by the wayside, was forgotten, or was ill learned to

begin with. Indeed, in conversations with him he expressed deep disdain for the academic world. He was a very pompous and affected man, certain of his genius. He has not understood science nor exposed himself to evidence or countervailing views. If he was once scientist, he has forgotten nearly all of what he learned.

I visited Wolfgang Smith several times at his home near Corvallis, Oregon. I saw him once too visiting Schuon in Bloomington, at a Majalis, where he came to talk to Schuon about science and he was unimpressed with his ideas. He saw Schuon enter into the majlis ceremony with his usual pompous nose in the air, acting the part of the imperious prophet of the religio perennis. All of Schuon's motions in public setting had the attitude of poses and pretenses. I saw Smith sitting near me, not in Muslim dress as I was (jalaba and turban--- Schuon insisted we dress like Algerian Sufis, which was silly). He was visibly moved by all the ceremony and theatre.

Smith now lives down near Los Angeles in Camarillo. When I visited Smith in Oregon before I joined the Schuon cult and then again after I left it, he had rather a bunker mentality and had a locked the gate and the bottom of his property fearful lest anyone get into his property--- I had to meet him at the gate at a certain time and felt I was entering a sort of compound. The road was completely hidden from the house and he lived there in irrational fear someone was going to rob him. He was a recluse of sorts and so was his wife. His office in the house had a huge oak desk that very thick and rather pompous. Behind where he sat at the desk where the collected works of Guenon all rebound in expensive black leather with gold or white letters. It made Guenon's esoteric tomes look strangely sinister, as of course, they are, not in any literal way, but because they had such a power to convince delicate minds with delusions. He was reading far- right Catholics like Abbe Henri Stephane(a Guenoniste). He is a man of high erudition who uses his knowledge in service of delusions. This gives him a certain authority when he speaks or writes, but if you examine what he writes closely , it is really a bunch of medieval hogwash, to speak

plainly. His best work is medieval and he has been able to enter into the medieval mentality like a modernist monk, imitating its pretensions and fictions almost flawlessly.

I was reminded, when talking with Smith of Victor Hugo's great character in Notre Dame Claude Frollo - arch deacon or priest at Notre Dame, Frollo is also the novel's antagonist, but he not a typical evil character bent on causing pain and suffering. Instead, like Dr. Smith, he is very bright and compassionate. But Frollo is attracted to elitist, esoteric magic and descends into madness and religious hypocrisy. Guenon has something of Frollo about him too-- something Faustian, something rigorously French and rational like Descartes, but without Descartes' sanity and balanced mind. In Guenon Cartesian reason joins with paranoid mania and issues in a geometric obsession with universal conspiracies. In Smith's case, there is a frustrated Church Father in him, a patriarchal elitist who wants to dictate reality to others. He is utterly convinced that his Medieval Dogmas are the TRUTH, capital T.

When I finally read his attacks on Darwin, I realized this man has no real understanding of biology at all. It is embarrassing to see how little he actually knows and the people believe him because he seems to know what he is talking about. He wrote some reactionary and inaccurate things about the theory of evolution, based on 1930's creationism. Smith's distorted and false ideas about evolution, are mere dressed up restatements of creationist doctrine. Smith's abilities as a biologist are non-existent, He had no grasp of the of the vast array of evolutionary evidence. Had he studied the evidence he would have learned that many of the so called "missing links" in the theory of evolution are no longer missing. He would also have learned that there is virtually no evidence for the theory of creationism of so called "intelligent design". All of the traditionalists base their criticism of the theory of evolution on the idea that the "lesser cannot come from the greater" meaning that their idea of god is greater than nature, so therefore god comes before nature. "There is no reason to

admire a science that counts insects and atoms but is ignorant of God”, Schuon writes in the same vein. ¹¹⁶ No scientist counts insects unless they are doing population studies, as was done by the great entomologist E.O Wilson. Such studies are very useful and important in a world where many species are threatened.

In any case, the logic of the traditionalists is sophistic logic, of course. The god idea is a constructed thing, not a fact like dinosaur bones. Religion and gods are lesser than physical reality and evolution. The symbolist view of reality is dead. Dinosaur bones are much older than any idea of gods or any abstract ideology, Platonic, Taoist or otherwise. Neither Schuon or Smith understood this. Indeed, Smith’s whole theory of science as an inferior sort of metaphysics is based on misunderstandings and a need for abstraction. Smith has no real grasp of science as an empirical reality, he lives in math fantasies and surrounds himself in a hermetic environment of Thomistic metaphysics he Christian Gnosticism of Father Abbe Henri Stephane and Guenon’s dreams of a sacred science defeating the modern world.

I talked with Smith on a number of occasions about Schuon’s ideas about science, indeed, I was a peripheral go between the two men at one point in 1991. I saw eventually that neither man knew what they were talking about. Smith thought Schuon as so backward and ignorant of basic science that he could not take most of what he said seriously. It is certainly true that Schuon’s ideas about science are ridiculous. But Smith, I think, agreed with Schuon’s main point that the “divine Intellect” is the ultimate judge of the worth of any science. The notion of the “divine Intellect” as I have shown repeatedly in this book, is an utter fiction.

It is supposed to be the occult organ in the ‘soul’ whereby man receives revelations from gods. There is no such organ. Schuon indicates the inanity of the idea of the

¹¹⁶ Schuon. Sufism, Veil and Quintessence, page 128

“There are truths which intuitive intellection alone allows one to attain, but it is not a fact that such intellection lies within the capacity of every man of ordinarily sound mind. Moreover the Intellect, for its part, requires Revelation, both as its occasional cause and as vehicle of the 'Perennial Philosophy,” ¹¹⁷

Here Schuon is claiming he is the revelation of the Perennial Philosophy. Elsewhere Schuon claims that only the “elect” such as himself and Guenon, have access to “intellection” and only they can claim “infallibility” based on such secret access. The theory of the infallible and ‘divine intellect’ is bogus and self-serving, since only those who have had a “revelation” can say if they have had it or not. The arbitrary nature of revelation is common to all the religions. The idea that Jesus is the son of god for instance, is utterly ridiculous, yet repeated over and over.¹¹⁸ This is the pure bombast of a charlatan. The whole of the perennialist movement is based on the posited nonsense of the “divine intellect”, which is really just the organ of perennialist fantasy and pastiche. Schuon says somewhere that the “ pure intellect, which alone capable of knowing that which modern science rejects”. The critique of science and reason in by the traditionalists is premised on this belief in a higher order of knowledge, “gnosis” or “intellect”, but it is evident that this higher order is a crazy fiction that has no basis in reality. Indeed, I talked with Schuon at length about the intellect, and it became clear to me with time that

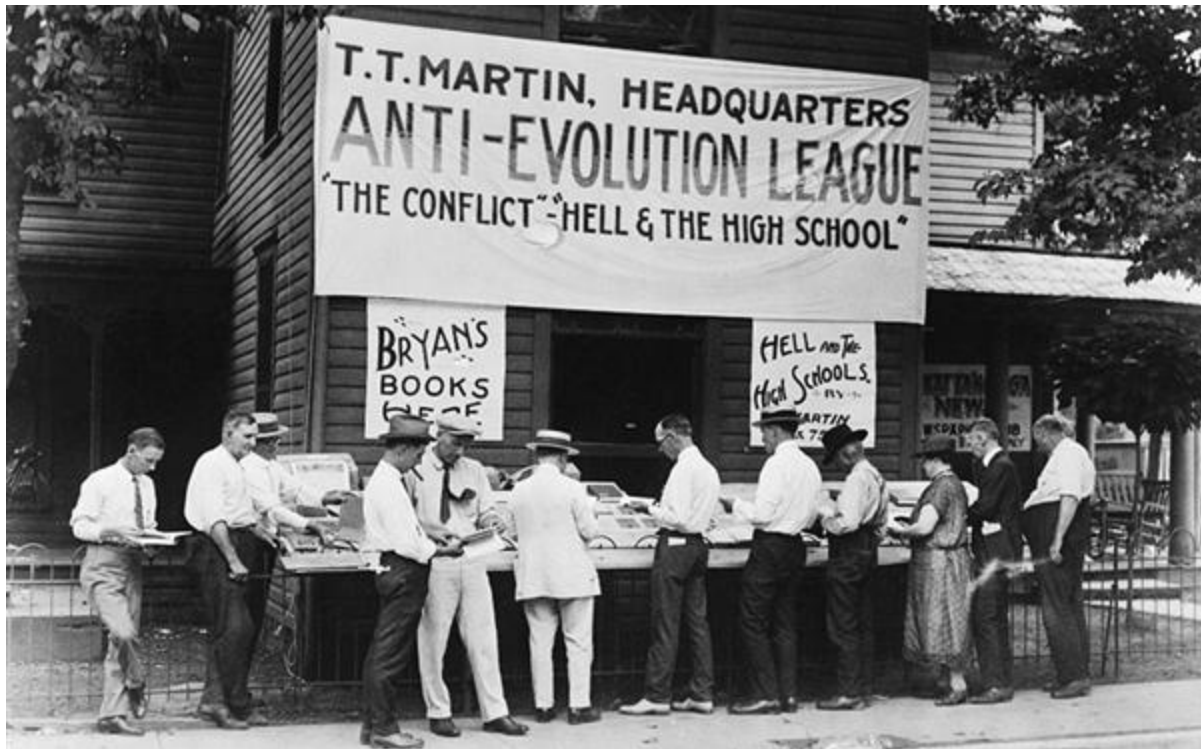
¹¹⁷ The essential writings of F. Schuon, ed., by Nasr, p. 337-338 see the following link for the an idea of the Schuon cult’s woeful inability to understand anything about science. The essay itself lacks any critical insight into either since or the cult and so is basically a document that propagandizes the cults anti-science, anti-intellectual interests and reactionary point of view. see Maroof and Mazoor Shah, http://independent.academia.edu/MaroofShah/Papers/446138/MODERN_SCIENCE_AND_SCIENTISM_A_PERENNIALIST_APPRAISAL

¹¹⁸ Schuon claimed to feel the Virgin Mary’s breasts and spread legs on his back, and who can argue that this nutty idea was real to him. Any quack or crank could clam this and indeed others have, as I have shown elsewhere. “Revelations” can be defined as the arbitrary eruptions of bizarre dream like ideas and images promoted by a con man who uses them to impose rule or conformity thought on a collective society. There are discussions of the fiction of the :intellect and comparisons with the use of reason and science throughout this book. See index at end of book

this concept is a fraud and based on subjective magnifications and delusions. The critique of reason from the standpoint of “revelation” is what the irrationalism of the anti-science people is all about.¹¹⁹

This is quite evident when you trace out the origins of Smith’s ideas, as I will do now. He too claims access to the intellect via traditional and revelation. Yet, in fact, most of Smith's evidence for his anti-evolutionary thought comes from Douglas Dewar (1875-1957), who was himself, a follower of George McCready Price, a creationist. Smith, like Schuon, was a creationist. This photograph expresses well something of the half-baked sideshow reality of Christian anti-evolutionary thought in America. Those who reject evolution are in accord the decrees of revelation and with the divine intellect. I like this photo because it expresses very well the actuality of the anti-evolution movement. Those who are attracted to this nonsense are largely uneducated and live in pockets where the Bible or the Koran are held in high esteem. Nowadays you are likely to see similar effort of promote this nonsense on late night TV where obscure Christian TV evangelists promote idiotic notions of “intelligent design” and the immediate coming of an apocalypse that never comes. The traditionalists are very much like these cracks and charlatans in their basic ideas, but are much more secretive and eclectic I their effort to embrace many systems of religious indoctrination, symbolism and ideology.

¹¹⁹ It is interesting to note that Kant is utterly hated by the traditionalists, partly because he denies any reality of religious ideas other than that of private fantasy, on the one hand,---but on the other, he reserves an area where science is important, if limited. Russell observes that the followers of Kant either became empiricists or absolutists, which shows well the dichotomy (History of Philosophy pg 718), Fichte carried Kant’s “subjectivist” philosophy in a direction that “seems to almost involve a kind of insanity”, Russell adds. Russell is right, Fichte is really an antecedent to Schuon , whose solipsistic absolutism is anti-empirical. It is the solipsistic absolutism that connects Schuon rather closely to the subjectivist aspect of Kantian thought, despite Schuon’s irrational hatred of Kant.



In any case, Smith's main source for many of his views, Douglas Dewar, was apparently just such a person who was inspired by the divine intellect. He helped launch the "Evolution Protest Movement" (1932) members of which declared the theory of evolution to be the "child of Satan" among other silly things. One source states that "Geologists dismissed Price as a crank and ridiculed *The New Geology* (Price was not even a geologist) as being riddled with error and distortion, the book caused a sensation among religious fundamentalists, who cited it as the first book to use science to show that the Bible is literally correct." Price's only real claim to fame is that he was cited during the famous Scopes "monkey" trial¹²⁰ in 1925 as a scientific "expert",

¹²⁰ Jennings at the Scopes Trial attempted to stop the teaching of evolution in the school and almost succeeded, but was turned over on appeal. Recent cases in Kansas and Pennsylvania attempting to include "Intelligent Design"—a euphemism of creationism--- in school curriculums have failed. No intelligent court is willing to accord religion any status as a theory of nature. See "Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District", 2005 trial where Judge John E. Jones III ruled that teaching intelligent design or presenting it as an alternative to evolution was a violation of the Establishment Clause of the first amendment to the U.S.

when in fact he wasn't an expert on anything. Of course he was on the side of William Jennings Bryant, who wanted to eliminate evolution from being taught in public schools. Much of Price's "flood geology" can be found, nearly intact, in the writings of modern creationists. . Indeed, the Scopes Monkey Trial of 1925 is one precedent to the anti-science mania that has swept the Republican party, making them anti-global warming, anti-environmentalism, anti-stem cell research and anti-Darwinian too.

Douglas Dewar, Smith's main source, was a disciple of Price: that in itself is enough to discredit both Dewar and Smith. Douglas Dewar, who the traditionalists rely on for their anti-evolution views, enthusiastically echoed his mentor's narrow minded beliefs. Dewar made a lot of incredibly stupid statements, typical of creationists ever since-- such as "The Bible cannot contain false statements, and so if its statements undoubtedly conflict with the views of geologists, these latter are wrong.". Dewar is the hero the traditionalists and his ideas are quoted by virtually no one but them and a few far right creationists.. Dewar was a charter member of the Evolution Protest Movement.

Thus, Smith's primary source of anti-evolutionary thinking is a man who is totally discredited. Smith's thesis is basically an attempt to state, on the basis of evidence mostly culled from Dewar's discredited and creationist texts, that evolution did not happen. Smith shows little understanding of biology or of paleontology, and his statements about evolution are mere dogmatic assertions based on discredited creationist writings from the 1930's. ¹²¹Smith claims all

Constitution because intelligent design is not legitimate science but essentially religious in nature. Not legitimate science is the key phrase. Creationism has no real world merit, it is fiction.

¹²¹ Ignorant creationism is not restricted to backwater America. One can find the same ignorance in Saudi Arabia where a school text books states:

“Nevertheless in the West appeared what is called “the theory of evolution” which was derived by the Englishman Charles Darwin, who denied Allah’s creation of humanity, saying that all living things and humans are from a single origin. We do not need to pursue such a theory because we have in the Book of Allah the final says regarding the origin of life, that all living things are Allah’s creation”

http://www.academia.edu/870964/Evolution_Education_in_Muslim_States_Iran_and_Saudi_Arabia_Compared

species came from humans who represent god on earth. This human centered theory is stated as if it were a fact that requires no proof. It is so patently ridiculous no proof is needed to refute it.

Wolfgang Smith's book fails because he wrote it to disprove a biological thesis about which he knows next to nothing. He was trained as a mathematician and knows a little about Math, less about Physics and no biology. He does not succeed in asking any relevant questions about evolution. His book is embarrassing given that the man in question purports to be a scientist.

In more recent years, Smith has changed his tactic from quoting Dewar who is hopelessly discredited, to quoting Michael Behe the bogus 'scientist' who was discredited in the 2005 trial of "Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District". Behe has been discredited too. Behe is a creationist who pushed a failed attempt to rehash creationist dogmas and misinformation as scientific facts, but was exposed as a fraud in Pennsylvania at this trial.¹²² In a recent book (Science and Myth) Smith quotes Behe's fabrication of the idea of " irreducible complexity" to try to push the ideology of "intelligent design" on his readers.¹²³

¹²²

For more on the fanatic anti-intellectualism of the creationists defeated by Darwin yet again see

<http://video.pbs.org/video/980040807/>

of this BBC version:

see <http://videosift.com/video/Horizon-A-War-On-Science-BBC-Documentary-49mins>

¹²³ The attempt to explain religion by quasi-scientific, "neurotheology", employing neurological and evolutionary development is highly dubious. Trying to explain religion as a branch of evolutionary biology is understandable, since theologians know religion is failing so they try to tie to science is an attempt to restore its credibility. But I suspect Steven Pinker is right when he argues against the attempt to posit a God gene, in his speech "The Evolutionary Psychology of Religion: Does the Brain Have a 'God Module?'", for instance. The notion that religion is a genetically evolved development is very unlikely as large scale organized religion is really only 3-4000 years old, if that much. Certainly magical thinking, folk tales and superstitions are older than that. Certainly the imagination may have had some

“Intelligent Design” has been utterly discredited too, not just in the Dover trial of 2005 but also by many Darwinists, including Richard Dawkins. Dawkins shows how utterly bankrupt Behe’s ideas are in his excellent book The God Delusion.¹²⁴ Judge Jones referred to Behe’s attempt to explain “irreducible complexity” as an example of “breathtaking inanity”, which is also a phrase well suited to Dr. Smith’s ideas about Darwinism.

Smith also quotes the far-right Theologian and creationist William Dembski. Dembski and Behe’s ideas were judged in Judge Jones' 139-page decision on December 20, 2005. Jones wrote that wrote that "the overwhelming evidence at trial established that ID [Intelligent Design] is a religious view, a mere re-labeling of creationism, and not a scientific theory.". Smith is connecting Guenonian ideology to this anti-scientific ignorance—as is to be expected from someone who knows as little about biological science as Smith appears to. Smith is an anti-intellectual who wants to hijack science and turn it back into feudal superstition. The facts of evolution are so pervasive and extensive as to be undeniable. Smith is off in the ozone of superstition and dogma.

The only Traditionalist who had any inkling about the importance of Darwinism was Ananda Coomaraswamy. He was more open to science earlier in his life than even his son Rama, despite the fact that Rama became a surgeon and wrote 30 or 40 scientific papers, mostly about cardiology. Rama was schizophrenic when it came to science and had no real notion of what Evolution is about. His mind was amazingly closed to anything outside his specialty as a doctor. This ability to be ignorant outside his specialty is an effect of specialization, and made Rama unable to see that his religious views were primitive in a really dogmatic and embarrassing way. I cannot think of

selective advantage, problems solving in particular, and religion may be a falsified “by product” of that. Certainly, also, abstract thinking due to the abstract character of language plays a role in creating imaginary agents. But religion does not appear to be evolved via evolution. It is a cultural artifact and an epiphenomena of children’s gullibility or the need of social networks and cohesion, power and politics. No doubt there are many physical and cultural factors at the basis of religion, but in no case has anyone every proven any gods or “god’s designs” to be rooted in biology.

¹²⁴ see pages 129-131 of that book.

another example of a man who was so good as a surgeon but was otherwise dogmatically ignorant in every other field. Ananda on the other hand says in an early essay that spiritual theories should have nothing "inconsistent with, but much rather inclusive of and explanatory of all the facts of evolution found by the geologist and biologist". ¹²⁵This is a reasonable attitude, wrong but reasonable. Ananda trained as a geologist, not a metaphysical pretender like Guenon. Rama says about his father's involvement with Science that

“With regard to his geology - he actually got his PhD in in botany and geology at London University. He went to Ceylon and did the geological survey of the country which still stands today as a standard work. There is a book published by the Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts which brings together his scientific early work including his discovery of Thorianite and his correspondence with Madame Curie.....

In the course of doing the geological survey he traveled all over Ceylon and saw the damage to the indigenous culture that resulted from the British Raj. It was this that got him interested in art and subsequently in the fundamental meaning of art and its sacred nature. He did have conflicts with the British and was considered a revolutionary - I believe he was with Gandhi on the famous salt marches but am not sure. In any event, he refused to join the British army in the first world war because of the absence of Indian independence and was essentially banned from the British Empire - though arrangements were made for him to live in the US by a special act of congress.” ¹²⁶

¹²⁵ In What is Civilization, pg 73. The essay is called Gradation and Evolution. AKC thought he could square science and religion, rather like Teilhard De Chardin. Rama was in denial about his father's pro science stand and hated De Chardin as do all the traditionalists. See: http://books.google.com/books?id=2AGrJwNmSSwC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

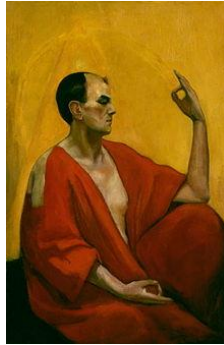
¹²⁶ Letter to author

Elsewhere Rama says he studied at Oxford in Botany and Geology. In any case, the strong background in science was important and slowly eroded over many years, so that in the end only his marvelous garden described by Rama to me and in various writings, remained. Ananda was a great tender of plants and would have done much better work in art if he has stayed with gardening and science. Ananda's shift from science to spirituality had a strongly political bent to it, partly inspired by Gandhi's radicalism, obviously, as well as Guenon's alienated and expatriate theofascism.

Ananda Coomaraswamy had some insight into what science was about. But Nietzsche and Tagore¹²⁷ and later, Guenon corrupted that in him, unfortunately. Ananda's other son died in Alaska as a bush pilot though around 1930. Around that time, AKC lost his interest in science mostly due to Theosophy and Guenon, the latter having a horrible influence on him. I suspect that the death of his son Narada might have had something to do with his growing attraction to the ideology of perennial and its cynical rejection of everything modern and democratic. He had failed in three marriages and his son was dead. He was tired of the world and had lived a somewhat decadent high style life. He even tried to arrange for himself a polygamous marriage with several women, at one point, antedating and perhaps influencing Schuon's obsession with dominating women in this way .¹²⁸His views of women were

¹²⁷ There is a humorous cartoon of AKC with Tagore and a hashish pipe from the time, and a photo of Tagore and AKC in 1930 both easily accessible online.

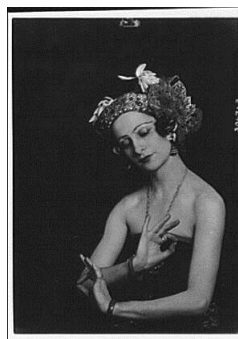
¹²⁸ Ananda Coomaraswamy (AKC) was also involved in a weird relationship with the charlatan Aliester Crowley, who managed to take AKC's wife from him. In early 1916, Crowley had an illicit liaison with Alice Richardson (Ratan Devi) who was also a theosophist, evidently. Alice evidently conceived a child with Crowley and subsequently lost it or aborted. This may be why AKC was disillusioned with Theosophy. AKC had earlier suggested that Alice have a ménage à trois with him and his earlier wife Ethel. He suggested they have a polygamous marriage. Ethel refused and divorced him in 1910. AKC left Alice after her affair with Crowley. See: http://www.sundaytimes.lk/100502/Plus/plus_21.html



Crowley as "Master Therion", oil painting
by Leon Engers Kennedy, 1917-1918

Sedgwick mangles all this on Page 53 of his book. He writes “Coomaraswamy’s wife, Ethel, is said to have become pregnant by Crowley in 1916. Coomaraswamy and Ethel subsequently divorced. This incident presumably helped to diminish Coomaraswamy’s enthusiasm for occultism, making him more receptive to Guenon’s Traditionalism and to the idea that what mattered was not the religion of the future but the tradition of the past.” Actually Ethel was AKC’s first wife. Alice is the one who had an affair with Crowley

Later AKC got involved with Stella Bloch (1898-1999) in 1917 or so. She was 17 . She accompanied on a trip to India and the Far East. They married in 1922, she was 29 years his junior. Bloch had been one of the “Isadorables”, a troop of dancers who performed with wildly romantic and self-destructive dancer Isadora Duncan. The marriage was not very successful and lasted until 1930. Most of the time the relationship was long distance. After the failure of the marriage with Stella, Coomaraswamy turns more and more towards Guenonism. Bloch is the first of many symbolist and occult sex goddesses worshiped by the traditionalists. Schuon’s “virgin” is a variation on the same theme . AKC’s interests in polygamy recalls Schuon’s own, 50 years earlier. It may be Schuon knew of this and was influenced by it, as many of Schuon’s close disciples had been first disciples of AKC, notably John Murray and the Perry’s.



Stella Bloch. Photo by her 1st husband A.K. Coomaraswamy, ca. 1920

misogynistic.¹²⁹ But all this together seems to have made him a ripe and decadent cynic, ready of Guenon's toxic spite and hatred of the world. He was predisposed to an escapist spirituality and aggressively defensive erudition, as if erudition could somehow prove what was not true or demonstrable to begin with. AKC's late work is world weary and apocalyptic and evokes Guenon's rather paranoid and sardonic view of the world.

AKC's early work shows a great interest in evolution. This was later ruined by Guenon hatred of science and his ignorance of biology. His attraction to Guenon spoiled a really brilliant scientific mind and set him against the west in an unfortunate and backward way. This split in Ananda's mind is apparent in his son Rama, who became a very good cardiovascular surgeon, but a cramped and bigoted religious fanatic at the same time.

Rama Coomaraswamy wrote me some years ago and told me most of his father's book were out of print. Rama told me that he had "great difficulty in getting my father's works published" because they just don't sell well.¹³⁰ Rama wrote to me that he thought "the Schuon phenomena which has about it a certain evil". I argued with him about this—not in defense of the Schuon cult—but as I did not agree with the concept evil, which Rama was rather obsessed with. But he thought the group a dangerous cult. We agreed about that and talked about this many times.

Rama Coomaraswamy thought Schuon was evil and helped me get out of the cult. He was badly punished by the cult after helped me get out of the Schuon and insisted I write my 1991 Account of the cult. He typed it and

¹²⁹ See AKC's "Sati: A Vindication of the Hindu

Woman" in which he tries to justify ritual suicide by women who have lost their husbands. Like Rama his son, Ananda has very reactionary and ideas about two men.

¹³⁰ He later agreed to let World Wisdom publish them, only because no one else would. He had doubts about doing it, he tells me, as he thought the Schuon group, which owns this publishing company, a "cult" and complained it enshrined a "certain evil". But he agreed to do it because it was hopeless otherwise to keep his father's work alive. I thought he should let his father's work fade rather than take that option, but he wouldn't listen to me. The advantage that the Schuon cult has is that they have lots of money and so easily corrupt others who might have need of them. Rama let himself be corrupted by them as have many others. The Schuon cult is enabled by some very rich right wing fanatics. Not much to say about this except that Rama put himself to bed with a deeply corrupt cult and maybe in the end that is where history will acknowledge he belongs.

added many things to it. Too many. I have trouble with parts of the book now partly because of how much he added to it. He did this in his oversized home on Otter Rock Drive in Greenwich Connecticut. Rama writes that

“When you put your piece together, I felt it should be published and helped you with the typing and the labeling of pictures. This is well known and is considered as an attack on Schuon like unto your own. I lost several friends and there are those who still consider me anathema because of this. As far as I am concerned this is enough of a statement regarding my public stand. I intend to do nothing further.”

Rama knew I was telling the truth. My writing was not an “attack”, but a strait forward account, written over a few months, late at night in an all-night café. It is full of the language and reality of the cult and I find it now embarrassing as it shows me heavily influenced by the delusions of the group think to which I was subject for two years. The tendency struggles with the need of truth which nevertheless shines through the document, despite my confused adherence to fictions. It was hard to write, but true as I could make it at the time.

Later, after the cult attacked Rama and nearly took him to court, he was scared silent about his relation to Schuon and his attack on him. In various places even tried to cover up or escape from questions about how he felt about Schuon. His courage was thin and he hid behind others. I did not admire that. They had blackmailed him with threats of a lawsuit Rama was a weak man and ambitious and he wanted too badly to be a priest that is made him deny the truth about what he knew about Schuon. He thought it would spare scandal to his followers if he kept his involvement secret. Really he just covered it up for his own sake. I disagreed with him about this and in a later letter from him not long before he died he more or less said that I had been right. He expressed uncertainty about himself and his hiding his involvement with Schuon from public record. I liked Rama, as underneath his many years of cult involvement and fanatical far right tendencies, he was a kind and gentle person. But I saw

his weakness and how easy it was for a cruelly empty and ambitious man like Hossein Nasr to talk Rama out of his better nature and corral him into obedience to lies. Nasr was never a man of truth, but a man who loved the powerful and wanted to live hobnobbing with them. But humans have a hard time telling themselves the truth about themselves and I could see Rama was no exception to this. He died without ever really coming clean about his involvement with Schuon, and he knew I knew this and did not agree with his cowardice on this. There are many cowards who have hidden from telling the truth about Schuon, even though they know about Schuon's Primordial Gatherings and other bizarre happenings in the Schuon cult. This is often the way with cults, governments and corporations. People are afraid to tell truth to power, afraid of reprisal and attacks.

Rama's ridiculous ideas about evolution in various essays follow those of Schuon and Guenon pretty closely so I won't bother to quote him about that here. Suffice it to say Rama was ignorant of the facts as were all the traditionalists. None of them had any real understanding of science and we prone to simplistic delusions about Darwin.

Darwin was an amazing man and scientist, and the deeper I have studied him the more impressed am I by him. I do not mean he is a saint or anything like that. He is a fallible person. But much of what I once thought of him was mistaken when I realized what his accomplishment really was. He was not only a great scientist but also an humanitarian who opposed slavery and believer in animal rights. He who deserves the enormous credit he is accorded. Few theories in science are less controversial than evolution. None of the Traditionalists know much about nature or evolution or for that matter the formation of scientific theories. I know from having spoken with many of them that they merely seek to assassinate evolution because they oppose it emotionally when none of them know anything about the actual science. This makes their writings about evolution laughable at best and tragic for those who

believe the nonsense they write. More recently Dr. Smith diatribes against evolution have become more rabid and he writes

From a Christian vantage point, it can be said that Darwinism is indeed the pseudo-myth of Antichrist, the Father of Lies and ancient Antagonist of man's salvation. We are dealing thus, not simply with beliefs or speculations of erring mortals, but with something far greater and more perilous.¹³¹

This is just plain fundamentalist nonsense and rant and the pure fiction of a rabid fanatic. I know Dr. Smith claims he was a reputable scientist at one time, -- I see he is not a scientist now, even if he once was---but as the years have passed and he has spent his time in reclusive pursuit of very crazy fringe ideas, and now his status as a scientist is gone. He is now a fundamentalist, traditionalist crank who basically hates science in an irrational way. He grabs at evidence that has no real basis in fact, he ignores counter evidence even when it is overwhelming. He is no longer remotely a scientist, though he behaves as if he were. He was able when I knew him to speak years ago and write in a way that was professorial and senatorial, with a distinguished Austrian accent, and large vocabulary. But as you can see above, he now sounds more like a fanatic fundamentalist preacher.

I have to say that years ago I had some respect for Dr. Smith, when I knew much less about history and science than I know now. He had not yet revealed himself as a creationist and anti-science preacher. I should have deduced it from his writings, but I didn't, or, if I did suspect it, I was duped by his seeming erudition. This is why science education and evidentiary inquiry is a fine thing: I have not stopped learning over all these years and I love science

¹³¹ "Science and Myth: the Hidden Connection". *Sophia: the Journal of Traditional Studies* (Oakton, VA: The Foundation for Traditional Studies) 7 (1). Summer 2001

and the university and learning and have since I was a kid. It helps me see through illusions such as these, which I have had to face many times in my life. The search for truth causes pain, but at the same time supplies liberation from false thinking. I have learned this many times. Telling the truth as best one can hurts and plows up the ground inside oneself. It is the cost of honest inquiry and sincere seeking.

I went through a period of doubting science because of nuclear weapons and environmental harms but finally grasped that it is business and politics and not science that is at fault there. It took me many years to learn what I now know. Smith hates education. He advised me to join the Schuon cult. He once wrote me a letter more or less begging me not to pursue questions in a university setting and to cling to “our Lord”, alone. There is no “Lord”, there is only the world in which we live and the necessity to make it a better place for all of us, all species.

Dr. Smith’s anti-intellectualism was atrocious. Echoing other far-right Bible quoting, anti-intellectuals, Smith contends that is “almost a precondition of sanctity to have escaped a university education”— and this looks like a sentence about his own bitterness about his work in the university. Smith’s idea of education is an outdated Platonic one. Jaroslav Pelikan reviews John Henry Newman's The Idea of the University, and this says a lot about the traditionalist view of education, indirectly. Pelikan, believes that Newman's book is a "eloquent defense of liberal education" whose "timelessness" explains the function of the university today. The "Idea" of the university, it turns out, is a "timeless", platonic archetype, which from an essential matrix, buried deep in the substratum of Creation itself, has somehow given birth, like Athena from the brow of Zeus, to the amazing array of subjects progressing ever forward though university study, expanding ever closer to an almost divine objective standard hovering near god and the limit of total knowledge.

The university, as the "Alma Mater" somehow mixes Athena, goddess of war, and the Virgin Mary, goddess and mother of the intellect, in an amalgam that gives birth to all research, like Orozco's painting of a skeleton giving birth to

skeleton-scholars. This mythical and Platonist notion at the basis of the university assumes that a divine and already completed knowledge exists supernaturally and mysteriously behind the fabric of things. It assumes that it is the function of the teacher and the university to help the student draw out, what, in his or her deepest recesses, the student already knows, The word 'education' has a similar meaning, deriving from the root 'to lead out of', into the light, with all the associations with Plato and his Parable of the Cave and the educator leading the ignorant into the light.

This is all myth, of course. Education is not inborn but must be had through experience and doing, not tapping into nonexistent archetypes. The Platonic theory of education is racist, elitist and hierarchical, and depends on the falsely modest of the image of Socratic spiritual "midwife" This ideology, which is at the basis of the university and the ethic of 'disinterestedness' is a romantic ideal which assumes the university has a quasi-divine function to dictate doctrine, form perceptions of reality and instruct students to learn to participate in, rather than question, the reigning social hierarchy. As Newman himself thought, rightly, this idea of education is essentially the ideology of empire, the Empire of the Intellect,¹³² which I wrote about very critically in another book.

Newman, writing from Oxford, says that the University is the embodiment of "the philosophy of the imperial intellect". This is an important and far reaching definition. He defines the university as the place of the "teaching of universal knowledge" and that its method and its "object is intellectual- not moral". The role of the amoral university in the world is clearly defined: "what the empire is in political history such is a University in the sphere of philosophy and research". This important statement defines clearly, all too clearly- "the Empire of the Intellect" , something that I am opposed to ad which makes philosophy a questionable subject. Moreover, how curiously like

¹³² <http://www.naturesrights.com/Knowledge%20doc%20PDF.pdf>

http://ArtInNature_New/knowledge_power_book/section32.asp - ftn3# ftn3

Aquinas' definition of the Christian 'great chain of being'. Aquinas wrote that "reason is to man what god is to the world" and when one compares Newman's statement, paraphrased to say 'empire is to history what research is to the university', what is being defined, in both cases, is a system of hierarchies of knowledge and power. I am not involving Foucault here, who is not very trustworthy. I am saying that Newman was creating a kind of theofascism in the university by equating empire with knowledge, much as the catholic Church did in equating world domination with the fiction of Christ. In both cases there is a process of "magnification" going on. A philosophy that exists to magnify power is not just questionable it should be opposed.

I don't agree with this medieval or traditionalist ideal of education at all. The university is best devoted to science and inquiry knowledge and the arts in a non-platonic way. Education is not platonic, but specific, exact and democratic. The teacher does not try to bring out what is latent platonic truths that the teachers wants to manifest, but rather seeks to elicit deepest in the student, but rather ones seeks to bring the student to what is the case in her real world, things that will help her live and good and full a life as possible.

Smith's hatred of education is typical for a traditionalist. He is wrong, as I found out when I went to universities myself. There is nothing better than free inquiry and real learning. I think Smith wanted to be a great scientist but was sorely disappointed, so he wanted to subvert science itself from the inside, out of bitterness. I don't much respect that. I once had a real affection for the man, but when I read Smith now I can see through his rather pompous prose pretty easily. He is really a reactionary science-fiction writer of a New Age slant, as are many traditionalists and he readily distorts and invents fictions to try to protect his little area of religious illusions. His New Age ideology is rather carefully hidden in the pose of a Christian apologist of an Aquinian sort, heavily schooled on monarchist metaphysics. It is not hard to unravel his fictions. He hates the New Age, but really all the traditionalists are merely right wing New Agers and Creationist fundamentalists who think they understand

the world but really are backwards elitists, metaphysical romantics covered with symbolist dreams like purple dust.

7. Quantum Quackery and Fictional Essences

Wolfgang Smith also writes a lot about Quantum Mechanics, but it is clear that his ideas are pseudo-science and has misrepresented and abused Quantum Mechanics as well as science in general. If Smith was originally a scientist as he claims, and it seems doubtful how much of a scientist he actually was, he is now an enemy of science. He states for instance, that

“there is indeed a connection between the scientific enterprise and the demonic realm.....[and] the demonic connection maybe more than a pious fantasy... Padre Pio referred to science as the “Bible of the Anti-Christ”.

This sort of talk is only possible for an extreme fanatic on the edge of sanity. His obsession with the anti-Christ is really disturbing in a man who should know that children were cured by penicillin vaccine and hearts are mended now with transplants. I seriously wonder why Smith claims to speak as a scientist and a far right catholic at the same time. He is certainly not a scientist. He seems to be a bifurcated Manichean divided between himself and what he hates. Of course there is no merit to his claim that science is evil, what good that has come to humanity in the last 500 years has been largely due to science. To the Church is reserved the ignominy of the Dark Ages, that black period of ignorance between 500-1200 C.E, the Inquisition, the pedophile priests, and spreading of superstition.. The notion of evil is a fiction designed to stigmatize and demean. The traditionalists refer to practically everything other than themselves as ‘evil’. It is their way of vaulting themselves into an artificial superiority. Smith cannot abide the big bang theory so it must be evil and he is frustrated that the chapter of Genesis is now merely a concocted fable in a

book of fiction. He concludes in bitterness that those who seek a real answer about the nature of our world must be evil. Smith is being a petulant child here, and calling science evil is a sort of child's tantrum.

So why does Smith abuse quantum mechanics? Quantum mechanics is easily abused because it deals with invisible entities like atoms and quarks and is largely describes a mathematical realm that is complex and paradoxical. Quantum Mechanics is a reductionist and materialist part of modern physics. Certainly no mystical assertions are justified by quantum mechanics, nor does it imply that the human mind controls reality. It supplies a model that is incomplete, inconsistent and full of absurdities, and that is the problem. It is not a finished and complete theory and is certainly not a blue print for how to interpret reality in our everyday world, which is how Smith and many others uses it.¹³³ The temptation to read things into quantum mechanics that are not there is high. Part of problem here is the use of math to try to describe the very small or atomic or the very large. No one knows yet what happens exactly on the subatomic level, though a few things are known and there is a lot of speculation and uncertain evidence. No one knows really what is beyond Quasars in the sky, either, though again there is a lot of speculation. Part of the problem is that those who do math get caught in their imagination and forget that that imagination is not reality.

I have met others who read all sort of nonsense into quantum mechanics. In 1979 I met and talked with Jack Sarfatti a number of times, the guy behind

¹³³ Roger Penrose has come up with various quantum theories that appear to be largely fictional. He claims for instance that human consciousness is "algorithmic" and somehow beyond scientific analysis and that it has features that quasi-miraculous. It seems thought for Penrose is an effect of gravity inside the microtubules of the brain. (sounds like Chomsky, who would like to find an explanation for language in physics rather than biology) Penrose reaches this rather dizzy conclusion through Gödel's incompleteness theorem, and the idea of a Platonic reality beyond mind and matter, of course. David Deutsch, from Oxford's Centre for Quantum Computation, dismisses Penrose's interpretation as "based more on aesthetics than science" Which basically means it is probably wrong..

the largely discredited book the Dancing Wu Li Masters.¹³⁴ Sarfatti's ideas are largely "a potpourri of nonsense", like those of Wolfgang Smith Both of them have projected their private obsessions onto the physics and come up with something that is more fiction than science. This is true of Roger Penrose too, but Penrose is a little harder to show to be false. Daniel Dennett may have hit the nail on the head when he criticizes Penrose¹³⁵ for not seeing that science simply does not have an understanding of exactly how thought or consciousness works yet.¹³⁶ It does not follow that thought is therefore mystical or that the mechanics of consciousness will never be explained.¹³⁷ Moreover, Stephen Weinberg writes that "[N]one of the laws of physics known today ... are exactly and universally valid.". He doesn't mean that the laws of physics are not true, he means that they come into question in extreme conditions. This seems obvious and any extrapolated metaphysical conclusions based on Quantum mechanics of Physics are probably false. The Tao of Physics, with its discredited "bootstrap theory" or the Dancing Wu LI Masters, with its fantasies of faster than light, "superluminal" travel and communication are vain exercises in imposing metaphysical fictions on physics. These books have been discredited. Peter Woit has discredited Capra and it is hard to imagine many take Sarfatti or Zukav seriously as quantum physicists. Their effort to turn science into some species of Taoism or Buddhism has also failed.

¹³⁴ See also Fritjof Capra's The Tao of Physics (1975) or the movie "What the Bleep do we Know" http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=what+the+bleep+do+we+know+part+1&aq=1sx
Or the much better debunking of this movie here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIPiXNlhKFo>

¹³⁵ Victor Stenger notes that Penrose is a Platonist, and this explains a lot of why his science goes off on weird metaphysical tangents. His book God and the Folly of Faith has various refutations of spiritual quantum theories, such as Penrose, Bohm and others. Stenger goes to some length to try to justify multiverse theories, when there is no evidence at all for these ideas. This, again, suggests that math has been used without a real basis in physics. One has to be careful of speculations on the edges of math, the universe and the atom, as all sorts of things can be projected into these empty and unknown areas.

¹³⁶ The idea of quantum consciousness is criticized sharply by Victor Stenger, who characterized quantum consciousness as a "myth" having "no scientific basis" that "should take its place along with gods, unicorns and dragons."—and one might say, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha and other gods too. The notion that biology is really Buddhist is just bad logic and poor insight. In any case, many of the original claims of Penrose and his associates have been discredited. It is a highly contentious area of current science.

¹³⁷ see chapter 15 of Dennett's Darwin's Dangerous Idea

Many people have abused or misused quantum ideas to push all sort of bogus of false ideas. I have indicated this in the cases of Frithjof Capra, Jack Sarfatti and Roger Penrose. I knew Dr. Smith many years ago and have not read much of his work since he sent me his highly questionable Quantum Enigma over 20 years ago, before it was published. But recently I picked up his The Wisdom of Ancient Cosmology and am deeply saddened by his further devolving development. He has become even more fanatical far-right than I remember. He has backed himself into a corner where whatever scientific understanding he might once have had has been utterly compromised and reduced to caricature by his rather wacky spiritual beliefs. For instance., He tries to say that the “world is *young*, which is to say that it is not measured in millions or billions--- but in thousands of years”¹³⁸ He appears to belong to the “Young Earth Creationist Club”, or at least most of his arguments against science come from members or associates of this club---really a sort of cult. The Young Earth Creationists is similar to the Flat Earth Society: both are clubs devoted to anti-intellectual rubbish, religion and backward pseudoscience. These informal societies of crackpots want us to move back to the 8th century, when superstition was king and stupidity was glorified. Like Mr. Smith they believe that Earth, and all life were created by direct acts of a minor god of a sector of humanity that calls itself “Christian”. They believe the earth was created during a relatively short period, sometime between c. 5,700 and 10,000 years ago. As Richard Dawkins has said that that to say that the earth is a few thousand years old, when in fact is 4 billion years old is equivalent to saying that the distance to San Francisco to New York is about 28 feet. Indeed, most of Smith’s assertions are embarrassingly absurd. He quotes the discredited Guy Berthault, who tries to argue that the earth is

¹³⁸ Smith, Wolfgang. The Wisdom of Ancient Cosmology. Oakton Va. Foundation for Traditional Studies 2003. Pg. 109

only six to ten thousand years old.¹³⁹ Berthault is a Young Earth Creationist who is an adviser to the Kolbe Center, an ultra-conservative traditional Roman Catholic creationist propaganda group. On the basis of Berthault's bogus ideas and pseudo-science Smith claims, falsely, that modern geology has been given a "death knell". Actually geology has never been so vibrant and healthy as in the last 30 years with vast discoveries like Plate tectonics and new research going on all over the earth. He also suggests based on all this bogus "research" that the idea of the "Flood" with Noah and the Ark "appear to accord far better with the geologic facts." This is pure fantasy on Smith's part as seems to be most of his ideas. Smith suggests that "creationist are doing "respectable geological research" , which is also false. None of the pseudo-scientists that Smith quotes appear in any peer reviewed journals or if they do they have been discredited. None have made any discoveries worth mentioning with a straight face.

Smith also tries to claim that Robert Gentry's wacky theories of "polonium halos" have "posed a challenge to evolutionist geology"¹⁴⁰ which is not true. Gentry's ideas have been debunked and discredited many times since the 1960's when he started proposing them and kept pushing them even after they were vetted and discredited. . His claims are rejected by the scientific community as an example of creationist pseudoscience. ¹⁴¹ The fact is that the earth's rocks are millions of years old and life in geological strata can be

¹³⁹For a good debunking of Berthault see http://www.evolutionpages.com/berthault_critique.htm

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. Pg. 125

¹⁴¹ Gentry's side lost in a law case in 1981 *McLean v. Arkansas Board of Education*, 529 F. Supp. 1255, 1258-1264 (ED Ark. 1982), decision on January 5, 1982, "giving a clear, specific definition of science as a basis for ruling that "creation science" is religion and is simply not science. As a U.S. District Court ruling, it was not binding on schools outside the Eastern District of Arkansas but had considerable influence on subsequent rulings on the teaching of creationism.^[1] Creationists did not appeal the decision and it was not until the 1987 case of *Edwards v. Aguillard* that teaching "creation science" was ruled unconstitutional at a Supreme Court level. "

measured by these rocks, in addition to other techniques. It amazes me that Smith is able to write this sort of fundamentalist ideology with a straight face. I have trouble not laughing when I read this pompous and wrongheaded nonsense.

But “it behooves us”, as Mr. Smith portentously likes to say, to consider that there is much more in Smith’s works that is not laughable.¹⁴² Unfortunately he really believes this nonsense and wants to make others believe it. As Karl Popper writes

“irrational and intellectual mysticism... need not be taken too seriously, but it is a dangerous disease because of its influence on social and political thought”.¹⁴³

Smith writes that “contemporary cosmology, in any of its forms, is not compatible with Christian doctrine” and this is exactly right, and a good thing too. Christian doctrine is irrelevant and archaic,---it is myth--- and well consigned to the dust heap of the Greek and Roman and thousands of other forgotten myths and gods. Science is not devoted to delusions and superstitions. This is a good thing. That is why Smith is welcome to believe his ridiculous theories in private all he wants to. He is protected by the 1st Amendment to believe whatever dreamy medieval rubbish enters his head. But that does not mean it is true. There are all sorts of wacky beliefs in America

¹⁴² Mr. Smith calls himself a Doctor, but he clearly despises the subject he got his doctorate in— so there is no point in calling him Dr. Smith. His style of talking and writing is decidedly 19th century,. Phrases like “it behooves us” or ‘I propose to say that...’ roll of his tongue or pen pretty regular like. He is a bit pompous, stiff and professorial. I suspect he was never really happy with his life and takes it out on science, which was once a great love of his. He is a man divided against himself and projects this on his subject, so that science and religion go to war in him in an imaginary Armageddon that while fictional, causes him distress and ecstasies. But this does not mean that his disparagement of science has any merit. It doesn’t. He is a man whose delusions overwhelmed his reason. When I got to know him it is was intellectual fervor and love of scholarship I admired, but it took me some years to see how he had gone off the deep end into Aquinas and Christian mysticism.

¹⁴³ Popper Karl, Open Society and its Enemies. Pg vol. II pg. 247

and one can pick and choose¹⁴⁴ among them. But science, for the most part, is outside that. Smith is incompetent to write books about science. He is able to write religious books, like his more recent ‘Christian Gnosis’ (2008), which is really a fringe book for wanna be Christian elitists who desire an ‘esoterism’ that few others can understand or need. It is fine if he writes about this area of mythic/metaphysical arcana. It is merely the gnosis or fictional dreams of an old religious crank.

But, incredibly, Smith tries to resurrect the Catholic condemnation of Galileo, for instance, as well as the geocentric theory and put Galileo in jail. Only the lunatic fringe wants to resurrect Geocentrism: it is a dead issue with huge amounts of evidence in favor of the Heliocentric theory. Smith wasn’t to return to the Geocentrism because the Heliocentric theory of Galileo and Copernicus were “formerly heretical, because [they were] expressly contrary to the Holy scriptures”. The “holy” books are clearly falsified history and have no basis in reality. But to resurrect the fictional Resurrection he wants to reinstate heresy hunting. He claims falsely that “heliocentrism has proved to be scientifically untenable and in fact the palm of victory belongs to the to the wise and saintly Cardinal Bellarmine”¹⁴⁵ Mr. Smith is just dreaming here, and it is vicious dream indeed. Cardinal Bellarmine was a fanatic who was one of the judges who at the trial of Giordano Bruno, and concurred in the decision which condemned him to be burnt to death as an obstinate heretic. So Smith sees this killer and fanatic as a “saint”. Bellarmine also was instrumental in

¹⁴⁴ The traditionalists hate free choice and I heard Wolfgang and Rama denounce “picking and choosing” more than once. Robert Orsi writes “Consider the phrase, “I am spiritual but not religious,” which serves as a mantra of modern men and women in the United States. What does it mean to juxtapose “spiritual” and “religious” in this way? It means my religion is interior, self-determined, individual, free of authority; my religion is about ethics and not about bizarre events, and my ethics are a matter of personal choice, not of law; I take orders from no one.”... Traditionalists hate this free choice and want only top down authoritarian religion and politics, like the grey clad misogynist mullahs of Iran or the Catholic Clergy. Of course the narcissist inwardness that results from this attitude brings its own set of problems, one of the worst being that New Agers become selfish and apathetic to the political reality of a corporate culture that exploits them, much to the pleasure of the corporate elite. The more atomized the population the better it is for business. Feel good, don’t think, begin within, “follow your bliss”---are all formulas for a pacified population that can be exploited endlessly. Inwardness is all that matters for them.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. 149

the outrageous condemnation of Galileo, when Galileo was right and the earth is not the center of the universe. It is true that Galileo got various things wrong, such as that the tides are caused by the sun alone, when they are caused by the gravity of the sun and moon together. But history is right that the Church was wrong to silence his views.

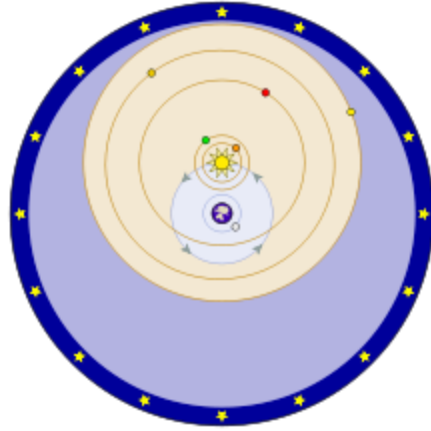
Galileo he was right that the earth moves, as should have been inferred from watching a lunar eclipse, which I myself have seen the shadow of the earth cross the moon in the span of a few hours. James Bradley proved that the earth moves around the sun when he discovered the aberration of light from distant stars in 1728. It is now known that the earth moves around the sun at a velocity=107,300 km/h (or if you prefer 67,062 miles per hour.) This is known for many reasons. There is further evidence of the earth's movement around the sun because of the Doppler effect, second because of the nature of the cloud formations and water patterns on the earth, toilets flush different directions north and south of the equator--- "Coriolis effect": third because meteors hit the midnight side of the earth much more often than the afternoon side, or in other words the side of the earth that speeds forward. There are less direct reasons as well, namely the rotation of all the other planets around the sun, the differential of the orbits of the various planets which deviate above or below the plane of the solar system, relative to the axis of the earth which is constant relative to the north star. The seasons too, indicate the revolution of the sun around the earth. Foucault's pendulum shows the rotation of the earth on its axis. Smith neglected to look any of this up. He is a bad scientist who does not do his research. He seems only to read the creationist press, which is tantamount to reading no science at all. Galileo already grasped something of it when he recorded Venus's phases as it revolved around the sun for a year.

It became clear that what really turns Smith on is the sentimental idea of the medieval conception of the earth-centered, god dominated cosmos dominated by priests who dictate reality to laymen, who are not allowed to read books that might educate them to think based on real observations. He can't let it medievalism go--- so he tries to repackage the merely symbolist and

rather kitschy medieval conception of the universe as co-existing side by side with the physical universe that science studies. He tries to hold up both geocentrism and solar centrism, in each case because they are symbolic. But symbolism is not science but superstition. He tries to claim that the religious alone can truly love the stars. He writes of the wonderful statement by Kant about the wonder of the stars above and the moral law within us: “how strange that this prosaic rationalist, whose philosophy is irreconcilable with the *Sophia Perennis*, could still sense, however dimly, a connection between the ‘star spangled sky’ and the ‘moral law’, deep in the heart of man.”¹⁴⁶ What arrogance this disparagement of Kant indicated. Many atheists not only see the sky with deep wonder, but are at the forefront of moral struggles to help nature, animals and humanity in ways that Smith, bunkered in his escape from reality into the medieval mind, cannot envision or understand.

Several centuries after the scientific revolution pseudo-science and anti-science attitudes are still common, due to religion and right-wing politics. Smith quotes many discredited Bible scholars, indeed his book, The Wisdom of Ancient Cosmology, is something of a catalogue of 20th century anti-science crackpots, including Smith himself. Smith seems to gravitate toward bogus science and creationists who pose as scientists such people I have already mentioned: Price, Guy Berthault, Dewar, Michael Behe, among others. Smith quote Walter Van der Kamp’s bogus claim that the earth does not move. Smith holds Van der Kamp in high repute. Von der Kamp features prominently in the tidy, neat and profound little book by John Grant called Bogus Science which is about pseudo-scientists, who, like Van der Kamp and Smith, distort science to pander ideological fictions. Smith likes the ideas of Van der Kamp who subscribes to the system of Tycho Brahe, who thought the sun goes around the earth but all the other planets go around the sun. Like this:

¹⁴⁶ Smith, *Cosmology* Pg. 141



Tycho Brahe's geocentric system

Brahe's absurd idea is impossible for various reasons. Mars orbit crosses the sun in various places and there would have long ago been a collision. There is further and more importantly the physical impossibility for of the Tycho's scenario because the mass of the sun is so huge, it could never be a satellite of the tiny earth or any of the planets, it must always the center of the orbits of all the planets. Newton understood this, as did Einstein. Why would Smith push such an absurd idea ?

John Grant speculates about the procedure of many pseudo-scientists. He explains the immunity to reason and evidence that creationists suffer from is due to their religious fanaticism. He notes that when Geocentrists and Creationists

“talk much about science but rarely focus on it, instead reverting to their own their own readings of the Bible, which interpretations they insist can be backed up by the discoveries of science. Pressed to identify the discoveries to which they are referring their tendency is to ignore the great bulk of scientific knowledge in order to nick pick over difficulties of detail they perceive science to have”

This is Smith's procedure. He only quotes discredited creationist sources.

Another bogus source he quotes is David Russell Humphreys, and others. Humphreys calls himself a “Creationist physicist”. Wolfgang Smith also, evidently, is a “Creationist physicist”— but these titles are specious because there are no creationists who have made any contributions to science or physics in any way.¹⁴⁷ Creation science is pseudo-science. Smith wildly claims that quantum mechanics justifies the Biblical Genesis .¹⁴⁸ He makes bizarre quantum leaps beyond common sense. He defies the Big Bang theory because he saw it declared in a Newspaper, but really it is not a dogma and the steady state theory has not been entirely ruled out either. He doesn’t seem to know the first thing about astronomy. It progresses by small discoveries and not enough is known to make definitive pronouncements about the origin of the universe. No one really knows. It certainly is not the Bible that will tell us anything about the structure of the universe. The Big Bang has more evidence on its side than other theories, but no one really knows much about it. Most of what is said about it is admitted to be speculation and mathematical postulations.

¹⁴⁷ Smith quotes Fred Hoyle (1915-2001) many times. One Bio says of Hoyle that “He elevated Stonehenge, a pile of rocks, to cosmic importance while degrading Darwin’s work, sensing that Darwin’s theories of natural selection somehow challenged his own ideas about life originating in outer space” Hoyle was a controversial English scientist, who sometimes is used by anti-evolutionists because he believed some extraterrestrial has perhaps “designed life”. His ideas, like “panspermia” are unorthodox and contested. He wrote science fiction. Christopher Hitchens notes in his book God is not Great that Hoyle was an “ex-agnostic who became infatuated with the idea of “design,” .(pg 65) Hoyle was against the big bang, like Smith.

“ Panspermia proposes that life which can survive the effects of space, such as extremophile bacteria, become trapped in debris that’s ejected into space after collisions between planets which harbor life and Small Solar System Bodies”

¹⁴⁸ Smith claims in The Wisdom of Ancient Cosmology that the “corporeal world does in fact accord with the data of Genesis”---(pg. 108 and 108-110) Of course he has a bizarre notion of what “corporeal” means as I discuss further on. The story of Genesis is a fiction. Smith claims falsely that the “profane” understanding of Genesis is “fundamentalist”. He opposes fundamentalist to mystical. Science to Smith is what is “profane” and he says the word ‘profane’, as Nazis used to say “Jew”, with a mixture of hatred and ridicule. In fact the Church father’s view of Genesis is quite childish compared to the amazingly profundity of the real discoveries of physics and astronomy. Genesis is fiction: Galaxies are real. Jesus is a cardboard cutout, whereas DNA is helping cure people of serious diseases. Smith tries hard not to be a fundamentalists but ends up being one anyway. He goes beyond the fundamentalists in that he condemns all of science, even Newton, Galileo and Copernicus.

Smith tries to uphold the idea of bodily resurrection, one of the more ridiculous ideas of the Catholic Church. He writes this in a chapter about “celestial corporeality” for instance, to indulge a taste of imaginary resurrections and bodies alive in heavenly realms, transfigurations, and other mythic entities of an imaginary kind. Bertrand Russell rightly discusses the absurdity of the Christian idea of bodily resurrection in his “Outline of Intellectual Rubbish”. Russell notes that Wolfgang’s Smith’s intellectual hero, Thomas Aquinas, was deeply puzzled by how cannibals will be “properly roasted in hell” when “all of his body is restored to its original owners”. Indeed, it is a very funny question, in a black humor sort of way. How will god separate all the ‘souls’ that a given cannibal might have eaten? Russell notes in regard to the similar problem of cremated bodies that

“collecting particles from the air and undoing the chemical work of combustion would be somewhat laborious, but it is surely blasphemous to suppose that such a work is impossible for a Deity. I conclude that the objection to cremation implies grave heresy. But I doubt my opinion will carry much weight with the orthodox” ¹⁴⁹

Yes, Russell was a humorist, sometimes. Many of the dogmas of the church seem very silly now. In any case, Smith believes all the stuff the Church “fathers” dictated as obligatory on pain of hell fire. He tries to impose the superstitions from the past onto science.

Smith’s work is really about a personal, private struggle inside him between “perennial philosophy” and a love of science that is being destroyed and undermined by the power of magical thinking and religious delusions. He really

¹⁴⁹ Hitchens, Christopher. The Portable Atheist, Philadelphia, De Capo Press, 2007 pg. 185

shouldn't try to impose his backwards views of science on others. He thinks there is virtue in doing so, because he has inculcated his brain with 'Them verses Us' thinking. If questioned Smith would probably claim persecution and martyrdom and say the devil is after him, But all that is nonsense too. But the truth is that science is not at all what he says it is and he needs to give up pretending to be a scientist and retire to a monastery. This would be an escape from reality into the pure fiction of religion. That is the way he has been tending all these years. He told me once he intended to retire to near a monastery near Coeur D'Alene, Idaho, but that never happened apparently.

The crux of Smith's work in the last 15 years rests on a bogus distinction he made up. He created a false distinction between the "corporeal" and the "physical" domains, which he goes to great lengths to try to make real, when in fact it is merely a figment of his imagination, or rather of the medieval and Greek imagination. The traditionalists believe in the theory of Archetypes derived from Plato which situates everything in an imaginary "great chain of being". Martin Lings writes that

"the language of symbolism , which is part of man's primordial heritage is based on this hierarchy of the different degrees of the universe... every terrestrial object is the outcome of a series of projections, from Divine to spiritual, from spiritual to psychic from psychic to corporeal."¹⁵⁰

This theory of the GCB or "great chain of being" has no evidence for it at all and is merely a fiction created by Plato, Aristotle and the Church fathers. The notion of a 'primordial heritage' that has any real basis in actuality is also a

¹⁵⁰ Lings. Martin. The Eleventh Hour. UK Quintessentia. Pg. 36 Lings also wrote books about the prophet Muhammad, and the Sufi Shaykh Al Alawi. In both case his books are largely poetic inventions of a hagiographical kind and not at all objective biographies. Lings poetic affections distort his thinking throughout his work. This made talking to him about anything real or objective virtually impossible, unless his affections were somehow trained to it. He was an obedient follower and not a man who thought much.

His slavish adulation for Schuon finally sickened me, when this adulation flew in the face of all the evidence I knew was factually true.

fiction. The idea of the great chain is merely a fictional and mythic illusion purported to describe aspects of reality, passed down from the Greeks and others. The corporeal—that is our bodies and selves—and the bodies of all that is—in short, just about everything--- is demeaned in this absurd system to the lowest grade of this medieval scale of projections. Smith places the physical below the corporeal in a typical attempt to degrade reality beneath imaginary unfounded metaphysical concepts. In fact, what Smith misunderstands is that the corporeal and the physical are the same thing. They are more or less cognate, synonymous terms. He betrays Occam's razor and "multiplies entities without necessity" (*Entia non sunt multiplicanda sine necessitate*). Occam's razor means 'to not create distinctions without a difference' or do not multiply entities beyond necessity", (ontological parsimony).¹⁵¹ Smith is a true son of Augustine and Aquinas, the scholastics who wanted to create endless distinctions without a difference--- count angels of the heads of pins. Augustine and other Christian dogmatists presided over The "Closing of the Western Mind". Charles Freeman, author of the book called the Closing of the Western Mind, rightly charges Christianity with repressing Greek science and causing a 1000 years of ignorance to reign. Smith--- and the traditionalists in general want to return us to those same Dark Ages . They want a renewal of the 'closing of the western mind".

Smith sets up a medieval hierarchy by setting up the fiction of the bifurcated world of the corporeal above the physical. The notion of the "great chain of being" he invokes by doing this is another fabrication. He wants to fabricate reality and to abuse science so as to propagandize for religion. The corporeal for Smith isn't just its dictionary definition as 'pertaining to the body or bodies'-- rather Smith is an elitist. He is prone to the same theofascism that I have discussed all through this book. He thinks science has no poetry, and

¹⁵¹ Occam did not say this exactly, but he did say *Frustra fit per plura quod potest fieri per pauciora* [It is futile to do with more things that which can be done with fewer]. Which amounts to same thing. (Thorburn, 1918, pp. 352–3; Kneale and Kneale, 1962, p. 243 Bertrand Russell's formulation of this idea is the best. He said "Whenever possible, substitute constructions out of known entities for inferences to unknown entities." In other words, do not make things up.

does not realize that science is “¹⁵²the poetry of reality”, the only poetry that really matters. Smith also believes in imaginary faculty called the “Intellect”—which is what Guenon and Schuon claim too, falsely since the faculty is just the subjective mind sunk in imaginary dreams of romantic ‘essences’ and “transcendent” states of self hyp-gnosis or suggestion. So in this context Smith’s effort to introduce the idea of the ‘corporeal’ is really to re-impose medieval or Ptolemaic ideology on modern science, after the 500 years it took us to get rid of that nonsense. He claims to be transcending “bifurcations” when in fact he slices the existing world right down the middle into quantum physical things against corporeal bodily things, when they are the same thing.

What Smith fears is that those favorite concepts of romantic irrationalists and haters of science—the concepts of “transcendence” and “essence”—would be lost. For Smith only these fictions are truly real, so everything that is actually real that science describes must be unreal. Smith resembles Christ or Plotinus who also hated the world. Plotinus said “Certainly no reproach can rightly be brought against this world save only that it is not That.” (Plotinus, *Enneads*, V,8,8) For Plotinus “That” or ‘God’ is everything, the world is nothing. Schuon reiterates this same mystical nonsense when he says that “existence is a sin to which no other can be compared”.¹⁵³

¹⁵² This lovely phrase is used by Richard Dawkins. See his *Unweaving the Rainbow* (subtitled “Science, Delusion and the Appetite for Wonder”) 1998, this is one of the best books on science and poetry written in many years. Dawkins writes that “Science is poetic, ought to be poetic, has much to learn from poets and should press good poetic imagery and metaphor into its inspirational service.” He also rightly takes many poets to task for spreading superstition and nonsense.

¹⁵³ In the *Diamond Sutra* Buddhist text, Chapter 32 Buddha is supposed to have said this is how to contemplate our conditioned existence in this fleeting world:”

“Like a tiny drop of dew, or a bubble floating in a stream;
Like a flash of lightning in a summer cloud,
Or a flickering lamp, an illusion, a phantom, or a dream.”
“So is all conditioned existence to be seen.”

This is another way of saying existence is worthless. Thus Buddhists cling to a dream of the void, which is really nothing, but they pretend is everything. The idea of enlightenment or satori as the imaginary opposite of “conditioned existence” is a myth, or fiction, and those who claim it are charlatans, beginning with the myth of the Buddha or the Hindu caste idea of ‘liberation’ from the “wheel of birth and death”. While suffering is real, the solution to it is hardly the negation of existence, on the contrary, existence and those who suffer is all that matters. Try to soothe and stop suffering of all species is what humans can do, but have failed to do as yet.

Smith desperately wants to defeat modern science and bring back medieval ideology. To this end he bifurcates reality into the Physical and the Corporeal to try to bring back Geocentrism, Platonic Archetypes, and the Bible as the criterion of truth. He sets up an arcane hierarchy, that favorite obsession of all Traditionalists, who love to rank and order things in elitist, caste ridden, medieval, Platonic or anti-democratic Ladder of Creation: The “great chain of being” Smith says he wants to restore the discredited “great chain of being” or *scala naturae*, which was a horrific system of social engineering that forced people into feudal orders and castes and led to terrible social strife and suffering throughout the middle ages up unto the French Revolution, which itself was a justified war against such mandated social inequalities. I am not excusing the injustices of Robespierre here, I am merely stating that the French Revolution was an inevitability and one that did for more good than harm. The rottenness of the upper classes of those days demanded revolution, rather as corporate corruption demands it now. The rottenness of Robespierre and Napoleon was proof that the revolution bit off more than it was ready to chew. It is an ongoing revolution that is still in progress today. The English, American and French Revolution as well as science and Darwinism broke the “great chain of being” forever and opens us to further improvement and rights for all. To include all species in the search for rights and end to suffering is what the future must be if we are to survive with others on earth.

There is allot of Quantum Quackery in Smith and the quackery grows out of the artificial distinctions between corporeal and physical. He misunderstands Descartes who is really one of the fathers of modern science and should be praised and not damned. He misunderstands Alfred Whitehead and the idea of the “bifurcation” between mind and body that Descartes’ system seemed to have created. What is worse is that Smith follows out those misunderstandings as an excuse to import into science all sorts of spiritual rubbish and crack pot creationist ideas that don’t belong there. It is terribly

sad to watch this man I once admired do this to himself and the world he lives in.

Furthermore, I see him take this artificial distinction and use it to condemn the entire existing world. He says that the distinction between the physical and corporeal “forces us to conclude that the physical domain itself came into existence at the time of the fall, and will cease to exist when the “new heavens and the new earth” shall come to be.” This is pure fantasy, and he extends his fantasy to conclude that “physical theory retains merely a formal sense; in other words, it becomes fictitious”.¹⁵⁴ In other words, he has reduced the existing world to fiction, or what the Hindus call Maya, and when he does this, he has entered squarely into the Insanity of Religion, the world hating schizophrenia that despises the actual and wants to disappear into the imaginal in a leap toward “inward” romantic death and apocalypse. Smith has accepted to “Transcendental Delusion” of the religions.

So then, Smith has badly read Aristotle and is out there in the ozone of mythology acting as if the ancient ideologies are real. Smith tries to resurrect the old medieval idea of “substance” and “essence”, both long since discredited as having any real meaning—and certainly no scientific meaning. What he really wants to do is to promote private feeling over verifiable evidence, romantic nostalgia for medieval religion (which he calls this esoterism”) over science.

The terms “essence” and “substance” s derive form Aristotle and the Scholastics, such as Aquinas ¹⁵⁵, and denote non-existent imaginary mysteries

¹⁵⁴ Ibid pg. 123

¹⁵⁵ Smith once sent me a book of writings by Aquinas. I read it and didn't like Aquinas at all. His politics are monstrous. In the philosophy of Aquinas the Aristotelian concept of universals would be combined, rather ambiguously, with the Platonic position. The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 decided the issue of the Church's stand on the subject of universals and this was reinforced by Trent. This subject was the central philosophical issue of the Middle Ages. The Church decided in favor of the Realist position, more or less, rather than the Nominalist position. The Realist position was essentially Platonic, and summarized in the Scholastic formula, “Universalis Ante Rem”; the universal is prior to the particular thing, or the idea comes before the physical. This is basically Smith's position, and leads to the spiritual fascism of Innocent the III. The Nominalist position states “ Universalis Post Rem”—or universals come after things. It is this latter view that is obviously the true one. The Nominalist position formed the conceptual

that are pretended to subsist inside matter and ourselves. The concept of ‘essence’ is merely a linguistic convention, as when one says, the essence of food is the taste, referring to some aspect of food that if one changed it, it would lose its identity. Bertrand Russell notes that the concepts of “essence” and “substance”, are a transference to metaphysics of what is only a linguistic convenience” ¹⁵⁶ Essence and substance are merely “convenient ways to collecting events into bundles”, Russell says. The substance of a matter is merely a summary, the essence of a book might be a plot or a character,-- the choice of what the essence is arbitrary and will differ whoever is speaking of the matter. In short the idea of essence and substance is nothing to build a theory of the world on unless you want it to be false, vague and muddle headed. The idea of ‘essence’ is usually made up of various subjective analogies, or “analogical transpositions” in Guenon’s words. Platonic archetypes are merely magnified or poetic analogies.. Making analogies is essential to fabricating fictions and religions. The correspondence theory of truth pushed by Swedenbourg, Boehme, Baudelaire, Dylan Thomas, Yeats and many others is just such a theory of analogy. Religion is also generated by analogies. God is like light, like the heavens, like the human heart etc. Out of such analogies an “essence” is imagined, which does not actually exist, but is an extrapolated fabrication. Boehme’s theory fo signatures depends on just these sorts of inklings and intuited relationships between ideas and things. Baudelaire poem on Correspondences likewise celebrates a fabricated “unity”.

Like long echoes that intermingle from afar
In a dark and profound unity,
Vast like the night and like the light,
The perfumes, the colors and the sounds respond.

basis of what would become science. This is not to say that Nominalism was a scientific position, rather it expressed the possibility in idea form of what would become science in practice two centuries later, between the period of Roger and Francis Bacon, Da Vinci, Galileo and Newton. Smith lives in a nostalgic dream longing for a dead system of thought that some not correspond with reality at all. That is why he much delude himself about evolution and quantum mechanics and promote pseudo-science to try to justify himself.

¹⁵⁶ Russell, Bertrand, History of Philosophy, NY, Simon and Shuster 1945, pg. 201

. Religion grew from just this sort of “essences” invented, conflated, mythologized and fabricated from the free association of the imagination. ¹⁵⁷

So, Smith says that the idea of essence is absolutely essential to his system. He says that

“ If the stellar light, which the ancients thought to be of celestial origin, and which Plato viewed as the carrier of intelligible essences--- if that light fails, the cosmos and all that it contains is reduced to nothingness. .. the drift into nihilism corresponds precisely to the loss of substance in the physicists world view. Culture and cosmology are intimately connected, and it appears that when the prevailing cosmology flattens, so does the culture” ¹⁵⁸

As Russell has said, essence is really just linguistic convenience. What Smith is really saying is he will lose his most cherished illusions if the muddleheaded idea of Platonic essences is not retained and he will feel empty. This is merely a philosophy of petulance. Believers in such a way of thought think their self-pity is metaphysical, when it is not, as birds still sing and the sun rises, whether these self-pitying philosophers like it or not. Nature does not need essences at all. If you examine why he uses the word “flattens” here, it tells a great deal about Smith. He equates the Scholastic ideology of substance and essence with hierarchy and says that “it is , as always, the loss of substance, of *hierarchy* in fact, that leads to democratization of what remains.” (emphasis mine) “Democratization” is presumably the “nothingness”

¹⁵⁷ Other advocates of a correspondence theory of religion and poetry are Plato, Donne, Blake Rimbaud, Verlaine and others.

¹⁵⁸ Smith, Wolfgang, Ancient Cosmology Ibid. pg 145

that is “flattened” if you get rid of Scholastic ideology. So Smith hates modern science because it tends to support democracy. He is sad about sharing with others. Existence is only good for the chosen elite, he thinks. Transcendence is merely the essences of things made into a mental mirage and people call this idea god. The elaborate construction of the Platonic idea of God as extrapolated analogies built up into an edifice of fake Eidos or gods can only be maintained by political fiat. Here we are back in theocratic fascism again.

No wonder Smith likes the Inquisitor Bellarmine and was glad that Galileo was attacked by the Inquisition and put under house arrest. This turns out to be Smith’s greatest fear, he is terrorized that delusional ideas like essence should be kept out of science. His distinction between the corporeal and the physical is already muddleheaded. But he goes further and says that when one reduces the corporeal to the physical, “one destroys the dimension of transcendence, verticality, of “the above”. The celestial is reduced to the terrestrial; the cosmos is homogenized—democratized, one could almost say” --- Yes, exactly. What he fears is people, humanity, earth and reality. He hates fairness and equality. We don’t need fictional systems of adult make-believe like the Aquinian, Eckhartian and Augustinian systems that Smith devoted his life to. He is welcome to languish in all that monastic and transcendental Eucharistic nonsense in private. But it is not reality. The reality is that those who Smith admires most, say Augustine, were anti-intellectual cranks. Augustine even admits this openly when he attacks curiosity, the fountain of science and says:

“There is another form of temptation, even more fraught with danger. This is the disease of curiosity. It is this that drives us to try and discover the secrets of nature which are beyond our understanding, which can avail us nothing and which man should not wish to learn”¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ Quoted in Dawkins, The God Delusion page 132-133

This sort of cramped and toxic view of science and inquiry led to the Dark Ages, over which anti-intellectuals like Augustine presided in repressive glory. To call curiosity a “disease” is such an ignorant thing to say, it takes one breath away. Children are naturally curious. Beating it out of them with repressive nuns and priest pounding desks while discoursing on hell with not solve the problem Religion extolls religious ‘fitness’, which is really the inculcation fo delusions as religion has no real claim to increasing human evolutionary fitness. Augustine is virtually condemning of every human and animal child in the world---all of which are intensively curious. But then Augustine was childless and hated sex above all else. The absurdity of the Catholic church derives from such nonsense as Augustine and others write.

Augustine cares about the abstract “intellect” and deifies imaginative make believe in gods..... goes on to write that if we “obliterate hierarchy and nothing at all remains, in a word, ontological homogeneity is tantamount to non-existence” This is really outlandish stuff. Smith is terrorized by the thought of that his god delusions will be ‘flattened’ and his geocentric delusions will collapse. Democracy is not the evil he imagines. When gods dissolve as they inevitably do, nothing is lost really. When I gave up Gods, the world was so much clearer and better. I had my own ironic “road to Damascus” and the ‘scales’ of religion finally fell off my eyes. The sky is no longer an “icon” the stars are not symbols, species are what they are and need not be denigrated as not being human. Everything has its own worth.

Smith and other creationists do not yet realize that the French Revolution already happened. All that ends when Hierarchy is gotten rid of is decadent gods, kings, and phony bloodlines of heredity are abolished. It is a good thing that geocentricism is gone and that the sun is no longer a symbol of esoterist ‘gnosis” . “Gnosis” was merely the false vanity of elitist and theocratic autocrats anyway. Smith wrote that science is the “Bible of the Anti-Christ” which is crazy nonsense. The bible was a fabrication and the anti-Christ is merely another made up fiction to complement or compensate for the invented and mythic Christ. Smith tries to claim that scientists are the “perverse race”

that St Malachy referred to in some bogus prophecies he made. He wants to make scientists into a race everyone should hate. Strange that Smith would try to reduce scientists to a “race”, as if they were despised and deformed or something.¹⁶⁰ Smith is a racist in disguise, a man full of hate and prejudice who hides these behind exalted metaphysics. This sudden need to express a racist hatred against scientists is curious, as if evokes anti-Semitism of racism against Native Americans of Africans. But this is what happens when you put essences before existences, and denigrate people without real evidence. Scientists are not a race and not perverse either.

So Smith’s book The Wisdom of Ancient Cosmology is certainly not wise and really it is a very bad book that recommends that we go back to the theocratic tyranny of Innocent the III and Aquinas. In his conclusion Smith creates a plea for inequality and hierarchy. He wants to go back to Platonic autocracy, Catholic dictatorship, in a word, spiritual fascism. He hates democracy. Democracy causes our universe to “flatten” he says repeatedly, as if trying to convince himself. Actually flat earth was totally the creation of Christians. But never mind, Smith is out for “verticality” another word that is a code word or jargon for inequality and dictatorships. He wants “verticality” and ‘inwardness’, unaware that “verticality” is a meaningless category,¹⁶¹ and “inwardness” is a word for subjectivity and a refusal to admit there is a real world outside us. Smith “feels” the holy spirit told him ‘within’ that Christian Gnosis is sublime so it must be true and Smith feels obliged to write all sorts of

¹⁶⁰ Smith writes about multi Worlds theory with bitter humor that” It appears that in the egalitarian age even universes have been accorded equal rights. Whatever might be said for these theories, equating them with democracy or rights is merely reduction ad absurdum.

¹⁶¹ Schuon claimed to be “vertical” in his marriages, namely, God blessed them “esoterically” whereas his “exoteric” marriages were meaningless. This is self-serving nonsense. Smith’s use of the concepts verticality and esoteric are similar, he uses jargon that has no real meaning. I have known a few hundred “esoteric” pretenders and I can tell you, not a single one of them had any real superiority over anyone I’ve met who believes in no religion at all. On the contrary in fact, so called ‘atheists’ I have known, in many cases, are kinder and better people, smarter and less prone to bragging. The claim to possess “gnosis” is invariably a claim to special election and such people are prone to become intolerable cranks and elitists. Mr. Smith is a proud and arrogant man who misuses science and promotes himself as a sort of Christian magus or gnostic, when actually he is not an “elite” at all. He is a bit of an anti-science charlatan who wants to abuse reason and support superstition.

pompous books quoting church fathers proving the irrational. Christian gnosis is really just a gossamer figment of the ancient imagination, made up by monks and scholars feeding one each other's fictional insights. Religion is a mistake of false analogies and misunderstood essences. Smith is prone to a romantic irrationalism. In a nutshell Smith creates his 'truth' out of thin air.

Smith is no scientist, though he pretends to be one. He is an irrationalist who wants inequality, to increase the disparity between the poor and the rich, to make life harder for the middle class, to give more power to elites and unjust leaders, more hierarchy and division. The main point of hierarchy is to promote the priests and believers by spreading irrational hatreds and racist essentializations. Those who do not believe are "sinners", devils or the profane. Smith loves these vague essentializations, vague generalizations, as it is the preferred mode of thinking of the irrational.

Smith ends his book with a big embrace of Hossein Nasr, a self-appointed "Shaykh" who was involved with Schuon for years and tries to cover up for him. Nasr says that Smith's easily debunked book is not only one of the most profoundly amazing books ever written but that Smith's bogus notions about science have a basic "relation to perennial philosophy". This really very empty, outdated and ignorant "philosophy" is what Nasr says he has believed since "my student days". Unable to adapt to new information and adjust to new evidence, Nasr is proud of his bigoted dogmatism, his refusal to change or learn anything new. So Nasr was already deluded about the relation of science and religion since his student days and stubbornly holds to his ignorance out of false pride. Nasr and Smith want to foist this pseudo-scientific book on the world, since the book is published by Nasr's foundation for Traditional Studies. Unwilling to change, these are medieval thinkers really don't belong in our time, and those who accept their kooky ideas belong with other flat-earthers and creationists. They send their minds back to the dark ages when false analogies ruled everything and transcendence made a horrendous caste system

possible. This is where they belong, in a past that was not good and no longer exists .

Traditionalism can only thrive where people want to return to ignorance, dogma and tyranny. It requires a backwards mentality, an outsider ethic of world despising fatalism and hate. There are few people who really want that. The Traditionalist message is addressed entirely to insiders and to those who might be profitably proselytized. Traditionalism can only thrive where people want to make the world stupid and retrograde. Rama Coomaraswamy said to me that “for all practical purposes the Schuon group has kind of dissolved into nothing apart from a few staunch holders on.” Those few hangers on are the ones who want to listen to pseudo-scientists like Wolfgang Smith.

Martin Lings put it best when he wrote that “in the modern world more cases of loss of religious faith are to be traced to the theory of evolution as their immediate cause than to anything else” --- this is correct and it is a good thing too. As Jonathon Miller points out in his wonderful [Atheism , A Brief History of Disbelief](#),¹⁶² historical understanding of the demise of religion is increasing dramatically. Darwinism clears away a lot of the superstitions and mysticism that has clogged the cultural mind for millennia. More and more people turn against the irrational, anti-scientific hucksters who exploit ignorance. The Darwinian theory is beautiful and true and you can see this if you will expose yourself to nature and how nature operates. Once a reasonable person sees the staggering evidence behind Darwin’s theory it is all very clear. Darwinism is not an “anti-myth” as Wolfgang Smith maintains. Evolution is a beautifully humane¹⁶³ and profound theory backed up by reality, evidence, botany, chemistry, physics, microbiology, paleontology, genetics, biology and tests, retests, verifications and peer review. Point by point Darwinism trumps

¹⁶² All three episodes can be seen here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVsb0lxv_Kg

¹⁶³ A wonderful book about Darwin’s humane and enlightened awareness of others is Adrian Desmond’s [Darwin’s Sacred Cause](#), which shows how Darwin was passionately opposed the slavery that still existed in his time and sought to end it. It also shows how his *Origin of the Species* is designed to encourage the understanding of diversity, a fact that makes many right wingers like Smith furious, since they want control by the few, not the many.

religion. In contrast the 'Religio Perennis' is just a rag-tag concert of cranks and poseurs promoting ambiguous myths and fictions all mashed together into an esoteric soup of pastiched superstitions. ¹⁶⁴ Few stay in it long. It fades into antiquarian obscurity, as it should. In a decade or two it will be as dead as Greek and Roman gods; as dead as the fascism of Mussolini. That is to the good.

The anti-science movement has failed utterly. There are clearly things that are wrong with our world and need changing. Clearly too, science is regularly abused by corporations, insurance companies and governments. The way to change that is to get insurance companies out of medicine and limit, regulate and tax corporations into a more submissive role in our society. ¹⁶⁵ Corporate CEOs should be downsized, the 'compensation' packages severely cut and their wealth spread among employees and taxed for others. The unjust ideal of the CEO and the corporate mechanism of stockholder and board members needs to be changed, removed or altered to be fair and just towards those who actually do the work. Profit sharing is a good idea, within limits. Setting up systems and regulations that limit power and wealth and redistribute them is a good idea. Farming the world's poor regions for cheap labor should be penalized or at least taxed much more heavily so as to preserve labor and incomes here. People in other countries should be helped to preserve sustainable and ecological smart policy. But science itself should be strengthened and taught much more carefully and rigorously in our schools. The corporate takeover of colleges and universities must be stopped, Academic freedom preserved. Science has a great role to play in history and one of its many goals will be to give a retrospective account of religion: why it occurred and why it is no longer useful to humanity. What good religion did do can be isolated from delusional superstitions and developed in "secular" contexts.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. The Transformist Illusion by Douglas Dewar. Review by Martin Lings

¹⁶⁵ It would be useful to hold insurance company executives personally responsible for the murders regularly committed by insurance companies when they deny care to policy holders when they are very sick. Many of them would then be in prison. This happens routinely and is largely unreported.

