

Terence McKenna

The Archaic Revival

Speculations on Psychedelic Mushrooms, the Amazon,
Virtual Reality, UFO's, Evolution, Shamanism, the Re-
birth of the Goddess and the End of History

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Short editorial note

This book is a collection of essays by and interviews with Terence McKenna, productions that span over many years of his life and research. It's a quite heteroclit kind of book, hard to classify. I think in order to avoid making up something that it is not, best is to see it as a collection of earlier works under a new name like in music for example the volume 'Bunte Blätter' by Robert Schumann (Op. 99) – that contains many short oeuvres from his younger years, but the volume is one of the best, and most genial of his entire musical life. Some of the little pieces, says the anecdote, Schumann even had thrown in the garbage bin already and took them out again, to conserve them for later 'revision' because he thought they were not up to his standard. As for me, better the whole Schumann destroyed and this single volume conserved, than vice versa. And perhaps the same is true for the oeuvre of McKenna and this particular part of it, *Archaic Revival*. And if one day, which I do not believe, McKenna's findings were all found not true, there is one truth that goes beyond all this – and this is equally valid for Carlos Castaneda and his oeuvre – it is the truth that McKenna was one of the greatest poets of our time and a truly genial creator of his own peculiar, fantastic and highly interesting universe, his own particular reality. And at the same time a teacher of the technique to get there, for all of us!

- In addition to choosing to repress the strange abilities of the shaman and the psychic potential of contact with the Other, Western tradition has a built-in bias against self-experimentation with hallucinogens. One of the consequences of this is that not enough has been written about the phenomenology of personal experiences with the visionary hallucinogens. 3

- And I think what's really happening is that a dialogue opens up between the ego and these larger, more integrated parts of the psyche that are normally hidden from view. Ego may be a fairly modern invention – meaning the last one or two thousand years – a fairly modern adaptation of the psyche to its environment. One of the things happening in the Amazon is that forest people say they enter into a group mind when they take *ayahuasca*, and on it they make decisions for the tribe – where to hunt, who to make war on, where to move to, these kinds of things. 10

- So the issue finally comes down to the citizen versus the self. The citizen is an extremely limited definition of human potential. The self is a definition of human potential so broad that it threatens the obligations of the citizen. 12

- I am a political activist, but I think that the first duty of a political activist is to become psychedelic. Otherwise you're not making your moves cognizant of the entire field of action. 13

- Shamanism is use of the archaic techniques of ecstasy that were developed independent of any religious philosophy – the empirically validated, experientially operable techniques that produce ecstasy. Ecstasy is the contemplation of wholeness. That's why when you experience ecstasy – when you contemplate wholeness – you come down remade in terms of the political and social arena because you have seen the larger picture. 13

- So it is the form of the mind that the shaman works with: he has a larger view because he is not really in his culture. (...) The shaman may appear a member of the culture, but he's broader, deeper, higher, and wider than the culture that created him. 14

- I admire transpersonal psychotherapists. I think they are trying to remake the shamanistic institution in a modern form. What they have to realize is that they're wasting their time unless they use the shamanistic tools. And the foremost tool of the

shamans is the technique of ecstasy, and that means the hallucinogenic plants. Id.

- There are three questions that you should ask yourself about a drug you're considering taking. Number one, does it occur naturally in a plant or an animal? / Because nature has use-tested these compounds over millions and millions of years. Something that came out of the laboratory four or five years ago — who knows? So it should be a product of the natural world. Number two, does it have a history of human usage? Mushrooms do. Mescaline does. LSD doesn't. Ecstasy doesn't. And number three, and most important, it should have some affinity to brain chemistry. It shouldn't be just like landing on the moon; it should be related to what is driving ordinary consciousness. The last criteria is the most narrow, because mescaline won't get through that. I think that drugs should be as noninvasive as possible, and I know I'm on the right track because the strongest psychedelic drugs there are are the ones that last the shortest amount of time. Now, what does that mean? It means that your brain recognizes the compound and within a few minutes can completely neutralize it. DMT is the strongest psychedelic there is, yet it lasts only five minutes. Twenty minutes after you do it, it's like you never did it at all.

Nature is the great guide in all of this. The natural chemistry of the brain. The natural history of the plant. The naturally evolved shamanic institutions of small groups of human beings that are still in touch with reasonable social values. 15, 16

- I think of Mahayana Buddhism, the multileveled, many-inhabited, demon-haunted, Buddha-haunted realms of peace and joy. The insistence of Mahayana Buddhism that there is really no center, that everything is a construct of time and space, is the most sophisticated psychology. But I'm not willing to climb aboard the Buddhist ethic because Buddhism says suffering is inevitable. That's not a psychedelic point of view. 17

- And this is certainly part of what the psychedelics are about: they *force* the evolution of language. And no culture, so far as I am aware, has ever consciously tried to evolve its language with the awareness that evolving language was evolving reality. (...) The social consequence of the psychedelic experience is clear thinking – which trickles down as clear speech. Empowered speech. 21

- What is not well known is the communication model that is happening in the octopus. Octopi change their color not for cam-

ouffrage purposes, as might be supposed, but as a mode of communication. The blushes, spots, and traveling bands of color that an ordinary octopus can manifest are reflective of its linguistic intent. Its language appears on the surface of its skin.

Ordinarily, telepathy is imagined to be you hearing me think, then me hearing you think. But a richer notion of telepathy would be if you could see my words, rather than hear them – if they were actually sculptural objects. I would make an utterance, then you and I would stand and regard this utterance from all angles. There would be no ambiguity. And this is exactly what is going on with the octopi. Shamans do the same thing. These shamanistic songs that are sung are not intended to be heard, they are intended to be seen by other people who are intoxicated. This crossing from the heard to the seen is a very important part of the revelation of the transcendental object.

We are going to go from a linguistic mode that is heard to a linguistic mode that is beheld. When this transition is complete, the ambiguity, the uncertainty, and the subterfuge that haunt our efforts at communication will be obsolete. And it will be in this environment of beheld communication that the new world of the Logos will be realized. 22

- This experience of an interior guiding voice with a higher level of knowledge is not alien in Western history; however, the intellectual adventure of the last thousand years has made an idea like that seem / preposterous if not psychopathological. 27, 28

- Unfortunately, religion for the past five hundred years has been a hierarchical pyramid at whose top were theologians interpreting dogma. This interpretation was handed down through a hierarchy to the faithful. I think religious hierarchies are very unsettled by the idea of direct revelation. Nevertheless, this phenomenon is certainly thriving in preliterate cultures all over the world. We discovered in dealing with this that the only people you could talk to about it or who seemed to have familiarity with it were shamans. 28

- Anthropologists have commented on the absence of serious mental disease in many preliterate cultures. I believe that the mediation of the shaman and through him the contact to the centering Logos, this source of information or gnosis, is probably the cause of this ability to heal or minimize psychological disorders. 29

- Unless you shed your language and enter into these cultures entirely, you will always have the point of view of a stranger and an outsider. Id.

- Psilocybin, in the minds of the uninformed public and in the eyes of the law, is lumped together with LSD and mescaline, when in fact each of these compounds is a phenomenologically defined universe unto itself. Psilocybin and DMT invoke the Logos, although DMT is more intense and more brief in its action. This means that they work directly on the language centers, so that an important aspect of the experience is the interior dialogue.

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- The *Stropharia cubensis* mushroom, if one can believe what it says in one of its moods, is a symbiote, and it desires ever deeper symbiosis with the human species. It achieved symbiosis with human society early by associating itself with domesticated cattle and through them human nomads. Like the plants men and women grew and the animals they husbanded, the mushroom was able to inculcate itself into the human family, so that where human genes went these other genes would be carried.

But the classic mushroom cults of Mexico were destroyed by the coming of the Spanish conquest. The Franciscans assumed they had an absolute monopoly on theophagy, the eating of God; yet in the New World they came upon people calling a mushroom *teonanacatl*, the flesh of the gods. They set to work, and the Inquisition was able to push the old religion into the mountains of Oaxaca so that it only survived in a few villages when Valentina and Gordon Wasson found it there in the 1950's. 40

- Ignorance burned the libraries of the Hellenistic world at an earlier period and dispersed the ancient knowledge, shattering the stellar and astronomical machinery that had been the work of centuries. By ignorance I mean the Hellenistic-Christian-Judaic tradition. The inheritors of this tradition built a triumph of mechanism. It was they who later realized the alchemical dreams of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries - and the twentieth century - with the transformation of elements and the discovery of gene transplants. But then, having conquered the New World and driven its people into cultural fragmentation and diaspora, they came unexpectedly upon the body of Osiris - the condensed body of Eros - in the mountains of / Mexico where Eros has retreated at the coming of the Christos. And by finding the mushroom, they unleashed it. 40, 41

- As I said, I am an explorer, not a scientist. If I were unique, then none of my conclusions would have any meaning outside the context of myself. My experiences, like yours, have to be more or less a part of the human condition. Some may have more facility for such exploration than others, and these states may be difficult to achieve, but they are part of the human condition. There are a few clues that these extradimensional places exist. If art carries images out of the Other from the Logos to the world - drawing ideas down into matter - why is human art history so devoid of what psychedelic voyagers have experienced so totally? Perhaps the flying saucer or UFO is the central motif to be understood in order to get a handle on reality here and now. We are alienated, so alienated that the self must disguise itself as an extraterrestrial in order not to alarm us with the truly bizarre dimensions that it encompasses. When we can love the alien, then we will have begun to heal the psychic discontinuity that has plagued us since at least the sixteenth century, possibly earlier. 43

- My testimony is that magic is alive in hyperspace. It is not necessary to believe me, only to form a relationship with these hallucinogenic plants. The fact is that the gnosis comes from plants. Id.

- I will add a cautionary note. I always feel odd telling people to verify my observations since the sine qua non is the hallucinogenic plant. Experimenters should be very careful. One must build up to the experience. These are bizarre dimensions of extraordinary power and beauty. There is no set rule to avoid being overwhelmed, but move carefully, reflect a great deal, and always try to map experiences back onto the history of the race and the philosophical and religious accomplishments / of the species.
43, 44

- The tragedy of our cultural situation is that we have no shamanic tradition. Shamanism is primarily techniques, not ritual. It is a set of techniques that have been worked out over millennia that make it possible, though perhaps not for everyone, to explore these areas. People of predilection are noticed and encouraged.

In archaic societies where shamanism is a thriving institution, the signs are fairly easy to recognize: oddness and uniqueness in an individual. (...) Among aspiring shamans there must be some sign of inner strength or a hypersensitivity to trance states. In traveling around the world and dealing with shamans, I find the distinguishing characteristic is an extraordinary

centeredness. Usually the shaman is an intellectual and is alienated from society. A good shaman sees exactly who you are and says, 'Ah, here's somebody to have a conversation with.' The anthropological literature always presents shamans as embedded in a tradition, but once one gets to know them they are always very sophisticated about what they are doing. They are the true phenomenologists of this world; they know plant chemistry, yet they call these energy fields 'spirits'. 45

- Shamans are peripheral to society's goings on in ordinary social life in every sense of the word. 46

- What good is a theory of how the universe works if it's a series of tensor equations that, even when understood, come nowhere tangential to experience? The only intellectual or noetic or spiritual path worth following is one that builds on personal experience. Id.

- What the mushroom says about itself is this: that it is an extra-terrestrial organism, that spores can survive the conditions of interstellar space. (...) Is it possible that these mushrooms never evolved on earth? That is what *Stropharia cubensis* itself suggests. Global currents may form on the outside of the spore. The

spores are very light and by Brownian motion are capable of percolation to the edge of a planet's atmosphere. Then, through interaction with energetic particles, some small number could actually escape into space. Understand that this is an evolutionary / strategy where only one in many billions of spores actually makes the transition between the stars – a biological strategy of radiating throughout the galaxy without a technology. Of course, this happens over very long periods of time. 46, 47

- I couldn't figure out whether the mushroom is the alien or the mushroom is some kind of technological artifact allowing me to hear the alien when the alien is actually light-years away, using some kind of Bell nonlocality principle to communicate.

The mushroom states its own position very clearly. It says, 'I require the nervous system of a mammal. Do you have one handy?' 47

- The Italian Renaissance ran on spices; they had to get spices from somewhere, so they bought them. 'Spices' is a very ambiguous term. If we could get psychedelics classified as spices they would come under the control not of psychotherapists and mental health care people but of chefs and maître d's. Then we

would have an entirely different approach to the administration of psychedelic substances, set, setting, goals. 55

[Follows a very interesting dialog with Ralph Metzner that is important word for word].

Ralph Metzner: Your ideas, as well as Albert Hofmann's idea about the role of ergotlike plants in Eleusis, tie into the notion of the reawakening of the old gods. These are sacred plants that were treated as sacred beings, divine beings, basically deities. If we are in fact able to identify what soma was, we will be able to identify and re-create the original source-energy behind the Indo-European civilization. Similarly, if we rediscover and are able to incorporate whatever was used at Eleusis, we will have the original impetus behind Greek-European civilization that carried it for two thousand years as the primary vehicle of religious experience.

Terence McKenna: Soma is the light at the beginning and end of history. This is the notion. It infuses history. History is a process that it created for its own purposes. We are involved in a symbiotic relationship with a biological creature that is like a god because it is so advanced, different, and in possession of such a peculiar body of information compared with ourselves.

Ralph Metzner: Another brief point about soma: Whatever soma was, why did it disappear? There are not any *Stropharia cubensis* or *Amanita* or any of these other hallucinogens in India now. If it is there, it is fairly remote and not a widespread thing like alcohol or wine, which became a widespread religious-social drug in all of Western culture. My theory about what happened then is the same as what happens now, that the use of soma, which was a genuine religious intoxicant in the sense that it produced a religious experience and direct knowledge of God, was stamped out systematically by the priesthoods, who were primarily intent upon maintaining their own power structure. If people could have a direct experience of God by taking mushrooms or any other plant they would not be interested in priestly power structures – they couldn't care less. Why should they talk to a priest if they could talk directly to God?

Terence McKenna: This is the deconditioning factor.

Ralph Metzner: We saw in the sixties and we see now that the power holders in society do not want large numbers of people taking substances or plants that expand their consciousness. A few here or there do not bother them. But if it grows into large numbers that make a lot of noise, they don't want it.

Terence McKenna: This is why the vertical approach is better. Deeper experiences for a harder core. 56

- My brother and I discovered during our expedition to the Amazon in 1971 that accumulation of the tryptamines in one's system seems to confer the ability to inhabit more than one world at once, as though another world were superimposed over reality. This is a super-reality, a hyperdimensional world where information is accessible in magical ways. 58

- It is not, strictly speaking, a contact from a space-faring race that has come from the stars, nor is it mass hysteria or delusion. 59

- The UFO is an idea intended to confound science, because science has begun to threaten the existence of the human species as well as the ecosystem of the planet. At this point, a shock is necessary for the culture, a shock equivalent to the Resurrection on Roman imperialism. (...) I think that to some degree science has betrayed human destiny. We have been led to brink of star flight, but we've also been led to the brink of thermonuclear holocaust. The result of this betrayal is that science may well be swept away by the revelation of the UFO. 61

- A voice that gave guidance and revelation to Western civilization has been silent for about seventeen hundred years. This is the Logos and all ancient philosophers strove to invoke it. For Hellenistic / philosophy it was a voice that told self-evident truth. With the passing of the Aeon and the death of the pagan gods, awareness of this phenomenon faded. However, it is still available through the mediation of the plant teachers. If we could intelligently examine dimensions that the psychedelic plants make available, we could contact the Oversoul and leave behind this era where dominance hierarchies must be disciplined by UFOs and messiahs, and where progress is halted for millennia because culture cannot advance ethics at the same rate as technology. 61, 62

- We need to face the fact that there is a level of hierarchical control being exerted on the human species as a whole and that our destiny is not ours to decide. It is in the hands of a weirdly democratic, amoeboid, hyperintelligent superorganism that is called Everybody. As we come to terms with this, as we take our place embedded in the body of Everybody, information flows more freely and the reality of this informational creature is seen more clearly. The fact is that we are in a symbiotic relationship with

an organism made of information, and this is the situation classic shamanic plant hallucinogens reinforce very strongly. 64

- The great majority of people interested in flying saucers are hardware nuts convinced that UFOs are ships from Zeta Reticuli. The shamanic and psychological explanation is not particularly welcome anywhere. 67

- The early approach with psychedelics was the correct one. This is the notion that intelligent, thoughtful people should take psychedelics and try and understand what's going on. Not groups of prisoners, not graduate students, but mature, intelligent people need to share their experiences. It's too early for a science. What we need now are the diaries of explorers. We need many diaries of many explorers so we can begin to get a feeling for the territory. 69

- The UFO comes from this murky region, beyond the end of history, beyond the end of life. It is both suprahistorical and supraorganic. It is uncanny, alien; it raises the hair on the back of one's neck. It is both the apotheosis and the antithesis of the monkey's journey toward mind. It is the mind revealing itself.

This is what all religion is about: shock waves given off by an event at the end of history. We are now very close to that event, and Psilocybin can help us to understand it because Psilocybin conveys one into the place where it is happening constantly. The Aeon, eternity, and the millennium are accomplished facts, not an anticipation. Hence the mushroom stands at the end of history. It stands for an object that pulls all history toward itself. It's a causal force that operates upon us backward through time. It is why things happen the way they do; because everything is being pulled forward toward a nexus of transformation. 70

- To sum up what I've said about religion, it is as though the Father-God notion were being replaced by the alien-partner notion. The alien-partner is like the angelic tetramorph. It is androgynous, hermaphroditic, transhuman; it is all these things that the unconscious chooses to project upon it until we have enough information to define what it might actually be for itself. 73

- Eventually this contact will occur. We are now in the pubescent stage of yearning, of forming an image of the thing desired. This image of the thing desired will eventually cause that thing come

into being. In other words, our cultural direction is being touched by the notion of / alien love, and it comes to us through the rebirth of the use of plant hallucinogens. The shamanic vision plants seem to be the carriers of this pervasive entelechy that speaks and that can present itself to us in this particular way. 73, 74

- The appetite for this fusion is what is propelling global culture toward an apocalyptic transformation. (...) But it could also slip away. We could harden; there are dominator, hypertechnological futures that we could sail toward and realize. That would eliminate this possibility of opening to the Other. 74

- There is tension around the flying saucer, aside from the erotic connotation, because the flying saucer represents a tremendous / challenge to science, perhaps the ultimate challenge. It may be as confounding to science as the resurrection of Christ was to Greek empiricism and Roman imperialism. The flying saucer is essentially an agent of cultural change. 75, 76

- The zeitgeist of hyperspace that is emerging, initially freighted with technology and cybernetics, requires that it be consciously

tuned to an erotic ideal. It is important to articulate the presence of this erotic ideal of the Other early. This is an opportunity to fall in love with the Other, get married, and go off to the stars; but it's only an opportunity and not evolutionarily necessary. 76

- But in the Amazon and other places where plant hallucinogens are understood and used, you are conveyed into worlds that are appallingly different from ordinary reality. Their vividness cannot be stressed enough. They are more real than real. And that's something that you sense intuitively. They establish an ontological priority. They are more real than real, and once you get that under your belt and let it rattle around in your mind, then the compass of your life begins to spin and you realize that you are not looking in on the Other; the Other is looking in on you. 78

- The story you tell yourself about how the world works can't explain to you how forming the wish to close your open hand into a fist makes it happen. This is the true status of present science. It cannot offer so much as a clue about how that happens. Scientists know how muscles contract – all *that* they know. It's the initiating phenomenon, that which decides 'I will close

my hand'. They know as much about that as – and perhaps less than – Western or Eastern philosophy knew in the twelfth century. Id.

- As human history goes forward, we develop the linguistic discrimination to be able to recognize the extraterrestrials that are already insinuated into the planetary environment around us, some of which may have been here millions and millions of years. In other words, space is not an impermeable barrier to life; there is slow drift. There is genetic material that is transferred through space and time over vast distances. 80

- I don't think that mass drug taking is a good idea. But I think that we must have a deputized minority – a shamanic professional class, if you will – whose job is to bring ideas out of the deep, black water and show them to the rest of us. Such people would perform for our culture some of the cultural functions that shamans performed in preliterate cultures. 82

- Evolutionary biologists consider humans to be an unevolving species. Some time in the last fifty thousand years, with the invention of / culture, the biological evolution of humans ceased

and evolution became an epigenetic, cultural phenomenon. Tools, languages, and philosophies began to evolve, but the human somatype remained the same. Hence, physically, we are very much like people of a long time ago. But technology is the real skin of our species. Humanity, correctly seen in the context of the last five hundred years, is an extruder of technological material. We take in matter that has a low degree of organization; we put it through mental filters, and we extrude jewelry, gospels, space shuttles. 92, 93

- The conventions of relativity say that time slows down as one approaches the speed of light, but if one tries to imagine the point of view of a thing made of light, one must realize that what is never mentioned is that if one moves at the speed of light there is no time whatsoever. There is an experience of time zero. So if one imagines for a moment oneself to be made of light, or in possession of a vehicle that can move at the speed of light, one can traverse from any point in the universe to any other with a subjective experience of time zero. This means that one crosses to Alpha Centauri in time zero, but the amount of time that has passed in the relativistic universe is four and a half years. But if one moves very great distances, of one crosses two hundred and

fifty thousand light-years to Andromeda, one would still have a subjective experience of time zero. 95

- Our institutions, our epistemologies are bankrupt and exhausted; we must start anew and hope that with the help of shamanically inspired personalities, we can cultivate the ancient mystery once again. 98

- In my opinion the unique quality of Psilocybin is that it reveals not colored lights and moving grids, but places – jungles, cities, machines, books, architectonic forms of incredible complexity. There is no possibility that this could be construed as neurological noise of any sort. It is, in fact, the most highly ordered visual information that one can experience, much more highly ordered than the normal waking vision. Id.

- What is happening to our world is ingression of novelty toward what Whitehead called ‘conrescence’, a tightening gyre. Everything is flowing together. The ‘autopoetic lapis’, the alchemical stone at the end of time, coalesces when everything flows together. When the laws of physics are obviated, the universe disappears, and what is left is the tightly bound plenum, the monad, able to

express itself for itself, rather than only able to cast a shadow into *physis* as its reflection. I come very close here to classical millenarian and apocalyptic thought in my view of the rate at which change is accelerating. From the way the gyre is tightening, I predict that concrescence will occur soon – around 2012 A.D. It will be the entry of our species into hyperspace, but it will appear to be the end of physical laws accompanied by the release of the mind into the imagination. 101

- Novelty, then, is put forward as a primary term necessary to a description of any temporal system much in the way that spin, velocity, and angular momentum are primary terms necessary to the description of any physical system. Synonyms for ‘novelty’ are ‘degree of connectedness’ or ‘complexity’. 109

- In my confrontations with the personified Other that is resident in the mushroom, part of its message was its species-specific uniqueness and its desire for a symbiotic relationship with humans. At other times it presented itself not so much as a personage but as a giant network that many sorts of beings in different parts of the universe were using for their own purposes. I felt like a two-year-old child who struggles with the question,

‘Are there little people in the radio?’. Perhaps the psilocybin-revealed dimension is a kind of network of information and images, or something even more substantial. 117

- Chemists who made the early attempts to isolate the alkaloids in *B. caapi* gave their compound the romantic name telepathine, reflecting the deep forest reputation of yagé as a genuinely telepathic drug. Id.

- ‘Ecstatic’ is a word unnecessary to define except operationally: an ecstatic experience is one that one wishes to have over and over again. 144

- One view of plant hallucinogens is to see them as interspecies pheromones or exopheromones. Pheromones are chemical compounds exuded by an organism for the purpose of carrying messages between organisms of the same species. (...) If hallucinogens are operating as exopheromones, then the dynamic symbiotic relationship between primate and hallucinogenic plant is actually a transfer of information from one species to another. 145

- It is reasonable to suggest that human language arose out of the synergy of primate organizational potential by plant hallucinogens. Indeed, this possibility was brilliantly anticipated by Henry Munn in his essay 'The Mushrooms of Language' (1973). Munn writes:

Language is an ecstatic activity of signification. Intoxicated by the mushroom, the fluency, the ease, the aptness of expression one becomes capable of are of such that one is astounded by the words that issue forth from the contact of the intention of articulation with the matter of experience. The spontaneity the mushrooms liberate is not only perceptual, but linguistic. For the shaman, it is as if existence were uttering itself through him.

- The people of Çatal Hüyük and other Mesopotamian peoples existed undisturbed in the ancient Middle East for a long time, practicing their Mother Goddess religion. Then, around five to seven thousand B.P., a different kind of people with wheeled chariots, patriarchy and a ritual involving horse sacrifice swept down from north of the Caspian Sea into Turkey and Anatolia, and what is now Iraq and Iran, encountering the pastoral, mushroom-using lowlanders. 150

- The Ninth Mandala of the *Rig Veda* especially goes into great detail about soma and states that soma stands above the gods. Soma is the supreme entity. Soma is the moon; soma is masculine. Here we have a rare phenomenon: a male lunar deity. The connection between the feminine and the moon is so deep and obvious that a lunar male deity stands out, making its traditional history in the region easy to trace. 152

- It is my suggestion that the mushroom religion is actually the generic religion of human beings and that all later adumbrations of religion stem from the cult of ritual ingestion of mushrooms to induce ecstasy. 153

- A rethinking of the role that hallucinogenic plants and fungi have played in the promotion of human emergence from the substrata of primate organization can help to lay the basis for a new appreciation of the unique confluence of factors responsible and necessary for the evolution of human beings. The widely felt intuition of the presence of the Other as a female companion to the human navigation of history can, I believe, be traced back to the immersion in the vegetable mind that provided the ritual context in which human consciousness emerged into the light

of self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-articulation: the light of the Great Goddess. Id.

- This dualism of the interior and the exterior may have to be overcome. It obviously transcends the individual. But I suspect it is something like an Overmind of the species and that the highest form of human organization is not realized in the democratic individual. It is realized in a dimension none of us has ever penetrated – the mind of the species. It is the hand at the tiller of history. It is no government, no religious group, but actually what we call the human unconscious; however, it is not unconscious, and it is not simply a cybernetic repository of myth and memory. It is an organized entelechy of some sort, and though human history is its signature on the primates, it is very different from the primates. It is like a creature of pure information. It is made of language. It releases ideas into the flowing stream of history to boost the primates toward higher and higher levels of self-reflection. 159

- [M]odern theories are that hallucinogens shift emphasis from left- to right-brain thinking. 189

- DMT is a neurotransmitter that, when ingested and allowed to come to rest in unusually large amounts in the synapses of the brain, allows one to see sound, so that one can use the voice to produce not musical compositions, but pictorial and visual compositions. This, to my mind, indicates that we're on the cusp of some kind of evolutionary transition in the language-forming area, so that we are going to go from a language that is heard to a language that is seen, through a shift in interior processing. The language will still be made of sound, but it will be processed as the carrier of the visual impression. This is actually being done by shamans in the Amazon. The songs they sing sound as they do in order to look a certain way. They are not musical compositions as we're used to thinking of them. They are pictorial art that is caused by audio signals. 209

- One of the things that interests me about dreams is this: I have dreams in which I smoke DMT, and it works. To me that's extremely interesting, because it seems to imply that one does not have to smoke DMT to have the experience. You only have to convince your brain that you have done this, and it then delivers this staggering altered state. 210

- There are times – and this would be a great study for somebody to do – there have been periods in English when there were emotions that don't exist anymore, because the words have been lost. This is getting very close to this business of how reality is made by language. Can we recover a lost emotion by creating a word for it? There are colors that don't exist anymore because the words have been lost. I'm thinking of the word *jacinth*. This is a certain kind of orange. Once you know the word *jacinth*, you always can recognize it, but if you don't have it, all you can say is it's a little darker orange than something else. We've never tried to consciously evolve our language, we've just let it evolve, but now we have this level of awareness, and this level of cultural need where we really must plan where the new words should be generated. There are areas where words should be gotten rid of that empower political wrong thinking. The propagandists for the fascists already understand this; they understand that if you make something unsayable, you've made it unthinkable. So it doesn't plague you anymore. So planned evolution of language is the way to speed it toward expressing the frontier of consciousness. 214

- Botanical Dimensions is a nonprofit foundation that attempts to rescue plants with a history of shamanic and human usage in the warm tropics, and rescue the information about how they're used, store the information in computers, and move the plants to a nineteen-acre site in Hawaii, in a rain forest belt that reasonably replicates the Amazon situation. There we are keeping them toward the day when someone will want to do serious research on them. As a nonprofit foundation, we solicit donations, publish a newsletter, support a number of collectors in the field, and carry on this work, which nobody else is really doing. There's a lot of rain forest conservation going on, but very little effort to conserve the folk knowledge of native peoples. Amazonian people are going off to sawmills and learning to repair outboard motors, and this whole body of knowledge about plants is going to be lost in the next generation. We're saving it, and saving the plants in a botanical garden in Hawaii. 216

- Reestablishing channels of direct communication with the planetary Other, the mind behind nature, through the use of hallucinogenic plants is the last best hope for dissolving the steep walls of cultural inflexibility that appear to be channeling us toward true ruin. We need a new set of lenses to see our way in

the world. When the medieval world shifted its worldview, secularized European society sought salvation in the revivifying of classical Greek and Roman approaches to law, philosophy, / aesthetics, city planning, and agriculture. Our dilemma will cast us further back into time in a search for models and answers. 218, 219

- The solution of much of modern malaise, including chemical dependencies and repressed psychoses and neuroses, is direct exposure to the authentic dimensions of risk represented by the experience of psychedelic plants. The pro-psychedelic plant position is clearly an antidrug position. Drug dependencies are the result of habitual, unexamined, and obsessive behavior; these are precisely the tendencies in our psychological makeup that the psychedelics mitigate. The plant hallucinogens dissolve habits and hold motivations up to inspection by a wider, less egocentric, and more grounded point of view within the individual. 219

- What I call the Archaic Revival is the process of reawakening awareness of traditional attitudes toward nature, including plants and our relationship to them. The Archaic Revival spells the eventual breakup of the pattern of male dominance and hi-

erarchy based on animal organization, something that cannot be changed overnight by a sudden shift in collective awareness. Id.

- The closer a human group is to the gnosis of the vegetable mind – the Gaian collectivity of organic life – the closer their connection to the archetype of the Goddess and hence to the partnership style of social organization. The last time that the mainstream of Western thought was refreshed by the gnosis of the vegetable mind was at the close of the Hellenistic Era, before the Mystery religions were finally suppressed by enthusiastic Christian barbarians. Id.

[List, pp. 221-225]

- Detoxification of the natural environment
- Connectedness and symbiosis
- Later, more sophisticated observers (C.H. Waddington and Erich Jantsch) found not the War in Nature that Darwinists reported but rather a situation in which it was not competitive ability but ability to maximize cooperation with other species that most directly contributed to an organism's being able to function and endure as a member of a biome. Plants interact

with each other through the tangled mat of roots that connects them all to the source of their nutrition and to each other. 221

- The matted floor of the tropical rain forest is an environment of great chemical diversity; the topology approaches that of brain tissue in its complexity. Within the network of interconnected roots, complex chemical signals are constantly being transmitted and received. Coadaptive evolution and symbiotic relationships regulate this entire system with a ubiquitousness that argues for the evolutionary primacy / of these cooperative strategies. For example, mycorrhizal fungi live in symbiosis on the outside of plant roots and gently balance and buffer the mineral-laden water that is moving through them to the roots of their host. 221, 221

- Whole-system fine tuning

- We can only admire – and we should seek to imitate such a Tao-like sense of the planet's multidimensional homeostatic balance. 222

- Recycling

- Like plants, we need to recycle. On a cosmic scale we are no more mobile than plants. Until this point in history we have modeled our more successful economic systems on animal predation. Animals can potentially move on to another resource

when they exhaust the one at hand. Since they can move to new food sources, they potentially have unlimited resources. Plants are fixed. Id.

- Photovoltaic power
- A global atmosphere-based energy economy
- Nanotechnology
- Preservation of biological diversity
- This return to a perspective on self and ego that places them within the larger context of planetary life and evolution is the essence of the Archaic Revival. 225