* Archetypal Analyses *

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The Splitting of Religion and Magic >>> The Birth of Science as Unconscious Spirituality

A Rationalistic Opposition of Mythos and Logos, a Literalistic Religious Denial of Animated Matter, and the Re-Animation of Nature in Science

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This paper outlines a perspective linking religious and scientific representations as modes for perceiving sources of agency or 'animating principle' (spirit) in or 'behind' the phenomenal appearances of the world. Further, a historical concept is offered on how the empirically scientific mode of representing such agency evolved. This is viewed as a consequence of the rationalistic repression of overtly mythical and magical status for the practices of religion. That shift is considered as having three basic stages. In a generally archaic cultural contexting, mythically religious representations explicitly posed intentional agency in phenomenal things and occurrences as 'spirits.' In an abstractly monotheistic context, all agency was explicitly removed from natural entities and reserved to a disembodied, extra-terrestrial godhead. That de-animation of nature then contributed to an evasive and implicit reassertion of autonomous agency in things. In short, literalistic religious representation of animating principles in the historical view of Christian monotheism and its de-animation or de-spiritualization of nature contributed to the compensatory approach of scientific understanding that allowed a return of 'autonomous spirit' to natural phenomena.

The Role of Psychopomp in Myth, Religion, and Science

A concept of leading or providing leadership is expressed cross culturally. Notions of leading are differentiated in relation to varied aspects of human relations: political, social, filial, spiritual. Political leadership roles can take different forms, as in 'war chief' or 'peace chief,' democratic president or dictatorial tyrant. A general category of spiritual leadership appears to have similar differentiations. In the broadest sense, 'spiritual leading' might be characterized as directing the attention of persons toward what a particular cultural tradition posits as the essential origin, motive, intention, or purpose of phenomenal existence. "Spirit: 1. The vital principle or animating force traditionally believed to be within living beings. 2. The soul, considered as departing from the body of a person at death (Am. Heritage Dict. 1178)." This English word spirit for "the vital principle" derives from the Latin *spiritus* for breath and *spirarae* for to breathe. Where there is the vitality of life, of being, there is a sense of breath, of respiration—of spirit moving in and out, back and forth. This sense of motivating or "animating" factor shows up in words such as conspire, indicating a 'coming together' of spirit, as in a sharing of the same or similar "animating principle," much as a group of people 'breathe together' the same air.

A spiritual leader thus 'leads toward' a particular version or description of "animating principle." In Western Christian religious contexts such a person is often termed a priest, minister, or pastor. Persons acting in these religious roles can act either to lead their 'followers' to conform their beliefs and practices to an orthodox version of "animating principle," or as interpreters of the experiences of others in relation to an orthodox tradition. But in so far as there is an orthodox version of what spirit as "animating principle" is, and how to come into relationship with it, spiritual leadership 'leads toward' an already known status of, and meaning or purpose for, 'spirit.' Similar roles for persons who somehow mediate relationship to 'spirit' in non-Western cultures are identified by such words as shaman, magician, witch, witch doctor, brujoh, magus, medicine man, alchemist, sorcerer, and guru.

Western commentators also often refer to religious 'officials' in non-Western contexts as priests, particularly when those roles are more authoritarian in the sense that some power to compel conformity to orthodoxy is involved. Descriptions of how persons in these roles in different cultures interact with those they are serving as 'spiritual leaders' ranges from such compulsory authority to more interpretive and

companionable postures. That is to say, some are better described as guides, advisors, or even 'go betweens,' rather than leaders. In all such roles, the 'mediator' is acting to direct or facilitate some relationship between the personal human consciousness and some form of "animating principle" in or of the world and cosmos. That relationship is often conceived as developing some reciprocity between 'spirit' (or 'soul') that residing in individual persons with its counterpart in the world. In this sense all are acting as psychopomps, a word that is used to indicate 'soul guide' or perhaps 'spirit usher.' This word derives from the ancient Greek words *psukhe* for soul, *pompe* for procession, and *pempein* for to send. The Greek god Hermes is considered a psychopomp because, as figured in Greek mythology, he guides or accompanies the souls of the dead to their place in the Underworld of Hades. He is also serves generally as a messenger, or 'go between,' who facilitates communication between the divine entities and the 'ordinarily human world.'

Most often, the efforts of spiritual guides or psychopomps involve some extraordinary or magical action that activates their capacity to connect or communicate with 'spirit'—either 'inside' ones 'personal self' or with it 'out there' in world or cosmos. Such extra-ordinary or magical action appears to be required if the more ordinary status of being (that in which humans are relatively un-related to spirit or "animating principle") is to gain access to the 'more than ordinary' or 'other worldly' context of 'living, breathing, spirit.' All this suggests that ordinary human status and attitudes are typically 'not spiritual.' Thus some special action is required to activate awareness of and relation with the "animating principle" that is presumably ever present yet not overtly experienced under practical conditions of daily living. Mythical or religious ritual practices typically involve some such magical actions that serve to invoke the presence of and evoke communication with those 'more than ordinary' forces or spirits that 'animate' both the human and non-human aspects of phenomenal being. Among the characteristic traits of differing cultural manifestations of the psychopomp is that of trickster or fool. When these aspects are emphasized, it appears that relationship with spirit is regarded as requiring some playfulness or deception, some 'leading that is misleading' or perhaps 'leads toward what is not known' and thus must proceed rather 'foolishly.' These modes typically involve abrogating ordinary standards of social propriety and offending personal feelings. The magic of Fools involves violating the rules of ordinary, non-spiritual behavior.

Magic per se is defined as:

> Magic: 1. The art that purports to control or forecast natural events, effects, or forces by invoking the supernatural. 2. a. The practice of using charms, spells, or rituals to attempt to produce supernatural effects or to control events in nature. b. The charms, spells, and rituals so used. 3. The exercise of sleight of hand or conjuring for entertainment. 4. A mysterious quality of enchantment. [from Greek *magos* for magician] (Am. Heritage Dict. '85, 753).

The first two definitions given suggest the role of magical action or invocation for connecting the ordinarily 'natural' experience of existence with some extra-ordinary or supernatural one. Psychologically such endeavor can be considered a way of experiencing the "animating principle" of and in the ordinarily pragmatized status of reality. The third definition suggests that there is some inherent pretense or deception in magical action, a 'tricking' of ordinary human consciousness that can be, in and of itself, "entertaining" to experience. The fourth definition indicates that there is a general sense of enchantment to 'magical contexts' or 'gestures.' To be enchanted is defined as "to cast under a spell; bewitch. To attract and delight completely; charm." The origin of this word is from the Latin *incantare*, composed of *in,* for against, and *cantare,* for to sing. 'To sing against' suggests a musical seduction that casts a spell, perhaps 'leading one away from' the status of ordinary consciousness about reality to some more 'magical' or spiritual one. Thus one might suppose a status of 'spiritual communication' involves some 'state of enchantment' induced by some 'magical incantation' that brings one's awareness into relation with a "animating principle" that is not of the ordinary self or world.

Thereby the role of psychopomp, in all its guises, would seem to involve some magical activity. A distinction is employed in this writing between a mythical contexting of that activity and a specifically religious one. The mythical version is taken to be an experience of the presence of that ordinarily not-known "animating principle" or spirit made evident, 'now,' in and of self or world. The characteristic dynamic of such mythical experience is taken to be one of multiplicity or plurality of 'states of being.' That is, in a mythical experience, persons somehow encounter the mutuality of the ordinary and non-ordinary, the pragmatic and spiritual, the familiar and the enchanted. Specifically religious contexting, as understood here, is approached as being more focused upon defining and interpreting the 'manifestation

of spirit' in some orthodox, definitive manner. Thus, though religious practices might involve magical ritual incantations that evoke mythical experience, religious intention is considered to be more about defining the status of spirit and its significance in a cultural tradition.

> Religion: 1. a. Belief in and reverence for a supernatural power recognized as the creator and governor of the universe. B. A particular integrated system of this expression: *the Hindu religion*. 2. The spiritual or emotional attitude of one how recognizes the existence or a superhuman power or powers. (Am. Heritage Dict. '85, 1044).

This word for belief about and systems for representing "animating principles" derives from a variant of the Latin *ligare*, for cord or rope used to bind and fasten. The from *religare* indicates 'binding again' or 'binding strongly.' It seems evident here that what is referred to as religious concerns ways of defining and fixing the references for knowing spirit, or what might be termed the 'magical enchantment of mythical experience.' Such experience can also be understood as, 'some non-ordinary sensing of the presence of animating principles in ordinary contexts.' Magical action, in reference to such experience, can be understood as efforts that some how induce such presence and enable experience of it.

These differentiations for notions of spirit, myth, religion, and magic provide the basis for a reflection upon how scientific materialism came into being, and whether it is psychologically a 'magical activity.' It will be suggested in this paper that a rather unique historical attitude developed about magic and myth in Western cultural history that appears to have fostered the mechanistic attitudes of supposedly secular science. That shift will be shown to involve a subordination of magical action and the mythical experience of multiple realities it can evoke to literalistic definition and rationalistic explanation. Religious practice thusly comes to be distinguished from magical action and mythical meaning. Thereby the role of psychopomp is radically confined to interpreting experience of "animating principles" strictly in relation to orthodox definitions that are literalistic rather than symbolic, and reductively rationalistic rather than mythically complex.

Consequently, humans are deprived of a valid cultural context for experiencing 'spirit' in any place or manner not defined by the orthodox version. When, as in this case, that orthodoxy asserts a literal opposition between spirit and matter, and

further reduces the source of all spirit to one disembodied God, the phenomenal world of nature is deprived of having particularized manifestations of spirit. The world, in a sense, becomes inanimate since spirit is the opposite of matter, and further, all spirit comes from one source that is not 'of things or the world.' Any experience of the presence of "animating principles" in such a cultural context is only valid if it is acknowledged as 'the will of God.' Thus only God, or those officially empowered by Him to 'channel' his power, is allowed to perform valid or proper 'magical action.' Such a cultural context, it is argued here, creates such a sense of alienation of human consciousness from matter or 'the things of this world' (including one's own body) that two dramatic developments are facilitated. One is a shift away from regarding 'things' or matter as 'alive' because these are animated by their own 'vivifying principle' and toward experiencing objects as inanimate. Things and the world thus become objects more than subjects, and are more readily manipulated in a mechanistic manner since there is no spirit in them that might resent and react to such manipulation.

Such a world is more readily rationalized in mechanistically linear understandings. Historically, Western society became increasingly secular as materialistic science and technology developed. The realm of magic retained by the orthodoxy of the official Church became increasingly marginalized by the demonstrated powers of mechanistic pragmatism. With the devaluation of magic and religious mediation, the world thereby tended to become 'nothing but ordinary,' without any mythical meaning or magical action. Overt mediation between humans and the "animating principles" in things appears superfluous from this perspective. With the evident triumph of mechanism over nature, there appears little need for any psychopomp to mediate relations with spirit in ordinary contexts. If there is a God, He is not 'here,' in this world, but elsewhere. In so far as religious attitudes persisted into Western modernity, their emphasis focused upon a divinity concerned with ethical morality, rather than experiential relation with a 'world animated by spirit' or the magic of knowing its mythical multiplicity as 'more than ordinary.'

However, it will be proposed that an innate human psychic need exists for such recognition, experience, and mediation of relation to a 'more than ordinary' status of phenomenal manifestation. Thus the scientific investigation and representation of phenomenal existence that develop out of the religious denial of non-literal myth, magic, and 'spiritual animation of matter' will be presented as actually constituting a mediation between ordinary human awareness and the inherent "animating

principles" or spirit in all 'things.' That this supposed role of psychopomp for science is essentially an 'unconscious spiritual leadership' or guiding will be contexted as a further consequence of the partition between religion and myth/magic in Western cultural traditions.

In short, it is assumed here that experience of spirit, or animating subjectivity, in matter or things, is an intrinsic aspect of consciousness in human psyches. However, that experience of "animating principle," (referenced in depth psychological theory as "numinosity") is also inherently 'at odds with' the pragmatic, ordinary sense of identity and reality. Thus some role of psychopomp is required in all cultural contexts to mediate relationship between ordinary consciousness and non-ordinary experience of the numinous—that mythical/magical presence of an 'animating other world' in this one. In the specific case of Western cultural history, a radically reductive, utter opposition between spirit and matter is viewed here as eventually generating an unacknowledged form of psychopomp mediation that, none the less, serves to at least partially articulate the mythical complexity of living in an animated world of matter. Furthermore, the 'activities' of science can be regarded as psychologically 'magical' in so far as these render an experience of "animating principle" accessible. However, even granting the accuracy of this analysis, there remains the distinction that the magical/mythical aspects of scientific representation are repressed from conscious acknowledgement. Such a status of 'partial mediation' appears likely to exacerbate the sense of alienation from 'the world' supposed to result from the repression of overtly mythical/magical relationship to the numinous presence of "animating principles."

This theme of the repression of mediation with numinosity through rationalism and literalism that somehow promotes scientific materialism is explored in brief in the remainder of this paper.

Logical Analysis and Religious Literalism as Precursors to Scientific Materialism

A Radical Differentiation between Rational and Mythical Modes of Understanding

In the context of ancient Greek intellectual culture a significant distinction was made between logical thinking and mythical knowing. A primary source for that

distinction was an effort to define an historical 'reality' that could be distinguished logically from the impractical representations of myth. Another source appears in development of an intellectual rationalism inspired by the precision of mathematical quantification. A third element is the emergence of mechanistic speculation upon the physical composition of matter among so-called "natural philosophers" that was a forerunner of scientific materialism. The intellectual methods that evolved in this environment focused upon the application of logical analysis through self-consistent reasoning. To analyze (take things apart) well thus required applying the 'measure of reason' to one's explanations how things worked or why statements were accurate. Mere emotional persuasion thus came to be regarded as inadequate to presenting a convincing analysis and explanation. To reason well thus became to reason consistently.

A convincing analysis or explanation thus became a form of rational argument or rationale. This lead to a powerful mode of asserting accuracy and truth in the forms of rationales that could be tested for the consistency of their reasoning. Truth in analysis, then, became 'testable' in a way related to how mathematical formulas or equations could be tested or proven. There is also a relationship between this intellectual model of rationalism and that of the natural philosophers who sought to develop physical theories that could be tested empirically against literal evidence in natural phenomenon. Again, such reliance on rational analysis and consistency of reasoning were a dramatic departure from more traditional modes of understanding the world through more mythical and religious representations of cause and effect. Truth, in the context of this new intellectual perspective, no longer 'derived from the gods' but from human rationality. A de facto implication, however, was that rationalism could 'arrive at' some final status of absolute truth or accuracy if one's reasoning were complete and consistent enough. This view is tantamount to asserting that rationalism could 'reveal' the true nature of nature in a way not so unlike how a prophet might reveal the 'truth of God.' Thus it seems fair to say that a 'faith in reason' is not, psychologically, unlike a more overtly religious 'faith in God' as the 'source of truth.' However, the approach to these different truths differed in so far as one was analytically rational and the other a matter of accepting traditional beliefs or magical/mythical experiences as validating one's 'faith.'

However, when this exceptional intellectual methodology emphasizing reason and empiricism as modes of knowing truthfully became associated with the religious thought of Christian monotheism, another historically peculiar development occurred.

The Greek language was the primary intellectual language of the Hellenic influenced cultures of the Mediterranean world of that time. Christian theological discourse readily came to be conducted in Greek and be influenced by Greek intellectual method. On its way to developing a relatively uniform orthodoxy, this theology developed two distinctive traits. One involved its assertions that the mythical/magical events of God's incarnation as a human in the form of Christ were indeed factual, historical occurrences. That assertion effectively literalizes the 'supernatural' appearances of 'numinous phenomena' or the experience of "animating principles" as literal and thus, in an important sense, 'ordinary' events.

Christian belief thusly comes to be grounded primarily in acceptance of this historical fact, rather than in personal experience of some 'strange numinosity' of some non-ordinary phenomena as typifies more animistic religious attitudes. Certainly Christian continued to pursue magical practices to induce direct experience of numinosity (fasts, desert meditations, holy communion) but these were not necessary to establishing a belief in the truth of the Christian God. Only literal belief in the historical reality of the incarnation, death, and resurrection were required for such 'faith.' In contrast, religious attitudes generally 'mediate' the presence of numinosity and the 'appearance' of divinities in ordinary contexts in some non-ordinary status of time—the 'time' of the 'other world,' the 'world of spirit' that is not 'of this world' yet is 'in' or 'behind' or 'before' that of the ordinary world of experience.

Thus, though the developments in the intellectual culture of ancient Athens epitomized by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle did not appear to have the immediate effect of generating secular societies or the equivalent of modern science, these did play a potent role in the development of an extraordinarily influential religious tradition. In addition, the differentiation of logical analytical understanding and a pragmatically empirical basis for reality from mythical understanding had become a literary intellectual tradition in its own right that would exert profound influences over the entirety of Western history. Indeed, that distinction between *mythos* and *logos* is often considered to have become a critical characteristic of Western cultural thought. That such an oppositional differentiation between a practically logical, material basis for reality and emotionally 'irrational,' logically inconsistent story telling might seem obvious to modern attitudes illustrates the point. In some sense, to be Western is to 'automatically' accept this distinction and its implied privileging

of rational empiricism as the most, if not only, valid form for expressing truth. This distinction eventually came to be described as being between physics and metaphysics, the former being the rational study of material reality and the latter an form of speculative imagination about forces and causes that could not be empirically validated.

However, from certain philosophical and psychological perspectives, rationalism and empiricism are also imaginal and 'metaphysical.' How so ever logically structured a rationalist view of reality might be, it remains a theory, an interpretation, and thus an imagination. A rationale is not the things or events it purports to explain. Any final determination of what is real based upon a logical interpretation of what appears to be consistently reasoned or empirically actual thus remains, in some sense, a 'myth' or story of how and why 'things are the way they are.' The interminable revisions and reassessments of scientific explanations of reality illustrate this point. The so-called truths of scientific materialism are inherently hypothetical. This view of some correspondence between mythical and rationalistic versions of truth poses a distinction between the usefulness of analytical reasoning for testing hypotheses about 'what is actually happening' in the world and rationalistic conclusions about any final status of truth and reality. Conclusive definitions posited by rationalists can thus be distinguished from the hypothetical insights of analytical reasoning. Literalistic acceptance of the 'absolute truth' or rationalistic explanations thus become subject to psychological and philosophical classification as 'religious beliefs' derived from some 'metaphysical faith' in an ultimate or final status of rational analysis—a conviction that is, essentially, irrational, and thus subject to the criticism rationalists direct at more overtly fantastic mythical expression considered to be 'unrealistic' because they are not 'reasonable.'

Furthermore, rationalistic assertions of final truth and empirically mechanistic manipulations of matter bear considerable resemblance to magical practices—that performance of gestures, incantations and evocations undertaken mediate relations between ordinary and 'spiritually animated' realities. However logical they might be, then, reductively conclusive rationalizations can be classified as 'spells' that alter 'reality.' Once a theory is accepted as reasonable truth, then reality is experienced through that theory, regardless of its 'actual validity' in representing phenomenal reality. Many a 'scientific theory' has been considered 'absolutely true' only to be 're-analyzed' as inadequately reasoned or inaccurately 'proven.' Thusly considered, a reliance on rationalistic reductions of reasonable analysis and its hypothetical insights

manifests a rather religious faith in his 'belief in an ultimate truth' —however reasonable it might appear. One might well 'believe' one does not believe in imaginal or mythical forces or 'spiritual realities' because one 'knows' by way of well-reasoned, verifiable facts and truths. There is, however, 'reason to believe' that such an assumption is dubious.

Rationalism in Service to Literalistic Religion

The conjunction of such a basis for 'intellectual belief in absolute truth' with historically literalistic Christian monotheistic theology, a few 'reasons' for their evidently complimentary relationship are important to reiterate. Firstly, it is not intended in making these associations that rational analysis and literalistic religious belief are inherently compatible. Rather, it is the compatibility of rationalism as a basis for belief in an absolute truth status with religious literalism of mythic references into ordinary reality that is being emphasized. With their combination in Christian theology, the intellectual potency of rational argumentation is brought 'into the service of' literalistic religious belief in the 'truth of God.' That conjunction is historically referred to as "the Medieval Synthesis" of reason and faith through revelation. However, it is being emphasize here that the union is not actually of analytical reason, but of rationalism with faith in revelation. The intellectual method and discipline of rational analysis, in contrast, was not synthesized but subjugated to rationalistic religious theology.

This privileging of rationalistic religious truth over mythical versions of 'how the world really is'—with all its extra-ordinary spirits of nature, personified gods, and fantastic events—actually establishes the 'truth of self-consistent reason' as the mediator between humans and the world. Consciously or not, rationalism thereby must act as 'psychopomp' between ordinary understanding of phenomenon and relationship with forces and causes that are 'beyond ordinary awareness' and likely to be experienced as 'super natural' or mythical/magical.

This conceptual split between knowing reality by way of mythical representation and that of rationalism and empiricism, with its implied distinction between literally real science and metaphysically imaginal myth/magic is used to substantiate the Christian religious version of supernatural or mythical reality as 'historical actuality.' It enabled the proposition of an empirical basis for its theology. It was rationalistically argued, then, that the miraculous events depicted in the mythical stories of the Christian tradition were real, literal, empirical, historical

occurrences—in contrast to the falsely mythical ones of other non-historical religions. Those other religious traditions did not cease to exist with the increasing dominance of monotheistic Christianity, but the latter did tend to view them as 'false' and inferior. Its superiority was based in part on the claim that the true god, the single source of all existence, is a literal, historical entity that worked miracles in the natural world, yet exists 'above and beyond' it. However, in rationalizing the distinctions between God and humans, a radically dualism evolved. The ethical basis for the difference between an 'all good, all powerful' God/Divine Spirit source of absolute truth on the one side, and sinfully corrupt humanity on the other, seems to have contributed to asserting a self-consistent rationale for a radically oppositional matter >< spirit dualism. In order for God's divinity or spirit to be ethically pure, there needed to be an argument asserting the absolute difference between God and the 'ethically fallen' status of humanity. Since human sinfulness existed in and because of incarnation in material carnality, the most potent rationale explaining this contrast holds that all matter is 'corrupted' or 'fallen away from relation to the perfect Spirit of God.'

Humans, being materially embodied, are not capable of access to the purity and power of ethically divine spirit. Only God can 'work wonders' or 'manifest mythicallity.' Magical action must then derive only from the 'power of God' it is to be valid. However, Church doctrine did recognize the potential existence of 'unholy spirits' or demons that might exert some magical influence on humans. These were not valid is of far as they were corrupt, unclean, or evil. Thus any humans that attempted to mediate the presence of these 'unholy spirits' were defying the truth of God. Magic that is not 'officially derived from God' thus comes to be regarded as either a deceit or else the work of 'evil entities' that are neither human nor divine. Magic, after all, in one sense seeks to engage 'independent forces' or "animating principles" as willful spirits, gods or goddesses, and thereby mediate relations between those and ordinary existence.

However, to the perspective of rationalistic monotheism, the existence of such non-ordinary or supernatural entities that are not 'of the one true God,' would compete with the latter's valid supremacy. Thus animism was at first marginalized, then demonized, and finally dismissed as mere superstition by Christian authorities. This evident anxiety about spirits or 'animating forces' other than the One God suggests some awareness that monotheism was an inadequate representation of 'what animates the world.' The very admission that there are 'demons' that are not

part of God indicates an admission that there is greater mythical complexity than the rationalized supremacy of monotheism can accommodate. In addition, continuance and occasional resurgence of animistic belief in popular European culture also expressed some deep need for immediate experience of "animating principles."

Eventually, the Orthodox Church held that only its authorized priestly deputies held any valid warrant for conducting magical rituals, by virtue of its priests receiving such power directly from the One and Only True God. As in Plato's proposed rationalistically conceived state ruled by "philosopher kings," the Christian orthodoxy forbid the practice of (unofficial) magic on the basis of its being a blasphemous denial of orthodox reality and a thus danger to personal souls. It reserved the role of psychopomp entirely to the practitioners of its dogma. Curiously, though, both Plato's prohibition of magic and that of the orthodox Christian Church indicate that there is actually something to be repressed, some phenomena that poses a threat to the rationalized basis of supremacy being claimed by State and Church over the role of psychopomp.

A Divergence of Reason and Religious Belief in the form of Rationalistic Humanism

These correspondences between ancient Greek rationalism and central tenets of orthodox Christianity over the centuries of the medieval period begin to diverge during the cultural changes of the Renaissance era. An enthusiasm for Classical Greek culture in general contributed to a differentiation of rational analysis as an intellectual method independent from religious orthodoxy. The 'return' of the works of Aristotle to prominence in philosophical literature promoted this shift. The resulting liberty to deploy rational discourse in a philosophic manner less constrained by religious orthodoxy contributed to the perspectives of Humanistic philosophy. The very notion of subordination of analytical reason to religious orthodoxy became a focus for rational critique itself. The validity of Church's definitions of reality and truth were forced into confrontation with the very logos dynamics of thought that it had long utilized to bolster its unitary theology. This more philosophical deployment of Greek rationalism broadened the uses for rational analysis, contributing to its more pragmatic application in scientific and technological endeavors. A gradual 'liberation' of analytical reasoning from the dominion of literalistic theology is viewed here as driving many of the radical changes in culture and society during the Renaissance,

Reformation, and Enlightenment eras and the emergence of modernism.

In addition to this rejuvenation of rational discourse, much attention to the polytheistic character of ancient Greek and Roman mythology emerged in art, literature, and philosophy. The extraordinary vitality of Renaissance culture is seen by some as deriving in significant part from this seemingly aesthetic interest in mythical representations of a more complexly animated world than offered by orthodox Christian religion. One might draw some correspondence between this characteristic of Renaissance culture and the Romantic literary movement of the 19th Century in which Classical references provided a counterpart to the rationalistic reduction of the modern Industrial Revolution.

One pertinent category of effects of Humanist thought is illustrated by the changes in religious perspective and practice that emerged during the Reformation period. Up till this historical shift, Christian theology and ritual practice had been directed by the central institutional orthodoxy of the Catholic Church. The power and prestige of that institutional religious system can be characterized as deriving from its role as the only 'legitimate' psychopomp through which Christian persons might access any relationship with the vivifying presence of "animating principles" or spirit. The deployment of rational analysis as a philosophical method of psychological speculation and social critique encouraged divergence of opinion from religious orthodoxy. An eventual consequence was the promotion of a more individualized relationship with God, or at least with the "Word of God" as recorded in the Bible. People began to read and interpret "God's truth" for them selves, using their own capacities for rational interpretation. The Protestant alternatives to Catholic orthodoxy that emerged expressed a wide divergence of theological interpretations of the Bible that competed for priority of interpretive superiority. Rationalistic argument was stimulated by the debates in these conflicts.

Perhaps most significant to the theme of this paper, Protestantism expressed a rejection of much of the more magical/mythical aspects of Catholic religious practices. The most significant example was a tendency to interpret the ritual of Holy Communion as a symbolic gesture rather than a magical transubstantiation of bread and wine into the body and blood of God. This shift of emphasis from what remained of magical/mythical action in Christian practice toward a rationalized symbolization suggests the ascendancy of rationalism as the dominant mode of mediating relations between ordinary and mythical states of experience. From one perspective, the 'irrational' remnants of mythical/magical mediation with "animating principles" are

'explained away' by rational interpretation of their symbolically coded significance. This move further narrows the basis for asserting Christian faith in the "truth of God" since there is no longer any valid context for direct magical/mythical experience of that 'presence of the numinous' in ordinary contexts. In the general context of Protestant rationalism, belief is a matter of believing in the literalized, historical reality of the incarnation of God and the literal truth of His words as recorded in the Bible. Protestantism thus furthers emphasis upon rationalizing Christian belief while even more radically marginalizing any role of mythical experience and magical action in mediating relations with spirit.

The enthusiasm shown for polytheistic and animistic symbolism drawn from ancient Greek and Roman culture in this era had a corollary in reactivation of neo-pagan practices in local European contexts. The dominance of Christian orthodoxy appears to have been quite complete during the medieval period, though remnants of local pagan and animist practices are noted to have persisted as a secondary, if inferior, context for mediating relations with non-ordinary 'spirit.' However, the changes in cultural attitudes occurring in the Renaissance and then the Reformation eras appeared to have included a new enthusiasm for those pre-Christian approaches to religious spirituality. What seems to have exited the most anxiety in Christian orthodoxy was the thought that avowed Christians might diverge from orthodox dogma by endorsing such pagan beliefs and rites. Thus the great issue of heresy arose in which Christians accused and persecuted other Christians for adulterating the orthodox dogma of belief and practice.

The resulting homicidal slaughter of the official Church crusade against the Albigensian heresy of Southern France and a peripatetic but centuries-long persecution of supposed heretics all over Europe, embraced by both Catholics and Protestants, reiterate the anxiety Christian monotheism felt about any and all deviation from one version of spirit and truth. The institutionalized power of religious orthodoxy pursued this staggeringly 'un-Christian' policy of torture and murder for centuries, savaging and terminating tens of thousands (at least) of lives for the sake of 'rooting out' heresy. These abuses were justified under the claim that the souls of the heretics were actually being saved by the purgatives of enforced confession and tormenting death from eternal suffering in hell.

What is perhaps most significant about this religious tyranny known as the Inquisition is that there were evidently many people whom it failed to intimidate from engaging in Pagan, animist, and magical practices—activities that could get them

brutally tortured and burned alive. What motive might have prompted people to risk such a fate? Again, as with the Renaissance enthusiasm for Greek and Roman polytheism, this 'underground resistance' or alternative to the ways Christian orthodoxy defined and mediated spirit is taken to suggest a persistent need for a more mythically complex expression of numinosity 'in and of the world.' In the case of the Albigensians, a concept of the earth itself as the Mother Mary arose among Christians, one that the Orthodox Church found intolerable. Evidently the appeal of that way of encountering spirit or "animating principle" was more important to many than protecting themselves from the reactive violence of Church authorities.

A Rejuvenation of Mythical/Magical Mediation in Conjunction with Analytical Intellect in Alchemy

Within the same historical periods leading from the decline of the Medieval Synthesis of faith and reason to the overly materialistic science and positivistic rationalism of modernity, a sort of hybrid contexting of mythical and rational understanding emerged. Identified by the phrase Western alchemy, a philosophy and practice for mediating relations between spirit and matter emerged that overtly involved magical action and expressions of mythical reality. Perhaps what distinguishes this tradition of engaging the numinous presences of spirit in matter most vividly from the orthodox Christian view is its sense of animism. Alchemical notions tended to imagine spirit as ever-present in matter, rather than residing only a single anthropomorphic god. Though still concerned with achieving some 'redemption' of spirit from matter, Alchemical representations are relatively polytheistic in comparison to orthodox Christian beliefs. More drastically divergent still, alchemical redemption appears to have been an individual's work in relation to and participation with transformations of matter from one form to another.

The alchemist sought to induce the separation of spirit from matter through a series of stages manifested in actual physical process of material transformation. These efforts involved elaborate manipulations of chemical substances that were developed through rational analysis and empirical testing, as well as a magical/mythical sense of 'more than ordinary significance.' Whereas the Christian imagination limits the magical power for 'valid' transformations of spirit to God only (channeled through His priests), the alchemist seeks to both precipitate and participate a move of matter into spirit by his or her own willful application of mythic

and logical imagination that brings those efforts into relationship with spirits desire for transformation. Alchemy thus not only re-animates matter with inherent willful spirit, but also attributes the potential for a form of 'divine intervention' that mediates relation with it to human intelligence.

What is most significant about Alchemical practices is that they involve rational analysis so intimately with magical/mythical action. There is considerable empirical pragmatism associated with these alchemical endeavors. The literalistic interpretation of them asserts that Alchemists sought to transform lead into gold. Yet various scholars hold that such phrases were both literally and mythically understood. That is to say, alchemical 'truth' appears to have been as much psychological as empirically materialistic. It developed elaborate understanding of the pragmatic manipulations of chemical compounds, yet it experienced these not only as mechanical phenomena but mediations of relation with numinous "animating principles" that are 'more than ordinary.' It was both empirically pragmatic and mythically spiritual.

There appears in this context a dynamical association of the *mythos* and *logos* sundered by Greek rationalism and Christian literalism. That re-formation of the role of (unorthodox and at least seemingly irrational) psychopomp 'in the realm of ordinary matter' was ultimately threatening to both Catholic and Protestant versions of Christian orthodoxy. Even though alchemical efforts began to generate the practically useful basis of modern chemistry, its 'meddling' in 'magic' was problematic for Christian rationalism. Thus a counter-imagination was generated which usurped the pragmatic logic of animistic alchemy, stripping it of mythic consciousness, creating 'scientific' chemistry. The experiential knowledge derived from participation with the spirit in matter during alchemical practices was repressed and discarded in favor of an emphasis upon practical manipulation of un-animated matter, thereby providing a basis for rationally theorized scientific materialism. Conflict with the authority of Christian religion over who or what 'animated matter' was also avoided in this maneuver.

Alchemy was not a popular practice among European societies. Its texts were esoteric, arcane, and often highly personal in their symbolic vocabularies. Thus its general influence was rather limited. Its decline in favor of pragmatized chemistry indicates both the lingering potency of Christian orthodoxies and the increasing tendency toward overtly non-religious, mechanistically pragmatic rationalism. But its existence suggests, similar to the appeal of polytheistic Greek and Roman references

in the Renaissance, and the resurgence of neo-pagan practices that prompted the Inquisition, that a potent impulse to reactivate magical/mythical experience of numinosity emerged after the decline of centralized religious orthodoxy—despite persistent religious literalism and the privileging of rationalism. Yet its displacement by a more overtly pragmatic and empirical science appears on the surface to indicate the weakness of that impulse. However, here is another perspective to take on these developments. If alchemy arose when it did as a vivid expression of some ever-present need to enact direct magical/mythical engagement with the numinous presence of "animating principles" in matter and ordinary reality, then perhaps that impulse survives in secularized, technically pragmatic science.

Scientific Representation of 'Unseen Forces' or Animating Principles as Unconscious Re-animation of Phenomenon

The preceding comments sketch how the conjunction of intellectual rationalism and orthodox monotheistic religious literalism long dominated the valid status of psychopomp in European cultures with a narrowly defined context for relation to animating principles in the ordinary world. As noted, that orthodoxy often reacted violently to what it considered deviance or heresy as expressed in both Christian mystical and neo-pagan experiences for mediating relations with spirit. Further more, that tension about asserting the one and only right way to mediate spirit contributed to the fragmentation of unitary Catholicism into a variety of violently competitive Protestant Christian sects. In addition, the expansion of European dominion to other parts of the globe, into the territories of non-Western cultural traditions, resulted in pervasive denigration and persecution of animistic and polytheistic religious practices there by imperial force. And finally, the emergence of Alchemy in Europe met with similar resistance, if not such overt persecution, by religious authorities. These events and concerns have been associated here in an effort to 'set the stage' for the understanding the emergence of scientific materialism as an overtly non-religious way of depicting the presence of "animating principles" in matter—or, 'things' that appear, ordinarily, inanimate.

Various perspectives have been taken on why and how it was that scientific materialism developed so extensively in the contexts of European culture and society. The view presented here is not meant to assert any essential priority among the likely causes for that development but to indicate one that might have been

overlooked. If one grants credence to the analysis of the history of monotheistic Christian theological orthodoxy that finds it to have drastically delimited experience of numinosity in ordinary contexts over many centuries, and by repressing various overtly religious alternatives, then perhaps there is more motive to the emergence of scientific representation than pragmatism. If human consciousness evolved in part by developing an experiential relation with a sensed dynamism in things and phenomena that was 'more than ordinary' (as expressed in mythical and religious representations of 'spirit'), then perhaps there is an irrepressible impulse and need to create some such experience in one form or another. Given the cultural emphasis upon religious literalism and rationalistic explanation that dominated European cultures, expressed in the defeats of various alternative approaches to experiencing 'spirit' and mediating its sensed presence in human consciousness, it would then seem plausible that the rationalistic mechanism of science offers some compromise.

If the overtly religious and mythical approach to phenomenon is to represent both forms and actions as imbued with or 'animated by' some force, intention, consciousness, or 'spirit' that is and is not 'the thing itself,' then that of scientific understanding can be seen as closely related. The scientific imagination my rely upon empirical quantification, calculation, and rational analysis to post its versions of reality, of material composition, chemical reactions, and the ratios of relation between energy, mass, and speed to depict 'the unseen forces' that 'animate the ordinary.' But these figurations are dynamically similar to those of mythical and religious representations. Granted such a similarity of representations of the 'spirits' that animate the things of the world, scientific materialism comes to appear as a form of un-conscious mythic imagination. In its purview, the material world was officially 're-animated' with non-conscious or non-willful energies and forces.

Newton declared his own theory of gravitational forces exerted at a distance by objects upon objects as non-animistic. Using the mathematical and empirical techniques of scientific materialism, the ordinary visible world was soon 'seen through' to a 'fantastic' realm of chemical and atomic dynamics as 'other worldly' as any pagan tradition's concoction of other worlds in this one populated by 2000 divinities, elves, dwarves, fairies, jinns, genies, spirits, dybuks, etc. Whereas the dogma of Christian orthodoxy 'deferred' the "animating principles" in matter to the One True (disembodied and absent) God, science locates such 'intrinsic impetus' within and of matter. Different forms of matter 'have' intrinsic qualities that direct their 'behavior.' Organic life is 'activated' by myriads of 'invisible' entities (microbes).

Human psyches are 'possessed' by diverse and contradictory intentionalities (unconscious psychological complexes). And the 'spirits' of scientific representation can even be 'made manifest' (conjured) by way of experimental demonstration. Their extra-ordinary presences and influences can be engaged by way of 'magical actions' that result in the transubstantiation of one form of matter into another—even of matter into energy on a scale that human experience conditioned by ordinary, practical life could hardly comprehend. And as technological mechanism, it could create fantastic 'creatures' capable of super human actions in the form of machines. These 'magical rituals of transformation' might be classed as 'technical,' but magic and ritual have ever involved some 'technical actions' to induce and mediate relations with the 'spirits in things.'

Thus it would seem 'reasonable' to contemplate that to the human psyche these extra-ordinary mediations of normally 'unseen forces' might well qualify as magical and mythical relations with 'spirit.' If this reasoning is inclusive yet self–consistent enough to be rational, what is to me made of the general assumption that science is the very opposite from religion as a way of knowing or experiencing phenomenon? One brief response to the question seems to be that religious approaches tend to overtly stimulate a mythical/magical experience with the radically complex, non-ordinary dynamism of a 'world animated by spirit.' By contrast, the scientific mode represents such a 'hidden dynamism' but regards it in strictly rational terms. Yet the supposed empiricism of that rationalism is reasonably suspect: Newton's mathematical explanation of gravity is practically useful, but the actual phenomenon remains in some respects incomprehensible. In a similar vein, quantum physics describes "spooky action at a distance" in technical terms that might be mathematically rational but remain practically mysterious.

The principle difference between the overtly religious, mythical/magical mode of representing and mediating the 'strangeness' of nature to ordinary experience is thus a matter of style. Scientific representation is derived from rational analysis and empirical testing. But its interpretive conclusions are rationalistic in asserting any complete and absolute mechanistic explanation that utterly accounts for phenomenon as if these were 'merely ordinary.' As such, though the scientific mode appears to re-animate matter with spirit in a practical sense, it not only reiterates the literalistic rationalism of Christian dogma, it intensifies it. Christian dualism that opposes spirit and body is reproduced in a scientific denial of intentionality in matter,

and more specifically, the displacement of mind from body. In so far as scientific representation attempts to account for mind it tends to regard it as an epiphenomenon of body or brain. The alienation of spirit from matter, mind or soul from body is thus preserved. These are not mythically reunited in overly acknowledged conscious experience. Thus the 'psychic compromise' of a dynamic but non-animist scientific imagination of mythic reality might actually have heightened the alienation of the split between *mythos* and *logos*.

A distinction seems in order between rational and empirical scientific analysis that generates hypothetical knowledge of the "animating principles" of matter and any rational-istic conclusions projected from such analysis as 'the one truth.' It can be argued that an attitude that 'leaps' from the diversifications of rational analysis to idealized conclusions of 'absolute truth,' that reflexively reduces all phenomena to quantification and mechanism, is not methodologically scientific. Such an attitude has been termed "scientism"—much like rational-ism tends not to be reductively assertive rather than logically complex.

The notion of "pure" science as a practice of utterly objective, rationally empirical mode of knowing phenomena presumes one can actually 'stand outside of the world' to analyze it. The complementarity and uncertainty principles of quantum mechanics suggest otherwise. The observer evidently effects what he or she observes just by attempting to measure it. Observation itself can exert some 'magical' effects on the "animating principles' of matter. Thus a science that assumes it can describe phenomena without representing 'spirit,' that denies any role as psychopomp, practices a 'faithless' alchemy, participating in the transubstantiation of matter by precipitating it yet refusing to acknowledge that interplay as an experience of the mythical/magical complexity of non-ordinary levels or 'worlds' of existence.

Perhaps it is illogical to credit this denial or evasion to 'science,' which is, after all, more a methodology than a dogmatic orthodoxy, religious or philosophical. It seems more likely that on the one hand it is the attitude of reductively literalistic Christian theology that 'lives on' in the form of 'scientism,' while the way scientific representation remains evasive about its elaborations of 'spiritual phenomenon' is a most reasonable evasion of the repressive fury which that religious dogma of dualistic reduction has historically directed at all 'heretics' and 'Pagans.'

Finally, then, just why does mention of magic and myth tend to provoke

associations with trickery, delusion, and falsehood? Well, if Western cultural history holds any memory of the furious oppressions directed at 'unorthodox mediations of spirit,' particularly those that overtly honor any intimate coexistence of spirit and matter, then a residual evasion of validating mythical/magical experience as 'real' is understandable. Put another way, to 'believe' in 'scientism' (as the ideological heir of literalistically religious, mono-logically rationalistic monotheism) requires overt denial of mythical reality—that experientially valid mediational encounter with the radical complexity of concurrent states of ordinarily inanimate and extra-ordinarily animated phenomena *as present numinosity*.

> Why then is magic held in such disrepute? The scientifically minded class it as superstition; the religious regard it as a sinister area of dark forces and dubious motives. Yet it seems significant that the views that science and religion have of magic are very much like the distorted caricatures that each in the past has held of the other! In the nineteenth century there was tedious and acrimonious debate between "science" and "religion." In fact in some unenlightened areas it still smolders on, but it is magic that now provides a mutual whipping boy. This might well be expected if magic is found to be a middle ground of both science and religion; if it forms a common ground so close to each that it falls into their mutual shadow.
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> Is it part of religion, which, because it is so like science, seems to threaten the authority of science? And is it also a part of science, which, because it is so like religion, threatens to trespass on the preserves of religion? (Knight, 1-2)

Perhaps it is only a Western perspective that asserts this seeming opposition of science and religion—and that by misunderstanding the difference between scientific method and reductively rationalistic 'scientism.' Many a scientist religiously asserts the absolute truth and thus superiority of scientific knowing over religious or mythical. However this might be, the triumph of Western rationalism on a global scale might well constitute the ultimate 'religious conversion' of human consciousness to a particular 'belief system'—meaning that of an unconsciously magical spirituality. No doubt, rationality is 'here to stay,' whether or not idealistic literalism continues to confuse it with reductive assertions of absolute truth and the

dissociative splitting of *mythos* and *logos*. And as for those who seek to engage in overtly 'magical actions,' reason need not be considered 'the enemy.'

> Many of the magical concepts and technique in this book are described using the terminology of psychology and information science, as well as more traditional magical jargon. This is not because I believe that magic can be "explained" by science and psychology, but because I believe that science and magic are complimentary approaches to the world, like two sides of the same coin.
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> As modern magicians, we are less and less allowed the luxury of belief untroubled by intellectual analysis. It is part of the task of the new age to synthesize previous knowledge, and to develop new, more sophisticated models that engage our hearts and satisfy our intellects. The analytical world of the scientist, the experiential world of the mystic, and the analogical world of the magician need not conflict, but can be reconciled by greater understanding of each. To approach magic without logic, empiricism, and discipline invites delusion and obsession. To seek mysteries without intuition, passion, and belief may yield only stagnation and academicism. One must be able to both observe and to participate. (Whitcomb, 3)

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