

A SHORT HISTORY OF PHYSICS AND WITCHCRAFT **by Mary R. Hopkins**

This paper explores how women may lead the way into the new paradigm shift when women's inborn intuition is validated by 20th century physics: when the paranormal becomes normal.

Art and Myth

For hundreds and thousands of years human societies were glued together by oral tradition. Before written history there were 800,000 years of human activity and mythic life that were documented only by visual art. These millennia are designated Pre-historic. Properly, they should be designated Pre-Literate. Only recently have a literate people created tribal scriptures, composed and distributed by men about male gods, which document Babylonian, Hindu, Jewish, and Christian myths. As a result, the unwritten myths that supported and guided women's lives have fallen out of human memory.

If we search for clues in the history of the Paleolithic or preliterate period of our human existence, thirty five to forty thousand years ago, we find a distinct genre of little sculptures of well endowed little women that were made over a period of fifteen thousand years. These statuettes with exaggerated breasts, stomachs and buttocks have been found in archeological sites from Spain on the Atlantic coast to the Siberian shores of the Pacific. Many have similar physical and geometrical attributes; apparently they were sculpted to be held in the hand. Do they represent a religious myth which lasted fifteen thousand years and spread across two continents? Probably.

Clearly the myth celebrated by this art is wonder at the power of a human mother. Collectively that mother is ingrained in all of human experience and psychiatrist Carl Jung¹⁵ proposed that She is a part of our Collective Unconscious. I could begin to understand Paleolithic art when I came to understand the full meaning of the holographic universe as put forth by physicists Karl Pribram²⁵ and David Bohm.²⁴ This theory explains why each part of our brain, or mind, or soul or all three contain the whole of human experience. Today, as then, this symbol of woman as a great mother reflects the need of every anxious child. In academic circles psychologists recognize that such a human need for comfort can be assuaged by a "transitional object."³⁶ Both then and now all children share a common anxiety about separating from their mother, and holding a little figurine of her could meet this primal need. These figurines of human creativity may signal the beginning of religion, a religion within which everyone knew that they were immanent or one with nature, not transcendent or apart from nature. The Christian ideal, to transcend our earth and rise to heaven free of physical desire, is a modern

concept. Our new shift, a return to unity with all of creation in order to save the earth, makes our modern environmental movement a religious one.

When I drop my modern assumptions of culture and pare my self down to a human who mysteriously emerged from a great body, found my nourishment and greatest safety in, on, and under enormous female bellies, I might feel the need of a comforting little reminder even an adult. Can I put the pieces of this puzzle together to suppose that this is the art of a culture that worshiped The Great Mother? Mothers have the physical power to create new life, not only other females, but something different from themselves, males. They then, with unbelievable altruism, keep the new being alive with milky breasts full of perfect nourishment. The astonishment I feel when I look at this with Paleolithic eyes fills me with awe: I am in the presence of magic. And it is that very emotion, awe, which is also shared with our ancient grandparents. We worship that which inspires awe in us.

“Shifts Happen” reads the little button a young woman gave to me with a giggle. When many small cultural changes collect and reach a large enough accumulation they cause cultural change, called a Paradigm Shift.¹⁹ In prehistoric history paradigm shifts are easy to recognize. They are reflected in the changes in art of late pre-literate history. The carved figures of women lose the easy flow of their curves, becoming rigid and angular. Later, symbols are painted on them, the use of which suggests that alphabets are emerging.²⁹ The feel of a shape of the statuettes in the hand is now a very distant experience from the emotional recognition of the actual contact with mother’s body. The religious myth shifts from adoration of the Creatrix to the use of the cold symbols of an alphabet, which do not immediately connect us with our senses or bring comfort and allay anxiety. Human Cosmology has shifted.

Now an ancient door creaks open and we peek at the first historic art accompanied by written myth. The earliest alphabets were the Sumerian cuneiform and Egyptian hieroglyphic. In Babylonia cuneiform was used to write down the myth about the great goddess Inanna. The first visible depiction of this goddess appears on a vase from 4000 B.C.E. (Before Common Era). At that time she is shown in a dignified pose, a crown on her head and arms raised in praise of the harvest from the farmers of Uruk. The myth was written down in approximately 2300 B.C.E., scores of generations after it was first heard. Once it was written, this Sumerian myth of the goddess Inanna can be traced from the Anatolian Plateau in what is now Turkey. We find that she was a fully-realized female with divine and political powers. A surviving poem describes her visit to the Underworld when she brought her sister, Ereshkigal out of hell and sent her consort, Dumuzi down to take her place.³⁷

The Rise of Patriarchy

Around 750 B.C.E., across the Aegean Sea in present day Greece, images of a fierce figure, definitely a woman as she has breasts, appeared in bas relief and on vases. An Ereshkigal type, the Gorgon, emerged as winged, with flailing arms, running legs, a snake wrapped around her waist and her hair bristling with serpents. She is the epitome of womanly fury, pop-eyed with an enormous grinning mouth and protruding tongue bracketed with boar tusks. We find her images in art history at the time that Greek religious myth begins to relate that Zeus and his brothers raped the goddesses. From what we know now, Athena, Diana and Demeter were the only goddesses left with their dignity intact.

In a patriarchal society this frightening goddess figure had to be banished. Apparently she never carried a weapon of any kind, but if a man looked at her he was turned to stone. (Jungian analysis: became impotent.) Athena, who was not born of woman but from the brow of Zeus, was called upon to do the job. She hired an assassin who cleverly used a mirror to avoid looking in the eye of this angry woman, now named Medusa by the Romans. Later images of Athena show her with the head of the Gorgon pinned to her breast as a trophy of patriarchal power. Still so powerful, even without a body, the visage of the angry woman was put on the shields of warriors to wilt their enemies. Never underestimate the power of an angry woman because she is alive and well today. In 1990, the poet Robert Bly wrote the signature book of the modern men's movement, calling it, *Iron John*.³ He uses this image in almost every chapter.

If religious myth, and then Holy Scripture, reduced women to being the property of males and legitimate victims of sexual assault, why were the men so afraid? What was it that frightened the male scribes so deeply that our sacred art, music and architecture has erased these old memories of The Great Mother, her nurture, creativity and unconditional love? Clearly the men needed laws. "Thou shalt not worship any other god but Him," was the first one. The character of a great goddess had to be balanced by the laws and justice of a male god. To correct this imbalance the Old Testament is partly a legal text, with Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Numbers establishing male religious authority over, and more powerful than, the needs of women and children. In the New Testament Paul of Tarsus partially reinforced that power.

Great religious traditions are fractured by denominations and sects. Jewish, Christian, and Islamic all have a spectrum of forms of worship and creeds which range from the dependence on outside authority such as written laws to inner mystical knowledge called "gnosis." To live in a community that observes and shares the same myth and legal system promotes feelings of safety and comfort. Others who feel constrained by religious law need to let their spirits soar into realms which cannot be described with words. In the face of the patriarchy's reliance on scripture over the last nine millennia, many mystics have retreated to caves, convents and artist colonies.

There is another aspect of women which can frighten both men and women. Religious literature is riddled with examples of miracles, but until the mid 19th century, only the Divine might create a miracle. A human who was perceived as exhibiting paranormal powers, such as anticipating something before it happened, seeing the body or hearing the voice of someone who had died, or healing a broken body, was condemned as a witch, tortured, hung or burned alive on a stake. For three centuries, in Northern Europe, over four million women died in this way. Some modern women, many of whom are just recovering from this terror, call those “The Burning Times.”^{32,27}

For example, the journals of George Fox (1624–1691), founder of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), indicated that he was fully familiar with his paranormal abilities and knew how to use them to advance his cause.²⁶ As a literate young man, Fox combed his Bible for religious guidance. Unsatisfied, he then left home to consult Anglican clergy for religious instruction because at that time the clergy were trained in the academies of Oxford or Cambridge. He did not find what he needed there and left in despair. Suddenly struck by an epiphany, he realized that spiritual instruction and guidance must come from that of the Divine within himself. He then declared that what the clergy had learned in the academies amounted to “notions.” “The Christ Within” became his “inner light” and he enjoined others to do likewise.²⁷ When he died his journals were published, but did not include the passages which dealt with his foresight, hearing the voice of God, healing broken bodies, and other mystical phenomena. These excised parts were not restored to print until the middle of the 20th century. What kept Fox from being killed as a witch was his care to attribute any and all impossible miracles of this sort to God.⁶

Fox also had a radical view of the role of women in organized religion. In Quaker meetings for worship, women were free to speak according to their spiritual leadings. Woman’s intuition and old wives’ tales were no longer a joke. Men were enjoined to listen to women. At this time, Christian marriage rituals spoke of trading daughters much like trading land or cattle, but Quaker marriage rituals began with the woman choosing the man she wanted to marry. Then, with the man’s agreement of course, a meeting for marriage took place in which the couple declared their intentions to the community and one another as they were led by the spirit.

In the Middle Ages every word in the Bible and the Quran was accepted as truth and no shadow of doubt must fall upon them. God was not only The Creator but the active judge. Christian behavior was kept orderly by promising a future life in heaven or retribution in Hell. The expression “Go to Hell!” was believed to be an effective curse and all such language was deplored.

George Fox’s birth in 1624 preceded Isaac Newton by twenty years. Newton was deeply entrenched in the ruling academy and church. He became a professor at Cambridge University, where he brilliantly uncovered laws of mathematics and motion. His proofs of Classical Mechanics gave great comfort to those who felt they could depend on his laws of gravity and motion and not be frightened by

the unexpected ghost, premonition or sudden return of health. A shift to a new cosmology was beginning.

Within the lifetimes of Fox and Newton, Cromwell overthrew the English monarchy and the distant rumblings of democracy were faintly heard around the North Atlantic rim. Independent colonists empowered themselves by finding their authority within, listening for Divine spiritual leadings. When Fox traveled to the Bahamas (1671-1673) and then north through the colonies, preaching against the patriarchal and hierarchical church, one out of four colonists were members of a Quaker meeting.² By the middle of the 19th century Protestantism and Newtonian physics were firmly in place.

Onward marched the Scientific Age. University graduates felt safe if they limited their knowledge to what could be weighed and measured. The parameters of reality were confidently declared when replication of properly done tests were declared proof of a theory. In the arts, detailed footnotes assured the reader that someone else had previously declared the same phenomenon in print and therefore it was true. In these circles Darwin's challenge to Holy Scripture and Freud's message that the devil is within, not without, was shifting the social fabric.¹⁷

As for miracles, F.W. Myers in England and William James in the United States had begun their "Society for Psychological Research" to scientifically investigate paranormal experiences.^{15,12} The scientific method, they believed, would prove that miracles were possible. Some of William James' Harvard students carried his cry, "There is no greater pain in the world like the pain of a new idea," down through generations of their students, this author being one of them.¹²

The old threats of being sent to hell to be punished by the Almighty began to lose their power. Behavior could no longer be controlled by threats of eternal damnation, and the ancient and carefully organized list of sins was abandoned. Religions based on law and commandments lost power and women began to dress in more comfortable clothes. By the time the first man stepped on the moon the old etiquettes were lost in the wild exuberance of the late 1960s. Heaven and Hell were not found "up or down there." The cow had jumped over the moon and the dish truly ran away with the spoon, which by then could be interpreted using either Freudian or Jungian analytic theory.

Twentieth Century Physics and Myth

What happened in the first half of the 20th century that sent Western social customs and mores into a tailspin by the 1960s? How did common archetypes of women move from the Virgin Mary to Madonna and Lady Gaga in only one hundred years?

To find some answers it is necessary to review the work of physicists because by this time scientific method was sure proof of reality. In the 20th century most people found comfort in knowing that what their senses told them was scientifically correct if it was properly footnoted. Others, not giving the scientific method much validity, rebelled. Actress Lily Tomlin declared that reality is a collective hunch. Women's hunches and intuition remained scary.

Reality became what could be weighed and measured, so instruments of measurement became vitally important. In every classroom teachers thumped their desks declaring that the desk was made up of the smallest particle of matter, atoms. Students squinted but were told that they could not see an atom with the naked eye! Blind faith in scientific truth had arrived and no one called it a religion. Would religion have changed men's behavior by the middle of the 20th century, when ethnocentrism led men to incinerate millions of their fellow humans in gas chambers or with atomic bombs?

Einstein began the century with the scientifically astounding $E = MC^2$ equation proving that at the sub atomic level, energy equals mass times the speed of light squared: Energy, mass and light. The three most important properties of our earthly life were dependable if we figured out how they are relative to one another. Energy is the prime mover in the universe and is interchangeable with mass.

The challenge to be the first scientist to measure these variables became the life quest of a new breed called "atomic physicists." They became the interpreters of our universe and how it works. David Bohm was a towering figure in 20th century physics.²⁴ He was mentored by Einstein and was able to incorporate subsequent discoveries by other physicists into his comprehensive understanding of our world. He had the ability to describe for us the reality of the Great Wholeness within which we exist and which we cannot know fully with our limited five senses. He described our universe as one that is very different from the old paradigm which had humans independent and separate from the flora, fauna and gods "out there." We are in Unity like fish in the sea, bound in by our five senses yet immersed in the whole.

What we are not able to sense, Bohm named the **implicate order** and what rolls out of the universe into our awareness he called the **explicate order**. He took the paranormal so seriously that the unity of mind and matter was a given for him. A friend and fellow explorer, Indian mystic Jiddu Krishnamurti, spoke for them both when he said, "I have looked at reality and seen that it is an illusion."

Most human beings feel comfortable when they can rely on the stability of the explicate order and may become frightened when they sense implicate emerging. We have knowledge of the explicate order and might know the mysteries of the implicate order through gnosis, mystical experience or intuition.¹⁷ To do that heralds yet another big paradigm shift.

Albert Einstein and David Bohm both reported an interesting personal experience. They spent most of their lives asking themselves, “How does everything I know come together logically?” When they finally hit on the correct answer they had a physical reaction confirming that they were correct in what they had figured out! With no scientific proof, they were physically changed when an idea in their mind became not only clear but proved to be correct. Their new understanding, or “Aha moment” was validated by their body.^{4 pg46, 24.pg 36} When he felt he had discovered a truth, Bohm described it as beautiful, simple, harmonious, coherent and subtle. By that he knew that everything in the universe was orderly, we just need to discover what it is.^{24 pg300} At least he felt safe.

Werner Heisenberg worked at the subatomic level as he tried to find out more about what atoms are made of. The only way he could measure a subatomic particle was with a tool that emitted a gamma ray. The ray was so strong that every time he set his sights on a target to measure its mass in relation to a light particle, it made the light particle jump. No target would stand still. The same happened when he tried to measure particles of light in relation to mass. With the tools available he was unable to get a bead on them. Scientists must achieve certainty through measurement and this scientist felt uncertain about the measurements of energy in relation to mass and speed of light. This became known as “**Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle.**”

To add to that discomfort, the next generation of physicists recognized that they are unable to make the measurements of energy at the subatomic level without full knowledge of more than four dimensions. They call it the “**String Theory,**” but they are far from finding the tools to replicate an experiment to prove the theory.

John S. Bell developed a theorem which proves that a pair of atomic particles below the quantum level can be influenced from places that are not local to them. As Bohm found, there is a fundamental unity in all matter, and communication can happen between two separate places faster than the speed of light. That is called “superluminal communication” and **non-local causality.** Our experience of this usually happens unexpectedly when a loved one who is at a distance is hurt or dies. Some energy, mass and space have “cracked open,” or “a wrinkle in time” has occurred. If two people in different places randomly reach for a phone at the same time and call one other, psychologist Carl Jung named that phenomenon “**synchronicity.**”

Bohm also agreed with brain surgeon Karl Pribram²⁴ that our brains function like holograms. We may mentally move from anyplace in time, past, present or future, because any part of the whole contains the whole. Naturalist Lyall Watson gave us the classic example: if we toss a pebble into a pond, the water ripples out. The ripples cross one another. That point of crossing contains information about where the pebble landed, when it landed and how much energy it had. Yes, Bohm agreed, the entire universe is holomonic. Krishnamurti other intuitive mystics will nod in agreement. We can move

instantly around in time and space, immediately communicating and influencing mass from a geographical distance if we learn how to do it. This led Bohm and Pribram to propose the **Holographic Theory of the Universe**.³⁴

Marilyn Ferguson sums up her description: ...the holographic supertheory says that our brain mathematically construct “hard” reality by interpreting frequencies from a dimension transcending time and space. The brain is a hologram, interpreting a holographic universe.¹¹ pg182 Her “hard” reality is Bohm’s explicate order.

Almost every scientist we have named has realized that his work opened a window to the probability of paranormal experience being simply normal. There are unmistakable realities which are not measurable by the tools available to what is now a global scientific community that seeks “Truth.” First, humans lived in awe of nature, using the arts of drawing and carving to express the inexpressible. When alphabets were developed, scripture became the authority for literate humankind. Does our modern scientific method describe human reality with mathematical accuracy? We cannot see, hear or feel the atoms and Big Bangs which authorities tell us are the building blocks of what we experience in our sensate world.

The universal language of scientific inquiry does not eliminate the need for interpretation and analysis of art or scripture. In this century the great unknown is labeled *psi* or *lambda*. It was Albert Einstein who named the great spaces between molecules, atoms and universes “Lambda.” Other scientific disciplines have agreed to use the word “psi” for unknowable, but probable, realities.

Most of the great physicists of the 20th century realized that they fell short of describing all of reality. Albert Einstein wrote the introduction to Upton Sinclair’s book *Mental Radio*³⁰ which deals with the mystery of clairvoyance or remote viewing. David Bohm spent years exploring the potential of telepathy or transfer of mental contents with the mystic Krishnamurti. Karl Pribram expressed the same interests. Another scientist, physician Elisabeth Kübler-Ross who focused her healing arts on dying patients, came to believe that life after death is a strong possibility. (We note that she is the only woman we have been able to name and must leave the discipline of physics to find her.)

None of the above was able to claim the reality of any paranormal experience. Scientific methods fall short of describing our human experience. The “truth” is still out there to be measured and controlled by humans. We need new tools, and probably the human brain is the best one available at this time. In order to use that tool we have to include the experience of fifty percent of human life: females. (For general discussion of this section:^{40,8,9,11,38})

Twentieth Century Myth

Earlier we discussed the power of a culture's religious myths. There are still places on the globe where regional ecosystems are interpreted through legends and fairy tales and educate a population about how to cope with their water earth and wind. These are generally about everyday folk and how they cope with family life and the land they live on. Valuable to a rural population, such legends can take on a religious nature. Most of the people reading this will have been raised within Christian, Jewish or Islamic mythic systems. These stories are passed on to children by parents and grandparents as guides to a life in cultures which accept male values and try to transcend nature.

In the fairy tales the prince leaves the castle with his brothers, venturing out from hearth and mother to establish himself as master of his own future. When he finds a beautiful daughter of a wealthy king, he can return to the castle with her and begin adult life. A princess has no future unless she can convince one of these Lords that she can satisfactorily dedicate her life to him and no other. I later figured out that that is the only way he could be certain he was the father of their children. In both urban and rural wisdom the loss of control during sex can be terrifying. If scripture does not directly teach that women are intrinsically evil, then it is made clear that sex is a very troublesome problem. The Bible and Quran emphasize that women must not be free to take control over their bodies. Birth, Marriage and Death must be under the full control of males and their masculine gods. Civil law follows myth.

In the West in this century most educators demean the mythic teachings. We are taught that hard science is the anvil upon which we hammer out our reality. As a reaction to the clarity of scientific knowledge a fascination with ancient pagan lore rose up among those who claimed to be scientists and called themselves analysts and psychologists. They remained deep in study of ancient myths and legends.

In 1949 Joseph Campbell began his catalogue of ancient male mythology with the publication of his book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.⁷ A few decades later he taught us that we could all fit into the following categories: Mentor, Herald or Harbinger, Threshold Guardian, Shape Shifter, Trickster, Fool, and Shadow. Well-educated women across the Western World bought it all and adapted themselves into these male models of behavior and frame of mind, when in reality the only one of those categories women reflected back to men was Shadow.

A review of museum walls and book publishers' lists reveal that little or no visual arts or literature by women artists and writers were available until the middle of the 20th century. What did exist was done in the manner of the acceptable male genres. Almost every time a woman looked at the picture of another woman, she saw herself reflected back from art gallery walls, billboards, movies and magazines as a sex object to excite the male.

When the mother or grandmother, beyond the age of menopause, or sexual desirability, was highlighted, it was rarely in a flattering light.²¹

In the early part of the 20th century, this dissonance sent some women artists to their easels. A few women surrealist artists were able to describe a woman's life and journey for us. Georgia O'Keefe made what we called "inanimate nature" animate for us, moving us from transcendence to immanence. If we surrendered any need for conformity to a three dimensional view of life, Remedios Varo and Leonore Fini were able to depict womanly reality for us. They understood that what they saw, heard and experienced in Western culture was very different from their inner reality. An aware woman led, and still leads, a life that is surreal.²⁰

By 1975 the word "goddess" was given life and heard in remote corners of mainline religious organizations. Ten years later bookshelves held descriptions of the ancient female deities such as the Greek Artemis, Aphrodite, and Athena. The writers unwittingly held them up as models for women's maturation, when in fact a close reading of their myths ensured that they met the needs of the men in very patriarchal ancient Greek culture. Still not fully experiencing themselves as agents, with few exceptions modern women artists painted goddesses with faces cosmetically made up to attract the male, not reflect the reality of their lives.

Random images such as Tarot cards have been used for centuries to spark the intuitive and inspire seers. There have been many sets made with images from ancient religions. The Rider-Waite-Smith deck was in common use in the early and mid part of the 20th century images defining patriarchal ideals. Then in 1981 a set by Vicki Noble and Karen Vogel titled *Motherpeace: A Way to the Goddess Through Myth, Art and Tarot*²⁸ was published by HarperCollins. They are not the usual rectangular playing cards, but are round. These two women trusted their intuitive gifts, one favoring her literate bent and the other her creative artistic skills. Combined, the book and cards present women with a way to trust their journey as their visual history is uncovered and deep womanly nature emerges.

Judith Anderson, Meinrad Craighead, Judy Chicago, Susan Okamoto, and young Helen Klebesadle were some of the wise women artists of the 1970s and 1980s, fully able to imagine the divine in women's spirit. They revised our myths for us helping us to see that women's bodies are primary natural creators of human life.

By the end of the 20th century women were still led by tales of fairy godmothers who could manifest from the implicate order whatever it took to make Cinderella attractive to the Prince and get her to the ball. Peripherally, stories of young women coping with menarche for the first time were available in juvenile literature. These stories lacked the vital information that connected the young reader to the earth and moon which influenced the timing of her menses.

What other questions should she ask? How could she be an active agent who searched out the healthiest and potentially most reliable male who could help her create new human beings and raise them to successful maturity? How deeply should she look into his family for clues? Did she want to join her family or her husband's family to help raise their children? Did the community they could live in have what was most comfortable and needed? Was mothering modeled best by her mother or was there another divine ideal of motherhood in which the unconditional love and nurture so desperately needed by every child was present? How do you raise pacifist and humanitarian children to adulthood? When the mother approached menopause, was she educated and wise enough to provide leadership for her children and their young families? And finally, what made a good death for everyone, including herself? Neither 20th century science nor culture helped her with these questions.

The peaceful revolution in which women rose out of the culture and into awareness that there was something called a patriarchy only superficially changed Western religious institutions. The churches, temples and mosques most dependent on creedal law still resist including women in their leadership. Others accept ordination of women into their priesthood where not much changes except the gender of the person at the altar. She handles the communion cups and plates with a pleasing familiarity. Her language, order of service, sermons on transcendence and financial support for her priesthood continue as usual. Of course she wears the vestments reflecting womanly modesty, no different from the skirts of the male priests. Serried ranks of pews hold congregations whose members face the altar as they go through a priest who petitions the male divinity for them.

In contrast, in the liberal or unprogrammed branch of the Religious Society of Friends—Quakers—a group sits down together to worship for an hour with no expectation of any pre-planned ritual such as song or sermon.¹³ The process of “being led by the spirit” must be fully trusted by all of the participants. In the first part of the meeting for worship they clear their minds of concerns and responsibilities, judgment and desire are put aside and they may even be breathing in rhythm. At this point a person can be open to whatever energy is manifest. Someone may be led to speak briefly. Often it is found that their words speak to the condition of many of those present and way is cleared for them to go forward. It takes courage to open one's self to a new idea.¹²

In the 1970s and 1980s Quaker women used visual arts, poetry and song to raise the consciousness of “That of the Divine” within them. Their exuberance in their process of self discovery often irritated others, as did their insistence that the masculine word “God” in spoken ministry did not include them. They changed the culture in most unprogrammed meetings for worship in the United States and Canada.¹⁴ So often a new struggle to rise from oppression begins with words.

21st Century

Humor, Irreverence and Laughter
Open the Gates of the Mysteries;
Self-righteous Pieties of Any Sort
Slam Them Shut.

Liberating Spirituality, Whatever Its Denomination,
Is Not About
Defining, Confining and Controlling
But About
PASSION.³³

We enter the 21st century equipped with the knowledge that there is one universe, and that time and space are relative to the observer, and for these reasons, paranormal experience is now probable, no longer a miracle. Scientifically and intellectually we know that an energy moves through each human being, that it can be used to heal, move mass through space faster than the speed of light and communicate free of three dimensional constraints. On the Asian continents this energy is called “qi” or “prana”. Western cultures have not yet formally named the power, but we can call this pre- and post-literate knowledge “gnosis”. Slowly humans are recalling their understanding that the Earth and everything on it is sacred and everyone in one form or another prays.

As an example we can use the shift happening in modern Western medicine. In the United States, in 2010, traditional allopathic medicine used roughly twenty percent of the United States budget and probably took up that much space in our media. Many citizens avoid hospitals because the system is so complicated that medical errors have become measurable. Non-invasive alternative systems such as Reiki, Therapeutic Touch, and prayer circles are now found in almost every community. Acupuncture and meditation are offered in many hospitals. Some alternatives, such as remote healing, defy Newtonian mechanics and are judged to be superstition. Apparently thirty percent of those seeking medical relief in the United States do not mind being labeled superstitious while they use alternative healing systems and medicines. We must add their out-of-pocket expenses to the twenty percent already used by the established institutions. The factor most often cited in studies of remote healing is how much the patient is aware of psychic support such as prayer. Being open to the reality of energy being made available seems to be what makes the remote healing most successful. Do the healing miracles in the New Testament give permission to Christians to lean on these alternative measures? How strong is the Christian myth at the beginning of this new century?

Huge Pagan and New Age celebrations of the seasons of the earth and stars in the sky are being held in cities around the world. They gather to raise energy and change the culture. The energy that is common to every human, can be channeled and multiplied into a positive force. The entire circle becomes an energy transformer as is each individual in it, the new physics made manifest.^{5,31,35}

Fearlessly self-styled Pagans and Neo-Pagans gather in smaller circles with the altar in the middle to make the paranormal normal.¹ These circles are filled with discussion of and the use of energy which they use to heal and create change.⁵ To the neo-pagan all life is sacred and interconnected, therefore all of nature, human and otherwise, deserves respectful understanding of how the individual can live in balance with the seen and unseen, both explicate and implicate. These are the realities now agreed to in the discipline of physics and are also those hunches used in women's spiritual rituals. Here the character and energy of the Divine can move within the individual who chooses to be aware and use it. There being that of the divine in everyone, leadership is shared and circles are unaffiliated in the sense that they owe allegiance to no larger "denomination." Usually money is not exchanged for spiritual services.

Because we are very human, some declare themselves more divine than others and attempt to wrest power from the innocent. Two gifted Neo-Pagan authors and practitioners, Margot Adler and Marion Weinstein, have laid out the dangers of cults and fakes.^{31,35} Integrity becomes very important deep in the mysteries of our universe.

The pattern of a circle celebration and ritual feels familiar from one continent to another. The ancient Bronze Age Minoan sites on the island of Crete reflect the same spiritual needs as those in our re-emerging 21st century. Here at Gournia, at the bottom of the hill where the processional path can be entered, evidence has been found of the ancient workshops of jewelers and costumers, makers of musical instruments, everything that could make a good ceremony or ritual great. A covered path leads participants up the hill to the stage area. Today, as then, the rattles and drums seen in their art drive the pace of the dance and mood. Today chants and songs give flavor to the occasion and a good song leader is essential to the success of the group. Six thousand years ago the top of the hill was probably used to act out the meaning of the ritual which today as then raises the level of energy and meaning to a pitch felt by all. At the cry of the leader, the circle sends the collective energy to the previously agreed upon goal, expecting change to occur both within and without for every participant. Finally, the community feasts in triumph and everyone returns to their families refreshed and restored for the next round of anniversaries and seasons.

If we read art history from a woman's point of view it turns out that there may be a greater fear than the fear of a new idea. Returning to the time of the rise of the Gorgon figure and the violent reaction of the patriarchy, what were men so afraid of? Why did that frantically angry woman have to have her head cut off?

Why did her eyes alone make men impotent? Think back, have you ever felt your stomach drop when you were startled by a seemingly impossible event? Many stage magicians have made a living by surprising children and scaring them with such tricks.

Were Paleolithic people living in the rhythm of the unseen implicate order where the paranormal could have been normal? What *were* the mysteries of the oracle at Delphi? Why do so many of the women in Minoan art float above the ground? When the wise women in Northern Europe were tortured and burned did men then feel safer? How many modern women can tell tales of the time they broke through the boundaries of time and space as their prayers and dares came true? Is it time men and women stopped being afraid of each other?

Literature and cinema are now shared global experiences. The modern myths of Harry Potter and The Avatar are common knowledge on all continents, giving new generations reference points for social expectations of what is good and what is evil.

As might be expected, great resistance is given to new paradigms by religions and governments who need to hold power through legal and legalistic means. The mystical relics of the culture of Tibet have been destroyed by Chinese who strain to hold themselves together after an internal combustion they called a “cultural revolution.” While they pollute the earth and air with industrial waste they sustain a health system which manipulates the *qi* or *prana* of the patient. The first written documents about this healing system originated in Tibet. Yet, all the prayer wheels in the world could not stop Chinese armaments. Most wars being waged have components of religious righteousness driving the “cause.” We must continue to learn to live with paradox.

For most women their primary concerns are the welfare of their children and their wider community: food, shelter and clothing. Mothers who must struggle to find enough of those basics are unable to give their children the love and laughter that every child deserves. If those are women’s priorities, what are men’s priorities? Men are so deeply in charge that today’s paper acknowledges that there are 925 million chronically hungry people in the world. In other reports we find that the Afghan war has cost enough to feed most of those people. In the United States we put exploration of space above the needs of hungry children and we know who those sober, angry children are. Where is the myth that Mother Earth can nurture everyone? Women, world wide, are learning to use corporate and governmental power. Men may grow to exercise cooperative power when taught by their newly aware mothers. Reverence for the balance of all of nature has to become a given, while acceptance of a radical democracy may emerge when women help define our common goals.

When will we discover what the best characteristics of both men and women are and hold them up as divine archetypes or role models? The unconditional love and nurture of the Great Mother will be woven in with the law and justice of the Father God. Once we have absorbed this we can begin to parent our

children with the goal of raising pacifist humanitarians. These children need to be released from the insanity of denying the miracles that they know from personal experience are very real to them. Their imaginary friends and sightings from other dimensions need not be filtered out as they emerge from childhood. Our collective hunch of what is real can expand beyond the evidence of our limited three dimensions and five senses. When the power of our thought is understood and we learn how to use that power we also will come to the common experience of seeding our lives with thoughts and acts of benevolence. Gratitude begets more gratitude.

By the end of this century will everyone have learned to protect themselves from unwanted and frightening miracles so they can feel safe if men and women circle up together for religious rituals? Will women glory in men's ability to plan and play their harmless games with balls while the men will happily wallow in the creativity and nurture of women? Sex might be liberated from social stigma when it is freely given and taken with full acceptance of subsequent social and family responsibilities. The title "witch" could return with the meaning of "wise woman." All are ideals and well worth working toward.

Yes, there will be charlatans, people trying to gain power through becoming cult leaders, scam artists who cause distress and disturbance. We will also have expanded our awareness of their weaknesses and know where and how to deflect unwanted energy. There will be no question that any thought or energy once released returns, some say, threefold to become a living reality. When women return to their true nature, the serious business of mothering, trusting the power of their minds and spiritual truths, they will raise the bars men have controlled for so many millennia, and balance may return.

I hope that it will be a common assumption that personal cosmology, or world view, is necessarily different for men than for women. Patriarchal societies order themselves mythically and religiously on a world dreamed up by and for a male deity. Philosophers find surety in mental concepts which circle around ideas of human will, economics, politics or social order. Scientists devise mathematical sets of their reality and believe that by proving the origin of the universe as a Big Bang they have abolished religion and the Garden of Eden. Today women, fully under control of the patriarchies, give male hegemony over their religious, economic, political and social existence, forgetting that all new human life is created in their own womb and nurtured at their breasts. When her power of being able to create new human beings is recognized by a woman she will spend her fertile years looking for not only the most productive male to initiate her creative powers but she will wisely consider other variables which will bring the family she creates with him into the most satisfactory circle of support available for her in her old age. Who needs a Big Bang? Several small ones do the trick too.

When individuals know that they are fully integrated into the order of the cosmos, will they accept that there is free will and there is not free will? They are their cosmology, had a part in conception at the beginning of the cosmos and will be a part of the consequences at the end of the cosmos because they were preceded by ancestors. This raises the question of what happens to us after death. It is evident now that we are all part of a hologram which changes as we think about it and therefore if you think Pearly Gates are your destination, then that is what you will experience after death. The person who cannot conceive of anything further will not experience anything further after the death of their body. (Perhaps these are the people most likely to destroy life as we know it on this earth?)

Will both men and women find the other half of their religious, philosophical and scientific answers to life's persistent questions and re-formulate them into a fully inclusive cosmology? Then all theory, philosophy, religion and cosmology will include origin in the body of the female and her paranormal life will be accepted as normal.

Mary R. Hopkins, Kendal at Longwood, April 2011

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