



## **Nomadic Wandering Through the Desire for Fear: We Know We Must Be Reborn**

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[Ed. Note: Karen and Luke are American-born, biological mother and son, respectively]

**Abstract:** In this wandering we (*via* mother-and-son-dialogue) explore the desire to be frightened. How do the wicked problems of our world lead us into desire for fear? When is the desire free, and when is it fear-based/addictive? Moving from the assumption that the moment of shock associated with fear is a reflection of the same ‘Nothing-Infinite Eternal Form’ that structures the process of death & rebirth, it could be said that we are wandering through the question of why people desire ‘death’ in its many, different and irregular expressions. Are we fated to an unhealthy configuration of co-creating a ‘death culture’ or are there other possibilities? Or is the true danger the ‘life culture’ and associated sun cult—the fear of death and the subsequent quest to find immortality in time? Should we fear death or the Deatheaters? Through dialogue we discuss the various symbolic/mythological (Moore, 1972) roles that monsters and dragons play in our relationships with fear in the neoliberal contexts of the MegaMachine’s (Mumford, 1967, 1970) dominant present incarnation, and ultimately we ask what we can learn from fear and our identity as ‘monsters’ in the eyes of Artificial-Domineering Worldview(s) (Barnesmoore, 2018) as we wander in search of ‘wicked good road(s)’ (Barnesmoore, 2019) that will lead us back to a place where we can enter the natural good road(s).

Keywords: Fear; Death; Rebirth; Neoliberalism; Ontology; Worldview

“No! No, no, no! This is precisely the time when artists go to work—not when everything is fine, but in times of dread. That’s our job!” (Morrison, 2015)

**Grandma:** Karen E. Moore (mother)

**Dad:** Luke R. Barnesmoore (son)

**Grandma:** When I was four or five, my dad and brother got gleeful over encouraging me to stay up late with them to watch *Creature Feature*, a late night TV show in Cleveland, Ohio that showed ‘classic’ horror movies—the cheesier the better. Part of their glee stemmed from watching me get scared. Hosting the show was a shock jock MC called “Ghoulardi,” who enjoyed inserting himself into movie clips he’d inject into the middle of the feature movie, like train crashes, where he’d barely jump out of the way in time, or into the actual features, where, for example, he might offer Dracula a martini. He was both inside and outside the imaginary he presented; fear was his currency, his vehicle, his power. Somehow, he created a bridge between the personal and the societal experience of fear, because as I watched I was taking part in something larger, something powerful: “emotions such as fear do not belong only to individuals or social groups; they mediate between the individual and the social. They are about power relations” (Bourke, 2005, p. 354).

I found the emotions evoked while watching exhilarating. I looked for more of this sensation. My dad’s bookshelf was crammed with HP Lovecraft and Poe. I would sneak-read stories at this early age.



Looking back, it is interesting that my dad was a Presbyterian minister: the first of his family to go to college. He was a literature major in undergrad, then took up the way of The Cross. Yet, his bookshelves and his conversations were always more peppered with pop culture, psychology, art and horror than with Biblical subjects. Honestly, I think he found religion and his chosen work boring. Being “good” can seem boring. The Bible is boring. I’ve pondered why he chose it. There was something in it about saving himself. From what?

As a child I remember waking up, not after my own nightmares, but to the sound of my dad screaming, shouting out, awakened by something inside he sought to suppress by embracing this external schema, as though God could enter in through your head if you thought about Him enough, and do his salvation work on dark memories through intellectual exercises. I’m not sure He ever entered Dad’s heart. And so, I stand fifty years later trying to understand these traces. As Gramsci has said, “The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and in ‘knowing thyself’ as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces without leaving an inventory” (Gramsci as quoted in Hall, 1992, p. 19). The Bible, Jesus and God linger on as unresolved tensions in me that reflect something larger, something mysterious, something not boring.

**Dad:** As white folks who bear the historical/ancestral legacy of global genocide in the name of Jesus we have duties and responsibilities in relationship to Christianity. We have the duty to make amends for Rome’s destruction of the sacred. We also have a duty to defend the true ministry of Christ—the vision of virtue/justice through love rather than punishment/fear of punishment—the passing of the tradition to Mary Magdalene and the assault on patriarchy/hierarchical ontologies of dualism manifest therein (Leloup, 2002)—the healing tradition—to our ancestors among the Essenes. We also have a duty to our European ancestors who were raped, tortured and murdered into submission to the Roman Christian incarnation of the MegaMachine.

I have been watching the rise of ‘whiteness studies’, of academic journals like ‘Whiteness and Education,’ and it seems important to add my voice to the discussion given that my positionality actually grants me some authority in speaking to what it is like to be both a hegemonic and a non-hegemonic white person in North America. This is not to say that whiteness studies can’t or shouldn’t be rooted in the experiences of people who exist under the influence of systems of white supremacist oppression and in relationship to white supremacist violence. It makes perfect sense for people who aren’t white to study whiteness when their communities are under attack from the hegemonic center of normative whiteness in North America/Europe and beyond. This is simply to say that the picture is much more bleak than is often imagined by people who have not lived *within* the tyranny of hegemonic white culture. There is a great deal of power afforded to white folks by systems of white supremacist oppression like the US electoral system (with the senate, electoral college, gerrymandering, voting schedule, etc. granting undue influence to Christian white folks) and the US (in)justice system, but I think the step from that to the assumption that it is easy or pleasant to be a white person is misguided in the extreme—perhaps ‘it is so easy to be a white person’ for some few who sit atop the artificial hierarchies, but in my experience it is tragically traumatic to exist in an intimate relationship with hegemonic white culture in the US. None of this is meant to excuse the inexcusable violence of hegemonic white culture in North America. The point is to understand how sickly hegemonic white culture in North America truly is—so sickly that those who come to embody it contract a sickness of consciousness that leads to the death of the instinctual virtue that rises from the goodly nature of all conscious beings.

I was raised among white folks, but since I was incarcerated in my early teenage years, I have spent most of my time in community with folks who do not cohere with the cultural norms of hegemonic whiteness in North America. I have lived in both Christian-right and secular-left white communities, both working class and elite class. I know the torments of life in intimate relationship with hegemonic whiteness. Foucault’s (2012) *History of Sexuality* makes an important note about the dominant class’s relationship with the Roman Christian sex/gender norms of hegemonic white culture—far from being lax in their own circles, hegemonic white folks enforce the sex/gender norms of Roman Christianity even more stridently within their own communities than they do upon ‘the other.’ Foucault’s study was of the dominant class, but I would say that this trend extends beyond sex/gender norms in the dominant class to all of the artificial-hierarchical cultural norms of hegemonic whiteness—the vision of order through punishment and fear of punishment that is enshrined in the purportedly secular legal systems of the West, the vision of deliverance through conquest and colonization of ‘the other’ (Warrior, 1989) that structures Western foreign policy praxes. These ontologies of virtue/deliverance are even more stridently enforced within hegemonic white communities/ among hegemonic white folks.

The legal system/policing system surely do not enforce their perverse vision of virtue through punishment and fear of punishment as intensely against white folks as they do against marginalized communities—that’s one of the many points at which white privilege is an inexcusable reality. The legal system/policing system surely do not enforce their perverse vision of virtue through punishment and fear of punishment as intensely against rich white folks as they do against poor white folks—wealth is derived from power, power is derived from one’s relationship with the MegaMachine, and the fundamental determinate of class (of one’s location in the hierarchies of the MegaMachine) is one’s relationship with (submission to and service of...) the MegaMachine (Mumford, 1967, 1970). The point is *not* that rich white folks are not privileged in relationship to the MegaMachine’s systems of hierarchical oppression—they are. The point is that hegemonic white folks embody the dogmas of these systems in their personal/community

relationships—the ontology of order/virtue through punishment and fear of punishment structures normative conceptions/performances of ‘love’ (which is not really love when so tainted by hierarchical domination) in hegemonic white communities. There is a great deal of power to be found in whiteness if you properly submit to/serve the MegaMachine, but there is little if no true love—not within hegemonic white communities, and not from other communities given their very understandable biases/prejudices towards white folks. Whiteness may afford power in relationship to the MegaMachine’s Modern systems of hierarchical oppression, but a life without true love is neither easy nor pleasant.

I often speak of Meng Zi’s (2016, 2A2) story of the simple farmer from Song. I often speak about the hierarchical order/pattern/form that is embodied by the farmer going out into the fields to ‘help the sprouts grow’ by pulling on them, by the death of the sprouts therein. But there is another part of the story that I do not often speak to. When the farmer’s family comes out into the field in the morning, they not only find the sprouts dead, they find the farmer laying on the ground, exhausted and broken from the hard work of pulling the sprouts. Both the farmer and the sprouts are to be understood as aspects of self. We are led by socialization into ontologies of order/virtue through domination into dominating ourselves. The sprouts represent love and the desire to be intimate with/protect the sacred that emerges from love. The farmer represents the ego-mind as separated from heart-body-spirit and the will to create order/virtue through domination that arises therein. The point is that the farmer destroys himself through his violence—the farmer may have power, but his lot is neither easy nor pleasant.

We should divide hegemonic whiteness into two *seemingly distinct* groups—Roman Christian-right white folks and secular-left white folks. Once divided as such, we should recognize that ‘secular-left,’ in for example the secular-left’s fetishization of Western legal systems, really just means the same old dogmas of Roman Christianity articulated in a paradigm that reduces reality to passing time and physical space. They may have denied the existence of religion and spirit, they may have taken on some fine rhetoric about freedom and social justice, but they still pursue justice through punishment and fear of punishment (e.g. through the legal system...) and thus continue to embody the dogma of order/virtue through punishment and fear of punishment.

I have been referring to Roman Christian whiteness through this piece for a reason. It was Rome who violently homogenized white folks from North-Western Europe into the hierarchical supremacist Christian culture that has come to be known as ‘whiteness.’ There is no intrinsic ontology of whiteness. There is a relational ontology of whiteness that rose from the colonial relationship between Roman Christianity and white folks. When you are told that you are the ‘chosen people,’ a title that very clearly implies the right/duty to colonial dominion over ‘the other’ in the Old Testament, a sense of racial supremacism ensues. When you are told that your actions embody the will of ‘God’, a sense of supremacism ensues. When you are told that you are going to heaven and everyone else faces eternal damnation, a sense of supremacism ensues.

“Eddie Glaude: ‘...We are trying to convince white folks to leave behind a history, that will maybe, maybe--or embrace a history-that might set them free from being white. Finally. Finally.’

The old white lady from the Bush administration responds: ‘Anything else?’

Eddie Glaude: ‘Lord help us.’” (Glaude, 2019)

Glaude interstands<sup>1</sup> the problem if what he means by ‘white’ is the white culture that emerged through our violent assimilation into the Roman Catholic Empire. Finally, Finally, free from the sickness that came when we lost our Indigenous ways through Roman Christianity’s genocidal conquest and colonization of Europe. When we lost our way in the flames that consumed our medicine people who were burnt at the stake for witchcraft. Finally, Finally, free to return to our land-water-sky and nonhuman kin-based ways. Finally, Finally the bear and wolf dancers of northern Europe can be reborn. Finally. Finally. Free from the sickness of consciousness that emerges from a culture that pursues virtue through punishment and fear of punishment. Finally, free from the hierarchical falling empires of the MegaMachine into which we have been assimilated. Finally, free from the ‘whiteness’ that emerged through our genocidal assimilation into the Roman Church. Finally. Finally. You should watch the clip—text can't convey the emotion with which Glaude said these words and that emotion is what carries the moral/ethical content of his statement: <https://www.msnbc.com/deadline-white-house/watch/blaming-trump-is-too-easy-this-is-us-65354309615>

Vine Deloria Jr. (1999) makes an exceptionally important distinction between Indigenous ways of knowing that seek knowledge for the sake of ‘walking the good road’ (i.e. for the sake of virtue) and Western ways of knowing that seek knowledge for the sake of power/dominion. Ermine’s (1995) distinction between the quest of Western ways of knowing to conquer, colonize and thus demystify the mystery and the embrace of/co-existence with the mystery fomented by Indigenous ways of knowing drives to the same distinction between Western and Indigenous worldview(s) and the ways of knowing made possible therein. To this I would simply add that, while I agree with this way of distinguishing between Western/Indigenous ways of knowing, Western ways of knowing understand themselves as seeking knowledge for the sake of virtue—the problem is that virtue is conceptualized in terms of the right/duty of the ‘superior’ to dominate the ‘inferior’ established by myths like Genesis, in terms of the dependence of deliverance upon conquest and colonization of ‘the other’ established by myths like Exodus, in terms of the ontology of order/virtue through punishment and fear of punishment established by all the myths of the Old Testament. Both purport to the orientation of knowledge to virtue—the problem is the ontology of order/virtue from which western ways of knowing like ‘scientism’ (Needleman, 1975; Nadeau & Désautels, 1984; Ogawa, 1995; Ogawa, 1998; Ziman, 1984; Aikenhead, 1985, 2001) were birthed.

There is no excuse for the violence of hegemonic white culture. There is no excuse for white supremacism. There is no excuse for the vision of order/virtue through punishment and fear of punishment that has come to typify both Christian and purportedly secular (which retains the dogmas of Roman Christianity through the reduction of reality to passing time and physical space) strains of hegemonic whiteness—neither the missionary nor the philanthropist’s genocidal manipulations of people’s vulnerabilities are excusable (Barnesmoore, 2019). So, when we speak of whiteness, let’s remember the colonial origins of whiteness in Rome’s genocidal conquest and colonization of (at least) Europe, in Rome’s genocidal assimilation of Europe into the Roman Church. Only then can we leave behind/embrace the true history of ‘whiteness’—only then can we finally, finally be free of ‘being white’ in the contexts of such a history of whiteness, only then can we finally, finally remember how to love in a manner that is untainted by the perverse ontology of order/virtue through punishment and fear of punishment. We have a duty to the rest of the beings

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<sup>1</sup> We don't understand, and we don't overstand--we interstand (which is to say that we perceive them from within experience rather than from some dislocated perspective).

of this earth to liberate ourselves from the violently homogenized ‘whiteness’ that Rome manufactured through murdering, torturing and raping our ancestors—only then will we remember how to love without perversion by the ontology of order/virtue through punishment and fear of punishment—only then will we remember how to relate to *all of our relations*, human/nonhuman and animate/inanimate alike, in a virtuous manner. [Ed. Note: Dad continues his critique of the Roman hegemonic legacy in Appendix 1]

**Grandma:** I loved being scared. Being scared I felt more alive than at any other time, because fear broke the script. It altered my state of consciousness; and that served as an impermanent alter-identity to my mundane lived one. It had something to do with freedom. Who was around that corner? How big could the Blob get? (Moore, 2019, p.1). I had horrible nightmares from these ventures into monster land, which ceased only at age 11 when my brother suggested that I actually enjoyed these nightmares, that I liked being scared, that I was choosing to have these monster-dreams. Once I realized I had made them, these sweaty heart-racing phantasms lost their impact. Once my dream agency was revealed it lost its potency. As I was directing the show, it was no longer that interesting. Only when I imagined that something from the outside controlled or haunted me were they really scary. Once I realized my role, there weren’t a lot of surprises. The shock was gone.

And also, if you are the one creating the fear, doesn’t that make you the monster? What could that mean? Just as it is the central question of every slasher movie, as Susan George points out “the great new central question of politics is... ‘who has a right to live and who does not’[?]” (George, 1999, p. 8). Maybe my attraction had something to do with Marina Warner’s claim in *No Go the Bogeyman*, “Through repeating the frightening imaging, children found relief from terrifying fears in the ‘real world’” (Warner quoted in Bourke, 2005, p. 102).

Maybe these monsters were substitutes, doppelgangers for some greater, hidden fear; but of what? The height of my ‘nightmare period’ was the late 1960s, the same time period when my brother, 10 years my elder, waited for his number to come up for Vietnam exportation, the same time period my dad watched the nightly news with its Vietnam images: the bodies, the blood, in black and white, and wept.

Fear is a legitimate reaction to ‘the real world’—this world is scary. Fear’s replication, its inculcation in our age, has something to do with a reaction to the mechanisms of society and self within neoliberalism, something to do with realizing yourself as within it, yet trying to find a way outside to rebel against it: trying to locate agency in the face of hierarchical domination, which is very frightening. So, fear is both personal, and not: “The growth and nature of fear must be studied as a process that develops under its own inertia, feeding off its antecedent and instinctual past, as well as a phenomenon that is shaped by and in turn shapes its institutional setting” (Wrenn, 2014, p. 337). As Fisher (2018) points out in “Fear has no place...”, “fear comes from hurting. We need to become a healing society, and thus, a loving society” (Fisher, 2018, p. 12). But how do we get to this healing society, rather than perpetuating merely a “coping society” (Fisher, 2018, p. 12) loping along with our rollercoaster desires, monsters armed to the teeth? Do we attempt to purge the ‘inner’ monsters, or those ‘outside’? Do we attempt to purge at all? The answer is not more security or more purity (Shotwell, 2016). How do we find the balance between legitimate fear—not living in denial of danger—and the scary leap into love? Arguably, if fear is a privation (Barnesmoore & Fisher, 2019, p. 62), then monsters are Charon, the ferrymen, the guides, beckoning us across the void-vacuum created by fear into the space beyond it. The attraction to them is the need to be reborn into an after-life, after-fear.

**Dad:** The attraction to them is the desire for death. Not so much we can hope for the death in an absolute sense, but the desire for death from suffering in/with the world in which we live, so that we can be reborn into a new (better?) world. When we come into contact with worldview(s) (cosmology + ontology) whose cosmology and ontology is incommensurable with the worldview(s) in/through which we exist, a liminal space is formed between the points of incommensurability. We die and fall like a seed into the soil of the liminal womb. “Death and rebirth into a new world, however, is only the first step in the process. Where death and rebirth happens in a moment, growth from the seed of existence in a new world to a mature fruit requires directing one’s attention towards transforming their norms of thought, feeling, behavior and conception of being to reflect the form/order of the new world an individual has come to inhabit” (Barnesmoore, 2019b). The moment of shock that we can come to know as fear opens a liminal void-vacuum (Barnesmoore & Fisher, 2019). What was it that drew you into this love of liminal death? Why were you seeking these repeated deaths? What was dying? What was being reborn from the ashes?

If I may riff on Foucault and Lemke’s conception, neoliberalism can in one sense be understood as a ‘rationality’ (worldview(s) and associated epistemological structure) that locates responsibility at the individual/local scales in a manner that obfuscates the constraint and expansion of individual and local agency by macro structural forces—the criminal is wholly responsible for crime, not the MegaMachine and its A.D. Worldview(s), as the impoverished is wholly responsible for poverty, and both are akin to the sick/insane (Foucault, 2008; Lemke, 2001). ‘The market’ may have taken the place of the fallen trickster who masquerades as creator in the Old Testament, but the God figure is still seeking virtue through punishment and fear of punishment (Barnesmoore 2019c) and conquest and colonization of ‘the other’ (Warrior, 1989) through ‘punishing the poor’ (Wacquant, 2009; Rios, 2011). Essential in this reduction of agency to the individual and local levels is the presumption that all humans rationalize the world through ‘materially rational,’ cost-benefit logics. Human nature is assumed to be evil and self-interested, and as another great prophet of Artificial-Domineering Worldview(s) (A.D. Worldview[s]) Han Fei Ziii argued long ago, punishment and fear of punishment is the only path out of our evil, self-interested nature into virtue.... In the terms of Exodus, another story that carries and transmits A.D. Worldview(s), deliverance into the ‘Promised Land’ is dependent upon conquest and colonization of ‘the other’ (Warrior, 1989). In Neoliberalism the poor are ‘the other’. In reality human nature is good and what we know as ‘evil’ is arguably, simply a privation of the good (Barnesmoore & Fisher, 2019; Barnesmoore, 2019a). Human nature only comes to be known as evil when we define the nature of ‘the rose that grew from concrete’ by the artificial blemishes that arise from growing up in the concrete jungle rather than by the roses reflection of NIE (Nothing-Infinite-Eternal) Form that is blurred by the artificial blemishes (Tupac, 2000; Barnesmoore, 2019a).

As for the perfectly entertaining conflict between Ong and Peck over the nature of neoliberalism, Ong (2007) takes a rather dogmatically materialistic line (she really seems to be irritated by the term hegemony when it is used in relationship to neoliberalism) in arguing, if I may generalize, that the contextual differences of neoliberalism’s many manifestations belie definition of neoliberalism. Peck, moving from something like Stuart Hall’s conception of hegemony as a fluid process involving breaches and rearticulations (Hall, 1988) argues that conjunctural analysis of neoliberalism’s many contextual manifestations begins to bring an image of neoliberal hegemony (what I might describe as a stream of ontological continuity) into focus (Peck, 2016) We view neoliberalism as rising from a stream of metaphysical ontological continuity that

manifests in relationship to the historical ontology of the contexts of manifestations. Neoliberalism is a stream of colonial metaphysical ontological continuity that manifests in a variegated (Brenner et. al., 2010) fashion through ‘mobile techniques’ (Ong, 2007) that manifest in relationship to the many and varied streams of historical ontology that run across the lands to which the neoliberal incarnation of the MegaMachine spreads. Neoliberalism is just another expression of A.D./C.M. Worldview(s). Neoliberalism is a perfect reminder that, no matter how secular we claim to be, the West is still enslaved to the dogmas of classical Rome—the structure of the very legal system that purports to divide the Church from the State rises directly from a Roman Christianity rendition of the A.D. Worldview(s) dogma that virtue is dependent upon punishment and fear of punishment. The State is the Church—and, it always has been.

**Grandma:** What you’re describing above, the “stream of metaphysical ontological continuity” reminds me of the horror movies I’d watch on Ghoualdi, monsters that were “variegated” but had a weird “continuity” (witness the series *Abbott and Costello Meet the Monsters*, where seemingly diverse entities like the wolfman and Frankenstein’s monster easily collaborate with comedians, united because they dwelt on the ‘south’ side of the “abyssal line” [DeSousa Santos, 2018, p. 20]).

*We have made the monsters. They have come to dwell within us...*

Neoliberalism is a monster that we have made, that we’ve come to know, like grandpa’s weird smell, or the feeling before sleep. It is familiar and plays out in the strange, strained relationship between the individual and the corporate, the ‘body’ politic, the monster bodies that move in darkness. And what does it mean when ‘that which must not be thought’—the old monsters were this: impossible, forbidden thoughts, that which was outside and feared because it was unknown—becomes ‘that which must be thought,’ in our culture of violence-death worship, just as freedom is now compelled under neoliberalism, and therefore becomes questionable as freedom. Just as “the power of Christ compels you” (Exorcist, 1973) rather than invites you, we are in a sticky, sickly relationship with neoliberalism and its monsters. We seem to desire the monsters. We have made the monsters. They have come to dwell within us, as Christ does; but at the same time, they have reformed us in their image and thus caused us to no longer exist as unique, in the way we once might have, in the long-ago days of the soul. So, just as we are *Homo oeconomicus*, (Brown, 2016, p.10) peddling our own wares in the world of total work, (Pieper, 2009) we are the wares—so we are also monsters—ourselves in this new world, in a strangely identical loneliness. Yet there is something about monsters and power: he who wields the power is the monster. I want (desire) to be a monster.

**Dad:** The monster need not bend its knee to the colonial machine. You want to be a monster? I am a monster. And, as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez recently reminded us (Truthout, 2019), a little bit of dragon fire is just what we need (Barnesmoore 2018b; Barnesmoore & Barnesmoore, 2019). The monster is not the problem. The Problem is A.D. Worldview(s). We seek liminal death again and again because we know that we must die from over-identified reified A.D. Worldview(s), which in Form must die too. And more visibly, perhaps we’ll witness the MegaMachine must die also.

Liberation from the chains of A.D. Worldview(s) requires experiencing Original-Natural-Indigenous Worldviews(s) (O.N.I. Worldview[s]), which allows us to die and be reborn from the liminal space formed between dimensionally incommensurable aspects of worldview(s). Liberation from the chains of A.D. Worldview(s) also requires that we direct our attention towards



growing the seed that we become when we die and are reborn into a new world into a mature fruit through transforming our thoughts, feelings, behaviors and conceptions of being to fit the pattern of the new world we have come to inhabit (Barnesmoore, 2019b, p. 1).

The problem is not the monster. The problem is the worldview. The problem is the separation from the NIE that is created by the hierarchical violence of entities like the MegaMachine that are guided by A.D. Worldview(s). We seek the death of those moments of shock because we yearn for the potential of rebirth that lies therein. Deep down we know that we must take to ‘the cross to bear the sins’ of our forebears that Christ can no longer bear. We need to sweat them out. The dragon brings us the fire that makes us sweat. She lights our tobacco for us. She accepts our gifts into the spirit world. She accepts us into the spirit world when the time comes.

There is no sin.  
It is you who make sin exist,  
when you act according to the habits  
of your corrupted nature;  
this is where sin lies.  
This is why God has come into your midst.  
It acts together with the elements of your nature  
so as to reunite it with its roots. (Leloup, 2002)

The dragon fire burns away the dead brush to clear the way for new growth. We seek these moments of death because we know we need to die and be reborn. We (desire) need to find the medicine—with or without desperation. We need (desire) to be reborn into the Original Worldview(s) (Forms) that emerge from the liminal space between time and the timeless.

**Grandma:** How might this rebirth come about? How to avoid the twisted hypostatized zombie version of rebirth? My thinking in response to neoliberalism has ranged from denial—it can’t really be that bad; to anger—I don’t have to be part of this bullshit; to capitulation—like that moment where you eagerly let the Blob swallow you; to an odd sense of power, maybe the power of resistance: *when you become the monster-power-fear assemblage*—as we’ve seen with many of the children of abuse—you reclaim your universe, albeit a sick disabling universe. Understanding neoliberalism is like donning a pair of night vision goggles. Tools have been offered, but it doesn’t mean you have to like what you see.

*Denial:*

What does it mean to deny neoliberalism—the monster? My brother has an expression he uses to describe the deluded: they are “lost in the game.” The cleverness of neoliberalism is that life has become an elaborate stage set that is just so realistic. It makes Shakespeare’s metaphor of ‘life as a stage’ no longer a metaphor, because it’s not that life is like a stage—which implies a distance and a difference between tenor (world) and vehicle (stage)—the two aspects of metaphor—but that tenor has been erased altogether. Military coups are being waged through Richard Branson funded Latin Pop-Concerts, Donald Trump is president, and that is terrifying. And under terror we use denial to cope. But because terror is forceful and dynamic, and denial has a half-life and wanes,<sup>iii</sup> eventually terror will break through. But it also, in this constant resurgence, becomes mundane. And that is where we dwell, as Arendt points out (Arendt, 1994)—in *The*

*Banality of Evil*, where naming evil comes to evoke more anger than the evil itself (Barnesmoore 2019b).

And what of freedom, this often desperately sought amorpha that seems to dissipate when we seek it too virulently? Maybe we are seeing what the neoliberal version of ‘freedom’ has bought, at what price; maybe this is the fruit of that awful ancient Tree so forbidden and desired. Satan is knowledge without wisdom. Wisdom is sacrificed under neoliberalism for what NPR’s Frontline recently called “The Right to Fail” (NPR, 2019). Denial of neoliberalism is the ability to still say “I choose freely; I live in a world; I live with others” unquestioningly. Those days are over.

**Dad:** Those days are over. Now we must learn to walk wicked good road(s) towards death from the world of the MegaMachine and its A.D./C.M. Worldview(s) so that we can be reborn into a new world. Now we must fulfill the desire.

**Grandma & Dad:** How do we walk away? How do we locate the path? Mary Wrenn (2013) distinguishes between two interrelated aspects of fear under neoliberalism: “ontological insecurity and existential anxiety” (p. 340), which can be understood as flip sides of the same neoliberal coin: fear of being <---> fear of dying. She describes the complicit nature of neoliberalism’s hyper-individualism (p. 347); the very individualism which is supposed to amplify our freedom with its emphasis on “choice” also means, when primarily driven by fear, the supreme disconnect from community and its sense of continuity of self and position in society. This alienation results in an increase of both ontological and existential anxiety, since now these are burdens one must bear alone.

Which brings us back to monsters. Monsters are perhaps the loneliest creatures alive—or dead—they bear their monstrosity in a near-completely isolated state—inside/outside society. Dracula, Frankenstein’s monster; the creature from the black lagoon: all tragically individual. The perfect neoliberal subject—near-totally atomized from the rest of reality.

This idea of the insider-outsider-monster, forced out under neoliberalism’s strict standards of self-enhancement, unable to ‘measure up’ to market values, can help to explain the real life monsters we see emerging in the modern state: the Christian terrorist (Barnesmoore, 2019b) who gloms onto an ideology to forestall a sense of existential anxiety—choosing death to avoid death’s erasure into anonymity—to give oneself the temporary illusion of group cohesion, while at the same time pushing themselves to commit atrocities against the “enemy.” This illusory, if not contradictory, process tends to seek deliverance through conquest and colonization of ‘the other’ (Warrior 1989). This process tends to fulfill the twisted ontology of virtue established by the fallen trickster who masquerades as creator in the Old Testament. Death to avoid eternal damnation... To be sure to be reborn into the paradise that we lost... Contradictorily, to earn this group identity, as lone gunmen gains individual fame: “it stands to reason that individuals who are less financially successful will seek amelioration of their existential anxieties through other cultural constructs that promise some sort of immortality whether it is through religion or historical memory” (Wrenn, 2013, p. 348). It seems to reason that individuals who learn the ontology of virtue/justice from the fallen trickster and the kings who fell under his dominion will seek virtue/justice through punishment and fear of punishment.

The Conquest narrative remains intact, no matter how sanctimonious the rhetoric:

24. And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the

lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

25. Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

26. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast forever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.

27. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.” (Daniel 6:24-26, KJV)

Warrior (1989) concludes regarding these biblical passages:

The covenant... has two parts: deliverance and conquest (p. 262) .... No matter what we do, the conquest narratives will remain. As long as people believe in the Yahweh of deliverance, the world will not be safe from Yahweh the conqueror. (p. 264)

### **Grandma:**

*Anger:*

Bob Dylan said, “Some are building monuments; others jotting down notes” (Dylan, 1970). Revolution, rebellion, it all seems so exhausting. It all seems to have been tried before. We gutted god, we gutted man, so now we have this mysterious force called *the market* that has been vehemently propped up as our new unassailable idol. And now we (some of us rebels) want to smash it, as a wooden idol of old.

Then it shall be for a man to burn,  
For he will take some of it and warm himself;  
Yes, he kindles it and bakes bread;  
Indeed, he makes a god and worships it;  
He makes it a carved image, and falls down to it.  
16 He burns half of it in the fire;  
With this half he eats meat;  
He roasts a roast, and is satisfied.  
He even warms himself and says,  
'Ah! I am warm,  
I have seen the fire.'  
17 And the rest of it he makes into a god,  
His carved image.  
He falls down before it and worships it,  
Prays to it and says,  
'Deliver me, for you are my god!' (Isaiah 44: 5-17)

Jim Morrison, in *The Soft Parade* says, “When I was back there in seminary school, there was a person who put forth the proposition that you can petition the Lord with prayer; petition the Lord with prayer...you cannot petition the Lord with prayer!” (Doors, 1969). Ultimately, the way

out of this is certainly not anger, not smashing, not begging a God one feels has “fallen down on the job,” but I have thought about these things, and that was a monstrous phase.

**Dad:** I recently received a rather thoughtful note concerning my paper titled, “My Fire Burns Hot in this ‘Cold Civil War’” (Barnesmoore, 2019).

“I personally love powerful metaphors, especially if they are heuristic. In your first paragraph, you invoked the metaphor of acting, the stage, and the mask. I am wondering if you might work more with it. Drama and reality are usually different. But what happens when we take the drama off the stage and make it THE reality. Note how the genre of Reality TV has blurred the lines between a scripted fiction and the real world. So, what happens when the entire world is turned into a stage for a single mega-actor? (This gives a whole new meaning to Shakespeare’s “All the world’s a stage, /And all the men and women merely players....” poetic speech from “As You Like It”. What might a commentary on that look like?

Best wishes on the fire. Holding it in, never seems to work. “Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay” (Jeremiah 20:9). I responded:

I am not so sure about the distinction between ‘reality’ and drama. By reality I assume you mean the world of facts, but do we not enact a drama? Facts are truth with motion, and dramas are no different. Geddes (1912) book *The Masques of Learning* provides some insight into this—we wear masks (personas) that we have built as tools for channeling certain energies into this world. I also think of the Bear/Wolf Dancers among my European ancestors—I think the basic principle is the same—we become a conduit for the energies that our masques were created to embody. I agree on the reality TV front, but I think the difference is simply that he is as poor an actor as we would expect from reality TV. As to the fire... Plato’s Republic is illustrative (Plato, 1908). The Rational (mind/spirit) is to dominate the spirited (emotive) and appetitive (physical). This hierarchical relationship keeps the fire trapped within—the heart is to be subdued by the mind, as Abel was subdued by Cain, as Remus was subdued by Romulus, as Iphicles was outshined by Hercules, as Epimetheus was outshined by Prometheus, etc. The twin myths of the western world aptly embody the sad relationship between heart and mind forged by patriarchal dominion of the heart by the mind (Four Arrows, 2010, 2014). These stories ring of Exodus, where deliverance of the ‘chosen people’ into the promised land was dependent upon conquest and colonization (genocide) of the Indigenous Canaanites (Warrior, 1989)—the patriarchy teaches us that we will be delivered into the Promised Land of human virtue by conquering and colonizing the heart with the mind. In Indigenous twin myths the twins work together (ibid.). Power with rather than power over (Methot, 2012). In Truth deliverance is to be found in reciprocal harmony between the twins. Deliverance from the wicked contexts of our world require that we step back and forth between the worlds of heart and mind to create liminal spaces from which we can be reborn.

(Barnesmoore, 2019d) The heart is not subdued by the mind, and so the fire is not shut up in my bones—it tears through this world destroying the causes of privation.

**Grandma:** The sad relationship between heart and mind is where the monsters dwell: in denying emotion we externalize it into something frightening and forbidden. At the same time, we ignore how “monsterization” serves the MegaMachine. “Focusing on the individual rather than structural causes of any incident reinforces the neoliberal narrative of individual responsibility” (Wrenn, 2013, p. 349). So maybe focusing on individual monsters is missing the point. How are these monsters created and how are they related? What role do they play in continuing the neoliberal game? As long as the monsters themselves remain isolated and accept the dominant mindset that deems them ‘monsters,’ viewing themselves and others as such, the neoliberal machine can churn on unabated.

**Dad:** Exactly. We have been assimilated into the MegaMachine. “We are Borg—you will be assimilated—resistance is futile...” (Star Trek). We seek death because we want the part of us that is the MegaMachine to die. We want to be reborn unchained from the MegaMachine. We inherently want to be free. We want to be healthy. We know we need/desire to break the golden chains; we know we need/desire to escape the golden chamber pot (More, 1930). Myths are the stories by which we convert experiences into conceptions of truth (Moore, 1972); myths carry and transmit worldview(s) (i.e. cosmological and ontological assumptions); we need/desire new myths so that we can stop storying ourselves out of this world of wicked suffering as we storied ourselves into it.

**Grandma:**

*Capitulation:*

Another approach I took to my face off with neoliberalism was giving in, instead of resisting. This is the part in the horror movie where the maiden opens the window in response to Dracula’s knocking. I said, “I am going to be the best, self-enhancing, *homo economicus* lady ever. I’m gonna get a fancy hair do, some new shoes, redo my resume and get out there and sell myself.” That lasted for about a day. This phase was very short, mainly because I am lazy and not well suited to self-promotion, though I do like to sit at the front of the class; mainly, so I won’t drift away into thinking about monsters.

*... whether you embrace it or detest it, you’re living in relation to it. It’s in the water.*

Also, I realized most frighteningly that you don’t have to capitulate to capitulate. You don’t have to consciously say “I’m giving into neoliberalism” like giving consent to a new lover. Because whether you embrace it or detest it, you’re living in relation to it. It’s in the water. It’s in the words you use, the mirror image fraught with constant comparison. It’s in the brands. Seeing it just adds to the absurdity, as you posture up against it, find yourself in it, try to step out of it, only stepping into another pile. It’s like the garage in Roma (2018): the dog shit is just always there, no matter how much sweeping.

Am I less neoliberal if I consciously act against it, or am I just a knee-jerk reactionary now adopting another position that has already been absorbed by the Blob?

**Dad:** It is one thing to conceptualize fear in relationship to the natural order—it's another thing to wrangle with the sickly expressions of fear that this artificially-domineering world so carefully crafts to keep us on the path of justice/virtue through punishment and fear of punishment. Some scars don't heal in this life.

*Sometimes we have to learn how to walk with a limp, to feel our way through the shadows.... prepare ourselves for death.*

Sometimes we have to learn how to walk with a limp, to feel our way through the shadows, and sometimes those 'limitations' are exactly what we need to slow us down from the fever pitch life in our neoliberal world(s) so that we prepare ourselves for death. We know we need/desire to be reborn. We know we need/desire to die—in order to change, and better yet, transform.

**Grandma:**

*Power and Resistance:*

We still have interiors. I don't give a shit what anybody says. Insanity proves this. They can't control that shit. The 'insane'—maybe they are the most free. A sort of "ha, ha; fuck you, what's that you say?" to neoliberalism. So, I begin my resistance, which isn't denial, but is becoming a self-fashioned monster, from the inside to get to the outside: outside of neoliberalism. Fisher (2003) called this "fearless leadership in and out of the 'Fear' Matrix." It is something about the sacred and the profane. And being "fearless"—something more than bravery and bravado and rebellion for the sake of rebellion.

"Fearless" in being/becoming a new kind of monster that scares the shit out of neoliberalism, because it just won't comply. Isn't that what makes the normies always so angry about monsters? That they just won't comply? Dracula: damn it, come out during the day. Frankenstein's monster: quit bashing shit up. Blob: stop eating. Invisible man: where are you?

Need and desire. Need suggests addiction and seems to be rooted in flesh: we are addicted to fear because we fear desire. Desire is ephemeral: a mist that winds into crevices, that permeates, that beckons and may lead us to places where awe predominates. Lately I have experienced a strange and wonderful transformation from need to desire when facing what is obscured, what is beyond the fleshy day to day existence. I have watched a number of videos recounting near-death-experiences, NDEs, and the visions of those who have had these journeys, which have supplanted and supplemented my childhood notions of Biblical beyonds. This is what is under the bed. Some kind of pure light that can only be accessed through pure darkness.

**Dad:** The monsters are here. Come walk with me into the darkness.

**Grandma:** My brother talks about people who have a "seamless system of denial." Neoliberalism is like this. But not completely. Just like *the market* which claims to operate free of interventions yet constantly needs interventions, so neoliberalism is full of cracks, it turns out:

In the moments when the performance doesn't go off, wardrobe malfunctions, falling airplanes. Those cracks are where the monsters can start screaming, something about the emperor's new clothes. Because I think this whole thing is way more fragile than it seems. I listen. I hear people talking when I'm out and about. I hear undergrads pointing and smirking at "coyote killers" (those who don't do the Canada Goose); I hear the bullshit being called out. Most people aren't really that fooled by all this. When we step back for a more historical perspective, this shit is teetering on the edge of a mighty precipice called time. And the odds are against it. Earth abides.

**Dad:**

Let a teacher wave away the flies and put a plaster on the wound.

Don't turn your head. Keep looking at the bandaged place.

That's where the light enters you.

And don't believe for a moment that you're healing yourself. (Rumi 1995, p. 142)

**Grandma:** Look at the Monsters. They are the wounds we seek to ignore. Neoliberalism is Frankenstein's monster: a strange amalgam of parts and chemicals; born of greed and hubris masking the fear; we are Frankenstein's monster: pieced together through choosey choices, staggering, misunderstood, terrified masking the feared and fearful. Shit's gotta go.

**Dad:** Indeed—shit's gotta go, but we must avoid simply chopping of a single head of the hydra and basking in self-gratification while two new heads sprout and we are subsumed by the 'MegaMachine.' We must tear out the heart so that a new head cannot emerge. We must destroy A.D. Worldview(s) so that we can remember how to love as untainted by dominion.

**Grandma:** Or maybe not 'tearing out the heart'—which could still result in zombies—but composting the shit (Andreotti & Valley, 2019, p. 5): engendering that transformation Rumi is talking about, where heat and light make something new; and darkness does too.

[See articles Notes after Appendix 1]

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## APPENDIX 1

Luke Barnesmoore (Dad):

What Do You Write For? Why Do We Write?

I write so that the warriors may know the true nature of the sickness—my truth, a reflection of the underlying truth.

I'm not writing for the sickness. I don't try to depict the sickness in a manner that won't offend the sickness. I try to depict my relationship with the sickness as authentically as possible.

I write to inspire a glimmer of hope in the hearts of those who have not succumbed.

I write for all my relations,

for the earth and the all of which we all are a different part.

I write for my daughter Athena, and for all those for whom I will someday be an ancestor.

I write for those who have not succumbed.

I do not write to preserve the banally evil tranquility by which the sickness persists.

I write to disturb its tranquility, within and without.

That gives people hope, not detached rationalism.

As educators our responsibility is to inspire hope...

To depict the honest story of our relationship with the problems we are trying to solve.

And to inspire hope.

Hope in the fact that we can transcend the sickly parts of that relationship to relate with our students as the sovereign beings that they are.

Hope in the fact that we can be healthy.

Hope in the fact that we can be free.

Hope in the fact that someone is fighting to protect the *sacred*.

“Do I contradict myself?

Very well then, I contradict myself,

(I am large, I contain multitudes.)” (Whitman, 1986, p. 51)

Silence Ensues...

The tree of *Rome is Burning*.

I adorn myself in his ashes as I dance in the Night.

‘Wild’ Mysticism, In Defiance of Rome

As Four Arrows and I explored the noosphere for articles that might help to tie the philosophy and worldview that was emerging from my writings to Indigenous Worldview(s) through use of Google's algorithms we discovered a 2008 article by R.D.K. Herman entitled "Reflections on the Importance of Indigenous Geographies." Bingo! The critique of the dialectical hegemony of Geographical thought that arises from the essentially materialistic, dialectical hegemonic 'conflict' between Positivism and Postmodernism that I had been trying to put into words was expressed perfectly. First off, Herman (2008) argues that Geography should be considered Philosophy. Herman (2008) goes on to argue that this Philosophical potential of Geography is negated by the disenchanting, materialistic rationalism that has risen from what I describe as C.M. Worldview(s)<sup>iv</sup> and the division of the 'magical' and the 'superhuman' from religious practice in the Reformation (and beyond...):

'Wisdom sits in places,' that is, the way in which social and cultural knowledge and guidance—wisdom—is based on experience. Because experience occurs in places, landscapes (and their stories and place names) can come to encode social and cultural knowledge. This notion of geography as philosophy would not have been foreign to the ancient Greeks to whom the discipline is often traced, but geography today, with some notable exceptions, is only slowly returning to the quest for wisdom. As an academic discipline, geography must struggle against the limitations of the larger (post) modern episteme within which it is situated. A genuine engagement with Indigenous geography may open a pathway out of this fix.

What I call 'modern geography'—meaning the Anglophone geography that has emerged during the past two centuries with influence from France and Germany—grew as both a tool and a product of the colonial era. The discipline helped map out the civilized and the uncivilized and the place of each in a world of empires. Its scholars at times justified territorial expansion with hints at world domination, laid out "scientific" justifications for racial inequality, or provided the technical tools and know-how for conquest and colonial rule. In the process, Western notions of geography—of space, time, and human environment relations—were imposed on the rest of the world. The hegemonic power of the resulting modernist worldview continues to perpetuate in part through its intimate relationship with global capitalism. It is important to bear in mind that what is now held forth as a 'rational' worldview has its roots in a European culture war—the Reformation. Although this worldview is accepted as common sense today, it embodies a distinct ideology that enabled the colonization of the world and the commodification of nature. (Herman, 2008, p. 73)

While Herman posits the Reformation as the origin of the disenchantment of the world, it should be noted that the Romans and their stolen/perverted<sup>v</sup> strain of Christianity have spent much of their foul existence ensuring that the general public is separated from and prevented from accessing the magical/mystical/mysterious/spiritual potentials of human existence—see for example their incessant witch burning and attacks on mystics like Eckhart who deigned to share mysticism with the people. Here is a traditional rendition of the elitist/supremacist dogma that stands at the root of Rome's presumption to control all mysticism:

The Rosicrucian Order had its traditional conception and birth in Egypt in the activities of the Great White Lodge....

The More profound secrets of nature, science, and art were not to be entrusted to the masses, however, nor were they susceptible to preservation through writing upon papyri. For this reason, classes were formed by the most learned, attended by the select minds, and there the doctrines and principals of science were taught....

The cyclical repetitions of certain phenomena in nature and in their own beings were the first *mysteries* of early man. In fact, these things, to a great extent, still remain mysteries. The personal mysteries—or rather the intimate ones—were those of birth and death, and that strange resurrection that occurred periodically in nature, as a rejuvenation of plant life in the spring.

At first, the term *mysteries* must have been synonymous with the unknown. Later it came to represent, to the Egyptian neophyte and priest alike, an uncommon or esoteric knowledge of the law and purposes of life and being. (Lewis, 1959)

Raymond Blakney's (1954) introduction to *Meister Eckhart: The Essential Writings* provides a particularly horrifying defense of the machinations by which the Romans sought to keep the magic/mysticism from the people:

...the ministrations of the church in the latter part of the thirteenth century were unsatisfactory to an ever-increasing number of people. This is eloquently attested by the sporadic but persistent appearances of so-called 'wild' religious societies, from the point of view of responsible leaders of the church.... [This] much-too-exuberant enthusiasm began to find its way into the pulpits and monasteries, until the authorities could no longer ignore it and began to take measures to stamp it out.

In defense of the Inquisition, the duty of whose officers it was to check the irregular movements, there is much to be said. Mysticism in the hands of Eckhart is one thing' in the hands of men of comparatively feeble intellect it is something else....

Of the stern realities of the problem the church officials had to deal with, we in the twentieth century should be well aware. Mysticism, like Mother Eve, has two kinds of children, Abel and Cain. For the Abel kind, almost everything good is to be said; for the Cain kind, almost everything evil. Out of mysticism, the great life-giving impulses of civilization come; but out of mysticism of a kind, the National Socialist movement of Germany is also born." (Blakney, 1941, pp. xiv-xv)

Perhaps it is the ancestral memory of my ancestors who were erased from the earth by Rome's genocidal conquest and colonization of Europe speaking, or perhaps the memories of a past life that ended in the fires of a Roman stake, or perhaps my history of tension with artificial authority figures like the Church/State in this life—but in any case this Blakney chap's evil words have always ignited the dragon fire within since I first read them in my early 20s. I vividly remember the class where we discussed this reading... 'What right does the most nefarious stream of mysticism the world has ever known (Roman Catholicism) have to police mysticism?' One of my fellow druidic descendants, red hair gleaming, sounded his approval. The instructor tried to defend Rome's right to dominion over the earth—he was too enthralled by the hierarchical dualism of A.D. Worldview(s)<sup>2</sup> to recognize how evil the above passage is... There is no defense for the

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<sup>2</sup> Artificial-Domineering Worldview(s) (A.D. Worldview[s]) assume that the order of (human) nature is evil and must be rendered as good through hierarchical domination by an external authority, through punishment and fear of punishment, thorough conquest and colonization of 'the other', through 'man's dominion over earth', etc. Colonial-Modernist Worldview(s), which are an incarnation of A.D. Worldview(s), synthesize the dogmas about the 'evil' of

genocidal conquest and colonization of my ancestors and the rest of the Indigenous peoples of this earth by the Roman Inquisition.

Blakney's argument illustrates the implications of the perversion of the natural order of duality through conflation of natural dualities like light-dark with the progenitor of artificial duality 'good vs. evil.' Here we see the Western twin myths work their bad medicine to legitimize hierarchical domination of the earth by artificial authorities like the Roman Church... As though the Catholic Church is any less evil than the Nazis. As though the Catholic Church's genocide of Indigenous peoples—from Europe through the Americas, Asia, Africa and beyond—is somehow less nefarious than the Nazi's genocide of Jewish people. As though the Nazi's 'master race' discourse does not find its roots in the perversions of the Roman Church and the Old Testament—in the discourse of the 'chosen people'... Anyway, whatever the designs of the Romans, "natty dread rides again, through the mystics of tomorrow" (Marley, 1979).

“Dready got a job to do  
And he's got to fulfill that mission  
To see his hurt is their greatest ambition, yeah!  
But we will survive in this world of competition  
'Cause no matter what they do  
Natty keep on comin' through  
And no matter what they say  
Natty do them every day, yeah!  
Natty dread rides again  
Through the mystics of tomorrow  
Natty dread rides again  
Have no fear, have no sorrow, yeah!  
All and all you see a-gwan  
Is to fight against Rastaman  
So they build their world in great confusion  
To force on us the devil's illusion  
But the stone that the builder refuse  
Shall be the head cornerstone  
And no matter what game they play  
We got something they could never take away  
We got something they could never take away  
And it's the fire (fire), it's the fire (fire)  
That's burning down everything  
Feel that fire (fire), the fire (fire)  
Only the birds have their wings, yeah!  
No time to be deceived  
Oh, brothers, you should know and not believe  
Jah say this judgement, it could never be with water  
No water could put out this fire (fire)  
This fire (fire), this fire (fire)  
This fire (fire), a yaga y'all! ride, natty, ride!

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natural order and the dependence of virtue upon domination with the materialistic reduction of reality to passing time and physical space.

Go there, dready, go there,  
'Cause now the fire is out of control  
Panic in the city, wicked weeping for their gold!  
Everywhere this fire is burning,  
Destroying and melting their gold,  
Destroying and wasting their souls  
Go ride, natty, ride!  
Go there, dready, go there!  
Tell you what now the people gather on the beach  
And the leader try to make a speech  
But the dreadies understandin' that it's too late  
Fire is burning  
Man, pull your own weight!  
Fire is burning  
Man, pull your own weight!  
Natty dread rides again (natty dread rides again)  
And me say, go there, dready! Go there! (go there, go there)  
Oh ride, natty, ride! (dread rides again)  
And go there, dready! (go there, go there)  
Ridin' through the storm,  
Riding through the calm (go there, go there)  
Oh ride, natty, ride!  
Go there, dready, go there!  
Ride, natty, ride!  
Go there, dready, do there!" (Marley, 1979)

Rome can keep trying to stamp us out. They can keep murdering us in each generation. The 'wild' mystics will always ride again. Here I am once again—your earthly flames can never quench this fire. So, Rome, send St. George—this time we will eat him.

Canada and the US's attempts to extinguish Indigenous ceremonies, songs, knowledge, praxis, etc. clearly reflect the reality that Canada and the US are just the new iteration of the Roman Empire and its attempts to steal and prevent people from accessing magic through mysticism. The survival of Indigenous ceremonies and songs through Rome's attempt to stamp out 'wild mysticism' on Turtle Island stands testament to the fact that Rome will never win.

Even when it was illegal to practice their ceremonies and sing their songs, our Indigenous sisters and brothers preserved their ways and made it through the long night. The medicine survived—humanity can still be healed—Rome failed once again, for their roots in privation can never overcome our roots in the Nothing-Infinite-Eternal. I have heard many a story along these lines in my wanderings through Turtle Island. Ceremonies held secretly, in a lonely wooded clearing, in the dead of night, so that the RCMP could not murder the knowledge keepers. Songs sung secretly in the dead of night. Rattles made of saltshakers to keep the US Romans off the trail. Rome never stopped its quest to stamp out 'wild' mysticism, and natty dread never stopped riding through the mystics of tomorrow.

Not much has changed in Colonial Modernity, where Colonialist Modern Worldview(s) have been crafted by the Romans and their progenies to prevent the public from knowing/accessing the magical/mysterious/mystical/spiritual aspects of life. Disciplines like Psychiatry have been

crafted by the Romans and their progenies to ensure that anyone who does come to know/access the magical/mysterious/mystical/spiritual aspects of life are quickly hidden away from the public behind the walls of the prison/mental hospital so that we don't even remember what has been stolen from us by the Roman Church. Foucault described the transition from the excessive revenge of the sovereign prince (witch burnings) to the modernism approach of hiding repression behind the doors of the prison, the mental hospital, etc. But in the end the goal has always been the same—ensuring that the public remains enslaved by ensuring that we do not remember what has been stolen from us. So that we do not tap in to the magical/mysterious/mystical/spiritual potentials upon which conscious-cultural evolution towards states of being in which true freedom becomes possible is dependent. Conscious-Cultural Evolution can be understood through the development of these magical/mysterious/mystical/spiritual potentials.

The point is that Herman's (2008) narrative (like many modern narratives about colonialism) focuses so much on the streams of ontological discontinuity between Catholicism and Protestantism (between Roman colonization of Europe and European colonization of Turtle Island) that the streams of ontological continuity which bind Catholicism and Protestantism and colonization of Europe by Rome and of Turtle Island by Europe into a mutually constitutive whole are obfuscated. The disenchantment of reality in the rise of Protestantism was just another step in the Roman quest to steal and destroy the magic/mysticism of the Indigenous peoples they colonized (in Europe *and* Turtle Island). Protestant disenchantment was just another step in the process of trying to prevent earth people from remembering what the MegaMachine has stolen from us, just another step in the process of preventing us tapping back into the magic through our own 'wild' mysticism, just another step in the MegaMachine's quest to ensure that we remain in physical-mental-emotional-spiritual slavery.

## Rational Conquest and Colonization of the Mysteries in Modernity

Rome's attack on human intimacy with the mysteries continued through the rationalist paradigm developed by Jesuit scholars in the birth of Colonial Modernity (Dussel, 2014). Rationalism seeks to demystify the world, which stands in stark contradiction with Indigenous ways of knowing that harmoniously co-exist with the mysterious (Ermine, 1995; Aikenhead, 1997).

Aboriginal knowledge about the natural world contrasts with Western scientific knowledge in a number of ways. Aboriginal and scientific knowledge differ in their social goals: survival of a people *versus* the luxury of gaining knowledge for the sake of knowledge and for power over nature and other people (Peat, 1994). They differ in intellectual goals: to co-exist with mystery in nature by celebrating mystery *versus* to eradicate mystery by explaining it away (Ermine, 1995). (Aikenhead, 1997, p. 5)

Aboriginal people found a wholeness that permeated inwardness and that also extended into outer space. Their fundamental insight was that all existence was connected and that the whole enmeshed the being in its inclusiveness. In the Aboriginal mind, therefore, an immanence is present that gives meaning to existence and forms the starting point for Aboriginal Epistemology. It is a mysterious force that connects the totality of existence—the forms, energies, or concepts that constitute the outer and inner worlds.” (Ermine, 1995, p. 103)

The trickster-transformer continues to guide our experiences into the deep reaches of the psyche and the unfathomable mystery of being. (Ermine, 1995, p. 105)

This quest for deliverance through rational conquest and colonization of the mysterious perfectly reflects A.D. Worldview(s) artificial-hierarchical ontology of dualism, wherein virtue/justice/deliverance/order/etc. are dependent upon the ‘good’ polarity (e.g. reason) dominating the ‘evil’ polarity (e.g. the mysterious). This quest for deliverance through rational conquest and colonization of the mysterious appears in the context of this story as the final stage of separating the masses from the mysterious. Rather than embodying the ontology of justice/virtue through use of ‘the excessive revenge of the sovereign prince’ (Foucault, 1994) to punish people who engage in mysticism so as to create fear of punishment in others, the High Priests of Colonial Modernity shift towards domination through ‘productive power’ by socializing people into C.M. Worldview(s) that deny the existence of the mysterious all together so as to manufacture individual/collective mentalities that lead the masses to govern their own existence towards stamping out ‘wild’ mysticism. This productive technique of power renders anyone who falls into a scientific, materially reductive subjectivity that associates mysticism with madness as a Colonial Modernist Inquisitor. The High Priests of Colonial Modernity, who most ironically identify themselves as ‘anti-Church/Religion’, are our generation’s Catholic Inquisition—though many of them do not realize their being as a cog in the MegaMachine, they are serving the same old function as the Catholic Inquisitors in keeping the mysteries from the masses.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Artificial-Domineering Worldview(s) assume that human nature is evil and that virtue is subsequently dependent upon hierarchical domination. A.D. Worldview(s) also hold a tainted vision of duality that rises from the progenitor of artificial dualities ‘good vs. evil’ wherein virtue is dependent upon one polarity dominating the other (see patriarchy and colonialism). Colonial-Modernist Worldview(s) (C.M. Worldview[s]) synthesize the dogmas of A.D. Worldview(s) with reduction of reality to passing time and physical space (Barnesmoore, 2018a).

<sup>1</sup> Xun Zi was the third great Confucian Philosopher (following Kong Zi and Meng Zi). One of his great innovations came in the notion that human nature is only good in potential (i.e. originally sinful) and good order must be created through the external (hierarchical...) influence of ritual practice. “Xunzi is known for his belief that ritual is crucial for reforming humanity’s original nature. Human nature lacks an innate moral compass, and left to itself falls into contention and disorder, which is why Xunzi characterizes human nature as bad. Ritual is thus an integral part of a stable society. He focused on humanity’s part in creating the roles and practices of an orderly society, and gave a much smaller role to Heaven or Nature as a source of order or morality than most other thinkers of the time” (Elstein, 2017).

Xun Zi had two famous students, Li Si and Han Feizi. Li Si was the first prime minister of the Qin Empire. Han Feizi is the founder of the Legalist School of Chinese Philosophy (Van Norden, 2011). Legalism accepts the notion that the order of human nature is bad (self-interested and covetous) and, dismissing Xun Zi’s notion that a good order can be manufactured through ritual, subsequently argues that fear of punishment is the only way of ensuring that the presumed natural, unchangeably bad order of self-interest can be aptly dominated and controlled. In short, instead of trying to manufacture a good order of human nature (one with a moral compass that transcends the limitations of self-interestedness), Legalism accepts that the order of human nature can only be bad (self-interested) and seeks to manufacture social order through manipulation of this presumed innate order of human nature through fear of punishment. People must remain bad (self-interested), but that self-interest will be hierarchically dominated by fear of punishment and a good social order will thus be manufactured.

Yes, these are Confucian and Legalist Chinese Philosophers from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century B.C. rather than members of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century’s Freiburg School and Chicago School of Economics, but the coherence between Neoliberalism, its



theoretical foundations like Rational Choice Theory (which presumes that human nature impels people to make all decisions based on material self-interest) and the authoritarian techniques of power it levies to dominate this presumed order of human nature and the Legalist model of manufacturing order through domination that was developed over two thousand years before the birth of Neoliberalism at the University of Freiburg and the University of Chicago should not be overlooked... Anyway, here is a taste of Han Fei Zi:

“The people covet wealth and fame; they are afraid of punishments: this is their basic disposition (qing 情). This disposition is not to be altered but to be properly understood and then manipulated.... Moreover, to overawe the people, the text advocates inflicting heavy punishments for even petty offenses, as only then will the people be sufficiently scared as to behave properly” (Pines, 2017).

This Legalist model for manufacturing order through domination, we should note, can be understood as a perverse fusion of the excessive revenge of the Prince and the standardized, regulated punishment of the enlightenment described by Foucault (1995) in D&P...<sup>1</sup> In any case, through this comparison with Legalist Philosophy we begin to see the ways in which Worldview (in this case conception of the *real order* of human nature as either good or bad) articulates the potential for Philosophy and norms of thought, behavior and conception of being as expressed in social-political-religious systems. It is only when we accept the absurd notion that the order of human nature is evil and human expressions like materially reductive self-interest are natural expressions of this evil order of human nature—which is starkly opposed to the notion that human nature is good and that human expressions like materially reductive self-interests come as a function of a privation (a void) of the order of human nature rather than as a function of the order of human nature itself—that it becomes possible to ‘think the that’ (Foucault 1994) of manufacturing a good order of human nature through hierarchical domination (and the fear of punishment produced therein). As the reader should by this point understand, the result of this perversely false conception of the order of human nature and subsequent attempts to create an artificially ‘good’ order of human nature through hierarchical domination and fear of punishment is that the void by which manifest human expression is deprived of its innately good (loving as opposed to materially self-interested) order is fed rather than filled. In short, attempts to manufacture a ‘good’ order of human nature through techniques of power rooted in hierarchical domination and fear of punishment actually serve to sustain the deprived, materially self-interested order of human nature they purport to treat by feeding the void by which the innately good order of human nature is deprived.

In this light we can argue that systems which seek to manufacture order through punishment and fear of punishment actually serve to create the problem they purport to control/treat. In so doing, these systems of domination create an artificial order of human nature (rooted in the privation of the innate order of human nature) that appears to necessitate the very systems of domination that created the artificial order. Hierarchical domination and fear of punishment beget subjects who are indeed confined (by the privation of their innate order via the void which is fed by hierarchical domination and fear) to making decisions based on material self-interest, and these deprived subjects beget the appearance that human nature is actually bad and that systems of hierarchical domination and fear of punishment are actually necessary for manufacturing a good social order. Systems of domination and fear, in short, establish a self-fulfilling prophecy wherein techniques of power that purport to control and treat the materially self-interested order of human nature actually serve to manufacture the materially self-interested order of human nature they purport to control and treat by feeding the void which deprives humans of their innately good order and thus reduces them to the perverse, unnatural order of materially self-interested human existence.

“The Utopians ‘define virtue thus: that it is living according to Nature, and think that we are made by God for that end; they believe that a man follows Nature when he pursues or avoids thing according to the direction of reason... Reason directs us to keep our minds as free from passion and cheerful as we can, and that we should consider ourselves bound by the ties of good-nature and humanity to use our utmost endeavors to help forward the happiness of all other persons...’” (Mumford 1922, p. 74)

Like Plato, More’s conception of virtue is bound by the mythos of the Paternalist Twin Motif (Four Arrows 2010), to the conquest and colonization of passion by reason, of the feminine by the masculine, of the moon by the sun. A good order of human nature, More assumes, must be manufactured by reason through its conquest and colonization of passion. Order is to be manufactured through hierarchical domination and fear of domination, which feeds the void by which the natural, goodly order of human nature is deprived, and as a result the actual, truly natural order of harmonious, reciprocal, mutually constructive relationship (i.e. relations enlivened by love rather than the will-to-domination) between the moon and the sun (the feminine and the masculine, the latent and the active, the infinite

potential and the infinite actual, which is to say the primordial void and the infinite-eternal that filled it, etc.) is thus decayed and deprived from manifestation. More, like Plato, may use the term Natural, but the conquest-colonization order of relations between sun and moon is about as natural as plastic (and has similarly destructive implications for the actual, truly natural order of things).

Mumford continues his quotation of More:

“Thus as they define Virtue to be living according to Nature, so they imagine that Nature prompts all people to seek after pleasure, as the end o fall they do. They also observe that in order to further our supporting the pleasures of life, Nature inclines us to enter into society; for there is no man so much raised above the rest of mankind as to be the only favorite of Nature, who, on the contrary, seems to have placed on a level all those that belong to the same species. Upon this they infer that no man ought to seek his own conveniences so eagerly as to prejudice others; and therefore they think that all agreements between private persons ought to be kept, which either a good prince has published in due form, to which a people that is neither oppressed with tyranny nor circumvented by fraud, has consented, for distributing these conveniences of life which afford us all our pleasures.” (Mumford 1922, p. 75)

“They think it is an evidence of true wisdom for a man to pursue his own advantages, as far as the laws allow it.” (Mumford 1922, pp. 75-76) The record is broken, but I can't turn it off... Imagine living life through this lens, where you have not been deafened by the banality of your socially constructed existence and thus actually hear the sickeningly repetitive notes of domination and fear emanating from all directions on the streets of the carceral concrete jungle humanity has constructed for itself... Reciprocal relations wherein the pursuit of pleasure is mediated by concern for the pleasure of other people (just men?) in a society are to be manufactured through hierarchical domination by law and fear of punishment. Domination and fear are to provide the force by which order is manufactured. Beyond the maddening repetition of the screeching notes of domination and fear that emanate from the broken record of Paternalist history, the ironic doublespeak that forms the foundation for Modern models of sustainable domination again rears its ugly head. Law must be consented to by ‘a people that is neither oppressed with tyranny nor circumvented by fraud’, and yet the act of consent to laws lain out by the archon (by the Prince who sits atop the hierarchies of domination that form the social structure of a Paternalist society) marks the birth of self-disciplined ‘oppressive tyranny’, and the illusion of free consent in a context where a lack of consent condemns an individual to slavery marks the fruition of ‘circumvention by fraud’. Law must be consented to without tyranny and fraud, and yet there can be no illusion of freedom within a hierarchical legal order without both tyranny and fraud. “Freedom is Slavery” (Orwell 1983, p. 5), and Slavery is Freedom.

“...They recon that all our actions, and even our virtues, terminate in pleasure, as in our chief end and greatest happiness; and they call every motion or state, either of body or mind, in which Nature teaches us to delight, a pleasure. They cautiously limit pleasure only to those appetites to which Nature leads us; for they say that Nature leads us only to those delights to which reason as well as sense carries us, and by which we neither injure any other person no lose the possession of greater pleasures, and of such a draw no troubles after them.” (Mumford 1922, p. 76)

This system of following Nature's dictates would be laudable if it were not stated in an environment where, through the domination (conquest and colonization) of heart by mind (of the feminine by the masculine, of the potential by the actual, of the moon by the sun), humans can no longer feel the dictates of the Natural order. Reason alone cannot tell us the truth carried by the wind in the trees and the waters in the river, for it is with the heart that we feel their beauty and thus know their truth. Paternalism burns out your eyes with hot irons and then instructs you to find your way through the woods by reading a map. It fills your ears with hot wax and then tells you to find your way by listening to the crack of branches under the feet of your traveling companions. It slits your throat and then tells you to breathe. Nature (the Mother) leads us by the heart, for she speaks with a voice of feelings, and we cannot be led by the sweet caress of Nature's emotive voice if our heart has been conquered and colonized by reason.

“Mencius said: “All people possess within them a moral sense that cannot bear the suffering of others....’ ‘Why do I say that all people possess within them a moral sense that cannot bear the suffering of others? Well, imagine now a person who, all of a sudden, sees a small child on the verge of falling down into a well. Any such person would experience a sudden sense of fright and dismay. This feeling would not be something he summoned up in order to establish good relations with the child's parents. He would not purposefully feel this way in order to win the praise of their friends and neighbors. Nor would he feel this way because the screams of the child would be unpleasant.” (Meng Zi [2A6] 2016, p. 43)

“‘There was a man of Song who was concerned that the sprouts in his field were not growing well, so he went and tugged at each one. He went home utterly exhausted and said, ‘Oh, I’ve made myself ill today! I’ve been out helping the sprouts to grow.’ His sons rushed out to look and found the stalks all shriveled up. There are few in the world who do not ‘help their sprouts grow.’ There are those who do not ‘weed’ – they have simply given the whole task up as useless. But the ones who tug on the sprouts to help them grow, they are worse than useless, for they do harm!’” (Meng [2A2] 2016, p. 40)

Through the lens of these two stories we can understand two things. First, the heart-mind (Xin, 心) allows us to know the truth (i.e. emotion, in its natural state, has epistemic function by which we come to know truth) in a manner that is dimensionally incommensurable with the rational mind. Second, the ways in which the conquest and colonization of heart by mind (of moon by sun, of feminine by masculine, yin by yang, etc.) that lies at the heart of the Paternalist mythos prevents the heart-mind from speaking its truth.

To the first understanding, that heart-mind speaks to us of the truth, we can argue that, as a function of the *natural order* of the heart-mind, the emotive response to suffering (aversion to suffering and the will-to-fill-the-void causing said suffering) leads us to understand the truth of suffering (its antipathy with the Nothing-Infinite) and our proper relation to suffering (filling the void that makes suffering possible to bring manifestation into better harmony with the Nothing-Infinite). We know that suffering is wrong and that morality requires that we do our part to fill the void from which suffering emanates because of the way that suffering makes us feel. We know that the potential suffering of the child if they fall into the well is wrong and that the right thing to do is to ensure that the child does not suffer as a function of falling into the well (by filling the void of loving care that led the child to stand alone next to the well) because of the way the natural order of the heart-mind makes us feel.

To the second understanding, that heart cannot speak its truth when it has been colonized by the mind, Meng Zi’s (2A2) story of the farmer from Song illustrates the truth that attempts to manufacture artificial order through domination begets a decay of natural order. By attempting to manufacture an artificial order of life in the sprouts through dominating them (through pulling on them), the farmer ensures that the natural order of life will decay and that the sprouts will thus die. The same is true in the context of the relationship between heart and mind. When mind attempts to create a new (subjugated) order of heart through hierarchical domination, which is to say when the mind attempts to pull on the heart-sprout to make it grow, the mind ensures a decay of the natural order of the heart. It is this natural order of the heart, however, that allows it to respond to manifestation in a truthful manner. Let us take up a banal example. Imagine a Paternalist white person whose heart has been wholly colonized by their mind and its racist ideology observing a black child standing next to a well; rather than distress at the potential of the child suffering and the urge to fill the void from which this suffering is made potential that would be spoken by the natural order of the heart, the Paternalist heart colonized by racist ideology might instead speak the language of the fear of other and the will-to-domination and thus draw the Paternalist, not to fill the void from which suffering becomes potential, but to feed the void by pushing the child into the well. ‘If the child falls in the well that’s natural selection.’

The heart speaks to us as a function of form responding to form in a manner akin to Cook Ting’s relationship with the Ox:

“Cook Ting was cutting up an ox for Lord Wen-hui. As every touch of his hand, every heave of his shoulder, every move of his feet, every thrust of his knee — zip! zoop! He slithered the knife along with a zing, and all was in perfect rhythm, as though he were performing the dance of the Mulberry Grove or keeping time to the Ching-shou music. ‘Ah, this is marvelous!’ said Lord Wen-hui. ‘Imagine skill reaching such heights!’

Cook Ting laid down his knife and replied, ‘What I care about is the Way, which goes beyond skill. When I first began cutting up oxen, all I could see was the ox itself. After three years I no longer saw the whole ox. And now — now I go at it by spirit and don’t look with my eyes. Perception and understanding have come to a stop and spirit moves where it wants. I go along with the natural makeup, strike in the big hollows, guide the knife through the big openings, and following things as they are. So I never touch the smallest ligament or tendon, much less a main joint.’

‘A good cook changes his knife once a year — because he cuts. A mediocre cook changes his knife once a month — because he hacks. I’ve had this knife of mine for nineteen years and I’ve cut up thousands of oxen with it, and yet the blade is as good as though it had just come from the grindstone. There are spaces between the joints, and the blade of the knife has really no thickness. If you insert what has no thickness into such spaces, then there’s plenty of room —

more than enough for the blade to play about it. That's why after nineteen years the blade of my knife is still as good as when it first came from the grindstone.'

'However, whenever I come to a complicated place, I size up the difficulties, tell myself to watch out and be careful, keep my eyes on what I'm doing, work very slowly, and move the knife with the greatest subtlety, until — flop! the whole thing comes apart like a clod of earth crumbling to the ground. I stand there holding the knife and look all around me, completely satisfied and reluctant to move on, and then I wipe off the knife and put it away.'  
'Excellent!' said Lord Wen-hui. 'I have heard the words of Cook Ting and learned how to care for life!'"  
(Zhuang Zi, 1968, pp. 50-51)

As the form of the Ox came to be inscribed upon Cook Ting (allowing form to respond to form without mediation by the rational mind), so the order of the Nothing-Infinite is innately inscribed in the natural order of the heart (allowing us to feel the sympathy-antipathy of manifestation with the Nothing-Infinite, which is the basis of virtue, without mediation by the rational mind). This statement requires some unpacking. Foucault's (2002) model of knowledge as resemblance (derived from Paracelsus), though describing how reason may come to be founded upon the simplest and most universal things (force, form and consciousness), is illuminating in providing us with the language necessary to describe the process by which the heart speaks. Resemblance of convenience is derived from a shared environment (force) of manifestation. Resemblance of emulation is derived from being as an expression of the same infinite-eternal form. Analogy allows us to view different forms manifest in the same environment to extract the essence of environment and allows us to view the same form manifest in different environments to become intimate with essence of force and form that is the simplest and most universal attribute of nature. Sympathy and antipathy allow us to subsequently *feel* the harmony (or lack thereof) of manifestation with the uncreated essence it reflects. Virtue comes in increasing the degree of perfection to which manifestation is sympathetic with the Nothing-Infinite it reflects. The moral sense described by Meng Zi, which is to say the natural order of the heart, allows us to feel this sympathy-antipathy of manifestation with the Infinite-Nothing and thus to act virtuously (in producing aversion to antipathetic relations between manifestation and the Nothing-Infinite and the desire to fill the void from which this antipathy becomes possible). If, however, the natural order of the heart has been decayed through conquest and colonization of the heart by the mind, which is to say if the heart has been brought into antipathy with the Nothing-Infinite through its conquest and colonization by mind, then we can no longer hear the voice of truth it was meant to speak. The colonized heart cannot speak truth.

St. Thomas provides a vision of morality that can aptly be understood within the framework of the virtue ethics tradition (wherein goodness is defined as the actions of the virtuous subject [McDowell 1979; Van Norden 2011]), which implies that there can be no fixed laws of virtuous action and that a virtuous, conscious subject is required to harmonize the eternal principles of the Nothing-Infinite Eternal and its emanations Force, Form and Consciousness (NIE-FFC) with the motion, change, difference, etc. of manifestation:

"In the *Summa Theologica* we find St. Thomas propounding a contrary opinion: 'The essence of virtue consists in the good rather than in the difficult.' ...Kant's compatriots and disciples—they held that virtue meant: 'mastering our natural bent'. No; that is what Kant would have said, and we all of us find it quite easy to understand; what Aquinas says is that virtue makes us perfect by enabling us to *follow* our natural bent in the right way. In fact, he says, the sublime achievements of moral goodness are characterized by effortlessness—because it is of their essence to spring from love." (Pieper 2009, p. 33)

Human nature is, in this framework, Good, and the pursuit of virtue comes in staving off privation of this good (*privatio boni*) rather than in dominating some 'essentially bad' aspect of our nature. St. Thomas is still located in the Paternalist stream, and so there is still an element of dominating the self that is presumed as necessary for actualizing the potential to follow our natural bent, but when purified of Paternalist perversion St. Thomas' vision of virtue comes much closer to the truth than do the post-Kantian perversions of Colonial Modernity. Virtue comes in emulation of the natural order, in the sprouts of goodness that lead the untainted to feel the necessity of saving a child from falling into a well (Meng Zi 2A6), and not through manufacturing order through hierarchical domination (which actually begets a decay of the natural order upon which virtue rests [Meng Zi 2A2]).

<sup>1</sup> Dad: If I may riff on Four Arrows language, it burns out. (Barnesmoore et. al. 2019) We need to fill the void with something that cannot burn out. Only then can we be reborn into that which we describe as 'stressless', 'effortless', 'fearless' because it cannot be named.

<sup>1</sup> Artificial-Domineering Worldview(s) (A.D. Worldview[s]) assume that the order of (human) nature is evil and that virtue/justice/order are thus dependent upon domination of the ‘inferior’ by the ‘superior’, upon conquest and colonization of ‘the other’ (Warrior 1989), upon punishment and fear of punishment. Colonial-Modernist Worldview(s) (C.M. Worldview[s]) synthesize A.D. Worldview(s) with reduction of reality to passing time and physical space.

<sup>1</sup> True Christianity was a revolt against the patriarchy and the Old Testament’s ontology of virtue through punishment and fear of punishment. (Leloup 2002) Peter, a patriarchal asshole, was mad that Christ passed on the tradition to Mary Magdalene. (Leloup 2002) The ‘Church of Peter’ arose out of Peter’s enmity and desire to preserve the patriarchy/the ontology of virtue through punishment and fear of punishment. The ‘Church of Peter’ is an affront to Christ’s doctrine of virtue through love, as are the machinations of Rome described by Blakney below.

[Ed. Note: for more End Notes see pp. 114-118 below]

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<sup>i</sup> Artificial-Domineering Worldview(s) assume that human nature is evil and that virtue is subsequently dependent upon hierarchical domination. A.D. Worldview(s) also hold a tainted vision of duality that rises from the progenitor of artificial dualities ‘good vs. evil’ wherein virtue is dependent upon one polarity dominating the other (see patriarchy and colonialism). Colonial-Modernist Worldview(s) (C.M. Worldview[s]) synthesize the dogmas of A.D. Worldview(s) with reduction of reality to passing time and physical space (Barnesmoore, 2018a).

<sup>ii</sup> Xun Zi was the third great Confucian Philosopher (following Kong Zi and Meng Zi). One of his great innovations came in the notion that human nature is only good in potential (i.e. originally sinful) and good order must be created through the external (hierarchical...) influence of ritual practice.

“Xunzi is known for his belief that ritual is crucial for reforming humanity’s original nature. Human nature lacks an innate moral compass, and left to itself falls into contention and disorder, which is why Xunzi characterizes human nature as bad. Ritual is thus an integral part of a stable society. He focused on humanity’s part in creating the roles and practices of an orderly society, and gave a much smaller role to Heaven or Nature as a source of order or morality than most other thinkers of the time” (Elstein, 2017).

Xun Zi had two famous students, Li Si and Han Feizi. Li Si was the first prime minister of the Qin Empire. Han Feizi is the founder of the Legalist School of Chinese Philosophy (Van Norden, 2011). Legalism accepts the notion that the order of human nature is bad (self-interested and covetous) and, dismissing Xun Zi’s notion that a good order can be manufactured through ritual, subsequently argues that fear of punishment is the only way of ensuring that the presumed natural, unchangeably bad order of self-interest can be aptly dominated and controlled. In short, instead of trying to manufacture a good order of human nature (one with a moral compass that transcends the limitations of self-interestedness), Legalism accepts that the order of human nature can only be bad (self-interested) and seeks to manufacture social order through manipulation of this presumed innate order of human nature through fear of punishment. People must remain bad (self-interested), but that self-interest will be hierarchically dominated by fear of punishment and a good social order will thus be manufactured.

Yes, these are Confucian and Legalist Chinese Philosophers from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century B.C. rather than members of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century’s Freiburg School and Chicago School of Economics, but the coherence between Neoliberalism, its theoretical foundations like Rational Choice Theory (which presumes that human nature impels people to make all decisions based on material self-interest) and the authoritarian techniques of power it levies to dominate this presumed order of human nature and the Legalist model of manufacturing order through domination that was developed over two thousand years before the birth of Neoliberalism at the University of Freiburg and the University of Chicago should not be overlooked... Anyway, here is a taste of Han Fei Zi:

“The people covet wealth and fame; they are afraid of punishments: this is their basic disposition (qing 情). This disposition is not to be altered but to be properly understood and then manipulated... Moreover, to overawe the people, the text advocates inflicting heavy punishments for even petty offenses, as only then will the people be sufficiently scared as to behave properly” (Pines, 2017).

This Legalist model for manufacturing order through domination, we should note, can be understood as a perverse fusion of the excessive revenge of the Prince and the standardized, regulated punishment of the enlightenment described by Foucault (1995) in *D&P*...<sup>ii</sup> In any case, through this comparison with Legalist Philosophy we begin to see the ways in which Worldview (in this case conception of the *real order* of human nature as either good or bad) articulates the potential for Philosophy and norms of thought, behavior and conception of being as expressed in social-political-religious systems. It is only when we accept the absurd notion that the order of human nature is evil and

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human expressions like materially reductive self-interest are natural expressions of this evil order of human nature—which is starkly opposed to the notion that human nature is good and that human expressions like materially reductive self-interests come as a function of a privation (a void) of the order of human nature rather than as a function of the order of human nature itself—that it becomes possible to ‘think the that’ (Foucault 1994) of manufacturing a good order of human nature through hierarchical domination (and the fear of punishment produced therein). As the reader should by this point understand, the result of this perversely false conception of the order of human nature and subsequent attempts to create an artificially ‘good’ order of human nature through hierarchical domination and fear of punishment is that the void by which manifest human expression is deprived of its innately good (loving as opposed to materially self-interested) order is fed rather than filled. In short, attempts to manufacture a ‘good’ order of human nature through techniques of power rooted in hierarchical domination and fear of punishment actually serve to sustain the deprived, materially self-interested order of human nature they purport to treat by feeding the void by which the innately good order of human nature is deprived.

In this light we can argue that systems which seek to manufacture order through punishment and fear of punishment actually serve to create the problem they purport to control/treat. In so doing, these systems of domination create an artificial order of human nature (rooted in the privation of the innate order of human nature) that appears to necessitate the very systems of domination that created the artificial order. Hierarchical domination and fear of punishment beget subjects who are indeed confined (by the privation of their innate order via the void which is fed by hierarchical domination and fear) to making decisions based on material self-interest, and these deprived subjects beget the appearance that human nature is actually bad and that systems of hierarchical domination and fear of punishment are actually necessary for manufacturing a good social order. Systems of domination and fear, in short, establish a self-fulfilling prophecy wherein techniques of power that purport to control and treat the materially self-interested order of human nature actually serve to manufacture the materially self-interested order of human nature they purport to control and treat by feeding the void which deprives humans of their innately good order and thus reduces them to the perverse, unnatural order of materially self-interested human existence.

“The Utopians ‘define virtue thus: that it is living according to Nature, and think that we are made by God for that end; they believe that a man follows Nature when he pursues or avoids thing according to the direction of reason. . . . Reason directs us to keep our minds as free from passion and cheerful as we can, and that we should consider ourselves bound by the ties of good-nature and humanity to use our utmost endeavors to help forward the happiness of all other persons. . . .’” (Mumford 1922, p. 74)

Like Plato, More’s conception of virtue is bound by the mythos of the Paternalist Twin Motif (Four Arrows 2010), to the conquest and colonization of passion by reason, of the feminine by the masculine, of the moon by the sun. A good order of human nature, More assumes, must be manufactured by reason through its conquest and colonization of passion. Order is to be manufactured through hierarchical domination and fear of domination, which feeds the void by which the natural, goodly order of human nature is deprived, and as a result the actual, truly natural order of harmonious, reciprocal, mutually constructive relationship (i.e. relations enlivened by love rather than the will-to-domination) between the moon and the sun (the feminine and the masculine, the latent and the active, the infinite potential and the infinite actual, which is to say the primordial void and the infinite-eternal that filled it, etc.) is thus decayed and deprived from manifestation. More, like Plato, may use the term Natural, but the conquest-colonization order of relations between sun and moon is about as natural as plastic (and has similarly destructive implications for the actual, truly natural order of things).

Mumford continues his quotation of More:

““Thus as they define Virtue to be living according to Nature, so they imagine that Nature prompts all people to seek after pleasure, as the end o fall they do. They also observe that in order to further our supporting the pleasures of life, Nature inclines us to enter into society; for there is no man so much raised above the rest of mankind as to be the only favorite of Nature, who, on the contrary, seems to have placed on a level all those that belong to the same species. Upon this they infer that no man ought to seek his own conveniences so eagerly as to prejudice others; and therefore they think that all agreements between private persons ought to be kept, which either a good prince has published in due form, to which a people that is neither oppressed with tyranny nor circumvented by fraud, has consented, for distributing these conveniences of life which afford us all our pleasures.” (Mumford 1922, p. 75)

“They think it is an evidence of true wisdom for a man to pursue his own advantages, as far as the laws allow it.” (Mumford 1922, pp. 75-76) The record is broken, but I can’t turn it off. . . . Imagine living life through this lens, where you have not been deafened by the banality of your socially constructed existence and thus actually hear the sickeningly repetitive notes of domination and fear emanating from all directions on the streets of the carceral concrete jungle humanity has constructed for itself. . . . Reciprocal relations wherein the pursuit of pleasure is mediated by concern for the pleasure of other people (just men?) in a society are to be manufactured through hierarchical

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domination by law and fear of punishment. Domination and fear are to provide the force by which order is manufactured. Beyond the maddening repetition of the screeching notes of domination and fear that emanate from the broken record of Paternalist history, the ironic doublespeak that forms the foundation for Modern models of sustainable domination again rears its ugly head. Law must be consented to by ‘a people that is neither oppressed with tyranny nor circumvented by fraud’, and yet the act of consent to laws laid out by the archon (by the Prince who sits atop the hierarchies of domination that form the social structure of a Paternalist society) marks the birth of self-disciplined ‘oppressive tyranny’, and the illusion of free consent in a context where a lack of consent condemns an individual to slavery marks the fruition of ‘circumvention by fraud’. Law must be consented to without tyranny and fraud, and yet there can be no illusion of freedom within a hierarchical legal order without both tyranny and fraud. “Freedom is Slavery” (Orwell 1983, p. 5), and Slavery is Freedom.

“...They reckon that all our actions, and even our virtues, terminate in pleasure, as in our chief end and greatest happiness; and they call every motion or state, either of body or mind, in which Nature teaches us to delight, a pleasure. They cautiously limit pleasure only to those appetites to which Nature leads us; for they say that Nature leads us only to those delights to which reason as well as sense carries us, and by which we neither injure any other person nor lose the possession of greater pleasures, and of such a draw no troubles after them.” (Mumford 1922, p. 76)

This system of following Nature’s dictates would be laudable if it were not stated in an environment where, through the domination (conquest and colonization) of heart by mind (of the feminine by the masculine, of the potential by the actual, of the moon by the sun), humans can no longer feel the dictates of the Natural order. Reason alone cannot tell us the truth carried by the wind in the trees and the waters in the river, for it is with the heart that we feel their beauty and thus know their truth. Paternalism burns out your eyes with hot irons and then instructs you to find your way through the woods by reading a map. It fills your ears with hot wax and then tells you to find your way by listening to the crack of branches under the feet of your traveling companions. It slits your throat and then tells you to breathe. Nature (the Mother) leads us by the heart, for she speaks with a voice of feelings, and we cannot be led by the sweet caress of Nature’s emotive voice if our heart has been conquered and colonized by reason.

“Mencius said: “All people possess within them a moral sense that cannot bear the suffering of others....’ ‘Why do I say that all people possess within them a moral sense that cannot bear the suffering of others? Well, imagine now a person who, all of a sudden, sees a small child on the verge of falling down into a well. Any such person would experience a sudden sense of fright and dismay. This feeling would not be something he summoned up in order to establish good relations with the child’s parents. He would not purposefully feel this way in order to win the praise of their friends and neighbors. Nor would he feel this way because the screams of the child would be unpleasant.” (Meng Zi [2A6] 2016, p. 43)

““There was a man of Song who was concerned that the sprouts in his field were not growing well, so he went and tugged at each one. He went home utterly exhausted and said, ‘Oh, I’ve made myself ill today! I’ve been out helping the sprouts to grow.’ His sons rushed out to look and found the stalks all shriveled up. There are few in the world who do not ‘help their sprouts grow.’ There are those who do not ‘weed’ – they have simply given the whole task up as useless. But the ones who tug on the sprouts to help them grow, they are worse than useless, for they do harm!” (Meng [2A2] 2016, p. 40)

Through the lens of these two stories we can understand two things. First, the heart-mind (Xin, 心) allows us to know the truth (i.e. emotion, in its natural state, has epistemic function by which we come to know truth) in a manner that is dimensionally incommensurable with the rational mind. Second, the ways in which the conquest and colonization of heart by mind (of moon by sun, of feminine by masculine, yin by yang, etc.) that lies at the heart of the Paternalist mythos prevents the heart-mind from speaking its truth.

To the first understanding, that heart-mind speaks to us of the truth, we can argue that, as a function of the *natural order* of the heart-mind, the emotive response to suffering (aversion to suffering and the will-to-fill-the-void causing said suffering) leads us to understand the truth of suffering (its antipathy with the Nothing-Infinite) and our proper relation to suffering (filling the void that makes suffering possible to bring manifestation into better harmony with the Nothing-Infinite). We know that suffering is wrong and that morality requires that we do our part to fill the void from which suffering emanates because of the way that suffering makes us feel. We know that the potential suffering of the child if they fall into the well is wrong and that the right thing to do is to ensure that the child does not suffer as a function of falling into the well (by filling the void of loving care that led the child to stand alone next to the well) because of the way the natural order of the heart-mind makes us feel.

To the second understanding, that heart cannot speak its truth when it has been colonized by the mind, Meng Zi’s (2A2) story of the farmer from Song illustrates the truth that attempts to manufacture artificial order through domination begets a decay of natural order. By attempting to manufacture an artificial order of life in the sprouts through dominating them (through pulling on them), the farmer ensures that the natural order of life will decay and that the sprouts will thus die. The same is true in the context of the relationship between heart and mind. When mind

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attempts to create a new (subjugated) order of heart through hierarchical domination, which is to say when the mind attempts to pull on the heart-sprout to make it grow, the mind ensures a decay of the natural order of the heart. It is this natural order of the heart, however, that allows it to respond to manifestation in a truthful manner. Let us take up a banal example. Imagine a Paternalist white person whose heart has been wholly colonized by their mind and its racist ideology observing a black child standing next to a well; rather than distress at the potential of the child suffering and the urge to fill the void from which this suffering is made potential that would be spoken by the natural order of the heart, the Paternalist heart colonized by racist ideology might instead speak the language of the fear of other and the will-to-domination and thus draw the Paternalist, not to fill the void from which suffering becomes potential, but to feed the void by pushing the child into the well. 'If the child falls in the well that's natural selection.'

The heart speaks to us as a function of form responding to form in a manner akin to Cook Ting's relationship with the Ox:

"Cook Ting was cutting up an ox for Lord Wen-hui. As every touch of his hand, every heave of his shoulder, every move of his feet, every thrust of his knee — zip! zoop! He slithered the knife along with a zing, and all was in perfect rhythm, as though he were performing the dance of the Mulberry Grove or keeping time to the Ching-shou music.

'Ah, this is marvelous!' said Lord Wen-hui. 'Imagine skill reaching such heights!'

Cook Ting laid down his knife and replied, 'What I care about is the Way, which goes beyond skill. When I first began cutting up oxen, all I could see was the ox itself. After three years I no longer saw the whole ox. And now — now I go at it by spirit and don't look with my eyes. Perception and understanding have come to a stop and spirit moves where it wants. I go along with the natural makeup, strike in the big hollows, guide the knife through the big openings, and following things as they are. So I never touch the smallest ligament or tendon, much less a main joint.'

'A good cook changes his knife once a year — because he cuts. A mediocre cook changes his knife once a month — because he hacks. I've had this knife of mine for nineteen years and I've cut up thousands of oxen with it, and yet the blade is as good as though it had just come from the grindstone. There are spaces between the joints, and the blade of the knife has really no thickness. If you insert what has no thickness into such spaces, then there's plenty of room — more than enough for the blade to play about it. That's why after nineteen years the blade of my knife is still as good as when it first came from the grindstone.'

'However, whenever I come to a complicated place, I size up the difficulties, tell myself to watch out and be careful, keep my eyes on what I'm doing, work very slowly, and move the knife with the greatest subtlety, until — flop! the whole thing comes apart like a clod of earth crumbling to the ground. I stand there holding the knife and look all around me, completely satisfied and reluctant to move on, and then I wipe off the knife and put it away.'

'Excellent!' said Lord Wen-hui. 'I have heard the words of Cook Ting and learned how to care for life!'"

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As the form of the Ox came to be inscribed upon Cook Ting (allowing form to respond to form without mediation by the rational mind), so the order of the Nothing-Infinite is innately inscribed in the natural order of the heart (allowing us to feel the sympathy-antipathy of manifestation with the Nothing-Infinite, which is the basis of virtue, without mediation by the rational mind). This statement requires some unpacking. Foucault's (2002) model of knowledge as resemblance (derived from Paracelsus), though describing how reason may come to be founded upon the simplest and most universal things (force, form and consciousness), is illuminating in providing us with the language necessary to describe the process by which the heart speaks. Resemblance of convenience is derived from a shared environment (force) of manifestation. Resemblance of emulation is derived from being as an expression of the same infinite-eternal form. Analogy allows us to view different forms manifest in the same environment to extract the essence of environment and allows us to view the same form manifest in different environments to become intimate with essence of force and form that is the simplest and most universal attribute of nature. Sympathy and antipathy allow us to subsequently *feel* the harmony (or lack thereof) of manifestation with the uncreated essence it reflects. Virtue comes in increasing the degree of perfection to which manifestation is sympathetic with the Nothing-Infinite it reflects. The moral sense described by Meng Zi, which is to say the natural order of the heart, allows us to feel this sympathy-antipathy of manifestation with the Infinite-Nothing and thus to act virtuously (in producing aversion to antipathetic relations between manifestation and the Nothing-Infinite and the desire to fill the void from which this antipathy becomes possible). If, however, the natural order of the heart has been decayed through conquest and colonization of the heart by the mind, which is to say if the heart has been brought into antipathy with the Nothing-Infinite through its conquest and colonization by mind, then we can no longer hear the voice of truth it was meant to speak. The colonized heart cannot speak truth.

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