

One River, Many Wells lists “Eighteen Myths for Remythologizing Our Species.” This post-paper, the *Wisdom Tabernacle*, is directed to two myths in particular:

The myth that all Creation is on fire with sacredness; that the Buddha nature and the Cosmic Christ and the image of God reside in the very light (photons) present in every atom of the universe.

And

The myth that community already is because all things are interdependent, nothing stands alone. Isolation and rugged individualism are lies that betray the very manner in which the universe operates. The truth is that interdependence exists at the microcosmic and macrocosmic and psychic levels of existence. We need to remove the obstacles that interfere with our realizing this truth about community.

All **quotes in bold** are direct quotes taken from lectures by Matthew Fox during Intensives in Oakland, California and Riverdale, New York.

Quotes attributed to Alex Gray were gleaned from his personal tour of his artwork at the Chapel of Sacred Mirrors, his gallery, during a field trip by participants in the Intensive at Riverdale, New York.

This paper begins with an original poem inspired by work done in Andrew Harvey’s Intensive on *The Direct Path* in Oakland, California.

Metaverse is a dance
of divine energy,
sound and light flowing from the Word.
An undercurrent of harmony
flows across a sea of pure chaos,
voicing the faint whisper of an ancient melody.
I enter into a
choiceless awareness
and am clear within.
God is in the fabric of this essence
and silence is her song...
I melt into dark matter,
and my sacred voice echos across an ocean
of seething, tranquil impermanence.
Holiness is wholeness,
and when I join the dance,
I have my Universe.
I dissolve into a singing bowl,
into the Word,
and I become *sat-chit-ananda*...
It is the quality of attention
that makes things sacred!!

Namaste, ya ha di...

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In Christian terminology, it is said that the world was created through the word--- through sound. Let us turn to the gospel according to John, Chapter one:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In him was life, and life was the light of men. That was the true light that gives light to every man who comes into the world.

In the Hindu tradition it is said that ... **“in the beginning was the sound.”** And as Laleh Bakhtiar explains ‘the Word’ in *Sufi Expressions of the Mystic Quest*...

Symbols connected to sound, light and the Intellect are among the most profound expressions (of Sufism.) The Word is both a sound and a light, for the light is the meaning of the Word. The Word is a mirror where the Divine reverberates outwardly.”¹

In the beginning was this flash of both sound and light in which everything was known and seen... in that moment was the beginning, the end and everything in between. That flash was a circle with a center made of heart and a periphery made of beyond. We are the center of this circle of light. We exist and do not exist. We are the infinite void; we are relativity; we are awareness, we are vibration... **“every atom wants the vibration.”** Artist Alex Gray spoke of a “void clear light and a space beyond depiction and representation” during a visit to his gallery. Sufi poet Hafiz muses:

Like a starving beast

My body is quivering

Fixed

On the scent

Of

Light ²

Vibration is the basis of life. Every sound you ever made continues to echo, continues to vibrate. Form is created by every underlying vibration. Vibration reflects from itself new insights in each moment, because light is constantly evolving and growing and needs new insightfulness to grow. Potential for new insight comes in the act of asking for help from the primary potential of spirit, the vibration behind the vibration. This is a vibration that comes from the silence of emptiness into crystallized meaning. Everything in the universe is a part and parcel of the light manifesting from “*the Word.*” We need to realize that our “***first family is the great community of the universe.***”

There is a spiritual energy flowing from the beginning, and as Alex Gray posits, “*we are expressions of spiritual energy.*” We need to acknowledge ourselves as vehicles of light; for once we are in harmony with “*the sound,*” we come to relate to this “***great community of the universe***” in a way that is a reflection of the Oneness. One might think of the Oneness, this ancient wisdom, this spiritual energy instantly

available to us, as a “*wisdom tabernacle*.” Ervin Laszlo refers to this body of information as the “*A-field*,” similar to the Akashic Field.

*In the beginning of the twentieth century, the much neglected—but now more and more rediscovered—genius Nikola Tesla, the father of modern communication technologies, spoke of an “original medium” that fills space and compared it to Akasha, the light-carrying ether.*³

Information available to us from this A-field, encompassing the 99+% of dark matter in our Universe, is our means of connecting to the community of one. Matthew Fox says we must “***draw inspiration from our shared silence***” and “***look for common threads in spirituality***” while still understanding our “***sense of unity as mystical.***”

Persons who meditate enter a “*shared silence*.” Here they *become* silence, return to the true vibration, and enter a mystical union with “*the Word, the Sound, and the Light*.” For here they rest in the very heart of the center of the non-existence of infinity. We must become vulnerable to an unknown while exploring our unconscious as we seek clues to any repeated patterns of harmful behavior, as well as insight into the oneness of which we are all part. We may come to the realization that our old current belief system no longer serves us in our journey to embrace the primordial Light.

Although this transformational process takes place as part of our solitary journey, many who have taken such a journey before have left

signs and tools for our use. **“Post-modern begins with the whole and we need to begin with formlessness and nothingness, and we need to understand power of formlessness.”** Their knowledge rests in the A-field. The A-field provides a context within which we may enrich our spiritual journey with words, art, music and memories accessible there. **“We need to be swept out of our individual pools into the ocean of divine wisdom, the wisdom imbedded in cycles of existence.”** This ocean, this *“wisdom tabernacle”* is the repository of wisdom teachings and life experiences from throughout all of space and time, portable in the sense that it is available to move to our field of consciousness at any moment and guide, nurture and heal us as we journey along on our spiritual paths on this plane.

During a semester in Nepal while attending Naropa, I was fortunate to apprentice with a pre Himalayan shaman of the first religion of the Himalayas, known as *“sacred conventions”* or the *“patterns of heaven and earth.”* **“We need the shamans, they can take one to transcendence.”** There came a time when I accompanied this shaman on a long trail through the Himalayas. We crawled through a long, narrow tunnel to a small, dark igloo shaped room with crystalline walls. For 24 hours we sat in meditation, at times chanting a single sound *“dmu-tag,”* the sound reverberating throughout the room as this sound was gradually transformed into a beam of light. **“I realized that silence and darkness were full of emptiness, and the emptiness was full of**

light.”

The shaman described this brilliant beam of light as a manifestation of a rope from heaven sometimes referred to as the *dmu-t'ag*, or "sky-cord". As the ancient Kaballists put it: "*There is no light as brilliant as that light which manages to emerge from out of the darkness.*"⁴

Rainbows ultimately filled this room in circular patterns, and I realized that the many colors of this rainbow emanated from the "One Consciousness" of ultimate enlightenment. The patterns of heaven and earth became one, or as Mirimba Ani describes the depth and many dimensions of the African universe, "*on this level Time and Space are totalities within which past, present and future become one. The spiritual and earthly spheres join.*"⁵

The *axis mundi* so typical of shamanism, this rope reaching through numerous levels of heaven, corresponds in Tantric yoga to the spinal column and our *charkas*. This vibration of golden light moves upward through each person into the atmosphere, where it becomes a ring of light that spreads around our cosmos... In the words of Plato from *The Myth of Er*,

*...they came to a place where they could see from above a line of light, straight as a column, extending right through the earth, in color resembling the rainbow, only brighter and purer... and there, in the midst of the light, they saw the ends of the chains of heaven let down from above; for this light is the belt of heaven, and holds together the circle of the universe...*⁶

Working with the shaman, I learned how to use the sound and non-

sound of a Himalayan singing bowl, in conjunction with other Himalayan ritual tools, to bring people to resonance and harmony with “*the Word.*” Inviting my bowl to sound allows the bowl to awaken one’s “*voice*” and lift it to consciousness. I use several dorjes in my work with sound. The Dorje is the Tibetan Buddhist equivalent of the double terminated Hindu ritual tool known as the Vajre, or thunderbolt. It manifests light when activated through the sound of my bowl. The dorje represents masculine energy, its purpose being the 'cutting' of ignorance and illusion. I always pair the dorjes with a bell, or Ghanta, its feminine counterpart. The spoked ends of the dorje represent the closing of the spokes of the wheel of Samsara; the attainment of enlightenment; the return to “*One Consciousness.*”

My work recalls Thich Nhat Hanh’s description of the power of bells. He told a Catholic priest from North America to ring the church bell and “*then use your bell as a bell of mindfulness, calling you back to your true home.*”⁷ Our vibration and sound is THE vibration and sound, and we simply need to still our minds and become the Oneness of “*the Word.*”

We are the light of universal intelligence. The energetic vibrations of our voices bond us to this repository of spiritual light made of memory, and of now, and of the future. Alex Gray’s painting THEOLOGUE is subtitled “*the union of human and divine consciousness weaving the fabric of space and time in which the self and its surroundings are imbedded.*” We have the opportunity to call both the past and the future

into the eternal now and manifest this “*union of human and divine consciousness.*” It is said in the *Tao te Ching*;

Seeing into darkness is clarity.

Knowing how to yield is strength.

Use your own light

and return to the source of light.

*This is called practicing eternity.*⁸

Here and now is the only place on the continuum we can experience that one light of universal consciousness from both the future and the past, and understand we are all part of one continual community of consciousness. “***We are in a continuous cycle of creation and incarnation and resurrection. Wisdom is imbedded in cycles of existence and cannot be random.***”

We must live with an understanding that we are more alike than different. We live both in our imagination and our feelings, and the longer we live together the more love and respect we will have for everyone.

Understanding the nature of our place in time is essential. “***Our past is ahead of us, not behind us and the caravan approaching is ancestors pulling us forward, not pushing from behind.***” Marimba Ani writes in *Let the Circle Be Unbroken*:

*...we become our ancestors, and so transcend the boundaries of ordinary space and time, and the limitations of separation that they impose.*⁹

Thich Nhat Hanh writes, “*our spiritual ancestors have also given birth to us, and they, too, continue to give birth to us.*”¹⁰ If we believe ourselves to be a manifestation of the Oneness, then we agree to his observation that “*A human being is a mini-God, a micro-theos who has been created in order to participate in the divinity of God.*”¹¹

For those familiar with esoteric interpretations of Buddhist and Hindu scriptures, there is another important consideration, that ultimately there is only *ONE CONSCIOUSNESS*, or spiritual reality, in the entire universe and that this unifying and all-encompassing God-consciousness is ultimately all that exists. Whether we refer to this spiritual reality as God, Allah, Brahman or Unity Consciousness, the important thing is that all sentient beings have their origin within this Sacred Oneness, within “the *Word.*” “**Community comes from communion.**” We are a community of, and ultimately from, light.

At a universal level we really are all interconnected—we are literally all ONE. Our sense of individual identity is merely an illusion. This interdependent web of existence of which we all are a part, referred to in the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism, might well reside in the A-field. We are all, simultaneously, a part and parcel of that original flash of light of universal consciousness. Sufi poet Hafiz says:

I have made that journey into nothing.

I have lit that lamp that

Needs no oil.

I have made the journey into nothing.

I have become that flame that needs

No fuel.¹²

Alex Gray spoke of how the Bodhisattva doctrine of Buddhism was not apparent until the time of Christ, that the messianic, world saving teachings of Jesus and Mahayana Buddhism appeared at the same time. We turn to the Buddha and Jesus and their reflections on the light. In words of the Buddha from the Digha Nikaya 14.1.17,

“When a Bodhisattva descends from heaven, there appears in this world an immeasurable light surpassing the glory of the most powerful glow. And whatever dark spaces lie beyond the world’s end will be illuminated by this light.”

And returning to the Gospel of John 8.12, *“Jesus spoke unto them, saying, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will live the light of life.”*

We must **“bring about a process of transformation from shadows to sunlight, from via negativa to via transformativa.”** William D. Watley explains this life changing metamorphosis in his powerful sermon *“Healing Shadows.”*

Shadows, as I have said all through this message, emerge when the conditions are right. There must be light to see a shadow. And when the light is present, when the conditions are right, you can’t stop a shadow from showing up. When we walk in self, that’s darkness. When our theme song is “I did it my way,” that’s darkness. When we walk according to the

wishes of others, that's darkness. But when we walk in the Word of God, that's light. Service is the Word of God, and that's light. Enlightenment is the Word of God, and that's light. ¹³

The Arabic word *bismillah* references our journey from the original word, that original sound. Neil Douglas-Klotz offers this literal translation of *bismallah*: “*with, along with, or within the sound atmosphere, name or light of Unity or the One Being (ALLAH).*”¹⁴ Or, more poetically translated,

*We begin by remembering
the sound and feeling of One Being,
the wellspring of love.
We affirm that the next thing we experience
shimmers with the light of the whole universe*¹⁵

May we walk with grace and may the light of wisdom shine upon our path.

Endnotes

¹ Bakhtiar, L. (1976). SUFI Expressions of the Mystic Quest. New York, New York, Thames & Hudson, Inc., P. 27.

² Ladinsky, D. (1999). The Gift: Poems by Hafiz. New York, New York, Penguin Group, p. 90.

³ Laszlo, E. (2004). Science and the Akashic Field: The Integral Theory of Everything. Rochester, Vermont, Inner Traditions, p. 46.

⁴ Winkler, G. (2004). Kaballah 365: Daily Fruit From The Tree Of Life. Kansas City, MO, Andrews McMeel Publishing, p. 192.

⁵ Ani, M. (1980, 1997). Let the Circle Be Unbroken. New York, New York, Nkonimfo Publications, p. 2

⁶ Myss, Carolyn. <http://www.myss.com/Myth.asp>

⁷ Hanh, T. N. (1995). Living Buddha, Living Christ. New York, New York, The Berkeley Publishing Group, p. 23.

⁸ Mitchell, S. (1988). Tao te Ching. New York, New York, HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., p. 52.

⁹ Ani, M., p. 9.

¹⁰ Hanh, T. N., p. 47.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 122.

¹² Ladinsky, D., p. 148.

¹³ LaRue, C. J., Ed. (2002). Power in the Pulpit: How America's Most Effective Black Preachers Prepare Their Sermons. Louisville, Westminister John Knox Press, p. 173.

¹⁴ Douglas-Klotz, N. (2005). The Sufi Book of Life. New York, New York, Penguin Group, Inc., p. 1.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 2

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