

The Predictors

Sub-chapter	Section	Subject Matter	People
Part 1: The Tools of Prediction	i. <i>The mathematical root of prediction</i>	The ancient origins of mathematics & philosophy (from Babylonian 'geometry' to the concept of 'zero' • Preserving classical learning during the European dark ages & the virtues of 'Renaissance' (from the Arabian guardianship of ancient knowledge to the Golden Age of reason in Europe • From 'probability' to 'chaos theory' • From 'fractals' to the 'butterfly effect')	Pythagoras Euclid Archimedes Eratosthenes Hipparchus Democritus Plato Aristotle Diophantus Galileo Galilei Gottfried Leibniz René Descartes Blaise Pascal Pierre de Fermat Johann Bode George Boole Bertrand Russell Albert Einstein Benoit Mandelbrot
	ii. <i>The Fibonacci connection</i>	The history & definition of 'Fibonacci numbers', & their uncanny presence in nature • The 'golden ratio' (the unusual properties of 'phi' & 'Phi') - a divine proportion & nature's unending quest to obtain it • From human bones to planetary orbits •	Leonardo Fibonacci
	iii. <i>Practical divination</i>	The esoteric world of modern scientific prediction versus divination: the ancient quest for answers from the 'spirit world' • Fate & the concept of 'destiny': the ancient rites of shamanism & the divine institution of prophets & seers • Spiritualism & the irresistible allure of superstitious practices (such as <i>astrology</i> & <i>clairvoyance</i>) in a 'rational' modern society • Attempting to see the unseeable	





Part 1: The Tools of Prediction (...continued)	iv. Reading the signs	The binary nature of divination • The oracles of chance (from ‘yin & yang’ to the ‘sisters of fate’) • The power of numerology & the occult science of ‘gematria’ (from the ‘ <i>Kabbalah</i> ’ to the ‘ <i>Book of Revelation</i> ’) • From ‘Mo’ & ‘Sho Mo’ (the interlocking cycles of existence) to the pseudoscientific reasoning of modern western astrology • The false hope of <i>horoscopes</i> & other astrological symbolism	Buddha Jesus Mohammed
	v. Animal spirits and human nature	Reverence & fear: the perception of avian spirits • The spiritual role of animals in shamanic rituals (from symbol to sacrifice) • From ‘scapulomancy’ to ‘palmistry’; the inexhaustible supply of symbolic signs (combining cultural prejudice with the unknown)	
	vi. The symmetry of life	The fragility of existence: spiritual perceptions & logical science • Different perspectives & learned knowledge: basic predictions & the innate comfort of even numbers • The symmetrical nature of all animal life	
Part 2: Cultural Perspectives	i. Historic overview	Divination, prophesy & the major religions: beliefs that dictate social culture & individuals who changed it (from the Buddha to Gobind Singh) • Erosion of the ‘ <i>Nicene creed</i> ’ & the splintering of Protestant Christianity • Religious recruitment in a modern world: from American cults to the ‘ <i>Moonies</i> ’	Prince Gautama Siddhartha Jesus of Nazareth Mohammed Nanak Gobind Singh Michel de Nôtradame Sun Myung Moon
	ii. Eastern perspectives	Chinese astrology & divination • ‘ <i>Fu Chi</i> ’ & the book of ‘ <i>I Ching</i> ’ • The balance of existence (from ‘yin & yang’ to ‘ <i>feng shui</i> ’ & maintaining the flow of ‘ <i>ch’i</i> ’) • Vedic astrology & the ‘ <i>Kali Yuga</i> ’ • Birthright & prejudice: breaking from the caste system & escaping the ‘ <i>samsara</i> ’ • Eternal change & the suffering of existence: exploring the ‘middle way’ • Karma, meditation & dream yoga	





Part 2: Cultural Perspectives (...continued)	<i>iii. Divination of the Middle East</i>	The Kabbalah (from the ‘ <i>Big Bang</i> ’ to the ‘ <i>Tree of Life</i> ’): a Hebrew preoccupation with prophesy & scripture • The power of Kabbalist prophesy (from the decoded visions of ancient scripture to Victorian occultism)	
	<i>iv. Divination from Africa to the New World</i>	African mysticism: from the Christian ideals of Victorian Egyptologists to ‘ <i>Santeria</i> ’ & the magical deities of African-American slaves • From ‘ <i>Shango</i> ’ to ‘ <i>loa spirits</i> ’: the invocation of ancestral superstitions	
	<i>v. Perspectives of pagan and classical Europe</i>	<p>The Christian suffocation of pagan Europe • ‘<i>Dowsing</i>’ as a surviving pagan ritual & the legendary power of ‘<i>runes</i>’ (three sisters of fate)</p> <p>✿</p> <p>The imposing megalithic structures of pagan Europe & ‘<i>druidism</i>’ as a connection with prehistoric realities</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Ancient Greek mysticism & traditional oracles (from <i>Delphi</i> to <i>Zeus</i>): the incorporation of Greek ideals in the ‘<i>New Testament</i>’</p> <p>✿</p> <p>The roots of western astrology & the influence of Hellenistic culture • The growing mutation of modern astrology & ‘fate’ as a science of the stars • The power of Greek oracles, sacred brew & visionary dreams</p>	<p>✿</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Jesus Plato</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Alexander the Great Aristotle</p>





Part 2: Cultural Perspectives <i>(...continued)</i>	<i>vi. In the shadow of Christianity</i>	<p>The Christian destruction of dreams & intuitive reality • Creation of the 'Holy Roman Empire' & the ruthless eradication of 'Gnosticism' • The state of ancient mysticism (from 'Renaissance' to 'Enlightenment') • Breaking from Christian domination, & the concept of free-thought (from 'humanism' to 'dark magic') ✿</p> <p>The history of 'tarot' & its assimilation with pagan imagery • Tarot, the Kabbalah & theosophical cults: the dark mysticism of anti-Christian archetypes</p>	<p>Augustus Constantine Jesus</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Carl Jung</p>
	<i>vii. Modern prophetic culture</i>	<p>The power of knowledge: the use of science & technology to rediscover ancient perceptions • The lure of mystical traditions & the fear of superstition • The exploitation of spiritualism, & debunking irrational beliefs • The pseudo-scientific fascination of astrological predictions: feeding irrational perceptions • Ancestral myths & archetypes: dream divination & the value of <i>lucid dreams</i> ✿</p> <p>Scientific modelling & military prediction: the 'RAND' corporation • Predicting outcomes to war & the 'World Future Society' • Prediction as pure mathematical induction</p>	<p>Mary Shelley Jules Verne H.G. Wells</p> <p>✿</p>





Part 3: The Personalities (historic)	i. <i>An inclination of pessimism</i>	<p>Semitic eschatology: the first apocalyptic prophesies (conceiving & recasting ‘<i>Judgement Day</i>’)</p> <p>✿</p> <p>The dreams & consequences of self-proclaimed prophets • Prediction & the laws that govern their fulfilment (from prejudicial inference to the ‘unimaginable’ future) • Wilful self-fulfilment (the deadly power of Moses & Hitler)</p> <p>✿</p> <p>The concept of ‘millennial apocalypse’ • Religious & political malevolence and the continuing growth of ‘hate’ groups in the new millennium</p>	<p>✿</p> <p>Charles Taze Russell Peter Lemesurier Edmund Hillary Roger Bannister Nostradamus St. Malachy Robert Menzies Jeanne Dixon Moses Adolf Hitler</p> <p>✿</p> <p>St. John Nostradamus</p>
	ii. <i>Prophecy through the ages: the early days</i>	<p>False prophets & genuine seers: peering into the minds of ancient sages</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Western astrology & the cyclical system of time (from the ‘<i>precession of the equinoxes</i>’ to the ‘<i>Great Year</i>’) • Outdated charts & the ‘<i>Age of Aquarius</i>’ • Ancient astrological insights</p>	<p>Kongfuzi Lao Zi Chuang Tzu</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Zeno of Citium Pythagoras Ptolemy</p>





Part 3: The Personalities (historic) (...continued)	iii. Prophecy through the ages: of Hebrew tradition	<p>Semitic prophecies & the power of ancient Judaism: controlling the myths of scripture • Divine inspiration & the warping of ancient prophecy • Seeing the third millennium through the visions of an ancient prophet</p> <p>✿</p> <p>The concept of the ‘millennium’ & its importance to Christian culture (<i>‘The Book of Revelation’</i>) • The prophecies of Jesus in the gospels of St. Mark & St. Luke • Removing the ‘Gospel of St. Thomas’ & the complete annihilation of Gnostic realism</p> <p>✿</p> <p>The Book of Revelation & its powerful apocalyptic tone • 'Kykeon' & the dark mystical world of ancient psychedelic visions</p> <p>✿</p> <p>The recovery of Judaism, the westward spread of Christianity & the birth of Islam: sharing sacred space</p>	<p>Abraham Elijah Isiah Amos Malachi Yoshua Ben-Yosef Mohammed Ezekiel Daniel Alexander the Great</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Jesus St. Thomas</p> <p>✿</p> <p>St. John Nostradamus</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Jesus of Nazareth Mohammed Abraham</p>
	iv. Prophecy through the ages: the first millennium and beyond	<p>Roman persecution of the Jewish people & their bonds of faith • Abu Isa & the failed attempt to overcome Islam • The unrelenting power of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe: early revolts • The intriguing predictions of St. Malachy • The bloody persecution of Anabaptists: a vision of Armageddon</p> <p>✿</p> <p>The inspirational ideas & visionary powers of Roger Bacon & Leonardo da Vinci</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Talented seers, false prophets & radical beliefs in the Middle Ages (from Mother Shipton to <i>‘The Ranters’</i>)</p>	<p>Simon Bar Kokhba Hadrian Mohammed Abu Isa Jesus Tanchelm Malachy O’Morgair Pope Francis Thomas Müntzer Hans Hüt Jan Matthyson</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Roger Bacon Christopher Columbus Leonardo da Vinci</p> <p>✿</p> <p>Ursula Sontheil Charles I Sabbatai Zevi Jesus Oliver Cromwell</p>





Part 3: The Personalities (historic)

(...continued)

v. *Michel de Nôtre dame*

A brief explanation of our innate ability to predict future events: prediction using reason (e.g. quantum mechanics) & through intuitive insight (e.g. dreamed future realities)



A brief life (& death) history of Michel de Nôtre dame



A selection of predictions from the '*Prince of Prophets*' (& decoding their obscure symbolism) • From the '*three antichrists*' to the '*fiery missiles of Judgement Day*' • Prophecy & the prejudiced mindsets of different cultures & eras

Nostradamus



Michel de Nôtre dame | Catherine de' Medici | Henry II | Charles IX



Nostradamus | Yitzhak Rabin | John F. Kennedy | Napoleon Bonaparte | Adolf Hitler | Carl Jung | Josef Goebbels | Louis de Wohl | Joseph Stalin | Pol Pot | St John (the Apostle) | George Bush | Mikhail Gorbachev | Jiang Zemin | Vladimir Putin | Henry II (of France) | Jesus | Mohammed

vi. *Prophecy through the ages: the 19th century*

The devout predictions of Joanna Southcott & her descent into divine madness • The obsessive prophesies of Margaret Peter & the deadly consequences of her fanatical followers • The esoteric insight of Madame Blavatsky: her occult beliefs & the continued popularity of theosophical mysticism



The naïve predictions of 19th century American churches: Joseph Smith & the delusions of '*Mormonism*' • The postponed apocalypses of the '*Millerites*' • '*Jehovah's Witnesses*' & the profusion of false apocalyptic prophesies



The progression of science fiction in the 19th century & the uncanny visions of many sci-fi writers (from Mary Shelley to Jules Verne)

Joanna Southcott | Mary Bateman | Margaret Peter | Helena Blavatsky | Henry S. Olcott | Annie Besant | Jiddu Krishnamurti



Joseph Smith | John the Baptist | William Miller | Charles Taze Russell



Mary Shelley | H.G. Wells | Jules Verne | Aldous Huxley | George Orwell





Part 3: The Personalities (historic)

(...continued)

vii. *Prophecy through the ages: the 20th century (to 1945)*

Madame de Thebes: palmistry & the impending doom of war • The 'Order of the Golden Dawn' & the emergence of the 'Great Beast' • The theosophical life, beliefs & predictions of Aleister Crowley (from the 'Aeon of Horus' to the 'Abbey of Thelema')



The life & remarkably accurate predictions of Edgar Cayce (the 'Sleeping Prophet'): from Sunday school teacher to the 'Association for Research and Enlightenment'



The power of dreams, the paradox of precognition & the concept of astral projection • Psychic investigation & the three dimensions of time (from Harry Houdini to J.B. Priestley) Dream time & real events: perceiving the infinite dimensions of future reality • The remarkable visions of wartime seers

Victoire Savary | Franz Ferdinand | Samuel Mathers | William Westcott | William R. Woodman | Aleister Crowley | Rose Kelly | François Rabelais



Aleister Crowley | Edgar Cayce | Adolf Hitler | Benito Mussolini



Aleister Crowley | Edgar Cayce | Erich Weiss | J.W. Dunne | J.B. Priestley | Leonard Dawe | Cyril Macklin | Adolf Hitler





Part 4: The Personalities (modern age)	i. <i>Prophecy through the ages: the 20th century (post-war)</i>	<p>‘Parapsychology’: Cold War studies into <i>ESP</i> & <i>psychokinesis</i> (from ‘Zener cards’ to Russian housewives) • The age of thorough paranormal investigation (PEAR & the AAAS)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✿</p> <p>Jeanne Dixon: devout Catholic & famous clairvoyant (from Kennedy to the ‘antichrist’) • Karmohaksis & the three ages of humanity • Mario de Sabato: the separation of prophecy & faith (from the ‘Cuban missile crisis’ to alien visitations)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✿</p> <p>The rise of Eastern prophetic tradition in the West, in the late 20th century - ‘<i>Ramala teachings</i>’ & ‘The Sai Organisation’ • Sathya Sai Baba (the second ‘<i>Avatar of Love</i>’) & Mother Meera (embodiment of the ‘<i>Divine Mother</i>’ Earth): guiding towards the light</p>	<p>Joseph B. Rhine Rudolf Tischner J.G. Pratt Hubert Pearce Carl Jung Nina Kulagina Margaret Mead</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✿</p> <p>Jeanne Dixon John F. Kennedy Carole Lombard Marilyn Monroe Mahatma Gandhi Akhenaten Nefertiti Karmohaksis Mario de Sabato Robert Kennedy Martin Luther King Charles III Juan Carlos Saddam Hussein Muammar Gaddafi</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✿</p> <p>Joseph of Arimathea Sathya Sai Baba Shuka Sai Baba of Shirdi Sathyanaratana Raju Kamala Reddy Bargur Venkat Reddy</p>
	Footnote	The myth of King Arthur	Chrétien de Troyes Robert Wace Geoffrey of Monmouth Thomas Malory
		<p style="text-align: center;">✿</p> <p>The life & enlightened philosophies of Osho: visions of a <i>Golden Age</i> for humanity (from sexual equality to the freedom of love)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✿</p> <p>Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh Mikhail Gorbachev Genghis Khan Alexander the Great Napoleon Bonaparte Adolf Hitler Joseph Stalin Jesus Buddha Krishna Lao Tzu Carl Jung</p>





Part 4: The Personalities (modern age)

(...continued)

ii. *Prophecy through the ages: the modern creed*

Prophecy & revelation: from the shackles of Christian belief to intellectual reason & the induction of science • *'The International Theosophical Society'*: melding Eastern concepts with Western sciences (the humanist perception)



20th century science: quantum theory & the concept of universal existence • Proving the existence of quantum systems & embarking on the 'theory of everything' • *CERN* & the *LHC*: revealing the '*God particle*' • *Theosophy* & *neuropsychology*: comparing experiences of the mind



Morphic resonance & the hypothesis of '*formative causation*': learning to exist (from hydrogen atoms to newly discovered particles) • Checking universal constants: the self-imposed restrictions of modern science & our misplaced faith in eternal truths



The enquiring mind of Colin Wilson: '*The Outsider*' (& '*New Existentialism*') • The concept of '*peak experiences*' & the power of '*Faculty X*' • Assimilating the occult into the foundation of human reality • Sex, happiness & the deficiencies of language • Establishing the true equilibrium of mankind & the inexorable march of human consciousness to greater heights

Helena Blavatsky



Max Planck | Albert Einstein | Niels Bohr | Ernest Rutherford | Arthur Stanley Eddington | Alain Aspect | Jean Dalibard | Gerard Roger | Steven Weinberg | Abdus Salam



Rupert Sheldrake



Colin Wilson | Carl Jung | Sigmund Freud | Albert Einstein | Max Planck | Friedrich Nietzsche | George Berkeley | P.G. Wodehouse | Edgar Allan Poe | Vincent Van Gogh | Ludwig van Beethoven | John Osborne | Abraham Maslow

Footnote

Experiencing '*the zone*'

iii. *Millennial apocalypses*

The mythology & pseudo-science that surrounded the turn of the third millennium - Christian eschatology (from Nostrodamus to *Jehovah's Witnesses*) • Astrological transitions & the pseudo-scientific reinforcement of obtuse beliefs • Prophecy as a genuine intent: from the '*RAND Corporation*' to the growing '*vanitos*' of self-fulfilling beliefs

Nostradamus | St. John | Carl Jung





Part 4: The Personalities (modern age) (...continued)	<i>Footnote</i>	The reality of ‘endtimes’	
		<div>✿</div> <p>The intellectual freedoms of modern democracies: balancing individual liberties with immoral ideologies • The warping of Christian ideals: the creation & apocalyptic beliefs of ‘<i>mad messiahs</i>’ (from Manson to Asahara) • Religious extremism & the fanatical drive for a ‘<i>New Jerusalem</i>’</p>	<div>✿</div> <p>Charles Manson Jim Jones David Koresh Marshall Applewhite Shoko Asahara</p>
	<i>iv. The irrational, the spiritual, and the logical</i>	<p>The clear social benefits of science & reason in the Developed World: our collective struggle to improve everyday life • The illusion of society & the exposure of irrational beliefs around the world (surrounding the 1999 solar eclipse) • The power of scientific knowledge & the continuing allure of mystical prophecies</p> <div>✿</div> <p>The spiritual comprehension of existence & its similarity with scientific endeavour • ‘<i>The Celestine Prophecy</i>’ & the appeal of seductive optimism</p> <div>✿</div> <p>Science and the power of knowledge & the uneven distribution of material wealth • Modern luxury & the virtuous existence of ‘<i>charity</i>’ • The human condition: dispelling the irrational fear of perceived enemies (& the permanent threat of nuclear annihilation)</p>	<p>Paco Rabanne Samir Tomb David Batzri</p> <div>✿</div> <p>James Redfield</p> <div>✿</div>
	<i>Footnote</i>	Probability & the futility of perfect prediction (using <i>roulette</i> as an example)	



Part 1 The Tools of Prediction

“And thus, by combining the uncertainty of chance with the force of mathematical proof and by the reconciliation of two apparent opposites, she derives her name from both of them and rightfully assumes the wonderful name of Mathematics of Chance!”

~ Blaise Pascal (1654)

i.

(The mathematical root of prediction)

For thousands of years mankind has attempted to predict the future. It is a consequential part of comprehending a reason for existence, yet most oracles, and other prophetic beliefs stem from cultural interpretations of **probability** which, in essence, is a branch of mathematics. Although today we are clearly able to separate science from divination, in the early years of civilisation conscious perception was not so well defined. Mathematics and physics, were once regarded as spiritualism and sorcery, but have since emerged as subjects of logic and reason which, when exploited, can be the source of accurate prediction. Mathematics today is established as a purely logical discipline, but was once a source of spiritual inference, and shares common origins with prediction and divination. Naturally throughout history, attempts to predict the future have had obvious spiritual and religious overtones. Today however, the western debunking of most established religions has turned the popular attention of prediction back towards the logical, mathematical principles of science.

All ancient civilisations used mathematics to some degree in order to make accurate measurements, and to record them. The ancient Chinese, Egyptians, Hindus, and Babylonians had all developed advanced counting systems. Indeed, the practical importance of mathematics in everyday society became clearer as human civilisation evolved.

At the dawn of civilisation mankind, with a newly empowered consciousness, built huge monuments that embodied human perceptions and, as thinking beings with the ability to create, through civilisation, mankind could express himself like never before. Material objects became a symbol of man's perceptual power, and lavish structures were a sign of dominance. Indeed, the '*Seven Wonders of the World*' all originate from this period of humanity's newly found consciousness. The ancient Egyptians had developed mathematical dexterity to the extent that they could create huge structures that were thousands of years ahead of their time. Whist the Egyptians had built the pyramids, the Babylonians had built the '*Hanging Gardens*', and the even more ancient '*Tower of Babel*', featured in sacred Hebrew scriptures. Ultimately it was their ability to understand basic geometric principles that allowed these civilisations to express their power through architecture.

As we have evolved great dexterity with two hands attached to our forelimbs, containing a total of 10 fingers, it is natural that most counting systems were based upon a base of 10 digits. The most basic level of mathematics is simple *addition* and *subtraction*, which was originally achieved when human consciousness had evolved

to the point when our distant ancestors could actually count the number of fingers on their hands. It was the Babylonians who had introduced the rules for *multiplication* and *division*, and, in so doing, completed the four *elementary algorithms* of *arithmetic*. They, like the Egyptians and Hindus, had a basic understanding of *geometry* and of rudimentary *algebraic* functions. However the Babylonians adopted an unusual base system of 10 which only went up to 60; an element which remains in use to this day in the way we perceive and measure *time* and *angles*.

It was the ancient Greeks however who had the greatest influence on modern mathematical perception. They, more than any other ancient peoples, advanced mathematics greatly through their desire to conceive rational theories of the Universe. Unlike earlier civilisations however, the ancient Greeks saw mathematics as a peripheral study which, to them, formed a small part of a wider existence. Because mathematics 'per se' was not recognised as a legitimate study in its own right but regarded as a marginal discipline, it was more commonly used in the greater research of philosophy and science, hence most Greek mathematicians were also philosophers.

The Greeks' curiosity as to how and why *algorithms* worked led to the concept of mathematical proof. In the 6th century **BCE** the work of '**Pythagoras**' advanced mathematical understanding immensely. By using geometrical principles, Pythagorean Greeks could solve many *algebraic* equations, and had formulated the theory of *proportions*. Understanding *ratios* they introduced the perception of *fractions*, and the Greeks notably applied their new knowledge to music, creating the notion of *harmonics* within stringed instruments. Furthermore '**Pythagoras theorem**' gave rise to the perception of certain trigonometrical relationships between many mathematical equations.

Later mathematicians applied this *theory of parallels* to many different aspects of logical research. '**Euclid**', who lived in the 3rd century **BCE** for example, is famed for recording Greek knowledge in his work '**The Elements**' which, in 13 volumes, combined mathematical understanding with astronomical hypotheses and philosophical perceptions. In short it was a compendium of all Greek knowledge of the time, and it formed the basis of mathematical thought and expression that was to last for over 2000 years.

Further discoveries in the field of geometry were made by '**Archimedes**'. Primarily famed for '**Archimedes Principle**', he also defined the value of '*pi*', founded the science of *statics* (*the interaction of forces to produce equilibrium*), and is credited for making physics a scientific discipline. All subsequent advances in the field of physics were standardised as mathematical interpretations of observation and experimentation. At around the same time that Archimedes had established the scientific nature of mathematics, another mathematician, '**Eratosthenes**,' calculated the circumference of the Earth within an accuracy of 90%. He was the first to apply lines of latitude and longitude to a map of the world, and also discovered a method for finding prime numbers (*known as **Eratosthenes' sieve***).

It was the Greeks who highlighted the importance of mathematical problem solving, and the branch of mathematics known as *trigonometry* is credited some 100 years

later to astronomer and mathematician '**Hipparchus**', who used it to calculate the length of the solar year and lunar month. Trigonometry, in its various cultural guises, was known to ancient Hindu and Arab mathematicians, and the ancient Egyptians had no doubt applied it in the building of the pyramids ~ but the first mathematician to accurately record trigonometrical values was Hipparchus in the 2nd century **BCE**. He discovered the precession of equinoxes, and was the first to scientifically catalogue the stars in the night sky by observing relative stellar positions and classifying them in order of magnitude.

By understanding the relationship between planes and spherical triangles, the Greeks had introduced the basic **trigonometrical ratios** known as *sines*, *cosines* and *tangents*. These functions had great practical importance in fields such as navigation, surveying, harmonics and, importantly for prediction, in the field of astronomy. It enabled the ancient Greeks to measure huge distances. Indeed the mean distance between the Earth and the Moon was measured for the first time with any degree of accuracy. Despite this, the distinction between astronomy and astrology was not to be recognised for another 800 years.

Over the years, there was a gradual accumulation of numeric knowledge, but mathematical calculation was still only seen as a part of the nature of existence. Many other Greek philosophers have contributed greatly to modern perception, and the way that we have come to perceive the mathematics of nature through purely speculative methods too. '**Democritus**' who lived in the 5th Century **BCE**, for example, reasoned that everything must consist of indivisible particles which he called atoms. Furthermore, he suggested that the property of matter depended on the characteristics of its atoms.

'**Plato**' meanwhile by proposing that everything in existence could be expressed in mathematical form, gave rise to metaphysics, a philosophical study of the nature of reality. His interest in the motion of *heavenly bodies* enhanced geometric perception, whilst the metaphysical aspect of his work inspired new ethical and political ideas. His pupil '**Aristotle**' further applied the mathematics of nature to the philosophy of existence, greatly influencing the development of everything from *logic*, *physics*, and *astronomy*, to *politics*, *ethics* and *psychology*. He perceived that everything in existence was composed of the four elements '*earth*', '*water*', '*fire*' and '*air*', with a 5th element '*ether*' being the substance of the heavens. It was the interaction of these elements, he believed, that was the cause of all motion. Perceiving of a fundamental life force within this universal existence, he was the first to use the term '*soul*' to describe the essence of a living entity. Indeed the works of Plato and Aristotle had the effect of embedding cultural and religious beliefs into scientific endeavour.

By the time that the Roman Empire had begun to dominate the Mediterranean region in the 1st century **BCE**, astronomy had become the dominant science of the age. Cosmological perceptions slowly advanced with theories of spherical geometry and spherical trigonometry, but for around 400 years these appear to be the only mathematical breakthroughs of any significance. It was not until the 2nd century **CE** that the greatest mathematical advances of the Roman age came, ironically from a Greek mathematician ~ '**Diophantus**'. As a result of his system for abbreviating the

expressions for his calculations in symbols, whereby a symbol represented an unknown quantity, he developed the forerunner of a new branch of mathematics, '*algebra*'. It was not until the 9th century however that algebra became fully developed, when Arabic mathematicians compiled accurate trigonometric tables originally devised for astronomical research.

Throughout Europe after the fall of Rome, the freedom of scientific advance was lost in what is termed the 'dark ages'. The powerful Christian monasteries that arose from the destructive conflicts of the dark ages, were the only source of knowledge throughout Europe, and what little remained of ancient Greek texts were all but lost. Throughout the medieval Islamic world however, mathematicians and philosophers were free to study in an environment that was conducive to intellectual thought, away from the severity of Christian dominance. Being in close geographical proximity to Persian and Indian schools of science, the Arab world benefited greatly from a wealth of knowledge and, unlike Europe, had not lost the Greek and Babylonian mathematical precepts. Indeed it was the Arabs who first developed the perception of '*zero*' as a legitimate numeric value.

It was not until the *Scholastic period* of medieval Europe in the 12th century, some 1500 after the height of Greek philosophy, that the ancient texts of Plato and Aristotle were rediscovered by monastic scholars in Europe. The severe and often tyrannical authorities throughout Europe in the dark ages had all but wiped out the works of the ancient philosophers and mathematicians, but between the 12th and 14th centuries Platonic philosophy, and the works of Aristotle were gradually incorporated into Christianity.

The Greeks, by mixing cultural observation with mathematical achievement, were the forerunners of both modern social morality and scientific discipline. and contributed greatly to the conscious perceptions of today. However, it was not until the Renaissance (*or revival of learning*) that began in Italy during the 15th century, that Europe began to catch up and eventually overtake Arabic scientific knowledge, which was conversely to be undermined by the rise in fundamentalist Islam. The works of Plato and Aristotle also formed the foundation of Islamic philosophy and, before the intellectual development of Arabic culture was suffocated by Islamic fundamentalist culture (*which rejected all foreign sciences*), it easily surpassed Europe for intellectual and material wealth. Since the Renaissance period however, the rise of western culture gradually increased and, eventually breaking free from the strictures of uncompromising Christian authority, it was to become the dominant culture of the modern world.

It began with Italian merchants bringing Arabic philosophy and knowledge (*including contemporary mathematics*) back to Europe, previously lost to the dark ages or otherwise restricted by the monastic monopoly of education. Over time, Arabic numerals were transcribed into Latin, and Arabic works translated for the new European Scholars. By the 16th century the atmosphere of Renaissance had spread throughout the west, and European intrigue had considerably widened the field of scientific knowledge. Western Europe became the new 'hot seat' of scientific and philosophical advance. In mathematics, *logarithms* had been introduced from the

British Isles, whilst new theories on planetary motion such as **'Kepler's Laws of Planetary Motion'**, which originated in Germany, pushed forward astronomical understanding.

The discoveries and innovations of Italian astronomer, physicist and mathematician **'Galileo Galilei'** are well documented. He importantly recognised the laws that govern the motion of bodies under gravity, an idea that was taken further by English mathematician and physicist **'Isaac Newton'**. In 1687, Newton published his three laws of motion and the universal law of gravitation, relating mass with weight, force, inertia, momentum and acceleration. Along with German mathematician **'Gottfried Leibniz'**, he is separately acclaimed for developing the general rules for methods of *'differential calculus'*.

The 17th century had heralded the age of reason, and a belief that all could be explained by the deduction of fundamental laws that govern everything in existence. It was a time when French mathematicians and philosophers became prominent, including **'René Descartes'** who is generally regarded as the father of modern philosophy. He attempted to rebuild human knowledge, believing that commonly accepted knowledge was dubious because of the subjective nature of the senses. Not only did he understand the cultural perspective of reality, but he saw that the entire universe could be explained in terms of mathematical physics, and was the first to apply geometry to algebra, inventing co-ordinate geometry.

At the same time, fellow mathematicians **'Blaise Pascal'**, and **'Pierre de Fermat'** had developed the modern theory of ***probability*** ~ a branch of *statistics* that deals with the prediction of events. Expressed as *odds or chance*, probability is mathematically illustrated as a fraction or decimal. Used originally to calculate the odds of being dealt different hands in card games, Pascal and Fermat established a system of probability in which a *certainty* has a value of '1' and an *impossibility* has a value of '0'. Despite its seemingly trivial origins, probability as a serious mathematical study has played a major part in advanced statistical studies such as meteorology and the development of atomic theory.

The 19th century saw German astronomer and mathematician **'Johann Bode'** predict the existence of a missing planet between Mars and Jupiter through a mathematical relationship described as the ***'Titius-Bode Law'***. It led to the discovery of the asteroid belt, which we now know to contain around 40,000 large asteroids in various orbits around the Sun. By the middle of the century, English mathematician **'George Boole'** declared that logic was closer to mathematics than it was to philosophy, and published his work ***'The Mathematical Analysis of Logic'***. It was a philosophical interpretation of the concept of numbers in the search for a mathematical basis for logic. ***'Boolean algebra'*** equates the perceptions of *'true'* and *'false'* into the mathematical terms of '1' and '0' through a series of operator functions, and is the basis of modern computer logic. Not only did Boole create the system of today's mathematical logic, but he inspired the binary system used in modern day computing. Meanwhile the principles of ***topology*** were gradually being established throughout the 19th century. Topology deals with the properties of a figure which remain unchanged even when the figure is

transformed, stretched or distorted ~ a concept that had prompted the investigation into the relationship of space and time.

The 20th century would see an explosion of scientific discovery and technological breakthroughs that dwarfed the intellectual advances of the entire 6000 years of civilisation that came before. The first half of the 20th century saw English philosopher and logician '**Bertrand Russell**' work out a reduction of mathematics to pure logic. Meanwhile, German-born American physicist '**Albert Einstein**' published his '**General theory of relativity**' which revolutionised our perception of matter, space and time. The second half of the century saw the further development of particle physics and quantum theory. Computer assisted mathematics created a faster and more accurate method of calculation, and led to the development of '**chaos theory**' which concerns the prediction of non-linear dynamic systems.

With the help of sophisticated computers, chaos theory is used to predict the probable behaviour of extremely complicated systems by using calculations which take into account every conceivable element. 'Meteorology' (*the study of weather*) is the most widely used example of a chaotic system. Yet even the apparently random aspects of the weather can be broken down into a series of interacting processes which directly or indirectly effect each other. There are *so many* factors which can effect the environment that even with today's sophisticated computer technology, weather forecasting is still far from obtaining a perfect accuracy.

Today we know that every dynamic system in the universe, no matter how seemingly chaotic, is actually composed of geometric structures. Programs that compute complex mathematical formulae can create an illusion of randomness, yet transcribed from numeric to graphic systems, geometric structures known as '**fractals**' are seen to form the basis of even the most chaotic systems. It was the Polish-born French mathematician '**Benoit Mandelbrot**' who first described fractals as geometrical figures, of 'curved surface' generated by a repeated subdivision on an ever-diminishing scale.

We know that every force of creation in nature is composed of fractal geometry. Indeed chaotic systems on a global scale (*such as the seasons and the tides*) follow the laws of nature and can be easily predicted. Both are directly affected by the Earth's position in relation to the Sun and the Moon respectively, and both time and tide can be charted with great accuracy. But on a larger time scale, prediction becomes increasingly more difficult, for example, we have no idea of what Earth's terrestrial seasons are going to be like in a million years time. Furthermore, it is virtually impossible to predict where the sea level will lie, let alone tidal patterns that far into the future.

Conversely other chaotic systems such as global weather systems exist within a far smaller time scale, and so even short-term prediction is difficult. There are literally millions of factors that continually alter the course of these extremely dynamic systems. However with the continuing accumulation of meteorological data from processed information, weather forecasts are getting ever more reliable. Despite this, there is unlikely to ever be a time when the weather can be predicted with absolute

certainty. It is simply unrealistic, as the more accurate forecasts become, the more data there is to input, and the process becomes more intricate, thus keeping '*meteorological perfection*' out of reach. Perceived graphically, the endless march towards certain prediction is like a fractal itself.

Of the four fundamental forces of nature, only the *weak nuclear force* has no symmetry, because it is not directly a force of physical creation but one of decay. However because it is continually rearranged by the creative forces of *gravity*, the *electromagnetic force*, and the *strong nuclear force*, every known structure, even the most chaotic ones, can be broken down into fractals. The whole concept has led to the discovery of a new universal constant which makes order and chaos, part of the same logical process of existence, denying the existence of the state of 'absolute random'. In short, chaos makes *randomness* predictable and therefore non-existent. However ideas such as the '*uncertainty principle*' and the '*butterfly effect*', which illustrates how something as sublime as a butterfly beating its wings can cause a hurricane on the other side of the world, has placed perceptual limits on science.





ii.

(The Fibonacci connection)

Today the traditional subject of mathematics is divided into many forms, from *arithmetic* which studies numbers, *geometry* which studies space, and *algebra* which studies structures, to *calculus* and *analysis* which study the process of infinity, and *probability*; a branch of statistics concerned with random processes. However, modern mathematics has come full circle in respect of its western origin. In the midst of the European dark ages, on the eve of Renaissance nearly 800 years ago, one of the first mathematical perceptions by western scholars was published by Italian mathematician '**Leonardo Fibonacci**'. As a well-travelled merchant working from Pisa, his work contributed greatly to the introduction of Arabic notation, and he brought algebraic methods of solving mathematical problems to medieval Europe. In the 1960's a renewed interest in his algebraic methods arose, in particular was a sequence of numbers that have become known as the ***Fibonacci numbers***.

In its simplest form it is a sequence of numbers in which each subsequent number is the sum of its two predecessors i.e.; 0 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89 etc... It is a sequence that has an uncanny knack of appearing throughout nature. For example, the number of petals on a flower is almost always a Fibonacci number, *irises* and *lilies* have 3 petals, *primroses* and *buttercups* have 5, *delphiniums* have 8, *marigolds* and *ragworts* have 13, *asters* and *chicory* 21, and *daisies* (depending on their variety) often have 34, 55 or 89 petals. But it's not just the petals of flowers that appear to follow the Fibonacci sequence. They appear in everything from the number of spirals that appear in pine cones and the seed head arrangement in sunflowers, to the number of gills on the underside of mushrooms and fractal like florets that appear on cauliflower. Indeed, the branching sequences of most trees, and patterned leaf numbers of many plant varieties all consist of Fibonacci numbers. From fragile clovers to mighty oaks, these numbers appear with amazing consistency.

The number sequence was originally demonstrated by Fibonacci using the fictitious multiplication of rabbits. Given the scenario that, in ideal conditions, a pair of rabbits could double their numbers every month (*but it took a couple of months for each new generation to become sexually active and breed*), he asked the question, "How many pairs of rabbits would there be after a year?"

The answer lies in the twelfth number in the sequence; - 377. Whilst this illustrates the natural progression of the Fibonacci sequence, in reality, ideal conditions rarely exist for mammals such as rabbits that live in complex dynamic environments which can subtly or drastically change many times within the space of a generation. However if you examine colonies of social insects such as honeybees, Fibonacci numbers continually crop up in the succession of generations of drone and worker bees.

There is an unusual property associated with the Fibonacci number sequence that also appears to be a prominent feature in nature. The further you go up the sequence of

Fibonacci numbers, the difference between each successive number gets closer and closer to what is called the '**golden ratio**'; an irrational number that, like *pi*, can only be expressed as an approximation. By dividing each number in the sequence by its predecessor, the answer wavers either side of the golden ratio, 1.61803..., getting ever closer to it but never actually reaching it. This unobtainable proportion (*or 'Phi'*), has the same properties as 0.61803... (*or phi*) the irrational number that is never actually reached when you divide a Fibonacci number by the **following** number in the sequence. Whichever way you go, every alternate answer falls slightly above or below the golden ratio, getting ever closer to the value but never reaching its infinite target. Moreover the golden ratio is an unusual value in that $1/\phi$ and $1+\phi$ both equal the same number $\sim \phi$.

The golden ratio is the most efficient value in three-dimensional geometry, and known to the Greeks as the '*divine proportion*', it was incorporated into most of their architecture. However it is not only present in the dimensions of magnificent ancient buildings such as the Parthenon, but can be found in other works of art throughout the world, and was known to medieval craftsmen such as '**Leonardo da Vinci**', and '**Antonio Stradivari**'.

The efficiency of this value has not been lost on nature, however the existence of life has added a chaotic element to this purely logical sequence. Because individual organisms cannot exist as anything less than whole units, the Fibonacci sequence can only be approximated by nature. That is to say that the petals on a flower or the leaves on a tree can only arise in whole numbers (*or integers*), so the golden ratio, (*the most efficient route of physical evolution*), can never be attained exactly. Subsequently every new generation of life compensates for the inaccuracy of the last. An aster, for example, may produce a flower with 20 or 22 petals because of the inaccuracy of integers, but the genetic information in its seed, will ensure that the next generation will produce a corresponding bloom with 21 petals in the endless endeavour of attaining the golden ratio.

Although the 'imperfections' of nature appear to add an element of randomness into the natural process, in the wider picture the apparent mistakes become less obvious. Calculate the sequences through 1000 generations of aster, and the natural attempt at obtaining the golden ratio through Fibonacci numbers becomes very clear. In effect, the numeric fluctuations around the golden ratio that become more accurate as you travel up the Fibonacci sequence, can be transmuted into biology with each subsequent generation getting closer and closer to a fixed constant. These subtle fluctuations through each generation tend to cancel out the inaccuracy of the previous one, with ever-greater precision. The paradox of procreation however, is that every species of life continually changes and evolves away from its ancestry, adding new elements of chaos into the dynamic system of evolution.

In essence, even human family trees adhere to this natural sequence, which becomes clearer the more generations that are included. Consider the long evolutionary process that has determined the way that we look as well. As individuals we have an unmistakable symmetry about our physical appearance. As if we are our own genetically identical twin, our left and right sides of our entire bodies mirror each

other. Our single body, for example, has two hands. Both hands have five digits, each of which have three joints, whilst our hands themselves are joined to our arms via a set of eight carpals (*wrist bones*). If the sequence sounds familiar it's because they are all Fibonacci numbers. Moreover, if you make a fist, and measure the length of your phalanges (*or finger bones*), the relative increase in size from the smallest bone at the finger tip, to the one that connects to your knuckle, you will see that comparative size wavers around a fixed ratio, and the comparison between the largest bone and the corresponding metacarpal (*or palm bone*) continues the series.

The Fibonacci sequence and the golden ratio can be applied to work out a range of mathematical problems, from finding the value of pi, to accurately predicting planetary orbits in relation to the Sun. There is order within every seemingly chaotic or random action, even biological evolution. When things as apparently dissimilar as human physiognomy, and leaf arrangements on a tree are mathematically connected to the logarithmic spirals present in nautilus shells and the tracks of subatomic particles, it becomes clear that there is more to existence than most people can comprehend.





iii.

(*Practical divination*)

Advanced mathematics is still ‘advancing’, and at lightning pace. As further numeric relationships are discovered, they are continually being applied to more and more aspects of society. The subject of mathematics in its purest form is therefore becoming increasingly unintelligible to most people. Today we have computers which can calculate far faster and more accurately than any human being. So numerical analysis (*or number theory*), for example, can be readily applied to subjects such as thermodynamics, astrophysics, atomic physics, or computing itself. Scientific fields such as these are therefore becoming increasingly esoteric and, although furthering the cause of human understanding, most cutting-edge mathematics and modern physical theories have escaped the conscious understanding of the average citizen.

However, accurate prediction does not *have* to be founded on pure logic, and often includes an aspect of profound intuition. This method, which is also based on numerical relationships, is called ‘*divination*’, and involves a perceived *spiritual guidance*. Divination is far more accessible to a majority people than the pure logical deduction of advanced mathematics because you do not have to be scientifically-minded to understand the process. Indeed, in today’s world of scientific and technological wonder, subjects such as *astrology* and *clairvoyance* have retained the same inherent curiosity that was present in the conscious perceptions of our ancestors.

For many thousands of years, people have used divination to guide their imagination, and see themselves and their situations from another perspective. Divination has provided answers for many people through the ages who have sought advice, help, and knowledge of their ‘*fate*’ from what was seen as an all-knowing spiritual world. People have always aspired to act in harmony with the *divine forces of nature* that have been established in their culture as the unseen forces that determine existence. Through divination, people acquire a sense of *destiny* which, in turn, influences the lives of many more people. Moreover destiny is a perception that has remained a prominent feature of cultural tradition, even amongst the general public of today’s reasoned societies.

In modern western culture, a line has been drawn between what we perceive of as physical reality, and the imaginary world of divination, fortune telling, and magic. However in many other cultures of the world, spiritual advice and daily activities are inseparable. Indeed, in many native cultures throughout the world, divination openly crosses the boundaries of perceptual reality. Across Asia, Africa, the Americas and Australasia, communities that have not been overrun by Christendom or Islam, practice divinatory beliefs which have, for thousands of years, been an intrinsic part of life. Using images, patterns, and symbols to interpret and predict events, most people in the world live their lives in accordance with their ancient cultural beliefs

which, to western reasoning, are generally regarded as intuitive, emotional, or irrational. Shamanism (*the oldest of all religions*) survives to this day, serving communities throughout the world, whilst the ancient Chinese book of changes '**I Ching**', for example, lay at the centre of Chinese culture for over 2500 years.

Divination, though often applied to predict future events, is much more than that. In its many cultural guises, it is primarily a method of attaining insight, and the many shamans, seers and prophets that have come and gone throughout human history have all used '*divine methods*' to navigate the intuitive world of spiritualism. Virtually every method of divination (*much like religion*) claims to act as a method of guidance within a spiritual world that is vast and potentially dangerous.

In the west however, the existence of a spiritual world in which human fate and divine spirits reside, has fallen into the disreputable shadow of rational thought, to become regarded as superstition and irrational nonsense. Despite this, divination attracts a strange sense of curiosity. Even in the most highly intellectual cultures of the modern world, many people continue to believe in unscientific ideas such as reading their *horoscopes* or adhering to a variety of superstitious beliefs.

Furthermore, the world of spiritualism is home to all of the perceptions that remain taboo in mainstream western culture, from the sexual and social depravity of devil worship, to the perception of higher powers that bear no relation to Christianity. In its widest sense, divination is the capacity to recognise patterns and symbols that interconnect space and time with '*spirit*' and '*soul*' in order to see the unforeseeable.





iv.

(Reading the signs)

Divination as a basic format is there to provide a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer to the questions of the inquisitor. The answers are often provided to questions that could not possibly be resolved through conscious logical deduction. In general, divination reflects the idea of two equal and opposite forces within the universe ~ one of action which opens up new possibilities, and one of benign rest which closes them down. The clearest illustration of what is basically a cross-cultural perception is apparent in Chinese divination. ‘*Yin and yang*’ beautifully embodies the endless interaction of opposite forces of nature.

Oracles are open-ended symbols which, through chance procedures, are interpreted by the imagination. The use of ‘*pua pao*’ beans which, when thrown, were seen to indicate positive or negative responses to any given question, were commonly used throughout ancient China. Today, the throwing of dice, or turning of cards are often used to indicate harmonies and conflicts that have happened, are happening, or are yet to come. Different cultures have employed different methods of oracular divination, ranging from staring into *divining bowls* or *crystal gazing* to the casting of *runes* or dropping of *yarrow sticks*. Ultimately however, regardless of culture, the methods used or resulting interpretations, the intentions of oracular divination are the same. In eastern traditions, people have striven to improve their position within the *wheel of life*, whilst in western classical mythology the art was to outsmart the *sisters of fate* who were believed to weave and cut the thread of mortal life. In all traditions however, life has always been recognised as a precious and very fragile gift which can be removed in an instant.

For many ancient people, matters of fate could be equated to numbers, and numerological divination is at the root of most spiritual prediction. Numbers were seen as giving shape and mass to everything in existence, and were often thought to be responsible for setting spirits or demons in motion. Understanding how numbers affected existence was all important for the peoples of many ancient cultures, and being aware of personal numbers that correspond to critical moments of a person’s life were often regarded with spiritual reverence. Indeed, numbers were regularly called upon in order to be prepared for the eventualities of life.

Even today, numbers are used by modern numerologists to analyse traits and behaviour patterns in people. The pseudoscientific analysis of numbers is used to investigate patterns of prosperity and adversity, through the relationships of fortunate and unfortunate numbers. Virtually everybody can recognise a profound significance in certain numbers and, within the spiritual subculture of modern western societies, the numbers ‘3’, ‘7’, ‘9’ and ‘13’ all embody an element of apprehension or curiosity. Many people may not think twice about these numbers whenever they are encountered in everyday life, but it impossible not to be aware of their cultural

prominence. Moreover, numbers that contain cultural connotations can affect even the most rational mind at moments of indecision.

In western Semitic tradition, the occult science of *gematria* was once a highly popular practice. By assigning number values to Greek and Hebrew letters (*which were themselves seen as sacred expressions of the structure of the cosmos*), a spiritual identity was attached to words within many works of antiquity. The sacred geometry of words originates from the '**Kabbalah**' ~ a mystical Hebrew tradition that began in the 6th century BCE. Constructed by ancient rabbis, the Kabbalah (*which was regarded as the 'key to the universe'*) was written in the Hebrew language, whereby each divine letter was considered to have the magical power of transformation.

The most scrutinised of all literary works for signs of sacred geometry were the various books of the Christian '**New Testament**'. Originally written in Greek, by biblical scholars in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, the books of the New Testament are linked by autonomous claims that each contain esoteric 'mysteries' apparent within a series of allegorical word problems. Known long before the New Testament was written, it is probable that aspects of gematria were purposely included in the *gospels* and other books contained within the New Testament.

When you realise that each letter in the ancient Greek alphabet also represented a number as well as a sound, the fact that words could be expressed as numbers and vice versa, made gematria an obvious pursuit. Throughout the New testament, many connected words share the same number values '*Christ*' and '*Jesus*', for example, are transformed into the numbers '888' and '8880', whilst the book of '*Revelations*' describes the number of the beast as '666'. Indeed there are many sacred geometric solutions to visions described in the book of Revelations which were designed around the orthodox Hebrew culture, and the revival of occultism in the 19th and 20th centuries often embraced gematria as a method to interpret its apocalyptic visions.

In eastern tradition, the astrological systems of '**Mo**' and '**Sho Mo**' used numerical interpretation in a different way. Particularly popular throughout Tibet, the systems of Mo and Sho Mo incorporate the 12 Chinese animals and the 5 elements to form a 60-year calendar that contains interlocking cycles of existence. Indicating the cycles of life, death and rebirth, the wheel of life illustrated on sacred scrolls is divided into segments of karma (*or fate*). By rolling dice or throwing seeds, people were able to interpret signs and make predictions. Indeed, in many ancient communities, everything including births, marriages, and funerals were automatically given astrological readings, and society lived by a strict spiritual code that kept them in accord with perceived celestial powers.

The association of numbers with apparently '*random*' events captivated the imagination of ancient people. Unusual events were often seen as divine signs from the heavens or as unnatural occurrences to be feared. Many mythical stories have been built around phenomena such as *eclipses*, *comets* and *shooting stars*, whilst Earthly events such as *storms*, *earthquakes* and *droughts* were all reasoned through numerology and geomancy. Astrologers and theologians interpreted signs from the skies relating them to violent social changes on Earth. From the configuration of stars

in the cosmos to the marks left by lightening strikes, the readers of signs saw the shapes of gods, animals, and men. Indeed, as myths were passed on through generations of eager believers, wondrous events were often seen as preceding the births of gods, messiahs and prophets. The births of legendary figures such as the **Buddha**, **Jesus**, and **Mohammed** were all accompanied by miraculous events that became established as factual occurrences.

Over time a perception of the heavens, the Earth and the underworld have evolved within a single hierarchic relationship. The fixed identity of these separate levels of existence has been projected into many aspects of life. It is, for example, a prominent feature of the prejudicial Hindu caste system which adheres to the perception of the *samsara* or the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

Through the ages, spiritualism and divination has kept an interest in the heavens at the fore of human consciousness. As human perception has matured however, a distinct separation between serious pursuits such as *astronomy*, and subjective ones such as *astrology* has emerged. Whilst astronomy considers legitimate movements in the heavens, astrology focused on the signs that could be read from these events.

Astrology is the study of the relative positions of the planets and the stars in the belief that they influence events on Earth. The heavens have provided a universal pattern in which everything can be linked. Horoscopes, for example, are astrological diagrams which appear as a set of interlocking spheres that represent the 12 signs of the *zodiac*. Movements within the zodiac correspond to the movement of stars or the planets within a sphere of fixed stars that represent a particular sign. The orbits of the planets, for example, regularly intersect these spheres which remain in same relative positions in the skies. For people born on the same date, regardless of their age, the alignment of stars and planets gives them a distinct astrological birth sign which is repeated on an annual cycle.

For many thousands of years, astrological charts have been drawn up to predict future events, and to perceive an individual's fate or destiny. Horoscopes based on the date, time and birthplaces of people have influenced the actions of kings and queens, military leaders and prophets, and been used to legitimise their decisions. Through the ages, astrology has had a powerful influence upon people; strengthening the resolve of armies, and confirming the spiritual worth of leaders to their subjects.

Much modern astrology tends to apply pseudoscientific reasoning to what is essentially an intuitive and totally subjective pursuit. Accurate measurements concerning the alignment of stars and planets are available to all western astrologers in this age of science and so, with all of the world's culture of spiritualism at their fingertips, they are able to read and reconfirm signs when compiling horoscopes ~ by employing many different *non-scientific* methods. Many modern astrologers will use reason to support their unscientific claims, and one of the most popular references to astrology as a powerful unseen force is based on the high water content of all life on Earth. Believers of astrological forces often point to the fact if that the gravitational force of the moon effects the tidal patterns on Earth, it must, to a less obvious degree, effect the actions of living things.

It is clear that astrological symbolism has nothing to do with science, it is more an imaginative interpretation of reason. Like other forms of divination however, astrology attempts to read the patterns of chance, and put reason to seemingly chaotic events. Science on the other hand explains events through logical reason that can be physically proven through experimentation, More accurately it seeks to discover what can be disproved, and by approaching science in a totally logical way, it is possible to find a balanced, unbiased solution to existence, that is not affected by inherent cultural prejudices.





v.

(Animal spirits and human nature)

The animal world has provided prophets, seers and mediums with physical interpretations of the spirits that they describe. Consequently different cultures hold different species of life with reverence, and animals become sacred or feared for their spiritual presence. Birds, in particular, have become an aspect of many divinatory methods. As omens and oracles, birds are the supreme animals for representing human spiritual endeavour. They have historically been seen as messengers of change, fate, transformation, life and death. From the prophetic significance of ravens and cranes, to the mythical '*phoenix from the flames*', birds have captivated human imagination.

For thousands of years, people have seen the owl as wise, or the stork as a bringer of new life, they have been wary of the disquieting presence of a vulture or the undeniable eeriness of a solitary crow with its unsettling piercing call. Throughout history the relative positions of crows and other *messengers of the gods* as they fly overhead or settle in close proximity, have been duly noted in order for the observers not to be in conflict with divine forces. Indeed in many cultures, birds are regarded as the ultimate spirit guides. Even Christian literature perceives of birds as being helpers of the saints and, throughout Indo-European culture, birds have been associated with the destiny of kings. Today we know that migratory birds often follow electromagnetic currents and are finely tuned to changes in weather patterns. So, like countless other species of life, they sense and '*perceive*' existence in ways that we ourselves cannot perceive, but can only imagine. In modern China, for example, the behaviour of birds and other animals are continually studied in order to predict the coming of earthquakes.

Animals have, throughout history, been used as omens in many different ways. Tuned to the frequency of natural events, tribal people often sought advice when their paths had been crossed by animals in waking reality or in their dreams. Animals have long been regarded as helping spirits, and continue to have sacred ritual associations with ancient tribes or clans, for example as *totems*. The behaviour of animals has been observed and documented so that significance can be applied to their movements and interpreted as signs. They have been linked to astronomical symbols as in the 12-year cycle of animals that shapes the Chinese calendar. They have been sacrificed to please the gods or to read the future, and by examining the flowing blood of sacrificial animals, or the direction of the smoke that rises from their burning bodies, mankind has attempted to open up gateways to different worlds. Even the behaviour of dying animals has been interpreted, and examining the entrails of a dead sacrifice is amongst the most widespread of divinatory methods of all. In particular, the liver (*the seat of the soul*) and the intestines (*the mirror of dreams*) are often examined in fine detail, spirals counted, and an inference made from the odd or even numbers that are present. Indeed outside of the western world, animal remains are often employed in

medicine, used to predict the future, or examined for omens, whereby 'even numbers' equate to forces of 'good' and 'odd numbers' signify the presence of 'evil'.

Divination is an unreasoned science in which death and non-existence is inexorably linked to aspects of the living. '**Scapulomancy**' (or *divination through the oracle of the bone*), for example, often employs the remains of hunted or sacrificed animals. By reading signs of the bones, shamans, witch doctors and ordinary lay people have, for thousands of years, spoken to the dead. However divinatory beliefs are not restricted to interpreting the signs of animals or reading the shape of sacrificial organs, but encompass all aspects of human physicality too. In Indian culture the body is built around focal points of energy or *chakras*, whilst throughout Europe and Asia the peripheral study of '*palmistry*' has remained a popular pastime. Here the hand is seen as a microcosm ~ a miniature version of its owner's life. The lines and mounds of a person's hands are believed by many people to indicate aspects of their life including their health, susceptibility, temperament, intuitiveness and fate. Whilst palmistry, as a popular divinatory method, is today seen to be relatively trivial, throughout antiquity the physical imperfections of people were once considered extremely inauspicious. Indeed children born with serious birth defects were often seen to be unholy or of '*evil creations*', whilst unsightly deformities were considered to be signs of the *devil*.

From the movements of birds to planetary positions, everything that can be symbolised has become incorporated into culture, and the language of spirituality and of divination is the source of the more tenuous, and otherwise inexplicable human beliefs. Ultimately divination is potentially dangerous. It exposes the human mind (*which is so easily influenced or manipulated*) to both cultural prejudice and the realms of the unknown. It is the place of dreams and alternate reality, gods and demons, light and darkness, love and hate, where the imagination is free to interpret and convince the diviner into believing what he or she sees. Spiritualism, mysticism, divination and religion are all based on cultural perspectives, which interpret aspects of human life and add conformity to belief. The cultural perceptions of every society contributes to the collective human unconscious which, to some degree or other, effects us all.



Today, through logical philosophy and advanced sciences (*such as quantum mechanics*), western culture has begun to recognise the fragility of existence in a way that has essentially been known to eastern scholars for thousands of years. The analogy of a life as a single ripple on the surface of a body of water, for instance, is one that is popularly used to describe how our existence is ever-changing, how we interact with each other, how different possibilities and probabilities proceed from singular events, and how we live and die within a moment of time. It is an idea that has often been illustrated by eastern spiritual masters, but one that is increasingly used in the west to express a more scientific perception. Whereas divination is based on cultural belief and applies to imaginary spiritual interpretations, science attempts to rationally explain these changes but, in doing so, has reintroduced ancient beliefs into western culture. Both recognise the strange intricate interactions that continually occur throughout life, but only science attempts to rationalise them into universal reason.

Our continued existence is so incredibly complicated, and there are so many factors that can affect its direction. Living within a shared environment, all life on Earth must obey the same laws of matter and energy that connects us all. We all, for example, can only exist in the *present moment* which itself comprises of an ever-changing series of events. Once a moment has passed, it no longer exists, and becomes nothing more than a memory (*unless it encompasses an event that is recorded or catalogued so that it may take its place in human history*). But all history arises from human perspectives, where truths and untruths are readily mixed because neither actually exist in the physical reality of the present moment.

The past however leaves legacies of its existence, and the present moment occurs as a direct result of every single past event that has come and gone. The future, on the other hand, has no direct connection to the present moment. It is totally independent of reality but, as thinking beings, we have the capacity to make reasoned presumptions about events that are yet to come. When we go to sleep at night, we know that, within a few hours, the Sun will rise again on another day, or when we are in the grip of a harsh winter, we know that the summer will return in a matter of months. These are not difficult predictions to make but, as human beings living in complex societies, we are required to foretell a great deal more than just these basic natural cycles of life.

All people are concerned with the uniquely 'human predictions' that are centred on outcomes that effect social existence. In the cut-throat worlds of commerce and finance, for example, the ability to predict economic changes is essential when dealing in stocks and shares. Decisions of the few, affect the lives of the many and, in times of war, the accuracy of predictions can dramatically alter the prosperity of whole nations. It is through reason that we are able to make successful predictions but

fundamentally even representatives of humanity, *the thinking species*, can proceed through life basing critical decisions upon intuition or chance. 'Gambling,' for example, is a concept that is deeply embedded in our conscious perceptions.

There is an underlying fundamental perception of existence that goes far deeper than the social culture of any human civilisation. It is such a basic predisposition that the only way to describe it is by posing a seemingly superficial question. Clear your mind and answer the question with the first impulsive answer that comes into it.

'If you had to make an instantaneous decision, what numbers do you feel more comfortable with: 'odd' or 'even'?'

Virtually everyone who answers without thinking about the question for too long, will answer 'even'. It is a natural inherited response, not from social indoctrination (*such a petty perception makes no difference to society!*). It is a far more fundamental conditioning, and the stuff of *numerology*. But whilst such a concept is open to all sorts of wild interpretation, it highlights what is ultimately a logical connection to everything, whether it is *mathematical* or *biological*.

If you are able to perceive of a loose similarity between odd and even numbers and *masculinity* and *femininity*, not only do you enter the world of spiritualist and mystic tradition, but you begin to see how sublime, yet how profound our many connections are. Seeing male sex chromosomes as being the equivalent to an *odd/even* pairing, and female ones as an *even/even* pairing, it becomes strangely understandable why people feel more comfortable with 'even' numbers which appear fundamentally more 'motherly'.

Consider the numeric logic of existence. Plant life, for example, is often regarded as a lesser existence than human or animal life because it is far removed from our own. All plants are directly of the Earth and exist as genetic blueprints for life. Take a seed or cutting of a plant, move it to the other side of the world and, provided the conditions are right, it will grow as a continuation of the original plant. With the help of the Sun's energy and a given amount of water, all plants are able to manufacture proteins from the chemical nutrients in soil, replicate their organic make-up, and continue to grow.

If you study the growth of plants, most appear as irregularly shaped organisms which sprout leaves and fruit and seeds which are always *symmetrical*. Animal life however is completely different. Whilst plants have an obvious symmetry in their leaves, all animals including human beings are ***totally*** symmetrical. Whether it is an ant or an elephant, every species of life in the animal kingdom has a right side that mirrors its left, as if this symmetry was a precursor for existence.

As humans with an ever-increasing ability to manipulate nature, we are attaining the capacity to irrevocably change natural existence. Through the science of genetic engineering for example, whilst we cannot yet create new life, we now have the ability to alter its evolution. Indeed, we can manufacture traits and introduce anomalies into living organisms that would not naturally arise without our direct interference. Moreover, by equating this symmetry to logic, you begin to enter the

realms of artificial life ~ a direction in which modern computing is inexorably heading towards.



Part 2

Cultural Perspectives

“We don't need the victim's entrails for their own sake, only for the sake of the signs they convey. And we don't worship the crow or the raven -- we worship God who communicates by means of them.”

~ Epictetus (c.86CE)

i.

(Historic overview)

Divination is practised in every corner of the globe: openly if allowed, but often in secrecy. It has been a popular pastime throughout human history, and is as popular today as it was at the dawn of civilisation. Furthermore, a very prominent part of divination is **prophecy**, an aspect of mysticism that crosses all cultural barriers. All prophetic ideas that appear reasonable at the time of prediction often become beliefs that attract sections of the community to which they most apply. Many people have claimed the power of prophecy, and if their doctrines strike a chord with the populace, these people gain the power of social respect. In ancient times many prophets won the hearts and minds of the people, and became regarded as great spiritual leaders whose teachings heralded the start of new religions.

Throughout early **Hinduism** and **Judaism** for example, ancient leaders were the source of sacred texts that were written into the culture of society. Culture is forever changing, and established beliefs are slowly altered by each new generation in order to remain applicable to the communities that they *serve*. Around the year 528 **BCE** the idea of '**Buddhism**' was born when '**Prince Gautama Siddhartha**', by rejecting asceticism and overindulgence alike, became the '**Buddha**' (*the enlightened one*) through teaching a middle road to spiritual illumination. Buddhism arose from the perceptions of a man who had existed at a time and place where aspects of Hinduism were deeply embedded into the native culture.

Further west, Judaism was the basis of the world's two largest religions; - **Christianity** and **Islam**. The life of '**Jesus of Nazareth**' of course has greatly influenced the lives of several hundred million people worldwide. Indeed the impact of Christianity on our lives is often overlooked, yet the preachings of Jesus (*often named 'Christ' or 'the Messiah'*) have greatly impressed upon the development of the modern world to the extent that even the western timescale of human history is centred upon his birth. The Islamic calendar, on the other hand, began in July 622 **CE**, when the prophet '**Mohammed**' and his followers migrated from Mecca to Medina to avoid persecution. Having earlier written the '*Qur'an*,' claiming it to be the words of **Allah**, Mohammed introduced the new Islamic religion which, like Christianity several centuries earlier, had incorporated the Hebrew '*Old Testament*' as a vehicle for an entirely new culture.

The last of the great world religions to emerge was **Sikhism** which was founded in 16th century, by the Indian guru '**Nanak**'. Born in the Punjab, a region that at the time was deeply divided by Hinduism and Islam, Nanak preached Sikhism as a new

religious path. His new religion was greatly influenced by '**Sufism**' the mystic tradition of Islam, and it was one that offered a release from the Hindu caste system. Like all religions before, subsequent leaders further developed the Sikh religion, and by the 17th century, the tenth and last guru '**Gobind Singh**' had founded the Sikh brotherhood (*the Khalsa*), established the *five 'K's*, and replaced the succession of human gurus with the Sikh holy book, the '*Guru Granth Sahib*'. As human consciousness has evolved however, ordinary lay people were increasingly able to think for themselves, and the development of new religions gradually became less common.

Since the creation of Sikhism, the world's major religions have virtually monopolised further spiritual beliefs, and by the Late Middle Ages the power of religious and spiritual leaders to create new world religions was reduced to forming divisions within established ones. If they are not enforced by rigid cultural traditions, even the most popular of religions are doomed to divergent offshoots. Following the '**Reformation**' period in the 16th century the *Roman Catholic* church was irrevocably split, and Christianity was to become the most splintered of all major religions. The new Christian faith of *Protestantism* gave rise to an array of new biblical interpretations which have gradually grown in number in the centuries since the Reformation. From *Anabaptists* to *Mormons*, *Evangelists* to *Jehovah's Witnesses*, there have been a multitude of offshoots from Protestant Christianity. It has led to many various interpretations of biblical texts, contorting their meanings far beyond the intentions of the '*Nicene creed*' which originally gave rise to *Orthodox* Christianity back in the 4th century.

So, as humanity has intellectually evolved, the birth of completely new religions has slowed down. But prophesy remained a lucrative business, and historic prophets, many of whom commanded great power, still emerged. The most notorious prophet of all (*since the creation of Christianity*) was the French physician and astrologer '**Michel de Nôtre Dame**' (*better known as 'Nostradamus'*), whose predictions in the 16th century have generated much interest in the spiritual subculture of the west. Nostradamus' books of prophesies were banned outright by the Catholic church, yet, had he practised his prophetic talents 1000 years earlier, there is little doubt that his decoded writings would have developed in to a fully fledged religion.

Since the Middle Ages the consciousness of humanity has evolved to be ever-sharper, and today people who claim to be prophets or true messengers of God attract only a relatively small number of faithful believers. The 20th century was not only a time of increased rational thinking, but it was an age of science and technology where the potency of spiritual power (*over the general population*) had diminished quite considerably. The only true new religions of the 20th and 21st centuries were/scientific discovery and mature philosophical ideology based on reason and popular ethics. Spiritually-based religions have been reduced to the status of minority '*cults*' which tend only to attract the socially susceptible '*old*', the impressionable '*young*', and other disadvantaged people who are readily indoctrinated with new beliefs and prejudices. The United States of America is the most productive place for new cult religions, having been the home of literally thousands of new faiths ~ many of which are apocalyptic variations on the theme of Christianity.

The most successful religious cult of the 20th century however originates in South Korea. Created by the Reverend '**Sun Myung Moon**', the '*Unification Church* or '*Moonies*', which was founded in 1954, has a worldwide following of more than 200,000 faithful believers. For many people Moon succeeded in uniting Christian, Islamic, Buddhist and Taoist beliefs into a single tradition. However he based them around his own ideas, beliefs and prejudices and, by using the institute of marriage to support his book '*The Divine Principle*', he became an extremely wealthy and powerful man. Whilst actively recruiting new followers with techniques akin to brainwashing, Moon has successfully instilled blind faith within thousands of people, obscuring his ulterior political ideology from his loyal followers, which includes using the wealth of the Unification Church to finance his right-wing extremist activities. The power of spiritual leadership and prophesy is one of the mightiest that any single human being can wield.





ii.

(Eastern perspectives)

Prophesy, and most other aspects of divination appear in every culture on Earth. As humanity emerged from the realms of benighted primate perception into one of distinctly human thought, so civilisation was created, and one of the greatest breeding grounds for spiritual belief was ancient China. In early civilisations such as this, the conscious awareness of the human species began to focus around the single aspect of reason, and had an irresistible desire to understand the mysteries of existence. **Chinese astrology**, for example, has its origins some 2600 years before the beginning of the Christian era that was to later influence so much of the world outside of China.

As intellectual growth continued, so did the perception of spirituality, leading to a wide array of divinatory methods based on various cultural traditions. Today, ancient Chinese astrology is the basis of most surviving divinatory systems as well as many modern calendars that remain in use throughout eastern Asia. Its origins are so old that the history of its development is totally reliant on legend. The Chinese calendar is based on a 60 year cycle which combines solar years and lunar months. It is composed of *10 heavenly stems* and *12 Earthly branches*, and also incorporates the cycles of animals and elements that are the source of most Chinese divination.

There are many aspects of Chinese divination however. **‘Fu Chi’**, for example, is primarily concerned with spirit communication, whereby mediums in trance could act as messengers of the spirits by sieving grain over ashes or sand. The patterns left by the sifted grains could be read by the ancient Chinese who believed that the spirits (*or shen*) were the source of intelligence and reason. Believing that these wise spirits lacked a consciously intelligible language, ancient villagers provided Fu Chi as a language to communicate between worlds. The influence of ‘Fu Chi writing’ on Chinese culture was such that it led to the development of many characters in the modern written language.

The oldest and most continually used divinatory systems in the world are those contained within the **‘I Ching’** book of changes. The format of the book is based around 8 separate trigrams; basic symbols which, when combined in pairs, produce 64 possible hexagrams, often referred to as the *spirits of time*. Originating in ancient shamanic practices, the I Ching is a collection of these 64 divinatory symbols and their many applications organised into magical and cosmological significance. As the various dynasties came to power, the revered texts of the I Ching (*or classic of change*) had comments added through the ages by diviners and philosophers alike. This ancient book has been studied for over 4000 years, and the symbols within it have been used in an array of divinatory and philosophical practices. It is responsible for the development of **‘Taoism’** (*or the way*), a philosophical system that is built on the reasoned premise that everything in the universe occurs through change, where existence is the interplay of order and chaos. Taoism is ultimately concerned with the

harmony and flow of equal and opposite forces in nature; forces commonly known as *yin and yang*.

The concept of yin and yang became a cultural institution throughout China and eastern Asia. Seen as the passive and active forces of nature, they are symbolised by two converse entities perpetually intermixing, swirling in an endless cycle of existence where each polar opposite contains the seed of the other. '*Yin*' the feminine force is seen as solid, intuitive, dark and benign. '*Yang*', the masculine force is active, aggressive, and intellectual. Existence relies on the continual interplay between these two opposing but mutually reliant forces, and through '*Taoism*', '*Confucianism*', and the many other philosophical beliefs to have been included in the I Ching, the ancient populace aimed to keep a balanced, harmonic relationship with nature.

Other forms of Ancient Chinese divination include the eastern geomancy known as '*feng shui*'. Geomancy is generally associated with prophecies that use seemingly random patterns, patterns that are often created by casting down handfuls of earth upon the ground. As a spiritual practice, it became an important ingredient in the concept of *alchemy*, particularly in Arabic and African cultures. Throughout China however, geomancy took the form of feng shui, the art of maintaining the balance of yin and yang forces in the land. Subsequently all sacred structures were built on sites determined by these unseen forces of nature.

Translated as '*wind-water*', the art of feng shui is applied to many buildings throughout China which are sited in relation to '*dragon lines*', flowing lines of *ch'i* energy that are seen to pass along the surface of the Earth. The course these invisible rivers of energy can be altered by poorly positioned buildings, and just as light is refracted by physical barriers, so the flow of *ch'i* energy is readily disrupted. The concept of feng shui is applied to the positioning of walls, rooms, and the artefacts placed within them. Acting like rivers of water, *ch'i* energy must be allowed to flow and circulate, passing through a building, not being choked by it. If allowed to stagnate, the natural continuation of positive energy begins to decay.

In the Indian subcontinent, spiritual beliefs of ancient peoples evolved in a separate way. The '*Vedas*', the earliest and fundamentally most sacred of Hindu scriptures, include texts that describe the cycles of the universe. There are four cycles (*or kalpas*) that make up one rotation of 4,320,000 years. (*a day in the life of their ultimate god Brahma*). This account of the cycle of creation is known as '*Vedic astrology*'. The present age is known as the '*Kali yuga*', the last age in the cycle of existence. It is the shortest and most dynamic of the four kalpas, and is one that is characterised by disaster and destruction. Depending on tradition, the current age of Kali Yuga, has anywhere between 90 and 427,000 years to go before worldly destruction is reaped by '*Kalki*' in readiness for a new age of creation.

Vedic beliefs led to the development of the highly prejudicial Hindu caste system which classified people according to their birthrights. Over thousands of years many '*castes*' or levels of social stratification evolved. Each caste was positioned within a strict hierarchic order, and a person's caste made them '*purier*' than anyone belonging to an '*inferior*' caste below. A belief that lives should be valued according to this

divine hierarchy meant that most people spent their lives the victims of prejudicial ideals and attitudes. Caste membership was for life, and the belief that people could only move up or down a caste through the process of death and rebirth became widely established throughout India.

Social status reflected a perceived position in the *samsara* (the cycle of life, death and rebirth), and the Hindu caste system was originally defined by five main groups. The 'Brahman priests', constituted the purest of all castes, below them were the noblemen and warriors, followed by traders and farmers, then the servants and labourers. Finally came lowest caste of all ~ the 'Harijan' (or untouchables) who were not even recognised as having a caste of their own. The Harijan were considered to be human filth, not worthy of even a glance, and a belief that it was dangerous to touch them perpetuated the myth that they were little more than carriers of pollution and disease.

By the 4th century BCE, the break away religion of **Buddhism** had given hope to many oppressed communities throughout northern India. By denying the existence of established deities, Buddhism offered people a chance to end the suffering within a lifetime, and instituted a 'middle way' to enlightenment. Through Buddhism, people could break free from the cycle of samsara, and so fell the traditional view that a position within it was determined by the gods. By shifting the emphasis of responsibility for existence from gods to the *self*, Buddhism generated an interest in meditation, *karma* through selflessness, and the virtue of dreams.

The teachings of the Buddha formed the basis of a middle path to enlightenment, and were encompassed within *four noble truths*. The 'noble truths' embody the Buddhist concept of existence, that is; 'to exist is to suffer', and that 'there is a **'way'** to end suffering'. In Buddhist tradition, true happiness can only occur if you separate from the mindset of material existence, for suffering is caused by a cultural attachment to what is essentially an impermanent reality. For example; in life, we all witness death, and so inevitably suffer the unpleasant feelings of distraught helplessness within our lives. The experiencing of profound sadness is a fundamental consequence of life, and human existence is a constant cycle of suffering. At the other end of emotional experience is the contrasting perception of joy, however times of great happiness, are far from perfect because, like everything else, pleasure is impermanent. Even the most joyous occasion will inevitably be lost because living existence **constantly changes**. By detaching from the ego, and letting go of the 'I, me, mine' perception of living existence, Buddhists disregard the notion of self and desire, and travel the perceived path of spiritual release.

In both Buddhist and Hindu traditions, living existence is governed by the samsara, the continual cycle of rebirth, whereby actions in this life promote the soul (or *atman*) to higher realms in the next. Buddhism teaches an escape from this seemingly endless cycle of existence into *nirvana*, the place of ultimate enlightenment where the bodily connection is broken and the soul becomes absorbed into the infinite. *Bodhisattvas*, those who have attained ultimate enlightenment and are on the verge of forever leaving physical existence, remain to guide the living towards the spiritual freedom of others.

An obvious method of attaining level of higher consciousness that developed from Hindu tradition was meditation, and the concept of dream yoga emerged as a way to achieve the ultimate goal of liberation from suffering. Popularised by Buddhism, the idea of dream yoga to release oneself from essential delusion complimented the eastern tradition of a dream goddess. Through dreams, enlightenment could be realised, so positions of relaxation were employed to encourage dreaming, whilst the keeping of dream journals became increasingly popular east of Europe. At an individual level, people could learn from their dreams, and use them to awake from ideas of illusion and compulsion. Ultimately however, enlightenment negates the need to dream, so dreaming was regarded as accurately reflecting peoples' state of existence.

As with all cultures that recognise the importance of dreaming as a spiritual tool for divination or self-enlightenment, the archetypal image of a tunnel of white light is the focal point for the dreamed consciousness within Buddhism and virtually every other ancient tradition. In order to navigate around the dreaming mind, the art of *lucid dreaming (that is becoming aware within a dream)* became a skill that many people have, throughout history, endeavoured to attain.





iii.

(Divination of the Middle East)

Semitic divination of the Middle East was to contribute to the creation of the world's largest religions. In the ancient times that preceded Christianity, Judaism was the dominant culture. Pantheistic beliefs, that all reality is the divine creation of 'God,' were deeply embedded in Hebrew society, and the spiritual philosophies of the '**Kabbalah**' emerged from a culture obsessed by sacred writings of the past. In endeavouring to interpret scriptures such as the **Mishnah** and the **Torah** (*the five books of Moses*), the mystical tradition of the Kabbalah preoccupied Hebrew culture from the 13th to 16th centuries. Today it is regarded by mainstream Judaism as medieval superstition, but throughout history the Kabbalah has been the source of many accurate predictions.

The Kabbalah, like all mystical traditions of Semitic origin, grew from the abundance of scriptures within the Hebrew Bible. It is an esoteric oral tradition that sees beyond a literal interpretation of Hebrew scriptures, recognising a hidden '*bible code*' within the Torah and other sacred books. For Kabbalists, the allegorical scriptures of biblical prophets were merely physical facades which concealed a far deeper meaning that lie within the shapes of the Hebrew letters themselves. The 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet are seen as conduits of energy that carry the force of creation into the physical world.

By using the Kabbalah as a '*key to the universe*', people who attained higher levels of consciousness could follow the laws of nature through the perceived magical transformation of the sacred letters themselves. In Kabbalist tradition the letters are organised within a complex symbol known as the '*Tree of Life*'. Embodied by 10 fundamental powers called '**sefirot**', creative forces that intervene between the infinite and the physical world. The 10 sefirot are joined by the 22 '*wisdom paths*' (*the Hebrew letters*) that represent the course of all creation from the original godhead (*or big bang*). The whole system gives insight into the direction of existence, and with this spiritual understanding of bible codes, the guardians of Kabbalah became revered for their mystical powers, particularly throughout the Middle Ages.

Fear of the magical powers of the Kabbalah has perpetuated the Hebrew tradition of prophesy, and predictions pertaining to the coming of a messiah have been interpreted many ways. Expounded into scientific tradition, existence begins from the moment of the '*Big Bang*' and, from that initial moment in time within our dimension, the laws of science themselves came into existence. As time passes, more and more events unfold, each being a consequence of those that came before. The Kabbalah has been used over many hundreds of years by prophets, astrologers, soothsayers and magicians to intuitively guide them along these '*wisdom paths*' to glimpse existence from the beginning of time to eternity.

Many modern Kabbalists see the magic and mysticism of biblical prophecies, as simply an interpretation by ancient peoples who could not begin to understand the technological marvels of the 20th century which were revealed to them through the Kabbalah. Entities such as *electricity, space exploration, computers* and *genetic engineering* to a primitive culture appeared as magic that went far beyond their wildest imaginations, and so the guardians of the Kabbalah were obviously feared for their supernatural insights.

Today, modern technology has once again revived this ancient Hebrew tradition, and by employing computers to decipher many numerical sequences of sacred texts using the Kabbalist system, the biblical prophecies have been examined in minute detail. Retaining the Kabbalah as a source of mystical wisdom and spiritual guidance, computer programs are used to apply the knowledge of sequence to ancient scriptures in order to search for clues that may foretell the unfolding future. Once decoded by the Kabbalah, the Torah is seen to contain many references to historic global events, mentioning everything from the rise of *'Hitler's Nazis'*, to the onslaught of *'HIV and AIDS'*.

At an individual level, the Bible Code is used to bring about positive changes such as improving health, financial and emotional success. Collectively, it seeks to embellish humanity with spiritual healing powers by predicting the likely outcomes of future events based on the current direction of mankind. Importantly for Hebrew tradition, the Kabbalah is an excellent tool for prophesying about the coming of the *'Messiah'*. In western tradition, the Kabbalah did not emerge until the 19th century when it became a focal point for occultism ~ the subculture of anti-Christian divination. It was during this time that the transformational symbols of the Hebrew alphabet were assimilated to the 22 major arcana or 'god' cards of *'tarot'*.





iv.

(Divination from Africa to the New World)

Like ancient Semitic culture, African culture also steeped in mysticism and spiritual magic. The most famous example of African divination relates to the alignment of pyramids; huge monuments that date back to 2700 **BCE**. The 'Great Pyramids' at Giza, in particular, have given rise to modern prophecies that are based on Christian ideals. Egyptologists and archaeologists in the 19th and early 20th centuries have claimed that the proportions and measurements of great chambers and passageways within the Great Pyramids correspond to significant dates in the history of the world, leading to much speculation about the ulterior divinatory purposes of these enormous monuments.

Indeed many measurements have been taken and theorised over to produce a myriad of pyramid prophecies. In the late 19th century, renowned Egyptologists began to match up the features of entire passage systems with the chronology of biblical stories which were recorded thousands of years after the construction of the pyramids. By using an inch to correspond to a solar year, the dimensions of inner chambers have since been assimilated to further global events. In the 1920's prophetic theories using the symbolic analysis of the pyramid dimensions not only recognised recent world events such as the *first world war* and the *great depression*, but led to accurate predictions of events yet to come, including the *second world war*, and the testing of the hydrogen bomb in the 1953. The same system was used by some modern Egyptologists to calculate the final years of the 20th century as a time that constituted the last phase of human history ~ when a new age of spiritual enlightenment would prevail. Of course the inherent cultural influence of Christianity was the real source of Egyptian rediscovery.

Whilst pyramid prophecies generated much divinatory interest in the west in the past century, the single largest system of divination throughout the continent of Africa, remains the tradition of '*Ifa*', which originated in what is now the town of Ife, in western Nigeria. Ifa has grown from spiritual and magical practices that were widespread throughout the Yoruba kingdoms of West Africa. Established sometime before the 6th century, Ifa divination became a fundamental part of Yoruba culture. It is an oral system of divination which uses geometric signs (*or Odu*) to unlock and organise the wealth of mystical knowledge of the spiritual mind. Ifa is seen more of as a method of connecting the 'self' to the 'spirit world' than as a means of prophesy. It employs a total of 256 divinatory signs, each one representing a particular circle of myths and ritual actions. By consulting Ifa, the diviner, originally a Yoruba priest (*Babalawo*; or '*father of secrets*') is seen to connect with the Odu signs before him and, by questioning the system, becomes open to the wisdom of the spirits.

Between the 16th to 19th centuries, the African slave trade spread the spiritual practice of Ifa to the Americas where, like all culturally inherited traditions, it was slowly adapted to meet the needs of the living generation. Ifa and other African

derivatives became mixed with Christianity, leading to the variety of Creole religions which emerged in many Afro-American communities throughout the *New World*. The spiritual culture of tribal West Africa survived the onslaught of intolerant Catholicism, remaining as hidden traditions that grew with the descendants of Sudanese tribesmen.

Ifa itself is the source of Afro-American magic collectively known as *Santeria*. Each form is a unique blend of Catholicism and African divination, and is manifest in various guises, from *Umbanda* and *B'zios* in parts of Eastern Brazil to *Candomble* throughout Northern Venezuela and *Voodoo* in Haiti. The various Afro-Brazilian cults, like those throughout the Caribbean, arose from an uneasy but convenient amalgamation of Catholic and African rituals. The Spanish Inquisition, for example, burned alive Yoruba and Bantu slaves who were caught practising their ancestral religions.

Understanding the grief and death of the white god '*Jesus Christ*', but noticing a lack of miracles, the cultural deities (*Orisha*) of the slaves assumed the guise of a Catholic saints. For example, in Cuba '*Shango*' the invincible warrior chief who commanded storms became '*Saint Barbara*', and in Haiti '*Legba*' lord of the road and spirit interpreter assumed the form of '*St Anthony*'. As these oppressed peoples knelt and prayed in the churches, they secretly devoted their faiths to their ancestral deities which were often worshipped in preference to Jesus. A devotion to both saints and spirits developed in the belief that it provided greater protection from the collective gods.

The one aspect of *Santeria* that remained totally unacceptable to Christian authority however was the ritual sacrifice of animals, and the persecution of worshippers has continued long after their emancipation from slavery. Indeed the various western influences in different regions of the Americas has led to many various forms of *Santeria*. Mexican *Santeria*, for example, emphasises its Roman Catholic roots, whilst in Cuba the African origins are far more prominent.

Voodoo, originating in Haiti, is one the most notorious of all forms of *Obi* witchcraft. To white American culture it appeared to be a fanatical worship of unholy demigods, and was often mistakenly regarded as being satanic. Yet the tradition of voodoo and the invocation of *loa* spirits dancing in the flesh, has picked up influences from another culture. The native Arawak Indians, who were totally wiped out in the 15th and 16th centuries by persecution and European disease, left a legacy of their own shamanic culture. Native medicines and potions, including the knowledge of how to prepare the magical white powder, a potent neurotoxin obtained from local puffer fish, all added to the magic of voodoo. From the resurrection of zombies to traditional curses that use effigies to represent their enemies, the voodoo culture which survives in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and throughout parts of Mississippi and Florida is often regarded with superstitious fear.





v.

(Perspectives of pagan and classical Europe)

Whether it has taken the form of African divination, shamanism from the Far East, and the Americas, or any other tradition unfamiliar to conquering Europeans, the cultures of millions of people have been suppressed or destroyed by the dominance of Christianity. The first ancient cultures to be decimated by the Christian intolerance of other faiths and beliefs were the various pagan cultures that existed throughout medieval Europe during the *dark ages*. As Christian missionaries spread north following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the power of Catholicism slowly eradicated pagan beliefs that had endured for thousands of years. Most of these ancient oral traditions were eventually lost, and those that survived were forced underground, as communities that did not adhere to the rigid doctrine of compulsory Christianity suffered severe persecution.

It is from primal religions that divinatory methods such as ‘*dowsing*’ arise. As a perceived mysterious interaction between the body and unseen forces of nature, dowsing was a vital tool of both culture and survival for many ancient European people. It was also known to the ancient Egyptians and Chinese but probably originated from the Palaeolithic cultures of early humans over 30,000 years ago. Like all non-Christian beliefs in Europe, the practice of dowsing was repressed. However, having persisted in pagan subculture for several centuries amongst the rural peasantry of medieval Europe, it re-emerged as a popular form of divination in the 16th century. What was once considered to be an important method of finding underground water or minerals using a divining rod became regarded as a *trivial pursuit* in Christian culture.

The casting of ‘*runes*’ is another system of divination which originates in pagan Europe. Often referred to as ‘*whispering stones*’, runes are Germanic characters that have been adapted to become a form of pagan divination. Originally scratched or painted onto bones, stones, or wood, these symbols were seen to connect the diviner with spirits and distant ancestors in order to gain insight and advantage from their power and wisdom.

The divinatory practice of runes originates from Palaeolithic cultures of northern Eurasia. As the Neolithic era gave way to the *Bronze* and *Iron ages*, the ancient symbolism of early man became predominantly *Norse* or otherwise *Germanic* in nature. With the decline of the ice age returning the land to fertile forests, human colonisation of the European continent spread inland, and the move southwards of many ancient northern European nomads, brought cultures of the north to parts of southern Europe. It is for this reason that some rune symbols are of Northern Italic origin, whilst others are distinctly Germanic characters.

The legendary beginning of runes arises from an ancestral northern tribe called '*Völsungr*', who moved south many thousands of years before the first civilisations arose. They assumed the identity of guardians of the great northern forests, and on migrating south, are said to have brought with them the culture of sagas and runic inscription. Moreover, they came to be seen as the spiritual liberators of oppressed peoples in southern Europe

Throughout the Middle Ages, divining with runes was strictly forbidden, and people found using them were executed, often by being burned alive. Indeed, people were executed by the church for using runes up until the early 18th century. However in pre-Christian, Roman Europe, they were gradually incorporated into classical culture. For example, the use of three runes to represent the '*three sisters of fate*', became a common practice before Christianity became the official religion of Rome.



Pagan culture in Europe lasted many thousands of years and, despite its eventual suffocation by Christianity, there remain around 50,000 prehistoric structures throughout Europe which still stand as testament to humanity's most ancient spiritual beliefs. Amongst the oldest surviving monuments are Neolithic chambers and Bronze age tombs encased in burial mounds or *barrows*. Besides the abundance of barrows, huge edifices such as *Stonehenge* and the *Avebury circles* in England, the *Carnac stones* in France, and other sacred monuments throughout Northern Europe provided spiritual focus for many ancient peoples. These huge megalithic structures, that were built some 4000 years ago, have long outlasted the cultures that created them and, by the time that Christianity had begun its inexorable march northwards, these ancient monuments were adopted by less ancient pagan cultures such as *Druidism*.

Druidism was the religion of the Celtic peoples of the British Isles and Gaul at the time of the Roman invasions, and so it was the Druids who were the sacred guardians of many megalithic structures at the start of recorded history. However Stonehenge and other late Neolithic monuments were used as astral observatories long before the Iron age cultures that succumb to Roman conquest. Along with the Norse religions of Scandinavia, it is the Druids that give pagan culture its decidedly anti-Christian feel.

A recent interest in Pagan rituals of northern Europe has revived the ancient tradition of celebrating the summer solstice, whilst many myths and legends involving mistletoe, mushrooms, fairies, and human sacrifice have been lost to the invading traditions of the south that were to forever alter the evolution of European culture. Stamped out in north-western Europe by the Roman conquests, pagan culture was completely finished off by Christian missionaries and the rise of authoritarian Catholic regimes during the Middle Ages.



A great deal of divinatory tradition throughout southern Europe originates in Greek antiquity. Being in closer proximity to the hub of Christianity, than the sacred

divinatory rituals of pagan northern Europe, Greek mysticism and philosophy greatly influenced the development of the Christian Bible. This is the main reason why Greek culture is more apparent in modern society than the religions of the northern 'barbarians'. Indeed the *New Testament* was originally written in Greek, by the earliest Christian scholars who played a major part in shaping the direction of biblical ethics.

Although ancient Greek mysticism itself was to be eclipsed by Christianity, the culture of Greek gods and traditional oracles such as the '*Delphi prophecies*', influenced the way that biblical scholars perceived a single omnipotent '*God*' when writing the '*New Testament*'. Indeed the development of God's character as an 'all-loving, all-creating being' in the New Testament contrasts greatly with the traditional 'God' of the Hebrew '*Torah*'. The influence of Greek culture on the development of Christianity is unquestionable. Yet it was a prophetic culture, whereby the Olympian gods formed an essential part of virtually all classical Greek literature. The development of healing and divination cults such as the '*Eleusinian mysteries*' became a part of official worship in Greek society and this too was incorporated into the *miracles* of '*Jesus*'.

Many people in everyday Greek society consulted the oracles; including political and religious leaders, poets, philosophers, all manner of statesmen and even private citizens. From the '*Parthenon*' in Athens, to the '*Oracle of Zeus*' at Dodona, Greek religion provided a wealth of spiritual practices. In the last few centuries leading up to the birth of Christianity however, society had begun to mature as religious veneration gave way to philosophy. People began to fear the gods much less, and '*Plato*'s perception of god as an abstract notion of mind started to replace the idea that people were merely playthings of the gods. Although reason prevailed, the powerful religion of Christianity that was yet to come, needed miracles and so the influence of the Greek mystery religions was not lost on biblical scholars several hundred years later. By the end of the 4th century **CE**, even the most celebrated oracle in the temple of *Apollo* in Delphi was shut down by the Romans who had recently converted to Christianity. Some aspects of Greek culture became lost forever, but others, such as dice divination associated with '*Hermes*' and '*Athena*', have persisted.



Modern western astrology derives from the Hellenistic period of late antiquity which began after the death of '*Alexander the Great*', who, in the 4th century **BCE**, conquered lands from Egypt to India. King of Macedonia and one of the most powerful and influential leaders of Mediterranean history, Alexander first conquered Greece. He then invaded Egypt, founded Alexandria, the first of several cities throughout Southern Eurasia to be named after him, and moved on to defeat the great Persian Empire claiming Babylon as his own. From there he advanced east into the Indus Valley and conquered the Punjab before finally retreating through lack of resources. In the historical perspective of its time, it was one of the greatest military triumphs in human history, and led to the amalgamation of many different cultures.

Educated by '**Aristotle**', Alexander the Great built up a reputation as an invincible conqueror, that was to continue long after he died. His influence was strong in the Hellenistic Era that followed his death, for the power vacuum that he left meant that all potential leaders wished to be associated with his memory. Indeed for nearly 300 years, until the succession of Rome in 27 **BCE**, Alexander the Great had become a religious figurehead and, even in death, contributed to a further mixing of ancient culture.

Hellenistic astrology incorporated Egyptian and Persian astral perceptions, Greek astronomy and philosophy, and eastern myths and legends. Whilst the Greeks united the planets with their own mythology, even the Islamic world later adopted the Hellenistic culture as the basis for its astrological sciences before being choked by the growth of fundamentalism. Over time, the cult of the stars and the idea of astrology as a powerful tool of divination became embedded in western culture, and its many influences have led to a complex system of astrological interpretations.

Astrology like everything else was subdued by early Christianity, but became reluctantly tolerated as the centuries passed, first re-emerging during the late Renaissance period. In similar tradition to Chinese astrology, western divination of the skies is based on a continuous cycle of annual astrological alignment. From '*Aries*' the ram to '*Pisces*' the fish, the night sky is the source of the western spiritual calendar just as it is in the east. The lure of celestial divination has always been strong, and Christianity, once divided by the reformation, could not prevent astrology from becoming popular once more.

From the 16th and 17th centuries, astrological analysis based on dice, cards and other divinatory methods of chance were increasingly related to the known planets. Indeed, the last major planetary bodies to be discovered; (*Uranus* in 1781, *Neptune* in 1846, and *Pluto* in 1930) all assumed Greek qualities, and were incorporated into astrological charts that have continued to evolve in the latter half of the 2nd millennium.

Over the years, antagonisms between the various astrological '*zodiacs*' have been played down to avoid Christian condemnation, so the mainstream astrology that is apparent today in the form of magazine and newspaper horoscopes naturally concentrates on positive aspects of life such as the potential for growth and personal development. With the further influence of 20th century reason and intellect, astrology has mutated into a blend of technology, symbolism and ancient ritual in which '*fate*' has become the science of the stars.

Western astrology was just one aspect of spiritualism to have re-emerged from repression by Christian authority. It was the addition of modern reasoning that influenced the re-emergence of '**occultism**' in the late 18th to early 20th centuries. With society giving people a greater perceptual consciousness, the occults of the last few centuries have been able to reach into ever-darker recesses of the human mind.

It is the human mind that is the ultimate source of all divination. How we perceive existence and how we interpret events around us are the essential ingredients of both

waking reality, and imagination. Of course, it is from the imagination that the realm of spirituality and divination are embedded. By manipulating the way that people perceive reality, religions and cults are able to grow stronger. By directing the perceptions of the general population, religious belief not only enables some to wield great power, but it can actually allows them to alter the direction of culture and tradition. After all, it is from the human mind that all discovery and innovation originates.

In archaic and classical Greece, the priests and priestesses who uttered and interpreted sacred oracles are known to have used a sacred brew to communicate with the gods. Psychoactive drinks made from *ergot* and other hallucinogenic ingredients allowed them to experience a different level of consciousness. Moreover, the ancient Greeks often saw *dreams* as visitations, but as the classical period increasingly turned to reason, dream philosophy gradually evolved and became a major part of Greek society. In turn, the tradition of keeping a dream journal, and examining dreams to gain greater insight further influenced the development of reasoned thought in this advanced ancient civilisation.

Philosophical debate and a spiritual reverence of dreams kept the topic of sleeping reality at the forefront of conscious reality, The ancient Greeks contributed to a range of beliefs concerning the power of dreams. The idea that dreams should be restrained as they embodied the animalistic elements in civilised man, and the opposing belief that they were the gateways to realms of existence that were otherwise unattainable, both originate in Greek philosophy. The notion that dreams enabled individuals to meet gods, spirits and demons however was one Greek tradition that was not tolerated by Christianity once it had risen to power.





vi.

(In the shadow of Christianity)

Christianity led to the destruction of western dream culture. In preservation of its own miracles, all dreams were declared false, and the sharing of visions became heresy. In the early Middle Ages even recounting a horrific nightmare could bring damnation from authority. So the long indoctrination of western perception that denies the reality of dreams had begun. Prophetic dreams were now aligned with '*Lucifer*', and to wake with fright from a startling dream, declaring its content as '*real*', was a dangerous thing to do. Thousands of women were branded witches and burned at the stake just for describing their dreams. In the European Middle Ages, the only oracles and prophecies that were recognised were those that originated in biblical scripture. Through this enforced state of reality, the consciousness of Europe had become somewhat perverted and detached from natural harmony. It is the cause of today's modern world culture being neglectful of dreams and of intuitive perceptions that have regard for nature. Today, the societies that drive humanity have become consciously and spiritually separated from the nature of Earth ~ *the cradle of life*.

In Europe, private divination and the freedom of spiritual discovery was initially suppressed by Roman emperor '**Augustus**' in the 1st century **BCE**. Within 300 years, the official recognition of Christianity by the emperor '**Constantine**' assured that any spiritual belief that challenged the existence of the Christian god, were eradicated within the empire. By the 4th century **CE** however, the western Roman Empire was overrun with waves of **Goths**, **Huns** and **Vandals** and, as it began to disintegrate, various Germanic kingdoms emerged in its place. The most powerful of the barbarian successors of Rome were the **Franks**, and by the 9th century most of the Frankish kingdoms were united by '**Charlemagne**' as the '*Holy Roman Empire*' ~ created in the image of Rome, and with the church in a position of absolute authority. Further invasions from the north and east in the 9th and 10th centuries by the **Saracens**, **Magyars** and **Vikings**, added to upheaval of the European dark ages. Overtime however, Christianity absorbed them all, and the people of Europe gradually lost the spiritual perceptions and consciousness that continued to flourish further east.

One of the earliest derivations of Christianity was '**Gnosticism**'; a collection of esoteric religious movements which attained cult followings in the 2nd and 3rd centuries **CE**. In some places, Gnosticism actually rivalled the growth of early Christianity. It was a belief in divine knowledge that took the spiritual element of Christianity and infused it with *Greek philosophy* and elements of eastern tradition such as *Hinduism* and *Buddhism*. Regarded as heresy by the early Christian church, Gnosticism envisaged the physical world as an intermediate level of existence in which humanity was trapped in body. It predominantly identified the God of the Old Testament as a tempestuous god which encompassed the evil of the material world and snared the human race in a living hell.

Eventually wiped out in Europe by the 14th century, Gnostic sects, such as the *Cathars* or *Albigenses*, believed that the spiritual element of man was the key to a release from the bondage of life's depravities in Earthly hell. They claimed that only by joining their church could an individual attain salvation through understanding the divine, secret wisdom of '**Jesus**'. To the Catholic authorities this was an unholy and blasphemous mix of Christianity with pagan culture, which was inevitably obliterated by continual persecution. Today Gnosticism only survives in parts of southern Iraq as the *Mandean* sect, although it has become entwined in elements of American *Evangelism*.

Gnosticism was only the first challenge of many to the established Christian authority over the centuries. What began as a flurry of astrological literature during the ***Renaissance period*** turned into increasingly widespread interest in eastern divination and ancient mysticism. The opening of medieval trade routes between Italy and the Muslim world, which spread from Persia to Morocco and Spain, allowed Italian merchants to bring back elements of eastern culture ~ leading to the rediscovery of classical knowledge and ancient astrology. Initially, European culture began to benefit from this *revival of learning* but, as the new atmosphere of freedom of expression became ever more popular, it threatened to undermine the authority of the church. Subsequently eastern divination became suppressed by claims of heresy but the church, unsuccessful in completely eradicating certain aspects (*such as astrology*), only succeeded in demoting it to the realms of superstition and evil magic.

The continuing social turmoil and religious power struggles throughout Europe culminated in the ***Reformation***, which started in the early 16th century. It was during the Reformation that Europe experienced the height of religious hysteria. This was a time of hysterical predictions, the burning of witches and the frenzied slaughter of the innocent. Anything that was not sanctioned by the Christian denomination that held power was regarded as evil, and retribution was served with fanatical intent.

This unrelenting attitude of adherence to holiness and godliness continued until the '***Enlightenment***' ~ a period in European history that reached a height in the 18th century. Intellectual movements in Europe applied criticism and rational thought to western culture, undermining religious traditions, and replacing prejudice with humanism. Enlightenment thinkers encouraged free-thought and were generally hostile to the religious establishment. Principles of the enlightenment were even used to morally justify the American and French revolutions. Moreover, a realisation that scientific knowledge was of greater benefit to existence than an adherence to a religious faith, started the intellectual revolution that relegated religious authority to a minority power, and eventually made western culture the culture of the modern world.

As increased humanism in society encouraged a greater freedom from the church, so the old perceptual boundaries once strictly enforced by Christianity were broken. By the 19th century superstition in the west fuelled the revival of supernatural and spiritual perceptions, and so western occultism once again emerged. everything from *astrology* and *tarot*, to *animal sacrifice* and *dark magic* began to flourish as a spiritual subculture.



'Tarot' is the quintessential divinatory system of post-classical western culture. It consists of 78 cards which focus on the 22 **'major arcana'**; full size picture cards that represent archetypal worlds. Each one defines a different perspective of existence. These *'god cards'* that travel from *'The Fool'* to *'The World'* represented, to many people, a journey of the soul from birth, through living experience, to enlightenment. To the major arcana are attached the 56 **'minor arcana'** or *'pip cards'* which are divided in to four suits (*wands, swords, cups, and pentangles*). Corresponding to the traditional four elements (*fire air, water, and earth*), the cards together were seen as an encyclopaedia of experiences, connecting the *'gods'* to everyday human events.

As a fully developed system of symbolic fortune telling, tarot originates from the divinatory card games imported from the Arabic east in 13th and 14th centuries. These popular games involved magical beliefs and practices that were first recognised in Europe through the Italian merchant voyages that initiated the Renaissance. First appearing in northern Italy during an atmosphere of rediscovery, early tarot known as *'trionfi'* would evolve into a spiritual icon which was to sweep across Europe over the following centuries. Tarot contributed to the re-igniting of pagan imagery, and incorporated aspects of spiritualism that were lost in the Christian resurgence of the early Middle Ages.

By the late 14th century the system that we recognise today as tarot cards had taken shape and was readily associated with a re-emergence of Gnostic ideas that were so despised by Christian authority. By 15th century, tarot became increasingly identified with **Romanies** (*nomadic gypsies*), provoking romantic myths about tarot and its perceived Egyptian origins. It now incorporated magical traditions of *Hellenistic astrology, Celtic shamanism, Egyptian mysteries, Babylonian oracles, Gnosticism*, and the archetypal *Great Goddess*. Tarot became a blend of *clairvoyance, ritual action, psychic healing, and romantic visions*. However Christian repugnance, ensured that tarot had a bad reputation, and for many people it came to embody *evil superstition*. Used by gypsies, witches and devil worshipers alike, tarot was strictly forbidden and there were fervent attempts to stamp it out by the inquisitions.

Over time the association of tarot cards with astrological and numeral divination became stronger, and they came to represent the mystical underworld of European spiritualism. It survived centuries of prohibition by successive Christian authorities and became a physical legacy of the myths and occults of the classical world that were not destroyed by Christian dominance. Tarot was merely pushed underground and naturally came to embody the medieval archetypes as a part of its own mysticism. By the late 18th century, tarot began its dark association with occultism.

To many occultists, tarot contained both the knowledge of the gods and all of the composite allegories of human life. The 22 major arcana became assimilated with the 22 sacred transformational letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Now tarot came to represent elements of the mystical **Kabbalah** and allowed occultists and self-proclaimed magicians access to the Hebrew *'Tree of Life'*. Furthermore tarot was seen

as the ultimate key to unlocking the secrets of life and began to embody all human mythology.

Tarot of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was at the centre of *neo-hermeticism*, and theosophical cults such as the '***Order of the Golden Dawn***' attracted a great deal of interest in western occultism. There was a re-emergence of interest too in the ancient arts of astrology and alchemy, with dark magic and with sacred texts that regarded the Sun as a physical embodiment of God. Tarot became a gateway to western esoteric tradition, and encompassed a range of rituals and initiations that were often blatantly anti-Christian.

Tarot today is identified with mythology from around the world, and it is clear that there is no single secret doctrine. It encompasses everything from native American culture such as *Mayan* or *Inca religion*, to *Greek philosophy* and contemporary *goddess culture*. The accuracy of assimilation is irrelevant because the embodiment of tarot is more to do with psychological perception. It is best illustrated by **Carl Jung's** description of the ***human collective unconscious***, in which exists all of the archetypes of transformation and the uniquely human imagery that we all share, regardless of our culture.





vii.

(*Modern prophetic culture*)

As scientific reasoning has moulded the open societies of today, so human culture has become enlightened with greater knowledge. Knowledge is power and, regardless of whether a society is a capitalist democracy or a totalitarian dictatorship, power and knowledge are an essential aspect of authority. In all autocratic societies, knowledge is primarily used to propagandise. It is even used in this way in the democratic west, however here free knowledge has contributed to a more astute concept of morality. Once knowledge is free to permeate throughout society, constraints on the intellectual evolution of humanity are slowly removed. This is the process which has profoundly shaped modern western culture and, in turn, has led to an increased understanding of everything around us ~ including the primeval act of *divination*. Science and philosophy has opened up the world in which we live to our conscious perceptions, and so brought humanity closer to its perceptual origins. By the end of the 20th century, previously suppressed spiritual beliefs, including *prophecy*, have begun to re-emerge as legitimate human activities.

Divination, whatever its origin, works through myths and symbols. Whether it derives from reading the signs of nature (*such as bird flight and animal behaviour*), or from the inference of hidden patterns within random actions (*such as the chance turning of a card in 'tarot', or the rolling of a dice in the traditions of 'Mo and Sho Mo'*), all forms of divination have a common bond. The aim of divination is to '*read*' and so interact with the unseen forces of nature. It is the perception of subtle forces, such as '*lay lines*' and '*dragon holes*' that spiritually connect humanity to an entity that is collectively interpreted as being *something bigger*. This universal law of nature is the same source of enquiry for advanced scientific endeavour too, and the modern theories of quantum physics are not too far removed from ancient ideas such as '*yin and yang*'.

Science and technology has led modern western society into rediscovering the *magical* qualities of matter, time, and space. We share the same experience of existence but each of us has a unique perspective of life, so the notion of reality is totally subjective. Reality is only decided upon by the consensus of the majority, and all perceptions that are beyond question are considered to be real. However the mystical world of ancient tradition and human imagination splits western culture between those who adhere to spiritual tradition, and those who see it all as insignificant rubbish that has no further part to play in the growth of human understanding. Whether it is a belief in *horoscopes* and *clairvoyance* or simply an instinctual care not to break codes of superstition such as *walking under ladders* or *crossing black cats*, the unreasoned influence of cultural tradition effects the lives millions of people who live in the western world. Unsurprisingly it is people who still believe in the existence of the Christian god, who are more likely to respect the superstitious subculture of their society.

Spiritually, there is still much to be disproved by science and, until science successfully masters nature and provides humanity with ultimate knowledge, then spirituality and divination will continue to hold an element of irresistible curiosity for many people. A firm belief in the spiritual elements of life not only offers hope and comfort to those who want to believe, but can actually change the way that people perceive existence, and so can fundamentally alter the course of their lives. Of course, the notion of *ultimate science* appears totally unrealistic, but that is the direction in which we as an intellectually curious species are travelling. In the modern world therefore, the perception of 'spirituality' continues to provide people with both trivial amusement and beneficial advice that can help them overcome stress and disillusionment with life. However, people parading as '*psychics*', '*astrologers*', '*clairvoyants*' or '*spiritual healers*' are also the source of often misleading information, because the quest for money, success and power will readily masquerade behind a veil of righteousness or divine inspiration.

Today, weaker and insubstantial predictions occur in abundance, and often gain as much coverage as the more accurate ones that are based on scientific reason. In a world dominated by science and technology, divination persists and has, in fact, grown stronger because of it. As we are able to understand more and more through a greater ability to reason, we are also able to perceive of more connections that link accepted fact to the spiritual beliefs of our distant ancestors. Indeed, as we live in a world of mass media and global communications, we truly have begun to return to a state of *collective unconscious*. Ultimately we are a single tribe that is in need of returning to the state of shared conscious perception that we had before our species expanded and inhabited the four corners of the Earth. Indeed, whilst that may never happen, by the turn of the new century millions of people living in developed nations actually possessed a direct link to the entire human world their own homes (*in the form of the 'Internet'*). Thanks to today's technology, we have instant access to every culture in the world, and can now share human experiences in real time, with cultures far removed from our own. Ultimately, what binds us as human is greater than that which divides us.

Greater knowledge naturally breeds new ideas and beliefs. Indeed many modern spiritual perceptions could not even exist without the aid of science. From the culturally misguided *pyramid prophecies* made by European Egyptologists in the 1920's, to the many religious myths and prophecies that have originated from the southern French village of *Rennes-le-Château*, science has played its part in perpetuating irrational beliefs. Both of these are examples of spiritual myths that have been subjected to pseudoscientific interpretation. Were it not for the use of scientific tools to undertake investigations that are seen to back up psychic belief, then the prophetic realms of the imagination, would not have survived the scientific endeavours of modern culture. An accurate prediction of events yet to come is an extremely difficult task to achieve because the pattern of the future is ever-changing in relation to decisions and actions that we take in the present moment. However through logical reasoning or intuitive perception, accurate prediction is possible, though many methods of spiritual prediction originate from fanciful imagination.

Astrology is most widespread aspect of trivial divination in the western world. It provides western culture with a wealth of unscientific observations, many of which are accrued by increasingly scientific means. Predictions based on astrological significance are amongst the more tenuous methods of intuitive divination. For example, the enormous amount of mystical significance attributed to the '**Grand Cross**'; a unique configuration of the planets in 1999 had prompted many astrologers to predict a series of Earthly catastrophes. From the time of the last solar eclipse of the millennium to the '**Great Conjunction**' in the year 2000, the Earth was seen by many predictors to undergo a series of cataclysmic upheavals ranging from *earthquakes floods* and *volcanoes*, to widespread *social unrest* and *global war*. This period of human struggle, for many astrologers, was intrinsically connected to a particular alignments of the planets. However, these wild astrological predictions illustrated the fact that, as long as people are interested enough and want to believe in irrational concepts, there are many others out there who are willing to feed their imaginations.

The 20th century saw a rise in the popularity of many once subdued spiritual traditions. Almost as a form of amusement, activities such as *seances*, *tarot*, *clairvoyance* and *palmistry* returned from a forbidden subculture, and are now free to be expressed openly. Divination has once more been allowed to flourish in the free western world which, having become the quintessential culture of modern intellect, is still unable to totally satisfy an uncertain populace. Through the scientific reasoning of today however we have come to recognise the importance of archetypes and the laws of nature that connect us all via our unique human consciousness. Our primal fears and desires are invariably the same, regardless of culture, and the *collective unconscious* that has built around our continually evolving perceptions is common to us all.

Over the many thousands of generations of human existence there has been a build up of myths and archetypes and, in our connected family tree, new minds evolve from ancestral experiences. Divination and the spiritual world exists as a result of our intuitive imagination, yet our imaginations are controlled by the boundaries of physical reality, and the social cultures in which we are raised. In our *dreams* however, our emotions are not constrained by the socially imposed rules of waking reality. In dream sleep, imagination is free to run wild, and so presents us with situations, many of which would be considered impossible in the waking world. Yet western society is gradually comprehending the importance of dreams. For it is from our dreams that we learn, by absorbing the information of our waking hours, and so giving us the ability to intellectually evolve. It is only from our imagination that we experience inspiration, and all innovations that contribute to our human world originate in the minds of individuals, often as a result of a dream.

Our increased understanding of the sciences that define the rules of nature have given us greater insight into our own psychological make-up, which has inevitably led to a return to *dream divination*. By consciously interacting with dream images, it becomes easier to take a firm control of the direction of our waking lives and shape our own futures. Modern sleep research has taught us a great deal about the fascinating workings of the human mind. Furthermore the psychological changes that occur in

dreams has led to a postulated connection between the human brain and the quantum world of subatomic particles. Modern dream divination interprets dreams in a variety of ways, whereas for most ancient cultures, 'dreams' mark the other side of a threshold which separates waking reality with another dimension of the mind. Our dreams are indeed alternate dimensions that absorb us entirely appearing as real to us as our waking experiences do when we are conscious and alert.

Recognition of the skill and importance of *lucid dreaming* is an art that has been revered in nearly every culture of mankind. The ability to attain consciousness whilst remaining within a sleeping dream is an ability to defy the narrow logic of conscious reasoning. Through lucid dreams it is possible to change the environment of the dream world, and gain total control over the dimension in which you find yourself. Only through lucid dreams can an unenlightened individual experience total control over their lives. During waking hours, people are restricted by physical boundaries and by the mindset of their culture, whilst unconscious during dream sleep, the power to act is suppressed by emotion. Yet in our dreams our senses are far more active than when we are awake, so by attaining a state of lucidity, dreamers are actually able to communicate through mutual visions, witness events that are yet to come, and even influence the perceptions of others. Ultimately the ability to control the sleeping world gives a greater control in the waking world, and it is seen by many spiritual traditions as a major step on the path to personal enlightenment and the emergence of the inner-self.

The habit of keeping a dream journal has been encouraged in nearly every spiritual culture, and the importance of doing this is recognised as having an enormous benefit to the dreamer. By recording our dreams upon waking we become privy to *patterns* of dreams that would not ordinarily be seen with an intellectually conditioned 'waking mind'. By studying the phenomenon of dreams, we have started to recognise how intuition reigns free only when we disengage from our conscious mind. Many elements of *déjà vu* and *precognition* can be traced back to the unfolding events that first occurred within a personal dream.

There is even a train of thought that theorises on our physical world being just one in an *infinite* number of parallel universes. It proposes that every time each one of us makes a decision or actions an event, our physical reality branches off in a particular direction. It suggests that physical reality is dictated by our personal contributions, and that for every new course that we take, another exists in a dimension not expressed in our own physical realm. Such a concept arises from the application of *science* to *fiction*. Indeed, popular writers of the last couple of centuries have captivated the imagination of millions, and the irresistible topic of prediction has inspired a range of new cultures within the body of western tradition. Novelists such as 'Mary Shelly', 'Jules Verne' and 'H.G Wells', have all been inspirations in striving to foresee the future and our presence in it.



Scientifically speaking, the 20th century heralded an age of increasingly accurate predictions. Predictions based on the logic of science and reason will often use

computer technology. With modern computers, scientists are able to simulate any given situation, and can analyse every possible interaction by containing models of the chaotic universe within programs that are fundamentally based on the principles of logic. Meteorological predictions (*that is the forecasting of weather*) is the most commonly illustrated example of human technology's increasing accuracy and its capability to give us prophetic insight.

As the human species embarks upon its third millennium since the birth of Christianity (*mankind's most influential religion*), the world of tomorrow is being played out in research laboratories and think tanks in every developed nation on Earth. Science is intrinsically involved in the art of anticipating the future; encroaching on the intuitive aspects of existence that traditionally belong to the human psyche.

The most famous of scientific forays into the traditional territory of prophets and spiritual leaders, is the **RAND** think tank set up in Santa Monica, California. '**RAND**' (*Research and Development*) originates from the US Army's endeavours to employ cutting-edge technology in order to gain military advantage during the Cold War, and, indeed, to predict the outcomes of any given wartime scenario. Since its creation in 1949, **RAND** has tackled the possibilities of everything from nuclear war, to testing expensive space technology without actually having to physically launch it. It is also involved in predicting the future world economy, based on our knowledge of natural resources, and projecting the outcome of computer technology if it continues to advance at the present rate. However one fundamental aspect of prediction is that accuracy is compromised whenever present trends are simply projected into the future. Computers at **RAND** therefore attempt to predict the unpredictable by taking into account every possible factor that could potentially effect the outcome.

There are numerous super-computers designed for military use around the world, some of which use prediction to model the outcomes of various conflicts. At the turn of the century, for example, a program (*named MACH 3*) became available (*to selected American nuclear scientists*) that could calculate the precise course of events within a series of specified nuclear explosions. Since then, the use of **AI** has further improved military defence systems around the world, enabling even greater accuracy. By employing algorithms that can methodically emphasise each possibility in turn whenever a war unfolds, there are now systems capable making increasingly accurate predictions about its conclusion (*as applied through various models of reality*). Indeed, our ability to make increasingly accurate predictions about the future has encouraged the development of scientific groups such as the '**World Future Society**'. Commercial interest in the prophetic sciences is high too, and all multinational corporations employ people purely to project the future demand for their products, and anticipate the outcome of different policies.

So the story of mankind's attempt to predict the future ends where it began; with **mathematics**. The modern proposition that forms the basis of scientific prediction is one of **mathematical induction**. From *binary logic*, to the development of *silicon chips*; integrated circuits that can contain several million components, the logic of simple mathematics, has been applied to human technology to create a world of

scientific marvel and wonder. Through modern technology, a growing number of people have access to *symbolic computation systems*, and so both science and the accuracy of prediction increasingly benefit. Moreover, modern technology has enabled scientists and mathematicians to answer long-standing questions relating to dynamic (*chaotic*) systems which, in turn, has allowed a greater freedom to think about complex ideas without the problem of tedious calculation and the worry of human error. New perspectives on reality are continually being uncovered and computer technology has taken us to the brink of a new era in human evolution.



Part 3
The Personalities (historic)

*“Our reasons are not prophets
When oft our fancies are.”*

~ William Shakespeare ‘The Two Noble Kinsmen’ (1614)

i.

(An inclination of pessimism)

Placed in the mixing pot of what is the ‘*human collective unconscious*’, astrology, tarot, religious prophesy and other spiritual beliefs and practices have served to strengthen the pessimistic traditions of ‘*eschatology*’. In the west, eschatology takes the form of orthodox Semitic doctrines that refer to the end of the world and the perception of life after death. Apocalyptic prophesies go back to the Hebrew Torah (*or Christian Old Testament*) and are equally a part of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. This concept of physical resurrection was adopted by early Christians as a reward for living a life of righteousness, and gradually developed into the idea of an end to *Earthly time* when only believers would find salvation. Indeed, eschatology attaches moral significance to what is seen as the inexorable march towards ultimate destruction of life on Earth.

Whilst in Islamic eschatology, the end of the world is described as a time when the Earth is consumed by fire and flood in the guise of **Gog** and **Magog** (*an old testament prophesy*), Christian eschatology perceives these and other apocalyptic visions as a time of ultimate judgement. Many Christian cults believe in the perception of ‘*Judgement Day*’ as a time that will precede a second coming of ‘*Christ the Messiah*’ who will return to resurrect the ‘faithful’ following a final battle with the *antichrist*. A common belief was that *Armageddon* would occur in the final year of the millennium, though most fanatical believers in Christian eschatology still visualise a day of judgement when the souls of the righteous will be salvaged and impure souls cast into the eternal damnation of hell. Initially a fear of Judgement Day encouraged recruitment into the early church, and today it remains a perception that is prominent amongst many modern pseudo-Christian cults from the *Seventh Day Adventists* to the *Jehovah's Witnesses*.

In the first millennium of Christian rule, the year 1000CE had a great significance attached to it by medieval Christians. Being 1000 years from the birth of Jesus, it was anticipated that it would herald the second coming of *Christ*. When the year passed without fulfilling the prophesy, the next date for religious fervour and apocalyptic imminence was 1033 CE, being 1000 years after the crucifixion of Jesus. 33 years later however in northern Europe, the Norman conquest of Britain in 1066 re-ignited eschatological doom and fear, increasing support for the notion of an apocalyptic demise of the Earth. It encouraged the development of ‘*Endtime sects*’ throughout medieval Europe, who revered the ‘*Book of Revelation*’ and used it in attempts to convince mainstream Christendom that Judgement Day would one day come. Dates of presumed significance came and went without cataclysmic incidents, notably the year 1666, which combines the number of the beast in the Book of Revelation, with the millennial tradition of Christian rebirth.

The most prominent years in Christian eschatology however occurred at the end of the second millennium. 1999 is an inverse to 1666, and of course the year 2000 itself held a great deal anxious anticipation. The whole transition period from the 2nd into the 3rd millennium was filled with dates of perceived significance and, as the 20th century drew to a close, the prophets of death and destruction significantly increased in number.



There are an abundance of people who claim to be able to foresee *human destiny*. Yet, although many come up with a similar scenario of apocalyptic destruction, there is an array of significant dates which differ from one sect to another. This illustrates just how inaccurate most so called prophets are. In nearly all cases of people who claim to behold divine revelations, their visions of the future will have originated from graphic nightmares or vivid dreams that they have remembered and simply interpreted according to their own prejudicial beliefs. Moreover, as there was a heightened sense of the millennium as being something big (*a year that has been anticipated throughout Christian history*), many prophetic leaders drew upon the haunting prospect of Armageddon, and added their own definition of redemption and salvation.

There have been countless self-proclaimed prophets throughout history and, of course, many exist today. Inevitably most of these inexperienced impostors are exposed when their predictions fail to materialise. However many gain inference from other events around the world to justify a non-event, and of course there is always something that can be pointed to that will *lessen* the inaccuracies of their prediction. **‘Charles Taze Russell’**, founder of the *Jehovah’s Witness* movement for example, predicted 1914 as the year of Jesus’ second coming, and many people under his influence had total faith in his revelation. When 1914 came and went without an appearance, the *‘Watch Tower Movement’* attached religious significance to the world war that had started, whilst insisting that **‘Christ the Messiah’** had arrived but was invisible.

Prophecy, like every other aspect of existence can be analysed and broken down into basic laws that tend to apply to it. The first person to make a comprehensive study of prophecy was British author and psychic researcher **‘Peter Lemesurier’** who, in 1993, described seven laws that govern predictions and the likelihood of their fulfilment. He identified several aspects of prediction which are repeatedly illustrated within the prophecies of the past. What Lemesurier describes in his ultimate law as *‘non-existent impossibility’* is an undeniable fact of life ~ that is; if something can happen, it will!

In the logical context of ‘analysing existence’; if something has never happened before then, by definition, it is impossible until the point that it actually occurs. Climbing ‘Mount Everest’ was impossible until **‘Edmund Hillary’** conquered it in 1953 and running the four minute mile was impossible until **‘Roger Bannister’** achieved it in 1954. Since then both feats have been achieved on many occasions, and we now recognise that neither tasks are impossible. Indeed when referring to a time before these human achievements were realised, we would correctly say that prior to the exploits of Hillary and Bannister, these goals were *‘considered to be impossible’*, whereas it was once widely believed that they actually *were* impossible. In other words if something is recognised today as being completely impossible, and can never happen, then it just

might occur sometime in the future, when the beliefs of today are proven wrong, because ultimately *'everything'* is possible. It just needs the discovery of a logical process with which to be achieved.

Another aspect of prophesy is one of *'surprise fulfilment'*, whereby the most likely outcome is one which only very few people are actually able to anticipate correctly. Indeed Lemesurier recognised the fact that prophetic visions are unable to be expressed in the exact way that they are seen. Moreover the interpretation of the *'seer'* is dependant on their own culture so, not only is a dreamed vision likely to be taken out of context by the prophet themselves, but their inability to neutrally interpret its meaning without the influence of their own culture means that it is often misread.

In the same vein, a prophet may be revered for the accuracy of predictions in their lifetime, but long-term predictions, such as those by **'Nostradamus'**, are far more difficult to get right. Prophecies of the distant past become interpreted differently in different cultures, and their perceived meanings change through the ages, so the interpretation of a vision may appear wayward. Indeed only a prophet of equal ability could accurately interpret the predictions that remain as legacies to celebrated prophets that have long since gone. This in turn is identified with an aspect of *'diminishing accuracy'*, whereby prophecies that mature within the prophet's lifetime are bound to be more accurate than those based on events far into the future. Indeed it is far easier to draw conclusions with the familiar facts of the present age and so be able to foresee obvious consequences that are *'waiting to happen'*. The accuracy of lifetime predictions are far greater because ultimately there are less *'changes'* to be considered, whereas in longer periods of time the world will change beyond the wildest imaginations of anyone who does not live to see it.

This inexorable course of continual change that we mark as the *passage of time*, dictates our entire waking lives, yet when we dream, time does not exist to us. It is here in the realms of the imagination that many prophets through history have predicted future events with uncanny accuracy. Biblical prophecies pertaining to the end of the world provide examples of how predictions have been interpreted various ways through the ages. They also highlight another aspect; that of *prejudicial inference* whereby established religions or political allegiance inevitably thwart the accuracy of predictions, and most prophets base their visions and interpretations of symbols on their own beliefs. Examples of this include **'Saint Malachy'**, whose accurate predictions made in 1139 were centred on 112 remaining successors to the papacy, right up to the pope of the apocalypse in 2009. The devout Christian upbringings of **'Robert Menzies'** and **'Jeanne Dixon'** also influenced their perception of the future. In 1865 Robert Menzies united Egyptian geometry with biblical chronology and sculpted the first pyramid prophecies, whilst in 1962 the misguided visions of 'Jeanne Dixon' proclaimed that the movements of the *'Antichrist'* would be exposed in 1999. Dixon achieved far greater accuracy in predictions that were based in her native American culture than she did when attempting to predict world affairs and global consequences.

Then there is the aspect of prophetic self-fulfilment. This law of prophesy again is a fundamental part of human existence. If you believe something to succeed badly enough, then it invariably will, for the decisions you take in the present moment reflect your

beliefs, and shape the consequences of the future. Likewise half-hearted attempts are usually doomed to failure. If a prophecy is held with such reverence that it becomes embedded in culture, then there is the force of many people willing it to come true, or if it is a prophecy of destruction, many minds are overtly wary of it. The followers of spiritual leaders, and the people who inherently comply with the traditions of their culture will subconsciously live their lives in accordance with specific prophecies yet to be realised.

The most powerful examples of this aspect of wilful self-fulfilment are the prophecies identified with '**Moses**'; who lived in the 13th century **BCE**. He predicted that the Israelites would be driven from their land as a consequence of breaking their covenant with *God*. Having been forewarned of an unpleasant future that would become ingrained in their culture, the Jewish people became increasingly less willing to defend themselves against the succession of invaders of their land. Believing it to be their destiny to suffer, the Jewish people became resigned to continual persecution and enslavement, often seeing the hand of divine retribution in the actions of their enemies, so most put up no resistance to their tormentors. The result of this was that the prophecies that they so readily believed in were brought upon themselves by their own actions. Moreover, it is highly likely that many prophecies attributed to Moses were actually written by Hebrew scholars, many hundreds of years after his death, and these scriptures overtime were added to the *Torah* with the intention of reaffirming religious laws and the divine consequences of disobeying them.

Although a religious culture will often adhere to the prophecies that have been established in its ancient history, at an individual level, historic prophecies are often played out by people who see themselves as the subjects of powerful visions of prophets of the past. '**Adolf Hitler**', for example, associated himself with the powerful '*Hister*' and the '*great priest of the party of Mars*' described in the prophecies of Nostradamus, and used it to his advantage, turning it into valuable propaganda aimed at unsettling his enemies. Yet Hitler himself was not master of prophecy, and neither are a vast majority of the many thousands of people who proclaim themselves as prophets and spiritual leaders around the world today.

People who claim to be prophets, but who are actually misled by their own delusions, tend to make more obvious interpretations of their presumed insight, and so are far more likely to be proved wrong. Yet there was a definite trend which saw a growing number of *false prophets* come out of the woodwork at the end of the 20th century, each proclaiming a path of righteousness ~ and it's a trend that continues today. Few have any tangible psychic ability, but those that did attain a degree of accuracy often misread their visions, because beside being affected by cultural preconceptions, visions are only '*snapshots*' of a much wider picture. After all the present moment is experienced through a huge number of perspectives, whereas a vision of the future presents just a single aspect of what could happen, which can be very misleading.



Many predictions through the ages centred around a perceived apocalypse that was to hail the dawn of the new millennium. The years 1999 and 2000 were full of apprehension, because there is a psychological tendency to conjure up an array of hopes

and fears whenever we are confronted with the perception of *endings* and *new beginnings*. The year 2000 heralded a new era, but only in numeric terms. It is human imagination which has made it out to be a far bigger event. Much of the anxieties concerning the new millennium had stem from misconceptions and misunderstandings of famous prophecies. The year 1000 saw widespread panic as medieval society was thrown into chaos by doomsday preachers, leading to mass pilgrimages to the *holy land*. Intellectually, we have evolved considerably since then, however communities of like-minded people who place faith before reason are still susceptible to mass delusion and hysteria. So it was proven, at the turn of the new millennium, when even mainstream culture was affected by the collective anxieties of countless different communities (*from tele-evangelists to extremist political groups*), as well as a growing number of darker predictions from popular tabloid psychics and astrologers.

The perception of what is essentially no more than a numerical landmark, was seen as the dawn of a new era in many ways. The religious viewpoint of an Earthly destruction by 'God' who will save only the true believers, was shared by many separate Christian sects. Moreover with the 2nd millennium being dominated by Christianity, for some fundamentalist religious groups the 3rd millennium presents an ideal time to create a new world order. There is also the pseudo-political viewpoints that perceive the new millennium as a time of social uprisings, whether it is by right-wing extremists who see the dawn of a new Aryan race, or by those who see it as a new era of black emancipation. There is even a body of scientific belief that supports the notion of *millennial catastrophe*, which has arisen from a growing awareness of how delicately balanced our existence is, not least through mankind's greed and malevolence.

The fact that everyday there are a growing number of people who have access to weapons of mass destruction illustrates a darker side of mankind that is only balanced by a greater 'moral awareness' in the western world. Yet there are countless people around the world (*including within the ranks of western society*), who are led by '*the hate of others*' and have the ability to make crude chemical or biological weapons that could wipe out thousands of people. Indeed, many religious and political fanatics would clearly like to cause catastrophic disruption to western society and bring about its downfall. As the new millennium unfolds, so the likelihood increases that one or more of these groups will successfully commit such a crime against a democratic state that could threaten the established world order.

Further up the pecking order of power, many nations and sovereign states possess the ability to destroy whole cities, nations and civilisations. Indeed the huge number of chemical, biological and nuclear warheads in the arsenals of the world make popular interpretations of the prophecies of '**Saint John**' and '**Nostradamus**' seem plausible to so many people that the aspect of prophetic self-fulfilment is not far from becoming reality. We know that mutually assured destruction is not an impossibility, which makes it all the more frightening to most people who pause to think about it. However most people choose to deny the possibility of nuclear annihilation because the emotional stress of worrying about it makes it extremely unpleasant to contemplate, and so society continues to disregard *natural law* in favour of material indulgence.

Societies are ever-changing, and human civilisation has never stood still since its inception nearly 6000 years ago. Social change continually occurs either gradually through democratic means, or more often through revolt and war. Today's weapons of mass destruction, be they nuclear, chemical or biological, are an ever-present threat to the continuing perception of western culture and a global modern consciousness.





ii.

(Prophecy through the Ages [The early days])

Prophecy can be a powerful career. There are many people who claim to speak from divine inspiration and, although most are considered to be touched by madness, a growing number are genuinely believed in. In particular, those who demonstrate their ability to foretell the future with consistently accurate predictions are often able to convince people that their beliefs must be right. For many people prophecy and leadership can become a lucrative business and an efficient way of accruing material wealth, respect, and power. However there are also many people (*the genuine prophets*) whose ability to predict the possibilities of the future are used to the benefit of everyone without personal gain. These *seers* live their lives without the fame and fortune that accompanies the majority with *dishonourable* intent.

The lives of several ancient Chinese sages illustrate this point well. ‘**Kongfuzi**’ (*better known in the west as Confucius*) dedicated his life to building an ethical structure for society based on morality and compassion. He did it for the sake of the masses; that is to relieve suffering amongst the poor, rather than to build up a personal power base within his own lifetime. Whilst being a genius with clear insight, Kongfuzi’s lack of material ambition meant that he spent most of his life wandering from state to state teaching. Yet his legacy lived on in the ethical system known as **Confucianism**, forming the social principles of the world’s largest culture for more than 2000 years.

Another philosopher who lived over 2500 years ago in ancient China was ‘**Lao Zi**’, considered to be the founding father of **Taoism**. Lao Zi, like Kongfuzi, was not interested in personal wealth. He simply wished to enlighten people of ‘*the way*’ to live in harmonious interaction with the environment. What Lao Zi and Kongfuzi did not do was to enforce their philosophies either physically or with a threat of pestilent prediction, yet the backbone of most religious authorities (*particularly in western culture*) is the reverence of a feared force. However, 160 years after the death of Lao Zi, came a philosopher named ‘**Chuang Tzu**’, who took the notion of Taoism further by adding his own observations and teachings to it. Taoism was still described as the hidden principle of the universe, but Chuang Tzu had introduced an element that was hostile to Confucianism, and so reaffirmed his own authority. He did this because the biggest single threat to his power base were the teachings of Kongfuzi, a sage who, since his death over 100 years earlier, had become the most important spiritual focus of Chinese culture in its entire history.



Until the births of **Buddhism** and **Jainism**, China was the only culture that centred around advanced philosophical perceptions. In ancient China, **astrology** also played a major role in the development of culture, and was mostly used to confirm the ethical behaviour of society. Further west, however, having less emphasis on philosophy and

more on religious interpretation, astrology developed many different aspects of adherence to the *signs of the skies*.

Whilst being used to reaffirm the divine authority of spiritual and religious leaders, observing the skies allowed all early civilisations to measure very longer periods of *time*. The cyclical system of time was defined by the Egyptians, for example, having developed an astronomical concept known as the '*precession of the equinoxes*'. This concept forms the basis of virtually all modern western astrology. Seers of the past drew enormous significance to the universal rotation of the known planets, and astrological calculations were centred around their astral positions in relation to their original positions on the day of creation. Most astrologers, prophets and philosophers of the ancient world put great importance on heavenly bodies, and all associated the cyclical patterns of the planets with the natural life cycles on Earth. But from culture to culture there was little consistency as to what constituted a full cycle or '*Great Year*'.

With scientific understanding into the universal laws of nature, we know today that the Earth sways in similar fashion to a spinning gyroscope, caused by the gravitational effect of the Sun being offset by the steadying motion of the Moon. This continuing '*wobble*' in the axis of rotation gradually alters the positions of the galaxies, stars and planets within the observable night sky. By extending an imaginary line outward from the Earth's poles, this natural phenomenon known as the Earth's *precession*, slowly traces out a circle in the opposite direction to the Earth's daily rotation. As the *celestial poles* move, so therefore do the co-ordinates of stars within the night sky. Through mathematical calculation it has been deduced that the circle traced out by the at the current inclination of 23.45° means the Earth's axis takes 25,800 years to complete this circuit of the equinoxes, which is today called the '**Platonic Year**' (or '*Great Year*').

The boundary of the *celestial sphere* naturally follows the line of the horizon, and on the 21st of March the Sun's plane (or *elliptic*) crosses the equator, marking the beginning of spring when the days grow longer and the nights shorter. Known as the *vernal equinox*, this marked the start of a new year in most ancient calendars. With the skies divided into the twelve *zodiacs* by the ancient Greeks, the equinox was originally aligned to the astrological constellation of '**Aries**', but over time, the Earth's precession has the effect of altering the equinoxes, aligning them to a different zodiac approximately every 2,150 years. Contained within the Great Year are many epochs of planetary conjunctions which are associated with developments in human civilisation. However, for nearly 2000 years astrological charts have not been updated, and those drawn up at the height of Hellenistic culture in the 1st century **BCE**, became increasingly inaccurate as the years passed. The sequence was lost through the early dark ages that befell Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire and, being suppressed by the dominance of Christianity, astrology did not gain widespread popularity again until the 16th century. The historical charts of ancient astrologers and prophets became used at face value without being updated, so consequently the zodiacs are not aligned to the original constellations with which they were originally associated.

Most of today's Astrologers and fortune tellers base their predictions on Hellenistic systems of Astrology, much of which has been adapted from Egyptian practices. Although the Astrological calendar traditionally begins with Aries, the Sun does not

actually pass through Aries until late April, in effect moving the spring equinox into **Pisces**. Yet there are so many interpretations of zodiacal constellations and their presumed astral significance that modern astrology has become somewhat lost, preferring to use the technology of the modern age to gain accuracy in their various assertions, rather than applying the intuitive inclination of ancient cultures. Many modern astrologers, for example, believe that humanity will enter the '**Age of Aquarius**' in the not too distant future, when mankind will finally turn to wisdom in preference to knowledge. However there is an array of interpretations from western astrologers who exist in a modern culture that suffers from an overload of information. Beliefs pertaining to the beginning of the 'Age of Aquarius' are wide ranging, and whilst most predictions fall between years 2020, to 2100 some even believe that this mythical age has already arrived.

Just as today, many people in society instinctively pay attention to their '*natal horoscopes*', astrological significance played a major part in Hellenistic society, and was of great interest to many philosophers of ancient Greece. '**Zeno of Citium**', for example, believed that as sure as the cyclical movements of the skies followed a set pattern, so history on Earth was destined to repeat itself in line with the universal forces above; making the prediction of future events definitely possible. Another notable Greek mathematician and Philosopher was '**Pythagoras**' who lived over 130 years earlier, in the 6th century **BCE**. Besides having great mathematical insight, Pythagoras built a philosophical community around the notion of immortality through transmigration of the soul, because he figured that, as the universe perpetually exists, so do we. By the 2nd century **CE**, the idea that the Sun, stars and planets formed a universe of interlocking spheres which effected every aspect of existence was confirmed by Egyptian astronomer and mathematician '**Ptolemy**'. In his studies of astrology, Ptolemy concludes that there is an irresistible force in the stars that influences events on Earth including the lives and experiences of every living soul.





iii.

(Prophecy through the Ages [Of Hebrew tradition])

Following the recovery from the dark ages, Christian prophecies began to take over the conscious perceptions of the European peoples. The loss of freedom to participate in ancient spiritual practices in the west, and the domination of Christianity, meant that astrological significance was relegated to the work of 'evil practices' and the '**Bible**' became the only word of truth. This need to fulfil written prophecies is an inherent part of Semite tradition, and began long before the birth of Christianity as both a route to power and an escape from poverty and obscurity.

Beginning with the exaggerated exploits of '**Abraham**' who is said to have lived around 4300 years go, it is Hebrew tradition and culture that has shaped the spiritual perceptions of Semitic communities in the Middle East. Ancient Judaism gave rise to Christianity, and so has had a profound effect on the perceptions of a dominant western world. Semitic tradition has produced plenty of biblical prophets which, beginning with the mythical figure of '**Adam**', include '**Elijah**', '**Isaiah**', '**Amos**', and a host of others. In Christian tradition, '**Malachi**', who lived some 400 before Jesus, was the last of the Hebrew prophets to be recorded in biblical scripture, though the '**Book of Daniel**' was updated around 130 years before the birth of '**Christ**'.

The single most important Hebrew prophet to emerge was '**Yoshua Ben Joseph**' (*Jesus son of Joseph*) who was to split the religious world. Regarded as '**Christ the Messiah**' by Christians, for most Jews he remained as just another prophet whose following made him a threat to Hebrew authority. After being crucified he became seen as everything from a martyred revolutionary to a god incarnate. However, this '*meek Messiah*' failed to bring peace to Palestine, and so was not considered to be the true Messiah by the Hebrew authorities. Although he was a preacher of love and compassion in the name of God, the religion that grew in his name was anything but meek and pacifistic. Christianity became a powerful religion that was to dominate Europe, and was the source of the medieval crusades into Palestine which massacred all non-Christians in preparation for his 'second coming'.

Nearly 600 years after the life of Jesus, another great prophet was to arise from Semite tradition. This one, '**Mohammed**', created a religion that originated amongst the Arabic-speaking world. It was the armies of this third Semitic religion, '**Islam**', that finally expelled the Christian crusaders in 1244. They too regarded Jesus (*or 'Isa'*) as just a prophet, referring to him as an '*apostle of Allah*'.

Semite culture has historically been ruled by divine inspiration. In the words of the prophet Amos, "*The Lord hath spoken*", and those with prophetic insight could often wield great power. Hebrew priests, and Rabbinical scholars made sure that the words of the prophets who reaffirmed the Jewish faith were immortalised in scripture. '**Ezekiel**' was known to remain in a trance for many days after his visions, whilst '**Daniel**' is said to have often been violently sick after the emotional strain of his prophecies. Yet not only

were their lives and prophecies well publicised, but the act of *living out their prophecies* was enforced by a strict adherence to Jewish culture. Isaiah, for example, foretold of rise of Babylon, and a manipulation of scripture by the Hebrew authorities ensured that the prophecies of old were seen to come true.

There is a long history of Hebrew prophecies reaffirming the authority of the *Torah* and other sacred books of Jewish law. It is also known that the biblical scholars and priests who studied the Torah and sat in the *Sanheredin* (*the Jewish supreme court*), were closely associated with the '*Pharisees*' ~ a conservative Jewish sect in the 2nd century BCE that were hostile to the Hellenistic infiltration of Jewish culture. Inevitably there was a Hebrew prediction that foretold of the death of '*Alexander the Great*', yet it was ascribed to Daniel who lived some four centuries earlier. As long as credibility remained in the historic prophecies of the Torah, then power was afforded to Hebrew authority. Ultimately it didn't matter whether a prophecy was indeed accurate or whether it was attributed to a revered prophet long after his death, so that is exactly what the guardians of the Hebrew culture did.

There are over 300 predictions in the Old Testament relating to the life of a Messiah, (*a title that the Christian bestowed upon Jesus*). As far as the end of human time is concerned, there are many perceptions in Christian belief that may have started the apocalyptic clock ticking, from the destruction of the '*Temple Mount*' in CE 70, to the creation of the Jewish state in 1948. Both the Old and New Testaments have an abundance of material that ignite the fears of Christian eschatologists. The last chapter of the '*Book of Daniel*', for example, contains a numerically coded timescale attributed to the '*Lord*' in answer to Daniel's question of how long his wonders will last. The translation of lines such as '*...time, times and an half of the 1290 days until abomination..*', and '*...1335 days until the blessed time of rest..*' have caused a great many people to analyse this prophecy. The most popular concept regards the number of days spoken by *God* as being years, and the belief that 70 CE was the year when the '*holy people*' began to scatter, made 2005 the first widely anticipated year after the turn of the 3rd millennium.

Hebrew prophets and scribes however generally approached the topic of the end of creation metaphorically within preachings of the Torah. Their purpose was to communicate the Hebrew law, and by adding to sacred scripture, their word became the word of God in the minds of the Jewish people. Many recent pessimistic prophecies of doom that relate to the new millennium are founded in Hebrew scripture, which can be readily associated with global events of the modern world. The 5th book of Moses called '*Deuteronomy*', for example, contains prophecies that foretold of the dispersal and persecution of the Jews, whilst the '*Book of Ezekiel*' tells of '*Gog*' an army of the north which will be defeated only by divine intervention. Many Christian theologians and Jewish Kabbalists believe that the visions of these ancient people were indeed real, yet if what they foresaw in their dreams was in fact nuclear war, then they would naturally put it down to the hand of '*God*', for they could not perceive of human armies with such destructive capability. To their primitive perceptions only '*God*' could reap such havoc.



The word **'millennium'** derives from the Latin **'mille'** (meaning a thousand) and **'annus'** (meaning year). It is a deeply symbolic span of time that has grown from Semitic tradition. A thousand years has great Christian significance too, with Christian culture originating in sacred Hebrew script, the *'Old Testament'* is rich in prophecies just waiting to be exploited by many latter day preachers. But most apocalyptic prophecies in Christian culture derive from the *'Book of Revelations'*. Here lies the prediction of a thousand years of peace on Earth following *'Christ's resurrection'*, and it promises a day of universal salvation afforded only the *righteous souls*. A thousand years, of course, has long since gone since the death of **'Jesus'**, yet the day when all will be judged is still regarded as a realistic prophesy in the minds of people whose Christian faith is somewhat fanatical. Despite the fact that, over the last two millennia, there have been many miscalculations in the measuring of time (*and the fact that world culture has adopted a scientific approach to reasoning*), the prospect of entering a new millennium still held a fascination, and millions of people were filled with expectations and anxieties about 2000 and beyond.

In the *'Gospel according to St. Mark'*, Jesus is said to have made some of his most intriguing prophecies; amongst them his own betrayal and the destruction of **'Herod's Temple'** (which was to fall some 40 years later). However many of his prophecies in the gospel are associated with modern world events by Christian eschatologists. He foretold, for example, of many men claiming to be Christ and many people being deceived by false messiahs. As man's reign on Earth approaches the *'end'*, he spoke of **"...many wars and rumours of wars..."** and a time **"...when nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom"**. He foresaw a time of famine, earthquakes, and storms surrounding an atmosphere of deceit where **"...brother shall betray the brother to death"**, leading up to Armageddon, which he referred to as **"...the abomination of desolation spoken by the prophet Daniel."**

Of course he reaffirmed the prophecies of doom that were later described in many editions of the Old Testament as signs of the second coming. In describing the aftermath of Armageddon, Jesus is quoted as saying, **"After the tribulation the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light..."** These words attributed to Jesus indeed could have been spoken by him following his prophetic visions, but they could just as easily have been added to the Gospels by scholars who constructed the New Testament with the aim of encouraging recruitment into the early church. Jesus, though believing himself to be the *'son of God'*, was a pacifist and the words credited to him are more likely to have originated from persuasive propaganda by the early church.

In the *'Gospel according to St. Luke'*, for example, Jesus goes on to speak of **"...signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations..."** a line that could fit the perceptions of people living at any time and in any culture. However with mankind's technological capabilities taking the human species beyond the imaginations of our distant ancestors, the perception of self-destruction becomes ever more plausible, making these biblical prophecies seem increasingly poignant.

By the 4th century CE, the New Testament had become the sacred doctrine of Christianity, but not before selective editing of the gospels by biblical scholars. The fifth *'Gospel of St. Thomas'* is a notable emission of the final Christian Bible. This lost

Gospel, along with the '*Gospel of Mary*', were maintained by early **Gnostic sects**, but banned by Christian authority. '**St. Thomas**' gives a far more accurate description of the life of Jesus, but undermined authority of the church with its Gnostic perspective that denied the infallibility of Jesus. Subsequently all copies of the fifth Gospel were banned and it was believed that there were none in existence as the church had ordered their destruction as heretical. In 1945 however, copies of St Thomas's Gospel and other sacred Gnostic texts were discovered in a cave in Nag Hammadi, Egypt, so modern scholars were at last able to study it and compare it to the official Gospels contained within the New Testament.

The Gospel of St. Thomas constitutes 114 sayings of Jesus. It does not conform to the orthodox Christian view of the life of Jesus, and makes no mention of a virgin birth, miracles, crucifixion and resurrection. There is no prophesying of an apocalypse in this unofficial Gospel either and of course no tampering by early Christian scribes. The ethics and theology of Gnostic sects were often radical in comparison to orthodox Christianity, and their various sacred texts appeared to deny the waiting for the creation of God's kingdom on Earth, suggesting instead that the *new world* is already here. The Jesus of Gnostic tradition claims that the kingdoms of God reside in each living person, which is a contradiction to the mythical 'heaven' that is hailed by the orthodox Christian establishment. In these unofficial writings he is quoted as saying, "**...But the kingdom is in your centre, and is about you. When you know yourselves then you will be known..**" Such a quote is in line with '*states of altered consciousness*' that were experienced by the apostles, most of whom were brought up with the **Kabbalist** tradition of astral travel and transcendence of the spirit of God.

The Gnostic Apocalypse is perceived as more of a disclosure of spiritual knowledge, than the cataclysmic interpretations applied to mainstream early Christianity. It appears that two schools of Christianity arose after the death of Jesus, and the one that accepted him as an apocalyptic saviour, eventually overcame the one that simply saw him as a martyred holy man. Yet in the religious fervour that accompanied this oppressed new religion prior to its adoption by the Roman Empire, the successors to the Christian church misconstrued spiritual resurrection with an actual physical resurrection of the flesh. Moreover, those who believed otherwise were often stoned for having dissenting beliefs, and the Gnostic mystical tradition of early Christianity became totally suppressed by the church.



Of the books that were finally included by the early Christian scholars, the '*Book of Revelation*' accredited to '**Saint John**' is the most disturbing. It is full of graphic imagery and foreboding warnings of the wrath of God which have continually stirred emotive speculation amongst Christians for nearly 2000 years. The book was cleverly constructed to deter a loss of faith and to rekindle religious fervour. St. John's visions are in familiar style with the much older Old Testament prophesies which were known to be a successful method of getting the masses to conform to social adherence.

It is in 'Revelation' that the New Testament confirms the prophesies of old, such as the idea of '*144,000 children of Israel*' to be '*taken into the arms of the Lord*' before the final

battle of Armageddon. This number of righteous souls is shared by *Jehovah's witnesses* and many other Christian sects who believe that their *flock* will be the only ones to survive the end of man's unholy reign on Earth. The visions of St. John reveal strikingly similar characteristics to prophecies of the Old Testament, yet are unlike any other books found in the New Testament. Many predictions founded in Christian faith have since arisen, and a large proportion point to the millennium as heralding the final battle prophesied by St. John. Many modern day prophets believe themselves to see hidden mystical meanings behind the visions credited to him. The Book of Revelation became the saviour of the Christian faith, and has had the most powerful impact on apocalyptic perceptions of succeeding generations, more so than any other book ever written.

The Book of Revelation was originally written on the Isle of Pátmos at a time when the followers of Christianity were under great persecution from Rome (*as were those who practised the religions of Ancient Greece*). Pátmos lies in the eastern Aegean and provided sanctuary for the biblical scholars who became the guardians of Christian scripture. It was in close proximity to the sacred site of '*Ephesus*'; a remaining bastion of ancient Ionian Greek religion and the centre of classical culture that still indulged the mystical cults. Ephesus (*mentioned several times in Revelation*) was seen as the source of cosmic mysteries and, united in fear of Roman persecution, the two cultures shared elements of mystical tradition. Indeed many of the mythical beasts described by St. John in his apocalyptic visions originate from sacred Egyptian mythology picked up from the mystery religions and were moulded around a Christian theme.

One of the common practices of priests participating in the mystery religions was the consuming of '*kykeon*' ~ a sacred drink made from many ingredients. It allowed them to reach levels of consciousness whereby they could experience the world of the gods. The main ingredient of this ritual brew was ergot-infected grain which, when immersed in water, creates a purple hallucinogenic drink. Ergotamine is a basic constituent of **LSD**; the powerful psychedelic drug first synthesised in the 1940's. As the bishop of Ephesus, before being exiled to Pátmos, St John would have shared such a drink with his oppressed comrades, and the symbolism of the Old Testament will have greatly influenced his ergot-induced visions.

In '*Revelation*', St. John wrote of the '*lamb breaking the seven seals that release the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, unleashing war, famine, death and disease upon the world.*' He went on to describe the most dramatic vision of the apocalypse within the entire Christian Bible. One of the visions described in Revelation concerns a '*star of heaven*', called '*Wormwood*', that falls to Earth and poisons the rivers. Since 1945 this particular vision has been interpreted by many people as a vision of atomic warfare. It also speaks of '*seven angels emptying seven vials over man, infecting the followers of the beast with a plague of sores*'; a line that has been interpreted by Evangelists and others as being the scourge of **AIDS**, whilst the '*...death of life in the seas*' is readily interpreted as man's irresponsible polluting of the environment. There is also mention of a '*..magnification of the power of the sun to burn mankind*' ~ a line that can be assimilated to the depletion of the ozone layer. Even the last solar eclipse of the millennium (*which passed over Europe and the parts of the Islamic world, including Turkey and Iran*) was assimilated to the '*..darkening of the kingdom of the beast*'.

The '*final vials of destruction emptied upon mankind*', as described in the last book of the Bible, for many people, relate to the final days of human civilisation. For example, one line speaks of the '*...drying of the river of the Euphrates in a sea of fire and brimstone*', to which some point to the likelihood of a nuclear detonation, whilst others have interpreted it as an invasion by Islamic fundamentalists in an endeavour to conquer the west. As for the final battle of Armageddon itself, the 'final vial' is said to '*poison the atmosphere*'; a notion which stimulates visions of the Earth in the wake of global war. It directs the imagination towards a perception of *biospheric destruction*, in which radiation along with biological and chemical toxins in the atmosphere wipe out the remainder of humanity.

St. John's Revelation contain visions that are shared by **Nostradamus** and many other celebrated prophets in the centuries that followed. But the Book of Revelation' is also seen to be an allegory of spiritual truths, and a mention of *the seven churches of Asia* has been assimilated to a spiritual unification with eastern religions and the concept of seven bodily *chakras*. Like the *fourth Gospel* and the '*Johannine Epistles*', the Book of Revelation is attributed to St. John the Divine, but as with all biblical scripture, they could have been written and altered by any number of Christian scholars or Greek and Hebrew converts.



Following the death of '**Jesus of Nazareth**', Christian culture spread westwards, so sacred scripture took on classical aspects of ancient Greece. Meanwhile orthodox Hebrew tradition remained rooted in Palestine, and works such as the '*Mishnah*' led to the development of the '*Talmud*', which reaffirmed Hebrew authority. Judaism gradually recovered from the turmoil of Christian separatism from its traditional culture. Until, that is, the 6th century CE when the Arabian prophet '**Mohammed**' founded the third major religion of '**Abraham**': - **Islam**. Islam, like Christianity and Judaism, has a spiritual focal point in the Palestinian city of Jerusalem. Although centred some 600 miles south in Mecca, Islam also reveres this '*holy city*' which, in Jewish myth, was created by the hand of God before ever being built upon by man.

Jerusalem is the Utopian focus of the three Semitic religions. It is deeply embedded in the Christian notion of building a '*New Jerusalem*', and within the city lies the 4th century *Church of the Sepulchre* which the Roman emperor '**Constantine**' had built after converting to Christianity. In the heart of the city lies a location sacred to Muslims and Jews alike, on what was originally the site of '**King Solomon's Temple**' and two other sacred Jewish temples that were successively destroyed. Today the site is marked by '**Dome of the Rock**', the second most sacred mosque to Islam after the '**Great Mosque**' in Mecca. The '**Mosque of Omar**', as it is often called, is the place where Mohammed's '*Night Journey*' took place, and where he was supposedly led by the angel '**Gabriel**' to be '*taken into the majesty of Allah*'. All that remains of the last Jewish temple ('*Herod's Temple*') that was demolished in CE 70, is the *Western Wall* which stands at the foot of the mighty mosque. The religious fervour here is great and the atmosphere edgy, as these distinct cultures that share a common origin, are also forced to share their sacred space. Indeed many Jewish fundamentalists are intent on pulling down the Islamic temple, whilst Islamic extremists would revel in the destruction of the '*Wailing*' wall. It is another

element in the potentially explosive atmosphere of the Middle East that has the potential to destroy civilisation itself.





iv.

(Prophecy through the Ages [The first millennium and beyond])

By the 2nd century CE, the downtrodden Palestinian Jews had lost much of their enthusiasm in the divine retribution against their oppressors and had placed their faith increasingly in mortal messiahs. In 132CE a failed revolt against Roman occupiers saw the death of '**Simon Bar Kokhba**' a Judean guerrilla leader who had accepted the title of '*Messiah*' to appease the oppressed people who needed to believe in him. His failed attempt to overthrow the Roman occupiers of Judea cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of Jews, and did much damage to the fabric of Jewish life in Palestine. This, the second major Jewish revolt against Roman occupation, led to the emperor '**Hadrian**' adopting a policy of further persecuting Palestinian Jews, and founding the Roman city of *Aelia Capitolina* on the site of Jerusalem.

The migration of Jews from Jerusalem throughout the 2nd century meant that they ceased to be in the majority. However the widely scattered Jewish community were held together by the strong bonds of their faith, reinforced by the '*Talmud*'. For the next 500 years, Palestine remained under Roman and then Byzantine rule, until being conquered by Islam in 637 CE.

By the 8th century, Islam, the religion of '**Mohammed**'s visions, had become widespread, stretching from Persia to the Pyrenees. In 750 CE though, Persian sect leader '**Abu Isa**' claimed to be the '*fifth and last messenger of the Messiah*', and attempted to overcome Islamic domination of Palestine with an army that was intended to clear the way for the Jews to return to the 'holy land'. His own religious philosophy was unique at the time, encouraging belief in both the Christian Gospels and the Islamic Qur'an. He considered the teachings of both '**Jesus**' and Mohammed to be equally valid, seeing them both as 'God's prophets. Indeed, to Abu Isa these biblical prophets simply expressed different interpretations of the word of God, and his beliefs incorporated elements of '**Karaism**' which accepted the '*Tanach*' (*the Jewish bible*) but denied all human additions to the Torah. However, Abu Isa was killed in battle against the newly empowered Abbasid dynasty of Islam, which crushed the prophetic dreams of 'this *would-be messiah* with an unrelenting force that demanded '*complete submission to the will of God*'; a belief that has brought about many fanatical ideas in the minds of numerous fundamentalist groups over the centuries. Throughout Christian Europe however, culture developed very differently. By the 8th century, early Christianity had begun to dominate much of Western Europe and had been suppressing the dreamed visions of people for several hundred years before the creation of Islam.

The separation of Roman Catholicism from the Eastern Orthodox Church in 1054 heralded the consolidation and then a diverse expansion of Christian belief. In the centuries that followed, there were many attempts to undermine a papal authority which dealt firmly with any heretical dissenters. Until the Reformation, some 460 years later, the Roman Catholic church effectively ruled the minds of most Europeans, whilst low moral standards and abuse of power by the higher clergy within the papacy was rife. The blind

faith of most medieval Christians ensured a naïvety that effectively blinded them to reason. Yet it was from Christian Europe that the westernised world culture of today would eventually arise.

One of the earliest religious revolts against Roman Catholic authority began in 1110 CE by a Belgian court official named '**Tanchelm**' who proclaimed himself '*prophet of the underprivileged*'. He declared that the church was so corrupt that it was unfit to administer the seven holy sacraments. Seeing that the papacy was full of hypocrisy and excess, he prophesied of its downfall, a notion that was reconfirmed 60 years later by the '*Waldensian Movement*', and several centuries later by the '*Lollards*' and '*Hussites*'. Tanchelm insisted that it was everybody's moral duty to protest through non-payment of taxes to church authorities which made him a very popular man amongst the lay people of medieval Flanders. His newly acquired power went to his head, and after assembling a private army of faithful followers he declared himself to be a divine incarnation of the holy spirit. Tanchelm had even gathered 12 apostles and taken a mistress whom he referred to as the '**Virgin Mary**'. By now his popularity had spread from the poor to the merchant classes, yet the potential development of a new pseudo-Christian faith came to an abrupt end when he was murdered by a Catholic priest.

Modern Catholicism, which admonishes all prophesying outside of the Bible, has its own prophetic secrets too. From 400 CE all forms of prophesy were considered heresy, but in 1139 the Archbishop of Armagh '**Malachy O'Morgair**' had visions in which he 'saw' every successor to the papal line, from the reigning pope **Innocent II**, to the pope of the Apocalypse. His predictions were ordered to be lost in the vaults of the Vatican by the incumbent pope, but were apparently rediscovered by a Benedictine monk in the 16th century. This papal prophet who was to become '**St. Malachy**' achieved a remarkable accuracy in the descriptions of all of the successive popes that were yet to come, including the reign of pope **John Paul I** who St. Malachy described as the '*pope of the middle moon*'. John Paul's pontificate lasted just 33 days, when he died suddenly in 1978, on a date which fell between two full moons. According to St. Malachy's predictions, there should be no more popes to come after '**Francis**'s reign has ended.

By the early 16th century, the monopoly on authority by the papacy was finally broken when the Protestant states withdrew their allegiance to the papacy. It was a century that saw the rise of radical Protestant sects which collectively made up the '**Anabaptists**' who were considered by many to be the armies of the *antichrist*. Originating around 1523, the Anabaptists strongly rejected child baptism, and believed that faith alone could bring about salvation without the need of the Roman Catholic Church. They posed a great threat to the Catholic authorities who were simultaneously being challenged by '**Lutheranism**' throughout Germanic Europe.

Declared a heretical cult, the Anabaptists, led by **Thomas Müntzer** a Lutheran minister, had created religious fervour and given rise to many prophesies regarding the 'second coming' of Christ. Müntzer himself had predicted 1525 as the year of Armageddon. Convincing the oppressed lay people that he was the *prophet of the apocalypse*, Müntzer took control of the peasants revolt, seeing them as an army without a leader. He led them to believe that they were fighting a just cause in a battle against nobility and the clergy who were enemies of both the people and the Lord! Furthermore he had promised to

build a '*New Jerusalem*' based on the principles of freedom and justice. However Muntzer too was an ambitious man who became effected by his own power and, seeing society as essentially evil, he developed a blood lust against his personal enemies. He is quoted as saying, “ *The living God is sharpening his scythe in me*”, and justified indiscriminate murder and the destruction of all he despised by doing it in the image of the apocalyptic events contained within the 'Book of Revelation'.

Another Anabaptist, and disciple of Muntzer, was **Hans Hüt**. Hüt predicted that 1528 would be the year when the Messiah would return to slaughter the priests for perverting his teachings. He was imprisoned and executed, and in retribution for his heresy, the church embarked on a policy of *holy* violence. Women and young girls from Anabaptist families were publicly drowned and whole communities burned inside their meeting houses. By acting this way the church authorities only fuelled their paranoia, and encouraged more self-proclaimed prophets to lead their cause. Some Anabaptist leaders even saw themselves as reincarnations of celebrated Biblical prophets from the Old Testament.

One widely believed prophesy originating from Anabaptist hysteria was that 1533, being 1500 years after the crucifixion, would be the year of Armageddon and the dawn of a new Christian millennium. Further conflict with church authority by the Anabaptists led to even more religious fanaticism, and the slaughter of thousands. For many Anabaptists, the German town of Münster became seen as the *New Jerusalem*, and many were led there by another prophet '**Jan Matthyson**'. Following a year-long siege of the town by the armies of the regional principality, the few survivors of the town were eventually massacred. Once overcome by religious authority Anabaptist communities throughout northern Europe were systematically destroyed, whilst they inevitably saw their persecution as the forces of darkness that preceded the 'second coming'.



The development of methodical, secular predictions (*that would eventually evolve into the sciences*) began in the imaginations of medieval thinkers. '**Roger Bacon**', for example, was a 13th century English Franciscan monk, and alchemist who had visionary powers that went far beyond his time. Combining mathematical principle and imagination, he was attributed with many discoveries and medieval inventions. Not only is he credited with invention of the magnifying glass and the optical lens, but he expounded the potential of gunpowder and foresaw many inventions yet to come. His visions of the future were varied but, perceiving of cars, boats and planes, his perceptions were generally seen in the context of future warfare. He wrote of bridges without supports, of lasers, and of poison gas, and even designed complex diving apparatus that could not possibly have been realised during the '*High Middle Ages*'.

Bacon was condemned and imprisoned in various monasteries for heretical thinking by the Catholic Church. Yet he is said to have been the inspiration behind '**Christopher Columbus**'s voyage that would lead to the European discovery of the '*New World*'. In inspiring many men into action, Bacon was the predecessor to the non-religious visionaries of Renaissance thinking in the 15th and 16th centuries. Of the many talents from the Renaissance period, '**Leonardo da Vinci**' is considered to be one of the

greatest. Da Vinci was a highly inventive visionary whose artistic and skill and scientific understanding was surpassed only by his talent for dreamed perceptions and innovations. He designed, pulley systems, cranes, lathes, water pumps, hydraulic jack, and even made prescient plans for modern day submarines and helicopters. Throughout the centuries, the intuitive dreaming mind has led to discovery, innovation, and even moral awareness, just as it is the origin of panic, religious fervour and mass hysteria.



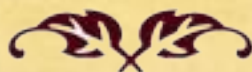
Medieval peasants who were acclaimed to have prophetic talents were widespread by the 'late Middle Ages' One such prophet was '**Mother Shipton**' a woman steeped in English legend. She began life in 1488 as **Ursula Sontheil**, and was rejected at birth because of her physical deformities. Despite her grotesque features, she managed to avoid being tried for witchcraft and survived to the age of 73. The life of Sontheil was never without incident, and even at an early age she was considered, by many, to be an ugly witch. She had started predicting local matters, and by the time she was a young woman her reputation had grown, but so had her fear of persecution for practising the forbidden arts.

The major prophesies of Mother Shipton were invariably made in code. She supposedly foretold of the English invasion of France in 1513, but is also attributed with many prophesies that went beyond her own lifetime. Legend has it that she foretold of the trial and execution of '**Charles I**' in 1649, and of future innovations such as the telegraph and the railway. Of the many predictions that she is credited with, the most dramatic prophesies describe a precession of three wars, culminating in the battle of Armageddon. Although no dates were placed on her prophesies, she is said to have predicted that mankind will land on the moon in the years before the final battle.

One of the most renowned false prophets of the 17th century was '**Sabbatai Zevi**', a manic depressive son of a wealthy Polish Jew. He was well versed in Jewish scripture and became obsessed by his religion. After returning from six years of fasting and self-punishment, at the age of 22 he declared himself the *prophet of the new millennium*. He was accepted by large sections of the Jewish community in his homeland of Poland, who were suffering a series of violent pogroms, and needed to believe in a saviour. As his popularity rose, so did the religious zeal that surrounded him, feeding his megalomania. By 1666 (*a year of great apocalyptic significance*), his name was recognised throughout the western world. But delusions of grandeur were the undoing of this false prophet, and whilst journeying throughout the Mediterranean, Sabbatai was captured, imprisoned, and forced to convert to Islam to save his life.

In England following the civil war, disestablishment of the church in the 1650's had led to greater tolerance of religious dissent. and to the creation of the '**Ranters**' ~ an array of prophets whose radical religious views were shunned by the new Puritan authority. Besides proclaiming the second coming of Christ and promising to establish England as the *New Jerusalem*, these unruly sects were sexually unrestrained, antisocial and often extreme. Their wild behaviour was justified by the belief that an expression of the body was expression of '**Jesus**', and the unfettered freedom of fornication was a declaration of faith. Whilst many leading Ranters endeavoured to fulfil the prophesies of the '*Book of Revelation*', most simply indulged in drinking, swearing, sexual promiscuity. Their

religious services were often a succession of profanities, forcing ‘**Oliver Cromwell**’ to introduce the *Blasphemy Act of 1650* to curtail their activities. From *Sabbataists* to *Ranters*, the 17th century saw an array of religious and prophetic sects, but the most notorious of all prophets had already left his mark in world culture.





v.

(Michel de Nôtre dame)

There is no such thing as *'fate'*. That which has not yet happened, is not 100% likely until the moment that it actually occurs because there are a myriad of events that could alter the direction of the present moment as it *enters the future*. The passing of time constitutes a chain of events that are linked together by cause and effect. Furthermore, human intervention in matters of physical existence, though themselves predictable, alter the direction of the physical dimension in which we exist in any number of ways. The future within this physical realm therefore is not set, it is just that some things are more predictable than others. Take the *'hands'* of a clock, for example, the movements are extremely easy to predict. As long as there is a power supply to the clock either from a battery or a clockwork mechanism, and it is in working order, the movement of its hands as they pass with time into the future moment are highly predictable. But attempting to predict scenarios that need to pass through a complex series of events in order to be realised is far harder.

We all have the ability to *'read'* the likelihood of future events to one extent or another. Indeed in our physical world, we *'need'* to be able to anticipate events in order to survive, yet we generally do this at a conscious level by applying our highly evolved intellect and following the path of *reason*. Successful city traders, for example, do it all of the time in their professional lives, and if they were unable to *'read'* the markets, the financial institutions of the world could not exist as they do. The further into the future that you attempt to predict, the greater the number of possible interactions, and the greater the likelihood of being inaccurate, or *'wrong'*. The trouble with conscious logical prediction is that it is our ability to comprehend only a finite series of reactions, limits the range of logical foresight.

There are many people however who have the ability to *'see'* probable futures through subconscious insight. Those who claim to see the future course of human existence in today's modern world are generally derided, however using the realms of the unconscious is an equally valid way to foresee the future. Many people who have discovered this instinctive ability to glimpse future events, perceive it as *'divine inspiration'* because, lacking scientific rationale, the only explanation lies in the established spiritual belief of their native cultures. However the power of insight lies *within* us. There is no divine presence, only the intuitive human mind and a universal law of nature.

So whilst the sciences of logic and the reasoned deduction of philosophy enable us to attain the greatest accuracy in predicting what future will manifest in the realm of physical existence, it is indeed possible to intuitively see what is yet to come through altered states of consciousness. More often than not however, prophecies that originate from states of altered consciousness prove generally misguided, though a few are uncannily accurate. The best way that science can interpret the intuitive ability of some people to unconsciously see accurate snapshots of the distant future, is through the study of *'quantum mechanics'*, which itself is only achieved through disciplined imagination.

If you can perceive that we exist in just one of a virtually infinite number of dimensions within a universe that is so vast that it contains other environments exactly the same as our own in all but time and space, then it is possible to imagine that our future has already passed in dimensions other than the one that we can physically experience. In whatever dimension of reality our perspective lies, the exact future is impossible to predict within the framework of a single physical dimension. In order to see beyond the realm of logical deduction we need to perceive our own existence from another perspective, and that is something that we do every time we dream. Yet our dreams lie in a dimension that does not exist in our physical world. They come from the only non-physical entity that we universally recognise as being real; the *human mind*.

It's because of the human mind that we are able to perceive of the sciences, but it is also the source of all religion, as well as being the origin of '*intuitive sorcery*'. By the fact that we are able to reach into the subconscious to find answers that we couldn't find in the material world of reality, humankind is living proof that our own physical reality is only a part of a much wider existence.

The ability to accurately predict the future is an art that many try to master. Of the thousands of prophets that have come and gone, but the most famous of all was '**Nostradamus**'.



'**Michel de Nôtre Dame**' was a 16th century French physician and astrologer who became the most notorious of all prophets. Born in 1533 in St. Rémy-de-Provence he was the well-educated son of a Jewish grain merchant. Whilst still a boy, his parents converted to Catholicism, probably to avoid persecution, so he became well versed in the prophecies of the Bible as well as being learned in the esoteric wisdom of the Jewish occult of *Kabbalah*, which he is said to have been taught by his grandfather. He was educated in Latin, Hebrew, Greek, and mathematics, and showed great interest in the young sciences, particularly astronomy. In 1529 he became a doctor, worked as a professor of medicine, and later practised throughout southern France.

1538 was a horrendous year for Michel de Nôtre Dame. His wife and children died of the bubonic plague, and he was unable to save them despite all of his medical skills ~ a fact which disturbed him greatly. The shock of losing his family was to totally change the course of his life and, as a result, his practice collapsed and his credibility suffered greatly. His late wife's family attempted to sue him for the return of her dowry, and following a chance remark about an unsightly statue of the *Virgin Mary* several years earlier, he also became targeted by the inquisitors and was ordered to stand trial for heresy.

Having been accused by the Toulouse Inquisition of heresy, he decided to not stand trial, and so fled his home in Agen. Over the next six years little is known of his life, however he is believed to have travelled around the Lorraine region in northern France, and also visited Venice and Sicily. It is during this period of his life that he was to become the mystic that we know today as Nostradamus.

Eventually returning to France and settling down, he remarried in 1547 and later moved to the small town of Salon-de-Provence, some 30 miles north of Marseilles. It was here that he began writing his renowned prophesies. In 1550, five years before writing his famous book of prophesies, he published an almanac containing weather predictions. However it is for his book '**Centuries**', that he is remembered. It was first completed in 1555, though further additions were made up until 1558.

'Centuries' was written through a series of 1040 *quatrains*; four-line verses that are an obscure mix of French, Latin, Greek, and Provençal, with encrypted time sequences. Divided into books of a hundred verses (*hence the title 'Centuries'*), it contains some 900 cryptic predictions concerning world events up to the year 3797. A large proportion of quatrains describe events of pain and tragedy, and he was no doubt reflecting the suffering of his own life in his prophesies of the future.

Becoming known to the people as the '**Seer of Salon**', he is known to have sat alone in his study, often throughout the night, in order to draw upon his prophetic powers in peace. To see his visions of the future, he applied the power of divination by concentration (*often known as scrying*), using a bowl of water to focus his mind. Clearing his mind of all notions, he would stare into the bowl, and from the vibration of the ripples he would eventually sense '*dark and cloudy images of tomorrow's events*'. A similar method of divination was used by the ancient prophets of the **Greek Oracle at Didyma**, and Nostradamus' himself gives a clue as to its origin with a probable reference to '**Branchus**'; the Greek god of prophesy. He is also known to have been greatly inspired by a book in his possession about the mysteries of Egypt. (*'De Mysteriis Egyptorum'*).

The popularity of his (*as yet incomplete*) book of prophesies made him famous across Europe. In 1556, as a popular astrologer, he was consulted by '**Catherine de' Medici**' the French queen consort of '**Henry II**' and mother and regent to '**Charles IX**' of France. As a deeply spiritual woman obsessed with what the future held for her sons, she was to later change her religious allegiance and instruct the 1572 '**Massacre of St. Bartholomew**' in which around 25,000 Protestant Huguenots were slaughtered; an act for which she was honoured with a medal from the pope.

In 1560 however, Nostradamus was to become the '*Physician-in-Ordinary*' to '**Charles IX**' on his accession to the throne because of his favour with the ten-year-old king's mother. However he remained in fear of the Roman Catholic church, and on being warned that the '*Justices of Paris*' were inquiring after his unholy practices, he returned to Salon, where he spent the final years of his life discreetly drawing up horoscopes for distinguished guests. He is said to have foreseen the date of his own death, and in 1566 at the age of 62 he finally died from oedema. All of his books were banned by the church, and the final edition of 'Centuries' was not officially published until 1568, two years after his death.

Even after death, Nostradamus was the source of magical superstition. His body is said to have been dug up 134 years later by the town authorities who had decided to place it in a more prominent position, within the walls of the '*Church of Cordeliers*'. Upon opening his coffin, the authorities are rumoured to have found amongst his bones an engraved

metal plate inscribed with 1700, the year of his first exhumation and reburial. In 1791 his body was once more said to have been opened, this time by superstitious soldiers during the French Revolution, 225 years after his death, following which his remains were finally reburied in the '*Church of St.Laurent*'.



Today the historic predictions of '**Nostradamus**' have earned him the posthumous title of '**Prince of Prophets**', though his art is not strictly astrology because it is impossible to predict events in a person's life when they are yet to be born. Nostradamus however was clever at predicting the mood of nations and intuitively surmising a likely outcome from the visions that he saw. Indeed he used his knowledge of astrology to predict the *potential* of future events and, by combining it with his visions, was able to make prophesies with far greater accuracy than anyone else living in his time.

The obscure symbolism of his prophesies have led to an array of individual interpretations. By using symbolism and cryptic code he was able to avoid being accused of sorcery, and to restrict the message of his prophesies to those learned in the secret arts. He understood the danger that his predictions could be used by unscrupulous leaders to reinforce their own visions of destiny, and recognised the effect that his words could potentially have on the development of future events. So by encoding his prophesies this way, he sought to minimise the negative influence on the course of history yet to be made, and keep his powerful knowledge from the non-initiated. He writes of his prophesies; "***Let those who read this verse ponder its meaning, let the common crowd and unlearned leave it alone. All of them idiot astrologers and Barbarians keep off...***"

Many interpretations of Nostradamus' quatrains have been assimilated to 20th century world events, Notably the rise of Hitler and the Holocaust, but more recently even the *Gulf war* and passing of the comet '*Hale-Bopp*' which occurred in the 1990's have arisen in various interpretations of his prophesies. There are several interpretations that relate to the assassinations of recent world leaders and national heroes too, from the plight of '**Yitzhak Rabin**' to that of the '**Kennedy** brothers'. For example, it is widely interpreted that in reference to the death of the '**John F.Kennedy**', Nostradamus wrote, "***The great man will be struck down in a day by a thunderbolt...***"

Ultimately however, is virtually impossible to interpret these quatrains intellectually, because they are so 'garbled' as to render them ambiguous; except they are used to focus intuitively. In essence, they present a series of '*pathways*' that foretell of 'possible futures' that are commonly interpreted from the perspective of the enquirer and their native culture.

Nostradamus however, is believed to have predicted the coming of three Antichrists. '**Napoleon Bonaparte**' who lived in the early 19th century is often associated with the first. '**Adolf Hitler**' is generally regarded to be the second, and the third is yet to be revealed, though (*he*) is expected to originate in the Middle East and make (*him*)self known sometime after 1999, when he will be responsible for potentially dragging the world into global war.

One of the first people to allege that the prophesies of Nostradamus foretold of the rise of Hitler was Swiss psychiatrist '**Carl Jung**', who saw much credence to his predictions. As for Hitler himself, he was well aware that he fitted the role of Nostradamus' second Antichrist, and so the Nazis used it to their advantage. Of Hitler's '*Third Reich*', the most widely associated quatrain includes the lines, "***...Most of the land will be under Hister, in a cage of iron the great one will be dragged, When the child of Germany observes nothing.***"

At the time of writing his prophesies the Danube was referred to by its classical name '*Ister*'. It is a river that runs through central Europe, a tributary of which feeds the Austrian border town of Braunau-am-Inn, the birthplace of Hitler. Even Nostradamus' phrase "***...the cross harried by the crook.***" appears to describe a swastika, the emblem of Hitler's Nazi party.

It was the wife of the Nazi propaganda minister '**Josef Goebbels**' who, being captivated by the German translation of Nostradamus' predictions, introduced the concept to her husband. He in turn saw its potential to unnerve his enemies, and mutated it into useful propaganda. In 1940, leaflets containing fictitious verses claiming to be from the prophesies of Nostradamus were dropped over areas of French resistance by the *Luftwaffe*. The distribution of historic prophesies to undermine the morale of the enemy was a ploy that the allies soon picked up on, and in 1941 they embarked on a similar strategy of propaganda through spiritual fear, enlisting the help of American astrologer '**Louis de Wohl**' who, amongst other things, foretold of Hitler's death alongside his mistress. De Wohl compared Hitler's horoscope to that of Napoleon's, citing his ultimate defeat as inevitable. Indeed the use of fictitious horoscopes and prophesies were used all over Europe and America in the propaganda war that accompanied this horrific global conflict.

The actions of many 20th century leaders however are no less repulsive as those committed by Hitler and Napoleon. Unlike Antichrists in the apocalypse which took the form of deformed creatures, designed to conjure up supernatural images of the forces of darkness, Nostradamus' Antichrists take the shape of mortal but immoral men that are simply an enemy to humanity. '**Joseph Stalin**' and '**Pol Pot**', for example, in these terms, could equally have qualified as his Antichrists'.

Like '**St, John**' however, Nostradamus took great pains to graphically explain the horrors of his visions, writing of "***The great star boiling for seven days, its cloud making the sun appear to have a double image...***"

and "***The parched Earth shall wax drier and drier, and a great flood when it shall appear.***"

He is known to have used orthodox Biblical chronology to measure time, which held that the world was created in 4004 **BCE** though Nostradamus is said to have recalculated the beginning of time to 4137 **BCE**. It was also widely believed throughout the 16th century, that there would, one day, come a final battle with the Antichrist. This concept of '*Judgement Day*' when the world will witness the overthrow of Babylon prior to a new age of peace, for many people, was simply taken as fact.

In more recent centuries, interest began to turn to Nostradamus' prediction for the year 1999. since 1945 many interpreters have seen it as heralding the first global nuclear war.

He wrote; ***"In the year 1999 and seven months From the sky will come a great king of terror..."***

Many see his prediction of catastrophe arising from a localised conflict which is aggravated by a pre-emptive missile strike, that spreads the conflict to global proportions. Of course there have been many serious conflicts in 1999, from Iraq to East Timor, including serious wars in Kashmir, Kosovo, Chechnya, as well as many other hot spots of political tension and civil unrest. But the month of July passed without catastrophic incident, though few avid followers felt the compulsion to celebrate just yet!

Another verse from his prophecies that are widely believed to refer to the 20th century reads ***"When those of the Northern Poles are united together, in the east will be great fear and dread..."***

There have been many direct claims and insinuations that this referred to the ending of the Cold War, with China becoming the new threat to western civilisation. It continues ***"... One day the two great leaders will be friends, the new land will be in the height of its powers..."***, which many saw as a reference to 'George Bush' and 'Mikhail Gorbachev'. The last line of the verse ***"... to the man of blood the number is repeated."*** has even been assimilated to the distinctive birthmark on the forehead of the former and last president of the Soviet Union. However a more sinister interpretation of this verse relating to the 'man of blood' is the idea of it referring to the third Antichrist, with the number concerned being 666. So an alternative view saw the 'man of blood' in the context of an eastern Antichrist, which some believed would be a communist dictator of China. In 1999 that premier was 'Jiang Zemin', but despite the symbolism of blood 'red' being clearly evident in Chinese culture, few world leaders seriously saw this man as being an Antichrist. Much more fitting, perhaps was a certain 'Vladimir Putin' who, in 1999 was preparing to take over the presidency of Russia and rebuild its foreboding military machine.

Nostradamus predicted a time of traumatic transition for the end of the 20th century. He foresaw climatic changes and cosmic cataclysms that will render the earth virtually uninhabitable. Ultimately, he saw it as an end to the old world order which will begin to crumble to make way for the new, but not before a series of devastating wars and natural disasters. He spoke of a *'renewal of the great cycles of the centuries'*, and with two world wars having already passed, many people have interpreted Nostradamus' visions as previewing the current era of violence which is marked by massive environmental upheaval, war, famine and plagues, as well as greater religious conflict.

From further predictions, some followers of Nostradamus' prophecies see two more major wars in the early years of the 21st century before a period of a thousand years peace. However there is no general consensus regarding the times of war and peace in Nostradamus' prophecies, and at best they rely on popular opinion. Many, for example, have interpreted the third Antichrist as being a Middle Eastern dictator who will encourage an Islamic fundamentalist invasion of Iran, Egypt and Turkey. One message of Nostradamus however is quite clear; through war, the human race will eventually conquer its fears, and will control the primitive urge to commit mutually assured destruction. He foresaw a time when humanity takes responsibility of its own future instead of delegating it to a divine creator in the shape of an omnipotent god. It is a process symbolised by Nostradamus as *'the binding of Satan.'*

His most distant predictions relate to the final end of the world which he believed to be 3797 CE. In a letter to king ‘**Henry II**’ of France he described that “...*the rains will be so diminished and such an abundance of fiery missiles shall fall from the skies that nothing shall escape the holocaust...*”

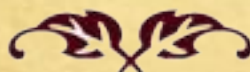
He later described in a letter to his son that “...*all shall perish save history and geography themselves,*” and many modern interpretations see this as the final catastrophe when the Earth will be devoured by an expanding Sun.

Whatever the perception of Nostradamus, his life and his prophesies, sceptic or otherwise, the central issue regarding human *destiny* and the course of future events remains. The descriptive accuracy of over 200 predictions by the great seer appear to have already come to fruition. Whilst they are now a small part of our history to Nostradamus they were the future, and his sense of accuracy indicates that there was a little more than mere coincidence to his visions.

There have been many prophets like Nostradamus could foresee the future but who have lived their lives under oppressive regimes which themselves have evolved from the words of ancient prophets. Most notable are the aggressive Christian societies which have embarked on more wars than any other culture of mankind, yet which descend from the words of ‘**Jesus**’ (*a pacifist prophet*). Another is the mighty culture of Islam which adheres to the words of ‘**Mohammed**’ (*though they believe them to be the words of God spoken through him*).

In these and other cultures there have been an abundance of people who have realised that by laying claim to being a prophet or divine messenger, they can gain social respect, power, and even spiritual leadership. There are also those with genuine foresight who have been declared false or persecuted simply because their presence has threatened the power base of the established religious institution. There is no doubt that Nostradamus’ entire works were banned by the Roman Catholic church, because it felt threatened both by his ability to arouse the imaginations of the people (*which undermined their authority*), and by his ability to accurately predict future events. Living when he did, in the 16th century, he will have experienced a collective human awareness that was far different than it is today, and many of his encrypted prophesies will have been written and perceived in vastly different ways throughout the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

Regardless of the accuracy of Nostradamus’ prophesies, the mysticism surrounding his life has generated a great deal of interest in today’s scientifically founded world. Many people hold credulous faith in his predictions, so there is a subtle increase in the fear of an end to civilisation. The new millennium has inevitably seen a rise in the number of accidents, as the fear and negativity in the conscious thoughts of those whose irrational beliefs are turned into reality by their own prejudices.





Since Nostradamus, there have been many people who have claimed to be prophets, or Messiahs with news of human destiny. At the turn of the 19th century came a devout Christian woman who maintained that she could hear the voice of God. English eccentric '**Joanna Southcott**' was obsessed with her piety, and after convincing parts of the religious establishment that she could foretell future events, published books and pamphlets containing her prophecies; many of which were uncannily accurate. Subsequently she became famous across the country.

Southcott appropriated many Old Testament prophecies, and whipped up religious mania amongst her followers, setting up '*Southcottian chapels*' throughout the country. Most of her predictions concerned local affairs which were of little consequence to world events. However her one major prophecy, which related to the battle of Armageddon, put the start of the new millennium at 2014. This deeply religious woman substantiated the biblical myth that only 144,000 will be taken into the kingdom of God, and issued sealed certificates to registered believers, promising them '*eternal salvation*'. In effect, she was selling '*tickets to paradise*' to many gullible people who believed that becoming official members of her church constituted salvation from the apocalypse to come.

By 1802, whilst still well short of her chosen number, it became public knowledge that '**Mary Bateman**', a woman convicted of murder, was hanged whilst clutching one of her certificates. News of this weighed heavily on her, apparently sending her into fits of depression whilst further aggravating her religious zeal. In 1813, at the age of 64, she announced that she, '*the second eve*', was pregnant with the new Messiah. This miraculous conception was a fictitious, but a genuinely believed pregnancy and, naming her unborn son **Shiloh**, she endeavoured to erroneously fulfil a prophecy in the '*Book of Genesis*'. Inevitably she was showered with gifts from her followers, who believed wholeheartedly that she was bearing the divine child of God.

Southcott had achieved a great core following, but was mercilessly derided by the general public, especially by the newspapers which often lampooned her in their satirical cartoons. Not everyone however took her claims either lightly or literally, and many people were upset by what they saw as vile blasphemy, leading to violent demonstrations against her in several rural communities. Even her chapel in London was burned by an angry mob.

Far from expecting a child however, she was actually dying, and after her death in 1814, an official autopsy confirmed it as a phantom pregnancy but failed to establish the cause of her death. Despite her death, she continued to have many followers who remained undaunted by the unfulfilled expectations of her life, and her biggest legacy remains a locked and sealed box which is claimed to contain within it the secret of world peace. However Southcott's instruction that it should only be opened in the presence of the 24 bishops of England, means that it remains hidden and locked, but its opening is an event

that many people of the modern '*Panacea Society*' believed would coincide with her millennium year of 2014.

Joanna Southcott was by no means the only female prophet of the 19th century who was obsessed with biblical scripture. Swiss '*bible-basher*' '**Margaret Peter**' was another woman who preached of hell and damnation, and managed to convince many people to accept her words as the will of God. In 1823 she declared that the final battle of Armageddon was close but, unable to wait for the eagerly anticipated second coming, her religious insanity took her and her closest followers over the edge, and she initiated her personal own Armageddon.

What began as a brutal exorcism on her brother (*whom she believed was possessed by 'Satan'*), turned into frenzied blood bath when her sister (*believing that she was 'sacrificing herself to the Lord so that Satan may be defeated'*) bludgeoned herself on head with a hammer. Within minutes there were bloody scenes of self-mutilation and mutual slaughter, during which time Peter had ordered her followers to nail her to a makeshift cross (*having insisted that, like 'Christ', she would rise again on the third day*). Her believers, whipped up into a religious frenzy, proceeded to sacrifice her at her own insistence. Stabbed in chest with a knife and finally beaten to death whilst still nailed to the cross, Margaret Peter had succeeded in warping the minds of others far beyond the limits of rational perception.

Christianity, it seems, has this habit of raising some people to the levels of self-destruction and generating blind faith which can sometimes spill over into insanity. Other religions (*especially eastern mystical beliefs*), unlike Christianity, appear to contain this tendency, leading to insight rather than insanity. '**Helena Blavatsky**', was one such westerner who channelled her thought through eastern tradition and became renowned for her psychic ability. Born to Russian aristocracy, this flamboyant woman and spiritual eccentric was well travelled. By her mid-twenties she had already travelled throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. Her destinations included New Orleans and Tibet, and she became greatly influenced by both *voodoo culture* and *eastern mysticism*.

'**Madame Blavatsky**', as she was better known from the 1860's, became a famous Victorian psychic. By 1875, along with '**Henry S. Olcott**' and others, she co-founded the '*Theosophical society*' which was largely responsible for introducing eastern philosophy into western culture. It remains a spiritual movement of universal brotherhood, based on an intuitive insight into nature. Paying no regard to race, creed, sex, caste or colour, it has adopted the ideas of *karma* and *reincarnation* with which to attain the principle state of nirvana. By bringing Buddhist concepts into the Theosophical society and applying them to her own esoteric wisdom, the inspirational Madame Blavatsky was the source of the new occult philosophy. Indeed she is even said to have astounded her colleagues with displays of *telekinesis*.

Fanatical about occultism, her first book entitled '*Isis Unveiled*' (*which was published in 1877*) was a blend of eastern esoteric tradition and western mythology. In it, she attempted to outline the errors of orthodox Christianity and fallacies of established science. Moreover she referred to it as the '*master key*' to ancient mysteries, and many people claim that it contains all of the unanswered solutions to modern science and

theology. In her second major book '*Secret Doctrine*' (which was published eleven years later), she described the creation of the cosmos, the evolution of mankind, and a primordial tradition that underpins all religions, mythologies and philosophies of the world. She attempted to explain the evolution of prophesies, and by describing a vision of the world yet to come, she aroused further interest in the concept of occult philosophy.

Madame Blavatsky's perception that we are the fifth of six races of man that are predestined to walk on Earth, has given rise to a great deal of speculative controversy. She advocated the notion of a new race of humanity quietly emerging from America, which she described as the '*seed bed of the primary race*'. Perceiving that the human race continually undergoes spiritual as well as physical evolution, her vision of the next phase of human evolution was that it would be initially regarded as a series of abnormal oddities both physically and mentally. Drawing on the Hindu tradition of '*Manvantara*', she predicted the future realities of humanity, and propounded the notion of a '*Sixth Root Race*' emerging as the majority of survivors from cataclysmic events which will not only totally destroy Europe, but eventually lead to the disappearance of the now dominant 'Aryan race'.

According to Madame Blavatsky and her *spirit masters*, the rise of the '*Golden Age of Man*' will coincide with an appearance of a new continent, which will provide sanctuary for the new race from the global cataclysm to come. Although she did not divulge a final year of global human catastrophe, she claimed that it would be preceded by a series of comparatively smaller natural disasters that would nonetheless be great enough to shake the foundations of civilisation. She even claimed that there was a distinct possibility of humanity transcending the body to exist in spirit, but ultimately the destruction of humankind was inevitable. Her desire to illustrate the future through occult philosophy however exposed her wild imagination to the sceptical criticism of scientific culture, and predicting that the '*Seventh Race*' of evolution will evolve on Mercury, only distanced her philosophy from the perceptual body of modern reality.

Although declared a fraud by the '*London Society for Psychical Research*' in 1885, her popularity lives on and, despite some misappropriated claims, the Theosophical Society is today active in over 60 countries worldwide. Buddhist concepts, for example, figured greatly in Madame Blavatsky's universal scheme of nature, and she predicted the coming of '*Maitreya*' ~ a world teacher and the next spiritual reincarnation of '*Buddha*' (or the *enlightened one*). She claimed that he would be born in 1950 and would live during the end of the present '*dark age*' of the '*Kali Yuga*' seeing humanity through into a *new age of light*.

The insistence of her theosophical successor, '*Annie Besant*', that she had found a new Messiah in India however, also somewhat detracted from the idea of universal occult philosophy. Not only did Besant's discovery of 15 year-old '*Jiddu Krishnamurti*' in 1910 predate Blavatsky's Maitreya by 55 years, but it became extremely embarrassing for the Theosophical society. Krishnamurti himself, although becoming one of the greatest spiritual leaders of the 20th century, rejected the role of messiah, declaring that he '*refused to set new cages for mankind*' and was only concerned with '*setting men absolutely and unconditionally free.*' However the beauty of theosophy is that, in order to

remain genuine, it cannot enforce its doctrines and so, unlike popular religions, is ultimately devoted to being spiritually passive.



Unlike the Theosophical Society, other prophetic movements that began in the 19th century have developed into proactive and spiritually dominant religions that bring the prejudices of the century with them. The '**Church of the Latter-Day-Saints**' (more commonly known as '**Mormons**') believe that the year 2000 marked both the secular and spiritual millennium, and perceives that the *New Jerusalem* will be established in America. Back in 1820, aged just 14, '**Joseph Smith**' the founder of the Mormons, had visions of angels which declared that all creeds of religion were an abomination. He claimed to have had many later visitations by angels, in particular one which he called '**Mormon**'. On establishing a small body of followers, in 1826 he insisted that his angel had urged him to spread the gospels contained within a '*hidden book*'; the location of which would be revealed to him in four years time. Published in 1830, '*The Book of Mormon*', which was undoubtedly written by Smith himself, was a jumble of Egyptian Assyriac, Arabic and Chaldean characters, that, when translated, appeared to make sense ~ and so began the constitution of the Mormon church.

On achieving considerable wealth and power from his book, Smith then went on to claim that he had been initiated into the priesthood of '**Aaron**' by the spirit of '**John the Baptist**', and he insisted that all those who remained unrepentant by the year 2000 would face eternal damnation. Amongst the Mormon prophesies is the notion that 'ten tribes of Israel' will congregate at the site of the *New Jerusalem* in the Rocky Mountains whilst the descendants of the *kingdom of Judah* rebuild the temple in Jerusalem (*in accordance with an Old Testament prophesy*). At the turn of the new millennium, such an idea has invariably affected the lives of millions of people throughout the Americas.

In the early 21st century, many Mormons still genuinely believe that, somewhere near Salt Lake City, a *New Jerusalem* (known as the '*City of Enoch*') will materialise, and that there will be a resurrection of all of those baptised by the Mormon faith, who will have become, by definition, '**immortal**'. Furthermore, there are many Mormons within authority in America who have the power to put into action the apocalyptic prophesies of a deluded individual whose words have influenced the minds of 6 million faithful Mormons around the world who believe that the wicked will be '*cast down into 'Satan's realm of damnation*'.

This highlights how the delusions of an individual can obtain worldwide success and recognition amongst millions of people. But not all profound fantasies turn into religions. In 1832 '*endtime*' prophet '**William Miller**' sent a wave of panic throughout America by predicting an imminent end to civilisation. He was a Baptist preacher who was obsessed with 'the second coming of Christ', and believed that the date of his arrival was encrypted in the Bible. By making calculations derived from his interpretation of the '*Book of Daniel*', he predicted that 1843 would be the end of the present world, and he attained a following of thousands of people, known as '**Millerites**,' who firmly believed in his word. When 1843 arrived, America became gripped by endtime fever. Businesses closed down, material possessions were either given away or held close in the hope that

belongings would be accepted into the '*Kingdom of God*.' Specific dates in 1843 were recalculated as they passed without incident, and when the year itself passed, he put it down to discrepancies between the Jewish and Christian calendars, ...and subsequently postponed the apocalypse until 1844.

Of course, that year too came and went without the appearance of *Judgement Day*. But once again tens of thousands of people had been readily convinced by the irrational concepts of a single individual, and so went about conforming to a misguided prophesy. Then, as today, those who blindly 'fall under the spell' of people who claim to be spiritual leaders pose a considerable threat to social stability in the west ~ collectively believing, as they so often do, in a fate created by their own religious faiths and prejudices.

Numerous apocalyptic prophesies also originate from '*Jehovah's Witnesses*'; another religious movement that derived from 19th century perceptions. The movement was founded in 1872 by American preacher '**Charles Taze Russell**' who predicted that the second coming would occur in 1914. When the new Messiah failed to materialise, his creed declared the presence of an invisible Messiah to cover up Russell's false prediction. Many further predictions pertaining to the year of Armageddon and the rebirth of '*Christ*' have occurred since then by the '*Watch Tower Bible and Tract Societies*'. They too maintain a belief that only 144,000 souls of their faith will be taken into their *theocratic kingdom of heaven* whilst the rest of humanity burns in a living hell.

These, and other movements based on irrational religious beliefs are a tolerated part of modern society, but continue to pose potential threat to its upheaval. It seems that the main difference between the creation of a *religion* founded by a self-proclaimed prophet, and the *passing fad* of a undoubtedly false messiah, hinges on whether or not their misguided predictions focus on a time that exceeds, not only their own lifetimes, but the lifetimes of their devoted followers.



The turn of the 20th century saw a rise in the popularity of '*science fiction*', and some visions of various renowned writers would bear an uncanny resemblance to several future realities. As western culture began to escape the shackles of Christianity, so the human mind became free to explore realms of the imagination and write about it without fear of persecution. Perceptions of the future through the eyes of literary artists allowed the imaginations of people to begin to indulge in the fantasies of life. The beginning of the 19th century had seen the horrors of scientific advance, for example, through '**Mary Shelley**'s '*Frankenstein*'. By the end of the century, readers of popular literature were encapsulated by '**H.G. Wells**' '*The Time Machine*' and the '*War of the Worlds*' ~ both published in the 1890's.

The 19th century was certainly one in which more and more people began to conceive of the futuristic worlds of famous novelists and '*sci-fi*' writers. Notably, it saw the publication of '**Jules Verne**'s stories; a popular French writer whose books included '*Journey to the Centre of the Earth*', and '*Twenty-Thousand Leagues under the Sea*'. In 1865, for example, he wrote '*From the Earth to the Moon*' and, through the literary art of science-fiction, predicted that the Americans would plant the '*Stars and Stripes*' on

the surface of the Moon. In his book he described a journey to the Moon that took 97 hours, 13 minutes and 20 seconds, (*only 25 minutes and 17 seconds short of the famous Apollo mission in 1969*). Amidst an age in which there is increasing speculation that the Apollo Moon landing was actually fabricated by **NASA**, Verne's uncannily accurate story line persists to amaze millions. He wrote of a three man crew on a voyage to the Moon in a cylindrical craft called '*Columbiad*' which was strikingly similar in both name and composition of the 1969 Apollo module called '*Columbia*'. The rocket of Verne's fantasy flight in 1865 had an outer shell made from aluminium, a versatile metal used by aircraft and rocket sciences that were to develop many years later.

Verne described major cities of the future as having in excess of 10 million inhabitants; cities that consisted of thousands of office blocks, and skyscrapers filled with people in air-conditioned rooms working over their computers. Within a hundred years after his life, his visions had materialised ~ maybe not exactly as he saw them, but they have nevertheless come to be a part of modern daily existence. It is because of the tendency for imagination to become reality, and of the relative accuracy of many sci-fi writers that later fears would inevitably arise from 20th century books such as **Aldous Huxley's** '*Brave New World*', and '**George Orwell's** '*Nineteen Eighty-Four*'.





vii.

(Prophecy through the Ages: The 20th century [to 1945])

French psychic '**Victoire Savary**', better known as '**Madame de Thebes**', was one of the first fortune tellers of the 20th century. She claimed to be able to read the future of anyone who allowed her to study their hands, and was renowned throughout France and much of England for her blunt but accurate predictions. She first gained notoriety in 1905 when, after having a premonition of impending doom, her almanac for the year cast a gloomy shadow over Europe ~ citing Belgium as the land that '*will set all Europe in flames*'. Although the real turmoil in 1905 occurred much further east in Russia, her popularity as a palmist soared.

Over the following years, she read the palms of thousands of people who came to her to have their fortunes told, and claimed to have seen repeated signs of death and destruction. Because she saw the coming of 'serious wounds' or 'violent deaths' in the hands of so many young men, she concluded that war was imminent. By 1913 the feeling of impending disaster had grown much stronger, prompting her to make a far more detailed prediction of the future of Europe. In this, she detailed the downfall of Prussia and foresaw an end to the German Kaisers. Following the assassination of the Austrian Archduke '**Franz Ferdinand**', which precipitated the first world war, Madame de Thebes declared that '*destiny had been written*', and that the troubles that she predicted a year earlier would soon come to pass.

On the deeper side of spiritual perception, the occultism of the 19th century had begun to flourish within western subculture, and was now tolerated to a much greater degree. One of the most notorious movements in western occultism was the *Hermetic* '**Order of the Golden Dawn**', which was established in 1877 by '**Samuel Mathers**', '**Dr. William Westcott**', and '**Dr. William R. Woodman**'. These three British freemasons, after having '*discovered*' some initiation documents called the '*Cipher Manuscripts*', developed an esoteric system of occult magic and inaugurated the '*Temple of Isis-Urania*'. The '**Order of the Golden Dawn**', was a society devoted to spiritual, philosophical and magical development which combined the Jewish Kabbalah with ancient Egyptian and Greek mysteries, as well as a variety of other western esoteric traditions such as alchemy, tarot and astrology. As the inner circle grew, so more and more people had access to the esoteric teachings of occult science and schisms inevitably appeared. In order to retain control of the society, Mathers established a higher '*Second Order*', which was answerable only to the '*Chiefs of the Third Order*', people who were perceived as being real but who had crossed the abyss of the Kabbalistic '**Tree of Life**' to become guardians of inner and sacred mysteries. As secrets were revealed to Mathers' '*Second Order*', they were disseminated to those who had pledged their oaths and joined the school of '*Adepti*'.

The system had initially functioned well, serving those hungry for occult wisdom for many years, but disagreements and power struggles inevitably arose and, by the turn of

the 20th century, internal divisions had created a variety of occult sects. Many of these claimed lineage to the classical temples after which they were named.

Most of the various orders of western occultism (*which have given rise to a more sinister side of spiritualism*) were steeped in mysticism and secrecy, and the only information to casual observers outside of these orders came from publications written by men who had broken their vows of silence to profit from their experiences. One notorious initiate to benefit from the revival of occultism was '**Aleister Crowley**' ~ a British magician and pseudo-messiah known to many as the '*Great Beast*'; a title taken from the '**Book of Revelation**'.

Aleister Crowley was born in 1875. His parents belonged to a fundamentalist Christian sect known as the '*Plymouth Brethren*' and his strict biblical education no doubt created his disdain of all things Christian. In 1898 Crowley became initiated in the theosophical Order of the Golden Dawn. and his growing interest in the magic and ritual of the *Kabbalah* greatly promoted his position of power within the society. However after falling out with Mathers in 1900, (*who some believe spiritually died as a result of losing to the 'Great Beast' in a battle of magic on the astral plane*), Crowley the '*magical heir apparent*' left England to travel the Far East. There he learned the disciplines of yoga, adding oriental mysticism to his knowledge of western ritual magic and, over the next few years, became increasingly lured by the influence of 'black magic'; finally leaving the order in 1903.

In the same year, he married clairvoyant '**Rose Kelly**' who, in 1904, on a return trip to Egypt, began involuntarily entering trances and insisted that a spirit guide called '**Aiwass**' was attempting to contact her new husband. In order to test the validity of her visions, Crowley took her to the '*Boulak Museum*' in Cairo where she led him straight to exhibition number 666, a painted wooden tablet called '*The Stele of Revealing*'. Dating back to 26th dynasty of the '**Saite**' kings who ruled Egypt from the 7th century BCE, this ancient artefact depicted '**Horus**', the hawk-headed god of war, receiving a sacrifice from the deceased.

'**Liber AL vel Legis**' (or '*The Book of the Law*') subsequently written by Crowley in 1904 was said to have been transcribed directly from the words of 'Aiwass' whilst in trance. He claimed that the book did not simply contain idol prophesies, but maintained that they could actually be brought into 'being' through the will and imagination of those who believed in them. Crowley understood that the power of thought constitutes the human power of creation, and so adopted it as an intrinsic part of his dark blend of ceremonial magic.

In his book, which heralded the dawning of the '*Aeon of Horus*', Crowley made many prophesies through which he described a world transcending into a new age. Although no dates were put to his predictions, many of Crowley's visions were naturally associated with 20th century world events.

"*...Horus would ascend his throne during a period of violence, widespread destruction and fire...*", for example, is a line that many believe refers to the first world war, "*...I am the warrior lord of all the Forties...*" appears to point to 'world war two'. Further interpretations of Crowley's book include a vision of the 1960's psychedelic culture, and

European wars which have since been associated with the conflicts in Kosovo, Chechnya and Ukraine.

However Crowley's book, a mixture of exclamations, instructions and encrypted prophecies, apply the base emotions of *'love'*, *'hate'* and *'desire'* in a way that mirrors the universal process of willpower. It is divided into three chapters which many people interpret as constituting three aeons of spiritual evolution of humanity. Of those who hold this view, most see the first chapter as characterising the *'Aeon of Isis'* ~ an age when female divinity gave birth to human consciousness. This is described as a world where ***"...the pain of division is as nothing, and the joy of dissolution all."***

Chapter two subsequently describes the current age of humanity ~ the *'Aeon of Osiris'*. This is a time when man began to dominate, and the intuitive force of natural law was replaced with intellect, allowing the human species to perceive of civilisation, domination and war. It has been described as the age when the archetype of the slain god replaced that of the divine all-powerful goddess, and when the world's patriarchal cultures and religions became established. The third chapter relates to the new age which Crowley called the *'Aeon of Horus'*. In this chapter, which is marked by the ascension of the warrior god ***'Ra-Hoor-Khuit'***, Crowley details a *'golden age'* where ***"Love is the law, love under will."***

Ultimately *'Liber AL vel Legis'* expresses the notion of an ideal world that will arise from the violent destruction reaped in the *'Age of Osiris'*

Some, however, believe that it is more than a two-dimensional representation of three ages of humankind; postulating that each chapter independently describes the same *'entire spiritual evolution of humanity'* from the perspective of each of the three aeons. The upshot of this cleverly constructed book is that it can invoke perceptions of personal transition, and so can be interpreted in any number of ways. Crowley himself envisaged a future age of free love and drugs, where conditioned inhibitions and morals succumb to a universal and hedonistic natural law. Recognising that the fundamental force of human power is willpower, he encouraged his followers to lose their inhibitions and indulge themselves without fear of guilt, writing; ***"Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law"***.

By 1907, Crowley had established his own order known as ***'Astrum Argentium'*** (translated as *Silver Star*) where he could express his own vehemently anti-Christian, antiestablishment ideals within the ***'Law of Thelema'***. Greek for *'will'* or *'intention'*, Thelema is based on a medieval philosophy first described by the French monk ***'François Rabelais'*** in 1532. He wrote of the *'Abbey of Thelema'*, an institution for the cultivation of human virtues that are the opposite of the prevailing Christian ethics, and a place where the only law was *'do what thou wilt'*.

Whilst Crowley himself advocated the use of drugs and sexual magic as a means to attaining deeper levels of consciousness, he treated others with contempt. In 1909 he published much of the secret rituals and doctrine of the *'Order of the Golden Dawn'* in his journal entitled ***'The Equinox'*** as if to declare his impudent superiority. Having proclaimed himself to be the prophet of the *'Aeon of Horus'* he lived a self-indulgent and socially abhorrent lifestyle, and by 1910 had become addicted to morphine. However, by 1912, he had begun to influence another primary esoteric order of freemasons, called the

'Ordo Templi Orientis' (or *Order of the Eastern Temple*) who claimed to have discovered the supreme secret of *practical magick*. Finally taking over the lodge in 1922, he reformulated the rites of the society to conform with his 'Law of Thelema'.

He elaborated on the philosophy of Thelema, and announced its power in his **'Magick in Theory and Practice'** which was published in 1929. In an attempt to avoid undesirable association with the darker elements of *'theosophy'*, *'spiritualism'* *'occultism'*, and *'mysticism'*, he described his use of the word 'magick' as **"...essentially the most sublime and actually the most discredited of all the available terms'."**

Yet he advocated its use for **"...every man woman and child"**, claiming that every intentional act is a magical act. In it, Crowley stated that **"A man who is doing his true will has the inertia of the Universe to assist him"**, describing magick as *'the highest, most absolute and most divine knowledge of Natural Philosophy'*. He likened it to the principles of science, because both exist as a result of manipulating the interplay of nature by taking it beyond our present comprehension. Quoted from another book by one of his disciples, magick is described as a **"...fundamental conception that is identical with that of modern science; implicit but real and firm, in the order and uniformity of nature."**

Whilst advocating free will, Crowley saw himself as the dark guru of a new pagan religion which he called **'Sexmagick'**, through which he manipulated the free will of those who trusted him. Drunk on power and Thelemic righteousness, Crowley became increasingly conceited; despising all those who faithfully followed him, and was known to have used his neurotic female disciples without any due regard. The press titled him, *'The Wickedest Man in the World'*, but his philosophy would long outlast his personal power.

Crowley had succeeded in establishing two temples; one in London and one in Cefalu, in Sicily, which he called the *'Abbey of Thelema'*, after Rabelais' temple of Thelemic revelations. However, following the mysterious death of one of his disciples (*who had drunk cat's blood at an unholy ritual*), he was eventually expelled by the Italian authorities who could no longer tolerate his disrespect for Christian culture. As his personal empire collapsed he faded into obscurity, and finally died in 1947 at the age of 62 ~ penniless and *'perplexed'*.



On the other side of the spiritual fence from **'Aleister Crowley'** was the American psychic and seer **'Edgar Cayce'** whose strict Presbyterian upbringing ensured a lifetime devoted to Christianity. Where Crowley would read the force of nature and apply the concept of *'magick'* to manipulate it, Cayce used his extraordinary abilities of diagnosis and prediction for the benefit of others, applying Christian ethics to his visions. Crowley practised the Thelemic philosophy of a law of *love under willpower*, but personally lacked the virtues of kindness and compassion that were ever-present in Cayce's philosophy.

Born in Kentucky in 1877, Edgar Cayce had a childhood which was spiritually eventful, having the ability to tap into the **'universal consciousness'** as he later described it. As a

12 year-old child he had experienced night visions, describing a luminous figure which stood at the end of his bed and told him that his prayers had been answered. He spoke of falling asleep to a voice in his head that repeated the line "*sleep and we may help you*". Upon waking, he claimed to have unconsciously absorbed the entire text of a school book which he had been told to study but which he had no recollection of actually reading. At 16 he was said to have suffered a serious injury playing baseball. Whilst confined to bed, he apparently asked his parents to make an unusual surgical dressing to place on the wound, which effected a cure overnight. Again, he had no recollection of asking them to make it.

Another tale of Cayce's early life is centred upon a persistent throat problem that he had suffered throughout his childhood and as a young adult. Often reducing his talk to just above a whisper, the infliction was finally cured after he was taken to a hypnotist. Whilst under hypnosis, he was subjected to 'regression therapy', where he is said to have spoken in a strange voice as he accurately diagnosed his own illness. Recognising his capability to cure himself and perceiving that his '*gift*' could be used to cure others, this 'God fearing' Sunday school teacher became a famous psychic physician.

He persisted in his desire to help others despite being arrested twice for practising medicine without a licence. For several years he performed his spiritual practice refusing to accept money until his wife finally convinced him to charge a modest fee for his services. As word spread of his preternatural ability to accurately diagnose an array of disorders, so he inevitably became consulted on a wide range of matters from the personal to the metaphysical.

Dubbed the '*Sleeping prophet*' by the American press because he would lapse into a dreamlike state in order to answer his enquirers, Edgar Cayce was questioned on virtually every major topic of interest that has ever attracted human curiosity. He made thousands of readings, most of which were carefully recorded and catalogued.

After entering a self-induced trance he would answer whatever questions were asked of him, whether they concerned financial or philosophical matters. Indeed the accuracy of his visions and prophecies made him highly popular even amongst businessmen who would consult him about the financial markets of America. In the spring of 1929 during a time of financial boom for example, he warned of a catastrophic downward movement in the values of stocks and shares, and by autumn of that year, the *Wall Street Crash*, occurred, sparking the *Great Depression* that affected the lives of millions. More sublime questions regarding the future of the human race gave rise to many predictions, some of which genuinely overwhelmed him.

When he was asked about his unusual ability of foresight whilst in a conscious state, Cayce described it as a '*gift from God*', but when put to him in a trance state, he replied that he could tune into the minds of all other people alive or dead, and tap information that was relevant to any question asked. His main source of spiritual wisdom however came from a library of knowledge which he would often visit whilst in trance. Indeed he likened this library to the traditional '*Akashic record*' a place of esoteric knowledge that housed every thought and action that has ever been. The Akashic record is described as a cosmic database of all feelings, thoughts, and experiences since the beginning of time,

preserved in the astral light, much like a universal photographic plate that is sensitive to every living emotion.

As he drifted off, shifting his consciousness to this universal '*world memory*', Cayce would see himself as a point of light, moving upwards through a larger beam of light. As he reached further into this altered state of consciousness, Cayce described the light slowly revealing misshapen forms which give way to a blending of colour and a vision of human civilisation. Then quite suddenly, he would arrive at a huge hall of records looking rather like an ancient Greek temple. Housed within were the books of universal knowledge that contained every conceivable occurrence that has ever happened and will ever happen. At the entrance to the library, its keeper (*an old man*), who would go inside and return with a large book containing the answer to the question that he sought, and together they would look it up and discuss the topic. Cayce would then return to the conscious world, and on awaking would present the premonitions that he had brought back from this realm of universal consciousness.

Some hailed him as a prophet of the '*new age*', but others (*in particular several Christian communities*) accused him of being a false prophet, condemning his practice as an instrument of the devil; an accusation that weighed greatly on him. The perception that he could be doing the devil's work however somewhat conflicted with what he saw in his dream state. The idea of universal reincarnation, for example, was alien to his Christian beliefs, yet he remained open-minded about the process of hypnotic regression into perceived past lives. Although his spiritual experiences often challenged his faith, they paradoxically gave him the strength to continue in his quest to help others even though the methods were deemed unconventional by the Christian culture of early 20th century America. Cayce believed that he had awoken latent psychic abilities that we all have, which enabled him to tap into a pool of human thoughts, however he naturally interpreted his visions through his religious background, and influenced by Christian culture, perceived it all as being within the '*oneness of God*'.

Nevertheless Cayce became asked to forecast principal world events, and spoke of 1936 as a year that would initiate a time of great catastrophe. He saw it as leading to the ***"...breaking up of many powers that exist as factors in world affairs"***.

Moreover, he foresaw the rise of the Nazis in Germany and the social turmoil that would effect the entire world.

Whilst there was no significant global war in 1936, many followers of Cayce point to the fact that it was the year that '**Adolf Hitler**' reoccupied the Rhineland, and formed an alliance with '**Benito Mussolini**'s fascists. It was also the year when Italy invaded Abyssinia, and the year that civil war in Spain began as a prelude to World War **II**. All of these events were opportunities for western democratic powers to intervene and stem the tide of fascism, but they failed to do so because they were without sufficient political will. In this instant, the course of history in Cayce's prophesy was therefore not changed for the better.

Foreseeing an eventual shift of Earth's poles caused by the unconscious actions of humanity in 1936 which would upset the equilibrium of existence, he spoke of inevitable realignment of world powers, which duly came in the shape of the second world war.

This however was said, by Cayce, to be only the initial consequence of the subconscious forces of man being '*out of balance*' with the universal force of nature. The second world war therefore, he believed, came about as a result of imbalance which violently manifested in the conscious actions of man. But the shock waves, he claimed, would last beyond the war, reverberating around the planet for many decades ~ eventually resulting in cataclysmic polar activity. Another important year in Cayce's prophecies was 1998, a year when he envisaged the culmination of a series of natural disasters around the world which would culminate in a *pole shift*. He believed that the longer term effects of imbalance would trigger major climate change and geological upheaval, gathering momentum between 1958 and 1998, and making the millennium a crucial time for human survival.

He pictured a great flood of biblical proportions, similar to one which occurred some 10,500 years ago, stating that, "***The greater part of Europe will be changed in the twinkling of an eye.***".

Of the more distant future, he foresaw seismic catastrophes that would eventually result in places such as California, New York, and Japan being consumed by the oceans. In the 1930's when Edgar Cayce made predictions that saw catastrophic global changes, such ideas were considered absurd by the scientific community. However since the 1970's and 80's we have begun to comprehend the sheer complexity of the global environment, and it is no longer considered to be scientific heresy to speak of such events. With a greater understanding of natural events such as plate tectonics, ozone depletion, magnetic polar shifts global warming, and the importance of the Earth's wavering axial tilt, science and the esoteric perceptions of many historic prophets are increasingly finding common ground.

By the late 1990's, the concept of 'thermohaline circulation', for example, had become better understood, in particular the notion of a '*North Atlantic conveyor belt*' which, by circulating warm equatorial waters northwards to western Europe, actually protects the much of the continent from the worst ravages of winter. Modern theories began to suggest that the action of global warming, by melting ice at the poles, releases vast amounts of fresh water into the northern Atlantic, which could eventually suffocate the conveyor belt, and potentially plunge Europe into another mini-ice age. However in Cayce's prophecies it is man's lack of patience combined with inconsiderate and intolerant actions which, whilst compounding stress upon our planet, will subsequently lead to a rise in the number of volatile storms and geological disasters. For many parts of the world 1998 was indeed the hottest year on record, and the climatic shift in regional weather patterns became increasingly evident, but as a year of global catastrophe, it was no more significant than any other in the 1990's.

Cayce could not predict definite dates of destruction and consequence, yet he could clearly see periods of transition, so his visions of the future would more accurately be described as visions of the *potential* future. He saw changes that effected every aspect of life; from social upheaval directly arising from the stresses upon civilisation, to seismic catastrophes that he believed would change the face of the planet if humanity persisted on its present course of consciousness. However, whilst he stated that the millennium would be a period of tremendously accelerated change (*which would invoke many crises around the world*), he also gave hope that it could potentially herald an age of understanding.

The perceived dangers for the human species were many, for example, he stated that, ***“On Russia’s religious development hinges the hope of the world.”***

On occult philosophy, he wrote ***“In the field of the understanding of the magic or mysterious forces, especially as applied to the influences over people.... the entity may reach to that position as to whatever is desired, so long as the desire is in accord with that universal force or development, called – God”***, whilst he referred to black magic as ***“...that of overpowering in the mental world”***.

Seeing that the future is subject to change according to our actions as a thinking species, he placed no definite timescale on his prophesies, believing that only mankind’s actions can determine the timing. His idea that the future is wholly dependant on our conscious and unconscious actions serves to illustrate why many psychics and seers can often give accurate accounts of future events, but find less accuracy with the dates. It also explains why even prophets that are generally accurate will sometimes make predictions which never occur at all, and why the use of symbolism and universal archetypes (*which transcend the language of any single culture*) find their way into so many prophesies. The reason for all these being that the actions of humankind can alter course of future events, taking *reality* in a totally different direction.

A common mistake by many people who are eager to prove their ‘visions of the future’ is to attach a date to their interpretation. But the future is not preordained and so does not conform to exact dates, Because we are free to act in accordance with our intuition or emotional preferences (*for example, we may act on a whim*), we change the course of the future by changing the pattern of the present moment. Many prophets with genuine perceptions but little insight make the mistake of believing the future to be preordained, and are thus *proven* false. Cayce saw that the future is determined by our individually made choices which are not fixed. However he believed that our waking habits badly need to be reassessed to avert disaster because our collective perceptions actually have an effect on physical changes within the structure of the Earth. Such is the power of influence of our thoughts.

Cayce believed that if humanity could change in time, it would lead to the establishment of new world order ~ a global community in which individuals would realise the connection and interdependence on one another. He described 44 elemental laws of spiritual development, which he claimed were first given by world consensus 10½ million years ago in Egypt during the very first dynasty of Pharaohs. He spoke of an early race of humanity who existed quite differently from ***“today’s age of man’s earthly indwellin.”***, and of the original separation of people into five castes. Of the modern era he wrote; ***“Unless there is, then, a more universal oneness of purpose on the part of all, this will one day bring, here in America, revolution!”***, perceiving that we, as a species, have splintered to the extent that we have lost sight of the common goal of humanity.

In 1945 Edgar Cayce died of heart failure. He left a huge legacy in the form of over 14,000 readings and hundreds of books filled with his writings that had accumulated since 1901. The many prophesies of Cayce which have been preserved long after his death, are highly acclaimed for their accuracy, and have been attributed with a success rate of as much as 97%. Indeed the ***‘American Association for Research and***

Enlightenment’ was set up to carry on his unique blend of Christian philosophy. It promotes the idea that modern society should reassess its attitudes towards universal existence, and proposes that as spiritual individuals we all have an opportunity to alter the course of the future.



Others, who were less belligerent than ‘**Aleister Crowley**’ and without ‘**Edgar Cayce**’s burden of Christian preconceptions, have also had the notion of astral projection and the idea that our actions in the material world effect the next level of conscious existence. Many such people get lost in the endeavour to understand the human mind, and other beliefs such as ‘*ghosts of the past*’ become entwined with the power of dreams and precognition.

The best illustration of this idea of *astral projection* occurs whenever a nation undergoes social upheaval such as war or a violent revolution. During such times, the emotional disturbances that arise from the people’s collective waking experiences are bound to be reflected in their anguished dreams. People who experience war will inevitably dream of it, and the collective dreams of those involved in war notably increase in emotional intensity. In this context the ‘*astral plane*’ is perceived of as an etheric dimension of human consciousness. Just as a flash of light leaves an impression on photographic film creating a two-dimensional image that is visible to the naked eye, so every thought and experience that has ever occurred leaves an emotional impression upon the ‘astral plane’, which can only be *seen* in the mind’s eye.

Entities such as ‘*ghosts*’ are also considered by many psychics to be ‘astral projections’. Some believe that they actually exist as disembodied ‘*spirits*’ or ‘*souls*’ trapped in another dimension of existence, whilst others see them as ‘*holograms*’ of reality from a time that has since passed or is yet to come. However, all spectres, phantoms and poltergeists conform to cultural expectations of what constitutes such an entity, and so must originate from the mind. Ghosts are in fact, no more than extensions of the human mind, which itself relies on *dreams* to develop and maintain a waking sanity.

It is from dreams, therefore, that spiritual entities such as ghosts and the astral plane originate. Moreover our dreams, which exist in a realm beyond the ‘physical’, form an integral part of our continued existence. When we dream, it becomes our *reality*, and our mind is taken into a *non-physical* dimension of human existence which allows us to reconfigure our intellectual perceptions by subsuming our most recent emotional experiences of life. In the conscious realm of waking reality, we are all sensitive to emotional upheaval and imbalance, which itself has increased as we have intellectually evolved and become more aware of our living environment. Indeed in the modern age of global media coverage, we are presented with images of conflicts elsewhere in the world that we would otherwise be unaware of, and so we are even susceptible to dreaming of wars in which we play no part, especially whenever we find them particularly upsetting.

Whilst some psychic investigators such as ‘**Erich Weiss**’ (*better known as the escapologist and conjurer ‘Harry Houdini’*) endeavoured to expose mediums and clairvoyants as frauds, others such as the psychic researcher ‘**J.W. Dunne**’ concentrated

their investigations on the precognitive nature of dreams. In the 1930's Dunne put forward a '*Theory of Serial Time*', in which he deduced that if time flowed in a single direction like a body of water within a river, there must be *another form of time* with which to measure its speed. From there he concluded that there must be yet another passage of time to measure that one and so on, and so visualised a universe which consists of an infinite series of dimensions. He therefore proposed that as the future unfolds, our choices and actions in the dimension that constitutes the present physical world are determined by a *body of existence* which flows along any one of an infinite number of tributaries of time.

This, Dunne reasoned, was why the accuracy of prophecies made at a specific moment of time, had such a wide range of accuracy. In expounding the idea of dream precognition, he proposed that, because the future will continually change course (*often subtly but sometimes suddenly and without warning*), dreams often contain precognitive visions. Dunne, like many other psychic researchers, advocated the historic practice of keeping a dream journal which enables people to remember dreams that they would otherwise forget in their waking lives.

Dunne recognised that there are numerous levels of consciousness, though his perception that every single decision and action that we take as individuals subtly alters the course of human destiny by moving us into another dimension, is a somewhat elaborate concept. If you consider that *time* itself is a manmade concept which basically allows us to perceive the process of change, then, being an intellectually-created entity, it simply does not exist. The concept of time however has allowed us to intellectually evolve so, whilst featuring heavily both in our waking lives and within our dreams, neither dimension of consciousness recognises the timescale of the other. In other words, we lose all sense of established time whenever we are not conscious and alert in our preconditioned waking world.

Dreams however are normally dismissed by our conscious mind as being of little value in the material world of physical reality. This is a *time* when our intellect takes over and adds constraints to our emotional perceptions. In the modern world, the relationship between western culture (*which has led to incredible human innovation*) and the realm of unconscious dreams, has created a paradoxical situation whereby invention and discovery originate from the realms of the imagination, but our dreams are consciously denied.

Another man interested in the paradox of precognition was the English novelist and playwright '**J.B. Priestley**'. He perceived of three dimensions of time; '*everyday time*' when we are absorbed in the mundane tasks of the waking world, '*contemplative time*' when we are aware that we are detaching ourselves from real time, either becoming absorbed by introspection or meditation, and a third '*infinite time*' when we experience moments of intense creativity. Both Dunne and Priestley saw that dreams often contain surreal circumstances that are distorted fragments of events yet to come. Even seemingly trivial scenarios within a dream can materialise in some form of another in the real world, so by remembering and categorising dreams, definite patterns emerge. Generally speaking, dreams consist of emotional experiences that have come about from our last waking day. Newly acquired knowledge, and our expectations of tomorrow become

mixed in a surreal setting whereby only our emotions decide the nature of the surroundings and the outcome of the dream itself.

By comparing a record of dreams to *real* events which are consequently experienced with a conscious mind, the similitude is often astounding. Events either personally experienced or collectively shared as headline news, are regularly foreseen but remain unrecognised in preceding dreams. For example one such person who recorded their dreams and categorised them, found that after researching the dates on which they occasionally had a dream about the Moon (*either as a central issue or a peripheral aspect*), their dreams appeared to correspond with a particular lunar phase: (*a pattern that they would never have been aware of had they not kept a dream journal*).

The meaning of the dreams is ultimately a matter of personal interpretation and no unconscious dream can be easily transcribed into definite meaning through the process of intellectual reason. Simply remembering dreams however is an enlightening experience and, by keeping a dream journal, the waking life can often appear quite different. A good example is the common perception of *déjà vu*, which becomes seen in a different light if the dream from which it originates is remembered. It is often from the unconscious, forgotten experiences of our dreams that the feeling that we've '*seen it all before*' originates, especially when we **know** that we are experiencing something for *real* for the first time.

A great example of dream precognition going unrecognised comes from the British schoolmaster '**Leonard Dawe**' who wrote crosswords for a national newspaper during the second world war. In 1944 the answers to one of Dawe's crossword puzzles coincided with many of the code-names that were to be used as landing points by the Allied invasion of Normandy which was to occur just weeks later. Besides words such as '*Utah*', '*Gold*', and '*Sword*', even the code-name for the operation itself was published. The **D-day** operation, which was mounted from southern England, and the subsequent Allied push to liberate western Europe from the Nazis, was one of the largest and most complex movement of men and machinery in history. Yet Dawe had no connection to the military, and his leaking of these words in a crossword puzzle were put down to an uncanny coincidence. Dawe may well have tapped into the pool of collective unconscious and seen an aspect of the future, but didn't recognise it as such. Moreover his precognitive perceptions imprinted enough on his mind to potentially effect the course of history!

Another seer of wartime upheaval and calamity was '**Cyril Macklin**'; a London machinist who foresaw the destruction of London in the *Blitz*, and even predicted the names of the streets that would be demolished. Back in 1927, having seen a newspaper picture of '**Adolf Hitler**' (*who was then a relatively unknown leader of the 'National Socialist German Workers' Party*), Macklin had recognised his potential to disrupt world order, and predicted that he would cause a world war in 1939. During the war itself, his visions of the Luftwaffe raids over London warned him of the destruction of no less than three factories in which he was employed. After surviving the bombing of both an aircraft and tank factory, (*his two previous wartime employers*), his visions and inner voices were taken seriously, and when he predicted the dropping of five bombs on his current factory (*including one on the canteen that will fail to explode*), his warning was heeded.

Astonishingly, the night after revealing his revelations, his visions were once again to be proved accurate.

As for the longer-term predictions, Macklin foresaw two more major wars before the end of the century, followed by an eventual unification of nations under a single global banner. The exact times for these he could not predict, proving once again that visions of events that days or weeks in advance are far easier than prophesies which look years or centuries ahead. Moreover, the capabilities of Cyril Macklin, and many other respected prophets uphold the notion that the future does not, and cannot, follow a predestined path.



Part 4

The Personalities (modern age)

“Astrology is assured of recognition from psychology, without further restrictions, because astrology represents the summation of all the psychological knowledge of antiquity.”

~ Carl Jung (1959)

i.

(Prophecy through the Ages: The 20th century [post war])

Parapsychology is the study of paranormal phenomena. Beginning back in the late 19th century, it has become subdivided into two fields; **‘ESP’** (or *extrasensory perception*) ~ the study of intuitive perception beyond the obvious physical capabilities of the senses, and **‘psychokinesis’** ~ the movement of objects without the use of physical force. By the 1940’s **ESP** had become a household phrase, much of it thanks to media sensationalism over research carried out by US parapsychologist **‘Joseph B. Rhine’** who concluded that one in five people had the ability to detect the thoughts of others. First coined by German psychic researcher **‘Rudolf Tischner’** back in the 1920’s, **ESP** covers phenomena such as **‘telepathy’** (or *the connection of minds*), and **‘precognition’** (the *foreseeing of future events*). However, it has so many subtle *‘variables’* that it became intellectually dismissive, making scientific study of such phenomena extremely difficult.

Further aspects of **ESP** include **‘clairvoyance’** (the *ability to see events through an ‘inner vision’*), and **‘retrocognition’** (the *mental witnessing of past events without having been physically present*). Rhine and his colleagues at Duke University in North Carolina endeavoured to prove the existence of **ESP**, using what they considered to be a scientific approach. One classic way of testing a subject for **ESP** that emerged from their experiments involved the guessing of symbols on ‘randomly’ selected cards known as *‘Zener cards’*. Each one of the 25 cards within a pack contained a different symbol, designed to be targeted and read by the subjects who were tested for **ESP**.

One particular set of experiments known as the *‘Pearce-Pratt series’* was conducted by **‘J.G. Pratt’**, Rhine’s research assistant, on a subject called **‘Hubert Pearce’** who claimed that he had inherited his mothers clairvoyant powers. Out of a total of 1,850 *trials*, Pearce correctly guessed the target card a total of 558 times, in some cases from within a separate building. By applying the scientifically accepted method of statistical possibility, the experiments concluded that Pearce’s success rate of 32% (or *just under one-in-three hits*), was well above the mean chance expectation of 20% (or *one-in-five*). Indeed the odds of achieving such a score were in the region of 22 billion-to-one, implying that some sort of telepathy or precognition must exist.

The work of Rhine and his colleagues at Duke University became well known, and was even acclaimed by some quarters of the scientific establishment for being the first definite step towards scientifically testing **‘psi’**, the hypothetical element responsible for **ESP**. The respected psychiatrist **‘Carl Jung’**, for example, praised Rhine’s research, insisting that the *“...contents of the psyche are as real as that which exists in the external world.”*

Jung himself had compiled studies of what he termed '*meaningful coincidences*', believing that, although everyone had an aptitude for perceptions beyond the *norm*, in the waking world we are all confronted with intellectual resistance to the idea of emotional precognition.

Whilst Jung welcomed this endeavour to research the paranormal, most of the scientific community remained unimpressed with Rhine's work. Indeed, although the results of many experiments at Duke University exceeded expectation, his team were accused of many failings by the establishment, such as lack of scientific discipline, being motivated by expectation, employing invalid methods of statistical evaluation, and even the accusation of collusion was thrown. However, pointing to unscientific inference, most sceptics have simply dismissed the work as being little more than inaccurate and fanciful.

Despite this however, parapsychology has remained an intriguing enough subject for it to warrant scientific investigation, so studies into **ESP** and psychokinesis (*or the parapsychical*) continue to this day. Indeed psychokinetic research became of particular interest to the opposing political powers of the 'Cold War'; both sides privately reluctant to dismiss it out of hand when it could potentially be used to advance the cause of the opposing ideology.

In the early 1970's, Russian housewife '**Ninel Kulagina**' had apparently demonstrated psychokinetic powers on film which, after being smuggled out of the Soviet Union by **US** researchers, prompted the **CIA** into research of their own. In the controversial film, Kulagina is seen to move objects through fixation alone, and it is claimed that she took several hours to muster '*supernatural forces*' before attempting these feats. Her pulse rate is said to have raced whenever she demonstrated her powers, and she would be left exhausted and pained for days afterwards. Occurring at a time of extreme covert global conflict, the notion of psychokinesis was inevitably seen as being of value to both Soviet and **US** researchers.

It was not until the 1990's however that the **US** '*Department of Defense*' revealed that the Pentagon had operated a program of psychic spies to gather intelligence in foreign countries. Whilst a reduced program still exists as part of the '**National Security Agency**', the American project began out of concern of a growing '*psychic gap*' with the Soviet Union. Reports of **KGB** programs involving Russian psychics such as Kulagina and others, prompted the **CIA** to set up '**Project Scanate**' (*or scan by co-ordinate*) which recruited Americans to demonstrate their own psychic abilities for the purposes of **CIA** and **US** military intelligence.

There have been many organisations formed, particularly in the **US**, to investigate matters of the paranormal. The largest of all psychokinetic laboratories is the '**Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research**' laboratory (*or PEAR lab*) at Princeton University in New Jersey. Set up in 1979, researchers at the **PEAR** laboratory again have approached the subject of psychokinesis through scientific philosophy. By conducting a range of experiments using strict scientific protocols, the **PEAR** lab has had to invest in setting up phenomenally large databases, insisting that, in order to draw meaningful conclusions from their research, such things are a necessity. Moreover, their reliance on computer

technology to analyse data concerning trials of the supernatural has further involved modern technology with the *sciences of the mind*.

Another organisation concerned with rational study of the paranormal is the '**American Association for the Advancement of Science**'. Set up in 1969, it now also accepts the scientific validity of parapsychology. Once considered a pseudo-science, parapsychology is becoming increasingly accepted as a legitimate scientific field, and the first president of the *AAAS*, anthropologist '**Margaret Mead**', played a significant part in changing attitudes. Mead's earlier work had proposed that profound human emotions were shaped by culture and circumstance as opposed to biological and genetic means, an idea that had sparked much debate amongst the scientific community. As the first anthropologist to seriously study 'child-rearing practices', she went on to develop theories on learning and 'cultural imprinting', that remained controversial for many years after her death in 1978. In 1969 however, she risked her reputation as a respected anthropologist by arguing that the scientific establishment needed to continue to investigate phenomena which it doesn't recognise, citing that, "***The whole history of scientific advance is full of scientists investigating phenomenon that the establishment did not believe were there...***"



As for popular prophets of the '*new age*', the post-war era has seen many. One of the best known was American psychic '**Jeane Dixon**', who shot to fame in the 1960's after apparently predicting the assassination of the 35th president of the United States. In 1956 her prediction that the 1960 election would be won by a Democrat who would, "***...be assassinated or die in office***", appeared in an issue of '*Parade*' magazine and, after '**John F. Kennedy**' was shot in Dallas in 1963, Dixon's reputation as a psychic grew enormously. As a devout Catholic who faithfully attended Mass each morning, she attained a huge following of people who revered her prophetic abilities, and was regarded as a '*prophet of God*' by many regular churchgoers.

For many of her predictions, she used a crystal ball which she claimed had been given to her as a child by a travelling gypsy woman who was convinced that she had been blessed with the power of prophesy. However the Kennedy family were not amongst her followers and remained unaware that she had apparently experienced further premonitions regarding their plight. Answering questions on precognition at a 1968 convention at the '*Ambassador Hotel*' in Los Angeles, she announced that '**Robert Kennedy**' would never become president "***...because of a tragedy that will take place here in this hotel***". A week after her prediction, he was indeed assassinated in the hotel's kitchens.

By now Dixon had become a celebrity amongst American high society, and was foretelling the *fate* of the rich and famous. Her many apparent prophesies include a warning to actress '**Carole Lombard**' not to travel by air just days before she was killed in a plane crash, whilst she even claimed to have even foreseen the death of '**Marilyn Monroe**' in a spontaneous psychic flash. However, many of the prophesies of Dixon have been blown out of proportion, and claims of her psychic abilities have been perpetuated by those who cling to her revered prophesies.

In her lifetime, Jeanne Dixon made numerous political prophecies pertaining to world affairs, and even became a useful *'ideological weapon'* for the US authorities who were keen to defeat the forces of communism. She promoted the idea of the *'traditional American way of life'*, and inadvertently reinforced the isolationist conception of political forces of *'good'* and *'evil'*. Her predictions that *'the Soviet Union be first to land a man on the Moon'*, and *'would invade Iran and Israel'*, that *'China would use germ warfare on the USA'* and *'that there would be a major war in the 1980's'*, whilst now regarded as unlikely to occur or clearly false, at the time, helped to maintain the hysteric anti-communist atmosphere of the United States during the Cold War.

Indeed inaccurate stories of her earlier predictions continued to be printed by a sensation-grabbing American press which fronted a media industry dominated by right-wing Republican ideology. In different reports, it was claimed that she had predicted *'the partitioning of India and Pakistan'* two years before it occurred in 1947, *'the assassination of 'Mahatma Gandhi'* in 1948, and that *'China would adopt communist ideals by 1949'*. However her accuracy in predicting world events was poor in comparison to those concerned with American culture, mostly because of her prejudicial and rigid perception of righteousness which somewhat distorted her visions. Whilst attaining success in predicting events based in her native Christian American culture, her view of the outside world was somewhat misguided.

Other wildly inaccurate predictions included a prophecy that *'World War III' would begin in 1958'* which, although being taken seriously by some people, was thankfully proved wrong. However this particularly forgettable prophecy was made before her meteoric rise to fame in 1963 and so, along with her prediction that the Vietnam war would only last 90 days and that a cure for cancer would be found by 1967, it became readily forgotten in the clamour to hail her as a genuine seer of human fate.

As far as the millennium was concerned, she foretold of a new religious leader who will rise to power at the end of the 20th century, and will oppose Christianity, believing that he would be exposed as the *'Antichrist'* sometime after 1999. This proclamation of Dixon's originates from a vision that she had in 1962, in which she claimed to have seen the Egyptian Pharaoh *'Akhenaten'* and his favourite queen *'Nefertiti'* holding their newborn son. Akhenaten of the 18th dynasty of Pharaohs, reigned ancient Egypt in the 14th century BCE, and is credited with developing the cult of *'Aten'*; the monotheistic worship of a Sun god, in an attempt to replace the many traditional gods that were worshipped at that time. Akhenaten's religious reforms however are said to have been responsible for the loss of much of Egypt's wealth, and he is believed to have been exiled with a number of Hebrew slaves whom he converted to his new religion; creating the antecedent of modern Judaism.

In her royal vision of ancient Egypt, Dixon claims to have felt an overwhelming feeling of peace, seeing the child as a messiah who would unite all races and religions under a new Christian deity. However, she later revised her interpretation following another vision, now revealing the child to be the Antichrist. She now saw him as a man who would establish a new religion based on Christianity and Eastern philosophy, which would be just a front for gathering a private army that will corrupt the innocent and fight to create a new world order.

Another western prophet who has been dismissed by many as a fake was the Italian prophet '**Karmohaksis**' who predicted, amongst other things, a viral epidemic that was subsequently assimilated to the outbreak of **AIDS**. However, Karmohaksis was so eager to be proved right, that he gave precise dates for his prophesies which consequently undermined his psychic reputation. His book '*Le Primi Luce della Terza Era*' (*The Dawn of the Third Era*) was published in 1959 and fuelled debate on the fate and future of the world. But when his predictions didn't match up to the dates he had set, he was inevitably declared false.

Karmohaksis shared the view of three ages of humanity; an idea which has featured in the prophesies of many seers. He saw them as the ages of the '**Father**', of the '**Son**' and of the '**Holy Spirit**', which in spiritual terms represented ages of *fear*, *faith* and *freedom*. Naming 2033 as the year that the final age would begin, Karmohaksis foresaw the idyllic 'third era' as a future paradise where man and nature would coexist in perfect harmony. However, being preoccupied with biblical mythology, he declared that a massive flood, which would "*...cleanse the world of evil intent*" would precede his '*Age of the Holy Spirit*', and amongst other things would lead to the total destruction of Rome.

The first signs that the current age is coming to an end, he believed, would occur in 1970 when the world would experience a series of natural disasters which would last for a period of approximately 15 years. He went on to name specific cities and towns that would be affected or destroyed by catastrophes such as floods, storms, earthquakes and volcanoes. Proclaiming that the early 1970's would be plagued with destructive forces, he foresaw riots in several major cities; including London and Paris. Regarding the 1990's, he believed that 1995 would be a particularly sombre year, seeing both the death of the pope and the outbreak of an incurable disease, which turned out to be not too dissimilar in description to the spread of **AIDS**. However, his insistence that, during this time of destruction, "*...a new land will emerge between Australia and New Zealand*", reveals more about his own cultural influences than it does about the state of the world to come.

Another seer of the century who achieved greater accuracy than Jeanne Dixon and Karmohaksis in his predictions of world affairs was French psychic '**Mario de Sabato**'. Born in 1933, he was yet another psychic who appeared to develop his unusual abilities in childhood. In the 1960's he had built up a reputation as a '*future consultant*', and by the early 1970's the accuracy of his predictions, particularly concerning global affairs, made him a popular figure throughout France and the French-speaking world. Of his prophesies made in the 1960's and early 70's (*that have since had time to materialise*), he is said to have achieved an accuracy of as much as 90% yet, as his prophesies have so far not been published in English, he remains relatively unheard of outside of France.

Although a devout Catholic, de Sabato has not used his visions to confirm his faith, and has refused to gain inference from biblical scriptures. Indeed, he has been likened to '**Nostradamus**' insofar as his prophesies were uninfluenced by religious or national interest. Of Historic events in the 1960's, he apparently predicted the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, the assassinations of John F. Kennedy in 1963 and both '**Robert Kennedy**' and '**Martin Luther King**' in 1968.

In 1971, he correctly foretold of many things to come before the turn of the century, including an American defeat in the Vietnam war in 1975, the Islamic revolution in Iran leading to the fall of the Shah in 1979, and the civil wars that raged throughout Angola and Mozambique in the 1970's and 80's. As far as European affairs were concerned, he predicted political turmoil in Italy during the 1980's, followed by a series of floods that would ravage parts of the country in the 1990's. He also predicted the collapse of the Soviet Union, the break up of Yugoslavia and a series of subsequent wars. He even foresaw Britain's many quarrels with the European Union, including the Europe-wide ban on British beef exports.

For his relatively short-term predictions, de Sabato had the gift of foresight rather than prophesy. He could expertly '*read*' how world cultures interacted, and so was able to accurately predict the course of future events. Back in 1971, he had predicted, for example, that the west would be crippled by an economic war with the Arab world ~ obviously referring to the oil crisis that began in 1973 and which ultimately led to world recession in 1974. The action by '**OPEC** member states of significantly raising oil prices in protest at US support for Israel during the escalating Arab-Israeli conflict in 1973 was not predicted by western analysts. Yet, unlike the many economists who failed to foresee the looming crisis, de Sabato's astute insight into world politics and the interaction of opposing cultures allowed him to accurately predict this and many otherwise unforeseen events.

He also foretold of the Iran-Iraq war which occurred throughout the 80's, several years before the Islamic revolution in Iran had even begun, whilst he also predicted the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991. Yet his most dramatic prophesy, that of a global war breaking out before 1982, failed to materialise. This prediction was the largest of several noticeable errors, including the assertion that Germany would never reunite, and that 1998 would see a nuclear encounter in Korea, though such a disaster could have easily developed at a time when the communist north had become increasingly isolated.

As for prophecies concerning the millennium, he believed that a new power source of electromagnetic energy would be discovered in 1999, a year that would be marked by major earthquakes; some of which would threaten nuclear power stations. Also failing to materialise, were his predictions for the year 2000, in which he saw a Chinese invasion of Europe in the shape of mass emigration and economic take-over, as well as a military attack by China on Russia. However he also predicted that Britain will become a republic after the reign of '**Charles III**', and that a popular political revolt in Spain will unseat king '**Juan Carlos**'.

Interestingly, de Sabato also foresaw military coups in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria, and hinted that both '**Saddam Hussein**' and '**Muammar Gaddafi**' would be assassinated early in the 21st century. He also believed, however, that Israel would be overpowered by its neighbouring Arab states before permanent peace would eventually return in what he saw as a new *golden age* beginning at the start of the 22nd century. This he prophesied would be a time when humanity became free from the influence of orthodox religion. However, his belief that the human race would also witness visitors from another planet sometime in the early 21st century greatly undermined his credibility as a genuine seer of the future.



There was an active development of eastern prophetic philosophy in the west during the late 20th century, giving rise to strange blends of human culture. Much of it arose from *western mysticism* taking on Christian, Islamic and Pagan traditions within the format of eastern spiritual wisdom. One such new age philosophy was that of **'Ramala teaching'**; a mystical cult based at Glastonbury, an English market town that is steeped in myth and legend.

Famed for its legendary links with the past, Glastonbury was traditionally founded by **'Joseph of Aramathea'** in around 63CE, when he is said to have built the first Christian church on what was once the *'Isle of Avalon'*. Legend has it that he brought with him the very chalice used at the 'last supper', the *'Holy Grail'*, containing the *'blood of Christ'*. This, and the many **Arthurian legends** regarding the kingdom of *Camelot* originate from medieval myth centred around Glastonbury.

In the 20th century, the increasing influence of eastern philosophy led to the revival of medieval Christian myths such as these, adding a sense of modern spiritualism to once archaic legends. Originating in the mid-1970's, believers of the mystical Ramala cult, who reside at the *'Sanctuary of the Holy Grail'*, maintain they have made telepathic contact with higher life. The perceived spiritual beings that they revere are referred to as the **'Ramala teachers'**, and, in keeping with the theme of western theosophy, it is through such entities that they claim to have channelled their prophesies of the 'new age'.

Ramala believe that humanity is ill-prepared for the cosmic changes of the new age, and are dedicated to meditation in order to accumulate spiritual energy in preparation for its coming. Through intensive meditation they claim to be building an *'ark of consciousness'* to escape the deluge of negative forces which threaten mankind's very existence. They have privately published a series of books warning humanity of the consequence of choices that are made by society in a modern age neglectful of nature. In ***'The Vision of Ramala'***, for example, the author exclaims that ***"...now is the supreme moment of choice to either recognise or deny our spiritual birthright"***,

going on to explain that ***"..humanity must be tuned into the 'cosmic energy pattern' because there are souls of great evolution incarnating on the earth at this time"***.

Whilst endeavouring to spiritually pave the way for these 'great souls' to come, the philosophy of Ramala asserts that the Earth will never die because it is *'imbued with spirit'*. They maintain that although its physical form undergoes continuous transformation (*which will one day disable its capacity to sustain life*), its life-giving aspect is just a part of its wider being. Moreover, they believe that humanity is ***'...tampering with that sacred being'*** through relentless exploitation of its resources. Unlike many Christian cults however, Ramala followers deny the destruction of life through the wrath of an omnipotent god, seeing the living Earth declining as a result of ***"...the flowering of seeds that humanity itself has sown"***.

Glastonbury is also the setting for a regional centre of the **'Sai Organisation'**, devoted to the teachings of **'Sathya Sai Baba'**; an Indian spiritual leader who had assumed the role

of the second '*Avatar of Love*'. The concept of a coming '*Messiah*' appears to be a part of cults and religions worldwide, it's just that the form that divinities are assumed to take tends to differ somewhat. '*Sanātana Dharma*', more commonly known as Hinduism, is a conglomeration of eastern deities and a religion with many esoteric beliefs. The Hindu concept of '*Avatars*' is very similar to that of Christian '*Messiahs*'. However some incarnations of divine entities such as the avatars of '*Vishnu*' assume the form of enlightened human beings whilst others manifest as animals. A major aspect of Hindu tradition is that there is no single formula to which everyone is expected to adhere without exception. In its many guises, it has room for understanding and belief at every perceptual level, regardless of intellect.

Hindu scripture reveals that an 'Avatar of Love' will manifest three times in the *Kali-Yuga* (the present, violent earthly cycle). It is written that these incarnations of an avatar will coincide with periods of great crisis '*in order to guide mankind when he is faced with grave choices between light and darkness*'. The life of Sathya Sai Baba was apparently foretold in sacred scripture by the ancient Hindu prophet '*Shuka*' around 1000BCE, when he accurately predicted the date and place of birth of this revered 20th century spiritual leader, who had an estimated 70 million devotees worldwide.

The first Avatar of Love was commonly believed to have been '*Sai Baba of Shirdi*', the foremost saint of modern India whose life at the turn of the 20th century is said to have spiritually liberated those who were drawn to him. This mysterious and enigmatic man lived as a Muslim fakir for around 60 years, but only towards the end of his life did his growing number of devotees identify him as '*the God incarnate*'. He is said to have performed many wonders, successfully commanding the rains to stop and the winds to cease, to have filled empty wells, to have blown out raging fires, and to have miraculously saved lives ~ all in the small village of Shirdi, in the Maharashtra province of India.

Sai Baba of Shirdi did not belong to any single tradition but "*...to all mankind on the path of goodness, love and understanding*".

Before his death in 1918, towards the end of the 'First World War', he claimed that, although one day his physical body will not exist, he will continue to communicate from the grave, and his temple in Shirdi has since become a pilgrimage for millions of people. He also named the place where he would reincarnate eight years later.

In 1926, '*Sathyanaratana Raju*' was born into poverty in the small village of Puttaparthi, in the province of Andhra Pradesh, eastern India. As a child he would give out food to starving beggars, despite his own impoverishment, and it is said that his spiritual values in life were exemplary, never complaining about his own obvious hardships. Many strange phenomena are associated with his early life, including the presence of a cobra found coiled up in his cot whilst he was just a few days old. This was commonly seen as an auspicious sign in Hindu mythology, widely believed to a representation of the great god '*Shiva*'.

It is said that as a child, Sathya performed many miracles. Whilst only eight years-old he is believed to have given demonstrations of supernatural powers such as materialising objects such as sweets and schoolbooks, and distributing them amongst other children. It

was not until 1940 however that he declared his '*mission of love*'. At the age of 14, Sathya had lost consciousness from what was initially thought to have been a scorpion bite. On recovering, he is said to have spoken in strange tongues and quoted sacred scriptures that were unknown to his family. He later went on to proclaim himself to be the reincarnation of Sai Baba of Shirdi, taking the name 'Sathya Sai Baba'.

A great many people were convinced that Sathya Sai Baba was the incarnation of the second Avatar of love. Indeed, whilst still a child, he is said to have enjoyed philosophical discussions with devotees who had known him from his previous incarnation. Since his spiritual revelation, his mission of love was to dedicate his life to initiating a new '*Golden Age*' for the new millennium, by balancing the very forces of chaos which had dominated the 20th century. He once exclaimed; ***"God is one, not two. Jesus, Allah, Rama, Krishna, Zorashtra, Buddha, they are different names, but God is One."*** Indeed he foresaw mankind moving away from a world of institutions which maintain order through force, towards a more harmonious world of universal consciousness and unselfish love.

As far as the future is concerned, he spoke of upheavals of biblical proportion taking place at the turn of the 21st century ***"... sufficient to uproot the evil that is so prevalent today."***

He claimed to see signs of a new awakening that was in the early stages of development, but which will eventually spread to all humanity. Yet he maintained that his account of the future was hard to visualise because the chaos and negative emotions of the present age masked the forthcoming era when ***"...right will be restored, and evil put down"***.

Speaking of a time when ***"Character will confer power...not knowledge or inventive skill, or wealth"***, he declared that ***"Wisdom will be enthroned in the power of nations."***

The spiritual movement which has grown around Sai Baba's teachings have taken inspiration from his example, maintaining that people shouldn't criticise any faith or religion so long as it does not stand against the unity of mankind. Beholding the belief that humanity is '*bound together by divine love.*' the Sai Organisation maintain that by following our conscience we cannot help but perform selfless acts, and Sai Baba's motto, ***"Help ever, hurt never"***, is observed by many devotees. Indeed millions of people once held onto his every utterance, and thousands had had direct consultations at his *ashram* (or spiritual headquarters) in India. A vast majority made the pilgrimage in hope of instant salvation, and there was a high expectation of enlightenment from people who rotely repeated his teachings without their intended sincerity. As a man who preached love, and to whom masses turned and 'fell before' in utter devotion, the likeness to the Christian Messiah was highly apparent.

Another avatar that was widely believed to exist in human form at the turn of the century was '*Mother Meera*' ~ who is seen by many as an incarnation of the '*Divine Mother*'. Born in 1960 in the village of Chandepalle, also in the Andhra Pradesh province, Mother Meera began her life as '**Kamala Reddy**'. The farming family to which she belonged did not follow any particular religious tradition. Indeed she had no religious or spiritual training, never prayed or practised traditional methods of meditation. Yet at three years-old she would continually talk of being drawn by various lights, and by the age of six she

is said to have experienced her first impulsive '*samadhi*' (or total absorption in meditation).

On returning to waking consciousness, she spoke of attaining detachment from human relations, and thereof recognised herself to live '*only in the divine*'. From that time on, she would spend many hours a day in samadhi, receiving a spiritual education from those she met in her realm of altered consciousness. For the few, but growing, number of people who become illuminated in such a way, it usually comes as a result of years of dedication, and is considered to be a lifetime achievement. Yet this gentle and loving child had achieved *spiritual enlightenment* at the age of six!

Although Kamala's immediate family were not especially religious, her uncle '**Balgur Venkat Reddy**' was dedicated to the ashram of '**Sri Aurobindo and the Sweet Mother**'. In 1972, having returned after several years of living at the ashram, he soon came to recognise an overwhelming presence of the 'Divine Mother' within his niece. Now 12 years-old, she was *nurtured* by her uncle, who began recording the accounts of her transcendental experiences, and a growing number of devotees became inspired by stories of her "**...continuing journeys through timeless dimensions, and meeting of entities on other planes of existence**".

Marrying and moving to Germany in 1982, Mother Meera continues to quietly holds '*darshan*' for the many thousands of devotees who write or visit her. Whilst she seeks no disciples, nor offers a creed to which devotees should 'convert', she encourages people to "**pray to the Supreme directly**" through whatever spiritual affinity they find their faith, affirming that "**All are one**". To a majority of Hindu devotees however, she is considered to be an incarnation of '**Kali**', the '*mother goddess*' who embodies the feminine aspect of the divine.

In Egyptian mythology the equivalent of Kali was the principal goddess '**Isis**', whilst in Christian tradition she has associated with the deity of the '**Virgin Mary**'. Indeed, known by many names, the Divine Mother, for many followers, is an incarnation of the Earth itself, and Mother Meera is seen by some as embodying the Divine Mother with the power to heal and protect during the course of transformation. Along with Sai Baba, Mother Meera's existence on Earth at the turn of the new millennium was seen by many as heralding a critical moment in human history. In essence, the common belief that there were two avatars on Earth was said to indicate that humanity had reached a moment of supreme crisis.

Although she avoids publicity and charges no money for her *divine consultations*, a lot of people find themselves irrepressibly attracted to Mother Meera, and she is considered by many to be the avatar of the new age. She does not speak to her devotees but is said to have the power of divine silence. It is stated, in one of her many testimonials, that Mother Meera has '*a silent bestowal of grace and light through her gaze and touch*,' whilst simply being in her presence and receiving silent blessings from her inner-being is said to have a powerful influence on the many who seek her. She communicates primarily through '*soul connection*' and writing, yet her message is clear. Best put by one of her closest devotees, her purpose is to, "**...assure the transformation of human**

consciousness by amplifying the light of the Divine on this planet, so that humanity can make the choice of light”.

Through the transformative ‘*Light of Paramataman*’ (or the supreme being), she is said to greatly influence her devotees. To be receptive to her inner-teaching, she advocates that people should, “*Be like a child; clear, loving, spontaneous, infinitely flexible and ready each moment to accept miracles*”.

In answer to a question regarding the traditional paths of awakening, she replied that her light is everywhere, and that it is not necessary to devote or believe in her, stating, “...*If you are sincere to your guru, master, God (absolute or the divine), it is enough and I will strengthen your faith.*”

There is certainly recognisable wisdom in the words, “*If you have devotion, you will get everything.*”

Advocating that people should realise themselves, Mother Meera maintains that by opening up to the light they become open to humanity, and humanity brings peace, happiness and harmony. With regard to world transformation, she beholds that although few people are conscious of *the light*, a growing number will come to realise its presence, and so understand that transformation is an inevitable part of human development. Indeed more and more people are becoming aware of mankind’s divergence from ‘the light’, as if violence of the last century was a necessary reawakening of humanity to the consequences of being self-centred; of living without god-consciousness. Moreover, Mother Meera’s suggestion that at the turn of the new millennium we are at the threshold of experiencing a new stage of spiritual evolution, is in keeping with the insights of virtually every single *divine* and *prophetic* personality who has ever gained popular recognition.



Other popular figures of the modern age who have not been so reserved in their approach to spiritual leadership include Indian mystic ‘**Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh**’, better known as the new age guru ‘**Osho**’. Born in 1931 this charismatic man, and lively personality, intuitively foresaw the consequences of ingrained attitudes of human civilisation.

He was an astute and well educated man who had studied philosophy at Jabalpur University. In 1963, at the age of 32, having rejected the world of established institutions, he started a tour of India to proclaim his vision of the new age, and soon developed a growing personality cult. By the early 1970’s his commune at Poona, which was seen as a spiritual utopia for thousands, had started to attract many westerners searching for spiritual enlightenment; including those disillusioned with orthodox Christianity, as well as those attracted by the prospect of sexual liberation. It particularly appealed to the disaffected generation of the 1980’s, who lacked the naivety of their 1960’s counterparts but who remained too impatient to embark on years of self-denial through an established eastern discipline. Another great attraction for many entering his fold was his voice of reason, which he used to eloquently describe the failings of modern humanity ~ illuminating many people and enabling them to envisage his ‘*Golden Age*’.

Besides having a passion for collecting *'Rolls Royce's'* he was famed for his sexual indiscretions. To the outside world he was seen as a man obsessed with sex, yet to his many followers the act of sex became seen as a path to the super-conscious. He is quoted as saying, ***"Sex is man's most vibrant energy, though it should not be an end unto itself"***, believing that it can help lead a person to their soul. Whilst sex played a vital part in his spiritual message, he advocated the unique wisdom of ***'Zen Buddhism'*** perceiving that it is the... ***"one spiritual tradition whose approach to the inner-life of human beings has weathered the test of time and is still relevant to contemporary humanity."***

Understanding that meditation is the gateway to peace and bliss, he insisted that enlightenment can be realised, not by following rituals, rules or initiation but only through direct meditation. Moreover, he believed that the institutionalisation of modern religions will be superseded by an intuitive understanding of simple devotion, maintaining that Zen Buddhism was the only true religion because it offered the ability of freedom from oneself ~ *'dissolving philosophical problems rather than solving them'*. Indeed he saw philosophy as a *'neurosis of the modern age'*

His visions of a future enlightened humanity, like those of so many other prophets and spiritual leaders, were seen as dependant on mankind's decisions in the critical present moment. In 1988, in an interview for Soviet television, he predicted the imminent fall of Russian communism and the break up of the Soviet Union as a direct result of ***'Mikhail Gorbachev's'*** reforms ~ a year before the eventual fall of the Berlin Wall. At the time, the Soviet press dismissed him as a front for **CIA** activities. However he had an ability to analyse and *read* cultures, and his short-term predictions were incredibly accurate. Praised by many as the greatest spiritual leader of the 20th century, Osho was condemned by religious leaders around the world and banned from 21 countries; including being deported from the **USA** in 1985, four years after establishing a commune in Oregon. Moreover he was also discredited by the American authorities after predicting that the United States will also disintegrate in the not too distant future.

By breaking down the path of humanity into the logical steps of survival that our ancestors took, he offered alternative insights into history. He proposed that we live in cultures which revere history, yet history is filled with figures who have reserved their place in it through the forces of destruction. There are many of them; ***'Genghis Khan', 'Alexander the Great', 'Napoleon Bonaparte', 'Adolf Hitler', 'Joseph Stalin'***, the list goes on. Tyrannical leaders such as these leave an indelible mark on human history, and there is no doubt about their actual existence. Yet the very existence of people such as ***'Jesus', the 'Buddha', Krishna'*** and ***'Lao Tzu'*** have come into question many times. Indeed there are those who suggest that they never existed outside of imagination and mythology. Dramatic events especially negative forces become news, and news becomes history, but because love is not deemed as newsworthy, its place in our socially conditioned history is minimal

Osho's philosophical perspective was very similar to that of ***'Carl Jung'***, whose perception of divine figures such as these, regarded them as more than mere *'wish-fulfilment's'* borne of myth. Osho maintained that anyone who dedicates their whole life to love and the helping of others invariably gain no recognition, and most of those who do, become little more than a footnote in history. Indeed he maintained that the people

responsible for the *real foundations* of human consciousness are barely mentioned in history. He cited the lives of the Buddhas as an example of the sacred innocence of nature, stating; ***“Buddhas never killed, they never conquered, they never possessed anybody, they lived so silently, they lived so blissfully that they never created a ripple.”***

To that end he concluded that; ***“Once pathology disappears, everyone becomes a creator. Let it be understood as deeply as possible: only ill people are destructive. The people who are healthy, are creative...”***

In a book of his teachings entitled *‘Sermons in Stories’*, the many disharmonies of human consciousness with nature are discussed. In this, just one of several hundred publications dedicated to his work, he pinpointed ‘jealousy’ as ***“...one of the most prevalent areas of psychological ignorance...”***, stating that ***“..people think they know what love is.... but their misunderstanding about love creates jealousy.”***

He went on to say that love is commonly perceived as a ***“...kind of monopoly, some possessiveness...”***

It has created a confusion which only exists in the human conscious, whereas animals and birds have no need of emotions such as destructive jealousy. Seeing marriage as an *‘unnatural invented institution’*, Osho reasoned that ***“...nature has not provided a mind that can adjust to marriage..,”*** because he claimed that love itself is *‘dream-stuff’* and so will not conform to manmade concepts such as this. Moreover, he proposed that people compromise through marriage, often in order to feel secure.

Osho spoke of the hunting and gathering days before cultivation had led to the concept of property, seeing it as a time of free will when ***“...men and women were mixing joyously; without any compulsion... without any legal bondage...”***

Yet it was *woman* who discovered cultivation, and as man hunted the great game to near extinction, he began to rely her idea to harvest the land. In order to ensure a sustainable harvest, ownership of land led to the concept of *‘property’*, and as primitive agriculture began to shape the newly divided lands, so prehistoric communities arose. The barter system began, and the exchange of goods not only allowed various crops to be distributed to the mutual benefit of people living in these growing communities, but enabled some landowners to generate great material wealth.

Success created the notion of *inheritance* to ensure that a lifetime’s accumulation of wealth was passed on to direct offspring after the death of an ‘owner’. This need to assure direct ascendance led to the concept of the family unit, and the contractual obligation of marriage enabled wealthy men to determine the children who carried their bloodline and who would rightfully inherit their estate. Indeed the concept of marriage, maintained Osho, grew from economic greed in the guise of being an institution based on love and mutual respect. In fact, Osho presented marriage as the *‘mutual sacrifice of freedom’*, whereas ***“...nature on the other hand is for freedom, not for any kind of bondage”***

In mankind’s sexually biased civilisations, the lucrative business of prostitution inevitably arose, and marriage created even more suspicion and jealousy. Man could not be trusted, and his mutual suspicion of woman led to her suppression in virtually every culture of the world. In male dominated societies, mankind was able to built more and more barriers around womanhood, attempting to ***“...disconnect her from the larger humanity...”***, such as denying education because it encourages thought and the notion to

revolt. Indeed Osho saw that the powerful masculine societies that have grown throughout history have denied womanhood her divine soul and enforced man's authority through religion. Religious institutions (*which created wealth and power*) upheld the concept of 'ideal marriage', and introduced the notion of eternal damnation for those who would not obey. Furthermore Osho was adamant that emotions such as 'jealousy' would persist as long as marriage remains the basic foundation of society.

Many spiritual leaders and psychologists have believed that it is in our dreams, that the true freedom of our spirit is revealed. Osho observed that people rarely dream of their spouses after a few years of marriage. Indeed most have unconscious fantasies with a variety of other people. This, reasoned Osho, points to the fact that society has gone somewhat astray, and he proposed that the idea of 'true love' being a 'permanent one' is a false and dangerous concept invented by social institution. Furthermore, modern society is continuing to condition the minds of children with false ideas about love, despite the fact that the natural instincts of a child are far more balanced than when they have been influenced by their society. Curiously enough, the idea of a mutual friendship within modern society is much more harmoniously balanced than the concept of marriage.

Again, like many others he saw the beginnings of a new age already in motion, declaring, ***"The new man is not a hope: you are already pregnant with it. My work is to make aware that the new man has already arrived..."***

These spiritual changes in human evolution, he believed, would be more dramatic than any physical evolutionary changes that have thus far taken place. He is quoted as saying, ***"From fish to man there has been an evolution. But from man to a Buddha, from man to a Christ, from man to a Kabir, it is not evolution, it is revolution."***

Predicting that the 'golden age' will offer humanity the chance to become free from political and religious slavery, Osho saw it as a place where there would be no need for institutionalised society and where humanity will be rediscover the *simplicity and innocence of the spirit*. Indeed, he foresaw a harmonious society that will actually be better than any of the utopian cities that human civilisation has ever created.

As for the millennium, he visualised it as a time of tremendous potential when humanity would witness a '*quantum leap*' of consciousness. He saw it as being a time when humanity becomes faced with the stark choice between global self-destruction or radical transformation. He reasoned that most world leaders have a vested interest in ignorant self-destruction, but by infecting the world with positive qualities such as love, laughter, meditation, celebration and relaxation, people have the power to uplift human consciousness, and that is exactly what the '***Osho Commune International***' strives for.

Since his death in 1990, the Osho organisation dedicated to promoting his discourses have continued to publish books of his teachings (*over 600 in total*).

There is much similarity between Osho's philosophy of life and love, and the traditional eastern philosophies that perceive of an ever-changing universe in which human consciousness should strive for harmony. In reality everything, including our thoughts and emotions, are continuously changing. They adjust and atone for the many experiences in life, and so the concept of *love*, more often than not, becomes more of a false expectation. Just as life continually changes, so does real love. As Osho pointed out, '*it is as uncertain as life itself*'.

Before reaching a state of spiritual enlightenment, Osho maintained that love (*like life*) continually changes. As people mature, their perception of love alters in the inexorable gathering of new emotional and physical experiences. On attaining enlightenment however, he believed that it is possible to ***“...take love beyond the ordinary laws of life. It is neither changing nor permanent, it simply is.”***

He believed that love affairs become irrelevant when you attain a greater understanding of the true meaning of love. In fact they actually serve to enrich life, and lead to a more wholesome perception of existence. Yet mankind, stated Osho, has been conditioned with a wrong idea about love.

Whenever a spouse has eyes for someone else, more often than not it creates instant annoyance (*sometimes even a look, or thought is picked up by a jealous partner*). This, claimed Osho, is a misunderstanding of human psychology. Indeed a lover's interest in the sexuality of others should be more constructively seen by a jealous partner as an assurance of a continuing capacity to love them. Yet the emotional instability of men in society is such that they attempt to make their chosen woman focus only on them by shutting off their right to experience the wider world.

In what has been termed by many people as a continuing '*battle of the sexes*' women, particularly in western culture, have begun to expect equality; though society is far from achieving that goal. It has created an imbalance of human consciousness, and allowed society to evolve without the stability ordinarily provided by intuitive female qualities. Many nations have become dominated by men who place power above compassion. But a world where the masculine dominates the feminine, is like the '*yang*' suppressing the '*yin*' ~ a very unstable situation.

Osho maintained that all influences in life that give rise to expression of freedom are *right*, whilst all destructive forces which deny freedom are *wrong*. In explaining how the old concepts of human society are wrong, he pointed to the millions of women who have died throughout history from jumping in the funeral pyre of their dead husbands simply because of their cultural conditioning, yet not a single man, he stated, has died in such a way for over 10,000 years. His philosophy on love and life are best put in his own words; ***“For a lighter life, for a more playful life, you need to be flexible. You have to remember that freedom is the highest value and if love is not giving you freedom then it is not love. Freedom is a criterion.”***

As for the new age, Osho perceived that '*existence has no limits*', explaining that if there were an end goal to life, then, once reached, it would have no reason to continue evolving, and there would be no purpose to existence. The journey of life therefore must be one of eternity, and once humanity becomes a species of enlightened beings, it will not stop there because is always more to discover. Throughout human history most people who have attained enlightenment stop, because it is such a blissful experience that they perceive it to be an ending. The truth, claimed Osho, is that enlightenment is only the beginning and the eternal journey of life can continue to be experienced in its ever-expanding essence. He assimilated the boundaries of life to being like a horizon which can never be reached, and saw enlightenment as the ***“...beginning of a non-ending process in all dimensions of richness.”***

Ultimately Osho saw a new age when humanity will not '*cling to outer symbols*' but emphasise an inward journey that is the source of all consciousness. Indeed, once collective human divinity is realised, the misleading religious institutions will collapse and an era of self-discovery will become established. He stated; ***“The only thing that can create a revolution in you is going beyond the mind into the world of consciousness. Except that nothing is religious.”***

Maintaining that only through the process of meditation can people relearn to reach higher into their consciousness and leave thoughts of the external world behind, he affirmed the increasingly scientific view that '*consciousness is energy*'.





ii.

(Prophecy through the Ages: The modern creed)

The true purpose of prophecy is revelation, but the real revelation of humanity is to be found in science. The psychic and seer travel the realms of consciousness, and many interpret the signs that they see as set visions of the future, often proclaiming them as a revelation to humanity. However the intuitive path of the inner-consciousness exposes an underlying struggle of humanity which is always seen as either *positive* or *negative* change. Hence both the modern day mystics and the ancient prophets have always tended to perceive their global visions in terms of the human race taking the path of light or darkness, of good or of evil!

Many prophets and spiritual leaders engender a sense of fatalism within their followers, and it is easy to become affected with their personal anxieties and pessimism. Indeed, a preoccupation with matters of destruction and retribution generates a sense of salvation amongst those who place their trust or faith in the words of a specific leader. In Christian culture, for example, the story of '*Armageddon*' has become the most commonly used theme by those who claim to foresee the future or have 'insight' into human consciousness. Many revered leaders have used their positions of power to initiate their own prejudiced ideals, some of which have been based on greed or even hate. But all human beings ultimately harbour an inner desire for peace, and the idea of a perfect world.

The problem is that, throughout history, many people's ideas of what constitutes a state of '*utopia*' have been severely corrupted by humankind's lack of respect for the intuitive natural essence of its being. The intellectual societies of mankind, whilst enabling an empire of reason, have created all sorts of illusory ideals of perfection. If we didn't have the capacity to reason, for example, false ideals such as those incorporated into *fascist* or *communist* doctrines would never have been perceived, and therefore could never even have existed without it.

Humankind is on a continuing journey, and many millions of people are as yet unable to perceive the moral obligations that have been realised, at least in theory, by 20th century western democracies. The massive civilisations that are the Islamic world, and Communist China, for example, view western ideals with suspicion. It is a natural mistrust earned from the west's historic tradition of Christian dominance. Yet to get to this age of modern ethical understanding, western consciousness has travelled the path of prejudice, oppression and war, gathering experiences that have enabled modern humanity to perceive of the horrors of destruction. We have been guided by our own mistakes whilst inexorably moving towards greater '*wisdom*' in life. It is that which we, as a species, have striven for, ever since we evolved the ability to reason.

The philosophies of the ancient east, which date back over several thousand years, were based on intuitive concepts. Today, we generally rely on intellectual understanding, reason and scientific proof for virtually everything in which we are expected to place

trust. Science is the master of human reality, yet the still immature scientific consciousness of the west has only recently begun to realise (*through the process of intellectual reasoning*) that the ancient model of existence is closely related to the logical one proposed by modern astrophysicists. Eastern religions and philosophies have, for thousands of years, taught notions such as *right conduct*, and *spiritual harmony with the forces of nature* ~ in most cases the ultimate goal being that of enlightenment and experiencing the eternal '*nirvana*' from which we are all born. They ultimately knew what science has only just begun to uncover; that everything in existence is a part of a single entity. Indeed, the sciences of today allow people to see reality through an intellectual understanding of the many aspects that make up what is essentially a '*unified process of nature*', however it invariably lacks the wisdom of respect for the very force that it studies.

In the early 21st century, most western religious institutions are still very much at odds with the scientific community concerning certain aspects of nature. The fundamental difference between the idea of a universal natural law and that of an omnipotent divine god who can wilfully manifest in 'human form', still divides human inspiration between '*reason*' and '*conditioned faith*'. However movements such as the '***International Theosophical Society***' attempt to bridge the gap between faith and reason, so it is little wonder that, for the most part, they have turned to eastern esotericism for spiritual inspiration.

Having originally been founded in New York in 1875, within a century the Theosophical Society had established branches in some 60 countries worldwide, with an international headquarters at Madras in India. As a popular philosophical system, theosophy is concerned with reconciling body and soul, and so many modern theosophists rely upon the intuitive nature of humanity to comprehend existence. It is often referred to as the archaic '*wisdom religion*' ~ a divine insight that is as old as human thought itself. Modern theosophy has drawn upon concepts which originate in Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, Shinto, and many other ancient beliefs, and applied them to the scientific model of reality that is so readily perceived today. Curiously enough, the social consciousness of today is moving ever closer to the theosophical perception of fundamental '*universal*' principles.

Basic ideas behind modern theosophy include the principle that there is a fundamental unity of all existence, and a regularity of universal law. Most members of the society support the ancient model of life which perceives existence as a natural cyclical production of universes out of an absolute '*ground of being*'. The intuitive progress of consciousness towards an ever-increasing realisation of unity is therefore seen by many as an irresistible step for humanity. However, members of the Theosophical Society are encouraged to accept nothing on faith or on the word of others, but only to adopt those ideas that satisfy their own sense of what is real and important in life. It is presented as a way of looking at life rather than a religious creed, and although many ideas are upheld, none are proffered as a collective fixed belief. As put by a cofounder of the Theosophical Society, Russian mystic '**Helena Blavatsky**' back in 1889, "***Orthodoxy in theosophy is a thing neither possible nor desirable. It is the diversity of opinion, within certain limits, that keeps the Theosophical Society a living and a healthy body...***"

Popular ideas of the Theosophical Society include the eastern concepts of ***dharma*** and ***tao*** (the 'way' of nature), of ***karma*** (or moral justice), and of the ***samsara*** (the universal cycle of reincarnation). From such ancient philosophies and spiritual beliefs, modern theosophy has inspired a fundamental moral attitude amongst its adherents. Its ethical code embraces ***altruism*** (an unselfish concern for the welfare of others), proposing that true theosophists respect differences in culture and support intellectual freedom. Most therefore endeavour to live in harmony, regarding the many religions of man as simply expressions of humanity's effort to 'relate to one another and the surrounding cosmos'. They view religions as institutions which have grown and adapted according to their surrounding culture, age, and particular needs of the people for whom they purport to stand.

Theosophy has been described as a 'spiritual-intellectual nursery,' one that many people believe will lead to a united 'philosophical-religious-scientific' system of the future. They behold that everyone is a different expression of the same life; so their philosophy of 'help your neighbour, and thereby help yourself' is paramount to intellectual and spiritual fulfilment. The idea that 'disharmony' and 'evil' exist as a result of ignorance and selfishness is impelling, and many modern theosophists follow a regime of regular meditation and vegetarianism avoiding the use of alcohol or drugs in their pursuit of spiritual freedom.

As for the scientific bent of their philosophy, most theosophists understand the essence of a single human gene pool which exists as an oasis of humanity, having only minute local variations. In line with many scientific observations, they believe that humanity has a common origin and a common 'destiny', perceiving that we are a small part of the 'totality of existence' which stretches in every conceivable dimension. The existence of worlds of experience beyond the physical, for example, is a concept that science has only recently begun to accept. Such notions (including philosophies that arose from the '***I Ching***') existed some 2000 years before the inception of Christianity, whilst it has taken a further 2000 years for western science to escape the confines of Christianity and begin to bloom. The scientific and ethical bodies of today, like many philosophies of the ancient east, understand that the power of thought is enough to affect one's self and surroundings. Both comprehend the importance of freewill and self-responsibility within the continuing reality of existence.



The scientific century began with the discoveries of German physicist '***Max Planck***', who in 1900 described the idea of ***quantum theory***. He opened up a whole new science when he suggested, counter to scientific belief at the time, that energy was made up not from waves, but of indivisible particles which he called 'quanta'. By 1905, '***Albert Einstein***' had developed his '*Special Theory of Relativity*' in which he unified the concepts of space and time, modifying it in 1915 to encompass a universal model of 'curved space-time' in his '*General Theory of Relativity*', The famous equation $E=mc^2$ is central to modern astrophysics and cosmology, predicting, for example, the existence of *black holes*. Meanwhile in 1913, Danish physicist '***Niels Bohr***' successfully applied quantum theory to the atom and so greatly helped to establish its validity. Having worked

with New Zealand-born British physicist '**Ernest Rutherford**' on the model of atomic structure, Bohr was the first to explain the process of nuclear fission

Since the 1920's, the concept of universal existence having its origins in a '**Big Bang**' started to replace the irrational '*steady-state model* of the universe that ironically was supported by people frightened of *change*. It is now realised that, in essence, matter is energy and nothing is truly solid (*even a rock will disperse its energy over time, and so changes like everything else*). In much the same way that the oceans of the world ebb and flow, all matter is considered to be ultimately fluid.

By the 1930's science had begun working on relating quantum theory to the theory of relativity, and one such notable scientist was British astrophysicist '**Arthur Stanley Eddington**'. Having introduced the subject of *stellar dynamics* to science, he was the first astrophysicist to express the theory that spiral nebulae (*or outer galaxies*) are receding from one another, and so developed the notion of a continually expanding universe. As a well respected figure in the scientific community of the mid-20th century, Eddington's comment that '*matter is more like a thought than a thing*', was indicative of what science was beginning to uncover. So it is little wonder that science and mysticism appeared to be getting ever closer together.

It was not until the early 1980's that quantum systems were finally proven to exist. One particular experiment which successfully proved quantum theory to be correct was carried out in a Paris laboratory by a team of French scientists led by '**Alain Aspect**', '**Jean Dalibard**' and '**Gerard Roger**'. It consisted of accurately measuring the emissions from a light source provided by bombarded calcium atoms, which were placed in centre of a long tube. The paths of simultaneously emitted photons of light were split and directed to opposite ends of the tube where they were detected by photon sensitive devices. In front of each detector was placed a light switch and two polarisers. This enabled the scientists to polarise the photons in opposite ways, and so change the property of the photons before they reached the detectors at the end. In order for the experiment to succeed, the speed of the polarisation change had to be quicker than the time it took for the photons to travel to the end of the tube.

What they found was that simultaneously arriving photons (*which must have originated as pairs from the same calcium atom*) demonstrated an unusual property which confirmed quantum theory. If the polarity of one of the photons was changed before it reached the detector at one end of the tube, its twin at the opposite end of the tube would also become polarised in the same way. It was as if each photon could detect and respond to the other, even though there could be no possible communication between them. These instantaneous changes in sympathy between once linked photons (*a 'mysterious' faster-than-light connection*), had huge implications for the scientific understanding of nature. It has been reasoned, for example, that once-linked particles must also act in the same way, and considering that every particle in existence can be traced back to a universal point in time and space (*the Big Bang*), everything from the most distant galaxy to human consciousness itself is linked by a web of connections and a common origin.

Back in 1953, the publication of Einstein's '**Unified Field Theory**' heralded mankind's first attempt to scientifically explain a link between the four fundamental forces of nature

(that is the strong and weak nuclear forces, the electromagnetic force and the force of gravity). In 1967, the link between *photons* and *gravitons*, carriers of the electromagnetic and weak nuclear forces, was successfully demonstrated. By the 1980's the '**superstring theory**', was developed as a logical way to combine relativity and quantum theory, and, importantly, explain the connection between the **strong nuclear force** and **gravity**. Today's quest for a *grand unified theory* which combines the strong nuclear and the *electro-weak* forces, is seen as another step towards realising the ultimate '**Theory of Everything**'

One of the main international bodies in the western world dedicated to cutting edge scientific research is '**CERN**' (*the European Organisation for Nuclear Research*). Set up near Geneva in 1954, today **CERN** serves the scientific communities of 20 member states, providing leading European physicists with access to particle accelerators and advanced computer technology in their endeavour to push forward limits of human knowledge of existence. Approaching the subject of universal existence from a totally scientific perspective, **CERN** endeavours to build upon the '*standard model*' of universal existence which incorporates all known particles and forces through which they interact. Moreover it employs the use of some of the most advanced supercomputers in the world, which can calculate the results of billions of particle collisions every second.

Of the various **CERN** projects, the most historic, 'scientifically speaking', was the discovery, in 1983, of the positive and negative '**W-bosons**', and the neutral '**Z-boson**' ~ elementary particles that carry the weak nuclear force. Collectively known as **weakons**, these three fundamental building blocks of matter provided science with an updated '*standard model*' of existence. By 1989, the '**LEP**' accelerator (*a large electron-positron collider*), had made accurate measurements of Z particle bosons, and confirmed the unified theory of electromagnetic and weak forces (*the electro-weak force*), first demonstrated by US physicist '**Steven Weinberg**' and Pakistani physicist '**Abdus Salam**' in 1967.

However, by establishing that weakons indeed consisted of only three families of particles, data from the **LEP** accelerator also gave rise to many more unanswered questions, such as; '*Why is there a lack of symmetry to the universe?*' and '*What is the origin of mass in all matter?*', The first paradox is known as '**CP violation**', which allows the known universe to exist out of matter without having been instantly annihilated by antimatter. As for the second avenue of scientific exploration, one proposal as to how elementary particles gain mass, involves the existence of the once theoretical elementary particle known as the '*Higgs boson*', which binds to other particles in order to give them mass.

Besides developing the '*World-Wide-Web*' in 1990, **CERN** has widened the frontiers of science and, in 2012, completed its search for the Higgs boson within '*hadrons*' ~ subatomic particles that experience the strong nuclear force. At the turn of the 21st century, work was under way at the **LHC**, project (or '**Large Hadron Collider**'), a massive particle accelerator which came into operation in 2005. Designed to use the same 27 kilometre tunnel originally constructed as a super-conducting ring for the **LEP** accelerator, the **LHC** created proton-proton collisions at a force of 14 **TeV** in the endeavour to find out what gives matter its mass. The energy created at the **LHC** was

similar, as **CERN** put it, '*to compacting to the energy of motion from a flying mosquito into a space around a trillion times smaller.*'

It is through the application of science that we are able to intellectually contemplate fundamental answers to questions of existence that were once purely intuitive. The trouble is however that the frontiers of science expand at an ever-increasing pace which disables the capacity of any single individual to keep in touch with new technologies which are continuously being developed. Yet in the modern world, the scientific approach to comprehending existence is encouraged as the only truly legitimate method. Consequently, scientists at the forefront of human understanding are so consumed by the quest for knowledge that many are oblivious to, or otherwise ignorant of, the consequences of their actions. But humankind cannot resist moving forward, and the prevailing thirst for knowledge allows the inevitable and the impossible to become one.

At present, every individual's comprehension of existence amounts to a personal interpretation, gained through life experiences and cultural perspectives. For example a *theosophist* may perceive that inner-experiences of someone under 'hypnotic regression' are really the reliving of past experiences and a clue to the eastern tradition of *samsara* or the cycle of rebirth. A *neuropsychologist* with a totally scientific background, meantime, will see hypnotic regression as a way to access forgotten personal dreams which are locked in the unconscious; not a sign of reincarnation at all. But as the subject of dreams and the human unconscious has begun to be rationally explored, the interconnection of humanity and everything else in existence has exposed our very consciousness to science. Ultimately the scientific search for a greater understanding of the universe through reason is no different from the spiritual search for the divine. All is one.



In the 1980's English biologist and author '**Rupert Sheldrake**' developed a theory of evolution that outraged the scientific community. He introduced the idea of '**morphic resonance**' as a previously unrecognised underlying force which connects all things in existence. Furthermore he suggested that evidence for so-called '*habit*' or '*morphic fields*' can be found everywhere in nature. Having left Cambridge University to travel to Hyderabad in India in the 1970's, he became involved with the ashrams of various Hindu gurus, and also increased his knowledge of Sufi tradition. Drawing upon Indian philosophy, he began developing an increasingly *holistic* approach to science.

Sheldrake rejected the orthodox view of nature as a mechanical system; a concept that is fundamental to the modern perception of science. He recognised that the '*cold and calculated*' sciences of the present age deny the natural instincts of the senses in favour of determining '*physical proof*,' and saw this as simply a collectively held model of reality. Furthermore he promoted the idea of '*holistic science*' as a way of integrating direct experience and understanding, which he maintained would allow humankind to develop a new and greater reality.

In his first book '***A New Science of Life***', published in 1981, he proposed that memory is inherent in nature, and it is the cumulative repetition of nature that causes things to exist, stating; "***Things are as they are because they were as they were***".

Known as the '*hypothesis of formative causation*', his theory involves the concept of morphic fields, which like the gravitational and electromagnetic fields, for example, exist "*...as non-material regions of influence extending in space and continuing in time.*"

He proposed that all things in existence, even matter itself, naturally occur through the habit of repetition; advocating the concept of '*morphogenesis*' ~ or the evolution of all form. The hydrogen atom, for example, is the most basic unit of matter, and it is in such plentiful supply, suggested Sheldrake, because it has been created out of a natural repetition that has lasted billions of years. Indeed the nature of this '*habit*' has become so ingrained that it has effectively become changeless and eternal. Consequently, the hydrogen atom (*which is the basis of all matter*) has habitually evolved many forms, allowing different materials to come into existence. In this hypothesis, matter is seen as no more than a natural '*habit*', an idea which curiously describes our own state of perception as well. Just as the habits of living beings are fixed at a particular point of attention, so the very dimension in which we exist has resulted from the '*habit*' of nature.

One example that reflects 'morphic' changes in seemingly inanimate objects concerns the making of crystals in laboratories around the world. Throughout the 20th century, scientists successfully managed to synthesise crystals from new substances, though the effort required to crystallise some substances for the first time is usually enormous. However once a particular batch of crystals has been created for the first time, it suddenly becomes progressively easier to create them in other laboratories elsewhere in the world. Obviously once human consciousness has cracked the code of creating particular crystals, from that point on, their creation becomes easier or, from another perspective, it is as if crystals '*learn*' to come into existence.

This sudden surge of many successes following an initial breakthrough is a phenomenon that occurs all of the time at the forefront of science, and is regularly seen in advances in computer technology and genetic engineering. For example, there have now been thousands of successful attempts at cloning many species of animal since the birth of '*Dolly*' the sheep ~ the world's first cloned mammal in 1997. There is little doubt that should mankind successfully achieve the ability to truly synthesise organic life, then once it has been achieved for the first time, the ability to do it again will become that much easier, and life will be scientifically replicated time and again.

This peculiarity of 'morphic resonance' can also be seen in other aspects of life, such as sport, for example, where running of 'four minute mile' or conquering 'Everest' has turned the impossible into the possible, and many people have since achieved these and other incredible feats. Yet success is a part of our very consciousness. One of Sheldrake's experiments to test the theory of morphic fields in human beings involved distributing thousands of pictures that concealed a face behind a mass of lines. He discovered (*as expected*) that once a certain amount of people had learned to '*see*' the face, an increasing number of people who were subsequently shown the picture began to see it immediately.

Observing and recording many sympathetic changes in nature, Sheldrake has also cited the story of a band of monkeys living on the island of 'Koshima' off southern Japan. For many years, scientists on the island had routinely fed the monkeys unwashed sweet potatoes. One day a particularly bright female had the idea of dunking her fruit in the sea,

thus making it less gritty and more tasty. Soon all of the monkeys on Koshima had learned the trick. But within a few months, so too had many monkeys living on the Japanese mainland; monkeys that had no contact with those on Koshima. Indeed the model of evolution has been somewhat matured by Sheldrake's observations which show that, contrary to Darwin's belief, a species can evolve a trait virtually overnight if it is subject to extreme stress or is presented with a major opportunity to develop.

In his fourth book *'Seven Experiments That Could Change the World'* (published in 1994), Sheldrake analysed many unexplained natural phenomena and incorporated them within the idea of 'morphic resonance'. One topic of interest that he covered was the many strange traits of animals and their ability to detect things beyond the grasp of human perception. Time and again, for example, wild animals and birds have been observed leaving a particular region in advance of a devastating earthquake. Their ability to 'sense' the inevitable is uncanny, yet it is an inherent nature that human beings appear to have lost by focusing on reason.

There are many other observations that appear to point to the psychic abilities of animals which have yet to be fully investigated by science. Those which revolve around the more mundane activities of pets have been largely overlooked by science for that very reason. There is a pet's innate ability to anticipate the return of its 'owner', however unexpected, or the ability to instinctively sense human intention. Indeed the apparent bond between pet and 'owner' is often regarded in terms of telepathic communication, and in extreme cases, the ability of some pets to react to the danger of their distant 'owner', has led to a great deal of speculation regarding animal behaviour. The strange traits of animals have largely been put down to highly adapted senses, and their ability to pick up on 'subtle cues'. But meaningful experimentation to determine psychic phenomena in animals has been overlooked by the main body of scientific investigation, which does not invest the same time and money in such seemingly banal research as it does in investigating 'quantum mechanics' for example.

Sheldrake also explored the world of 'phantoms', focusing on the peculiar sensations experienced in phantom limbs. He proposed that phantoms are more than just extensions of the mind, but a collective 'habit', based on cumulative experience. For example, it is well known that amputees often retain the sensation of a limb or digit long after it has been removed. Whilst some people who lose a limb in early childhood will gradually relearn that the absent limb is not really there, many people continue to experience the presence of limbs or digits that they once had but have since lost. He pointed out that, because leprosy is a slow degenerative disease, most sufferers do not experience these phantoms until, that is, a badly affected limb is amputated out of necessity. Curiously, in such cases, a fully formed phantom limb is often felt immediately after surgery has been completed, including fingers or toes which may have been lost to the disease many years earlier without incurring a perceived phantom presence.

It is common for paraplegics to experience phantom organs and body parts, whilst some people who were actually born without limbs (*including many casualties of thalidomide*) have experienced the presence of fully formed limbs that have never actually existed but which are felt as an extension to their physical body. Furthermore, the imaginary ability to move absent joints or feel involuntary sensations such as a 'tingling' in an absent limb

under certain conditions is legendary. Even people who have not lost their limbs can experience a phantom movement whilst under a local anaesthetic. Indeed the unconscious idea of '*holistic body parts*' which continue to exist after separation is deeply embedded in the human psyche.

By determining reality through reasoned perception, western science consciously assures people as to the non-existence of a missing or phantom limb, Whilst many other native cultures around the world do not share the western model of reality. Moreover, because western science categorically relies on physical proof and logical deduction, it has become limited by its own intellectual restrictions. For example, the casual disregarding of nail cuttings or locks of hair is considered to be a dangerous habit in many communities from Eastern Asia to Central America. The notion that personal items could be used to bring harm to an individual through '*sympathetic magic*', for example, is a traditional way of thinking in many remote villages of Malaysia just as it is a part of voodoo culture in Haiti.

Sheldrake went on to assimilate the idea of phantoms with out-of-body experiences and dreams (*or subtle bodies that reach out along what has been termed by many spiritualists as the 'astral plane'*). Like many other great thinkers of the modern age, Sheldrake returned to the idea of *lucid dreams*, or the act of becoming aware within an unconscious dream as a way to discover the eternal reaches of the mind.

Today science is increasingly confirming the ideas of many ancient philosophical and spiritual beliefs, such as the notion that the universe around us, like the ground beneath our feet, is not solid at all, but a continually flowing entity that only appears solid because we have been programmed to perceive it that way. Science has confirmed that '*reality*' consists of a vast network of energy, and its concentration into '*matter*' is what allows us to perceive it. Although confrontation with a physical object when carried out with enough force has the ability to physically harm or kill us, in the wider context of universal reality, physical objects are no more real than the images that we see in our dreams. These too must exist as a melange of unconscious energy.

However basic phenomena such as phantoms and the psychic abilities of animals, remain virtually uninvestigated by science. Indeed orthodox science still rejects the existence of hypothetical faculties such as '*psi*' ~ a fundamental force of nature essential to modern theories of parapsychology. The reason that science has failed to pay serious attention to such notions is because throughout history, imaginary, subtle, or otherwise inexplicable forces have naturally fallen into the realms of mythology, and orthodox science has established an intellectual taboo in even discussing such topics with the aim of serious investigation. Sheldrake and other '*holistic scientists*' have concluded that the climate of expectation influences the whole of nature, and it appears that through modern science, we place too much trust in literal probability.

Sheldrake understood the fact that religions of the past had '*shackled*' human consciousness to superstition. With the advent of science, mankind had become liberated from previously enforced religious beliefs, and the many scientific advances of the past few centuries have served to greatly increase the quality of life for millions of people. Indeed the success of scientific discovery has been such that it heralded a new era of

prosperity and material wealth, and, for the most part, it has superseded religion as the focal point of human consciousness. So much so that science, like archaic religion, has become deeply embedded in the mindset. Through his books Sheldrake proposed a new relationship between scientists and non-scientists, where the former possesses the *prestige of professional credentials*, and the latter has the *freedom to explore new areas of research*.

Regarding the present age of human discovery, Sheldrake recognised the bias of established science and how it effects experimentation. The idea that 'subtle cues' (*or the influence of expectation*) affects every aspect of living is unquestionable to a reasoned scientist, but the notion that science itself conforms to this model is naturally derided by the scientific establishment. However it is true that accurate prophesies are often not borne out of a mysterious knowledge of the future but because '**expectation**' leads to behaviour that makes it more likely to become fulfilled. This idea of self-fulfilling prophesies is present in many fields of human activity, from *economics* and *politics* to medicine (*including the use of placebos to encourage a return to health*). Faith and willpower are important ingredients in the fulfilling of prophesies, and even 'love', the most powerful human emotion, often manifests as way to fulfil the inherent expectation or 'wanting' for mutual desire and trust.

However expectation is also prominent in every field of science, from molecular biology and genetics, to chemistry and physics. Many scientists begin with a premise of what is, and what is not possible, and the expectation of science perpetuates the deep-rooted assumptions upon which our present day consciousness exists. As Sheldrake states; ***"The structure of the examination is like a stencil. It determines how much of the total truth will appear and what pattern it will suggest"***.

Indeed, the influence of accepted science on the social psychology of today is such that scientists regularly dismiss unfavourable results as errors.

A good illustration of this, points out Sheldrake, is the highbrow suggestion that nuclear physicists '*invent*' new subatomic particles rather than discover them. To be accepted by the scientific community as actually existing, a hypothetical particle first must have arisen from ideas or '*theories*' originating in human thought. If enough scientists adhere to a theory, then expensive particle accelerators and colliders are built, and more often than not, the expected particles are subsequently detected. After being detected for the first time they become easier to find, and more and more experimentation confirms their existence, establishing a new scientific consensus.

Moreover unexpected events are occasionally stumbled upon, posing even more questions and so prompting billions of dollars of investment in ideas that reflect only a tiny fraction of the ultimate reality of existence. Quantum theory actually regards the subtle effects on an experiment by its observers, yet science persists in its quest to discover answers which lie beyond the present boundary of knowledge. Mankind's scientific journey of reality is, in essence, a blind quest within an eternal universe of many unproven dimensions which ultimately have no defined ending.

To this end, Sheldrake also investigated the reliability of universal constants that are fundamental to scientific study. Supposedly fixed constants such as the velocity of light,

elementary charge, the gravitational constant and mass of protons and electrons reflect the underlying consistency of nature. The conventional view follows that as science progresses, errors are reduced and new technologies are created, allowing us to measure constants with ever greater accuracy. It perceives scientific advance as a gradual 'honing in' on the true value of universal constants. But some theoretical physicists have suggested that constants gradually alter in line with what is now generally accepted as being an expanding universe. Sheldrake goes further, he proposed that these constants actually fluctuate.

All fundamental constants are defined in standard units. The '*metre*', for example, first defined in France in 1790, has been adjusted several times, as greater methods of scientific accuracy have been realised. Originally defined as one ten-millionth of a quadrant of the meridian which passes through Paris, it was based on measurements of the meridian between Dunkirk and Barcelona. In 1799 the metre was embodied by a polished platinum bar, known as the '*Metre of the Archives*', which was kept at a fixed temperature and under constant supervision, becoming an international standard in the 19th century. In 1872, the '***International Commission of the Metre***' had constructed 30 prototype bars each calibrated using the original 'Metre of the Archives' as reference, but by 1960 the '*International Standard of Length*' (or ***SI unit***) became redefined in terms of the number of wavelengths emitted by a radioactive isotope (*krypton-86*). Since 1983 however, a metre became defined as '*the length of the path travelled by light in a vacuum during a time interval of 1/299,792,458th's of a second*'.

Scientific interpretation of standard weights and measures illustrates well the continual adjustment and reassessment of constants based on '*best values*', in order to create the most 'appropriate' standard on which to base all subsequent measurements. As Sheldrake put it, science places '*faith in eternal truths*' and has a tendency to cling to the idea of a stable uniformity within nature. However, because scientific measurements can only be as accurate as their limitations, separate readings regularly show subtle variations whenever constants are measured, and these variations are often dismissed as errors. But if science fails to dismiss an '*error*' it subsequently builds new theories upon it which confirms its validity. Indeed such errors inevitably go unrecognised until they are challenged by newer theories.

Likewise, if natural constants change or fluctuate in some way, the fundamental assumptions of science would all become increasingly inaccurate. Ultimately modern science adheres to fixed laws and eternal constants, but we only have the ability to base the constants on an extremely small portion of the entire universe. Sheldrake challenged the consistency of constants, and proposed that just as the cosmos itself has evolved, so too do the laws of nature. he proposed that they are effectively 'living' and continually developing entities.

Some physicists have now proposed that the universal gravitational constant is gradually decreasing over time, weakening as the universe expands, whilst others, (*Sheldrake amongst them*) have suggested that there is a cyclical variation in constants such as the velocity of light. Another theory is that the velocity of light measured from Earth gradually increases over time as our galaxy is blown further from the centre of the expanding universe. In the context of this theory, the velocity of light (*and therefore the*

passage of time) shortly after the ‘Big Bang’ around 14 billion years ago would have been far slower than it is today. However, the debating on fixed, fluctuating, or continually changing constants is considered academic, as both distance and time are now measured in terms of light itself. Many cosmologists and astrophysicists however are now proposing that the laws of universal constants evolve into being; apparently confirming Sheldrake’s model of morphic resonance or the natural development of ‘habits’.

It does indeed appear as if human consciousness has become ‘locked’ into the artificially constructed system that we call ‘science’, Now even changes in accepted constants have become impossible by definition, being measured as they are in units of themselves. In effect science has extricated itself from the possibility of discovering new realities by creating ‘*impossibilities*’ when such things do not exist in nature. If there is any validity in the observations of Sheldrake and others, any subtle changes in universal constants would go unnoticed until such time as human contemplation uncovers another natural event that science has yet to recognise. Only then will human perception once again change the goal posts to encompass a greater reality.



A notable occult philosopher of the modern age was English author ‘**Colin Wilson**’. He was a prolific writer on many subjects, ranging from *philosophy*, *psychology*, and *criminology*, to *fiction*, *literary criticism*, *science* and all things *occult* ~ backing up his many books with a lifetime of research. Yet his works embody more than just a passing interest in an array of topics. There was a unifying focus to all of his books, and his primary goal, as he put it, was to test the limits of human consciousness. “...*reducing it to one simple mystery.*”

Amongst other things, he charted the rise and fall of ancient mythologies and put them in context of mankind’s intellectual ascendancy, expanded on ‘**Carl Jung**’s idea of ‘*meaningful coincidences*’, and argued for the existence of unseen forces of ancient man ~ pointing out that scientific rationalism has made modern man a ‘*thinking pygmy*’. Time and again Wilson referred to the “...*natural freedom inherent in the back rooms of the mind.*” Having concerned himself with so many aspects of existence, his ineffectual verve and versatile literary skills enabled him to treat all of the subject matter in his books with equal emphasis and rigour.

Born in 1931, much of his childhood was spent in a ‘*dream world*’, bored and dissatisfied with the world around him. At the age of 10 he was introduced to science fiction. Becoming absorbed by it, he regarded it as important information about human thinking, apparently assimilating it to his discovery, as a younger child, of the existence of dinosaurs. It was the spark that he needed to begin his renowned intellectual journey through life. To him science fiction was not simply entertainment but another aspect of existence and, becoming charged with the energies of fantasy, he began to read voraciously.

Grasping many profound perceptions of humanity at a young age, he proceeded to study everything from the works of ‘**Sigmund Freud**’ and Carl Jung to the theories of ‘**Albert**

Einstein' and 'Max Planck'. He indulged in the philosophies of 'Friedrich Nietzsche' and 'George Berkeley,' became consumed in novels by 'P.G. Wodehouse' and 'George Bernard Shaw', lamented on the poetry of 'T.S. Eliot' and 'Edgar Allan Poe' and even developed a fascination for artists and musicians such as 'Vincent van Gogh' and 'Ludwig van Beethoven'. His swift accumulation of knowledge was such, that at around 13, he began to write down his perception of existence in an attempt to summarise his scientific knowledge. However he found himself including ideas beyond the physical sciences, and his prototype 'book' delved deep into the realms of psychology and philosophy.

Wilson realised at a young age that the universe could simply be an invention of the human mind, and his fanatical interest in science and philosophy embroiled him in the confusion of reality that is usually contemplated by people at a much older age. To him, humanity seemed to be motivated by delusion, and he saw a certain futility in human life and belief. All this before even experiencing adult life himself. At 16, a reference in a T.S. Eliot poem had led him to the sacred *Bhagavad-Gita* (the 'Song of the Blessed'); an ancient philosophical poem found in the *Mahabharata* ~ one of the two major Hindu epics. Having already developed a fascination for eastern religions and philosophies (particularly *Buddhism* and *Taoism*), he took up meditation and his outlook on life became healthier for a while.

Leaving school in 1947, as a young man Wilson had various mundane jobs including working in a tax office, a wool factory, as a farm hand, a ditch-digger, and a carpet salesman. By 1949 however, he was spending most of his free time in the reading room at the '*British Museum*', mostly working on his first novel ~ a fictional work with strong sexual tension, based on the life of a 1920's sex killer. The book, '*Ritual in the Dark*', was not finished and finally published until 1960.

However, in the early 1950's, Wilson's attention became diverted by a sudden philosophical inspiration that came to him whilst alone one Christmas. He began observing, researching, and taking notes, constructing the book that was to become '*The Outsider*' ~ his first and most spectacular literary success. 'The Outsider' outlined his philosophy which he described as '*New Existentialism*'. Through his book, he expressed the belief that there are many people "*...a little too intelligent to put up with the kinds of jobs and lives that they are expected endure in modern society, and yet not intelligent enough to dictate their own terms.*"

He introduced the idea of society being full of people who are happy to plod along with life, adhering to the superficial rules of society but living by their own moral codes. Moreover, he perceived that the bias and often mundane existence for so many people in modern society has created a groundswell of social misfits. In support of this notion, Wilson regularly cited 19th century '*Romanticism*', when European culture had succumb to the developing perceptions of humanity. It was a time of great individual creativity, when emphasis on imagination and emotion emerged as a backlash to 18th century values which had enforced social conformity. It allowed the '*Great Romantics*' to experience moments of exquisite living, but also gave rise to the notion that ecstasy is simply an illusion and, as history reports, there was a high suicide rate amongst the *writers, philosophers, artists* and *painters* of that time. But Wilson turned the whole Romantic

philosophy on its head, proposing that ecstasy is not the illusion, it is the banal waking 'reality' that is the illusion.

When 'The Outsider' was published in 1956, several years after its inception, it caused uproar and was hailed as a literary masterpiece by reviewers. At 24 years old, Wilson was regarded by some critics as a major writer of the age. His book became a bestseller both sides of the Atlantic, and was translated into many languages. Indeed he became seen as an English counterpart to the American '*Beat Generation*', and in Britain was labelled one of the '*Angry Young Men*' ~ a journalistic term for the new breed of authors and playwrights who began to express dissatisfaction against the prevailing social values. Publication of the 'The Outsider' had followed the first showing of '**John Osborne's** debut play '**Look Back in Anger**', and typified the new reaction against the post-war drabness of 1950's Britain, riding on the success of this new '*antisocial*' creativity. Wilson however saw his success as an '*absurd paradox*', and saw himself as '*being rewarded for telling society how much he detested it*'.

His raging popularity however was short-lived, and his success soon turned sour. It appears he had become too successful, too soon for the establishment to take him seriously enough allow itself to become diverted by his ideas. Serious critics became irritated by him, the banality of his background, and the adverse publicity that surrounded such a young intellectual. His second book to be published, '**Religion and the Rebel**', was first reviewed in 1957, and was slated by the critics. 'The Outsider' became seen as no more than a craze that had died a natural death, and Wilson was no longer taken as a serious writer by mainstream critics. As one newspaper put it, the angry young man was now seen as an '*intellectual fraud*.' However, Wilson continued to write and subsequently penned over 100 books, most of which continued to sell as popular interest in his work has remained.

His work has led him to increasingly explore the concept of '**peak experiences**'; brief moments when we attain higher levels of consciousness. A prime example a 'peak experience' is the Christmas morning sensation experienced in childhood ~ a feeling of exultation that is somewhat lacking in the remaining 364 days of the year. For many psychologists, the Christmas morning feeling amounts to little more than individually experienced realities invented by children with overactive glands and imagination. But Wilson's view is that this 'peak experience' is a moment of clarity, in which a child savours the event through a higher consciousness, whilst a majority of the time is spent shrouded in the drabness of everyday illusion.

'Peak experiences' is an idea which was postulated by American psychologist '**Abraham Maslow**,' whose work in this field was similar to Wilson's. Maslow had studied this phenomenon in the belief that there may be some sort of paranormal inference. Dedicated athletes, for example, often speak of a place known as '*the zone*', an exhilarating place beyond normal perceptions. Moments of sudden and extreme happiness were investigated in great depth by Wilson and Maslow, who both recognised that these feelings are the focus of human direction. People with a happy outlook and pleasant temperament experience these moments more often than those whose pessimistic outlook on life reflects their negative thinking. Wilson reasoned that if people were more

aware of these exquisite moments of spiritual and emotional pleasure, then they could have them all of the time, but unfortunately we live in a culture saturated with pessimism.

Childhood, on the other hand, is filled with such moments. The excitement and anticipation of an 'as yet unfocused mind' discovering the world for itself is bound to experience heightened perceptions. By studying this phenomenon, Wilson realised that it can be induced in adulthood by anyone with enough dedication, seeing it as an innate human trait. This ability to raise consciousness to a higher level of intensity, he dubbed '**Faculty X**', realising that peak experiences in adulthood revive the heightened perceptions more often felt in childhood before the mundane aspects of existence within society has suppressed the wild senses.

However on the occasions when a 'peak experience' is felt in adulthood, sights and sounds feel 'fresher', feelings of completeness are rediscovered as if for the first time, and faith in the world is often renewed. People who have experienced it talk of being immersed in a feeling of invisible energy that washes over them, invigorating their senses. But inevitably the feelings subside when they return to the same routines and drudgery of an unfulfilling and unsatisfying daily life. This happens because a vast majority of people habitually experience life '*dampening*' rather '*opening*' the senses, and so miss the beauty, complexity and meaning of the surrounding world. Wilson concluded that these 'peak experiences' come about when "***...reality is grasped by the mind rather than by the automatic responses of everyday life.***"

Wilson recognised that the fundamental reality of freedom has become distorted by the '*passive fallacy*' of human waking consciousness. In his words "***...we've developed a very narrow obsessive left-brain consciousness, which is quite unlike the wider, more easy going consciousness of animals.***"

Through his books he names '*cynicism*' as being the keynote of modern reality. Our conditioned attitudes are reinforced in literature, philosophy, music, films and television, all of which have served to impregnate modern culture with expressions of hopelessness and despair, making it easier to believe in failure than success. Wilson sees that society is filled with people who lack the inertia of ambition, and justify their apathy by assuming a cause to be hopeless.

In 1970 he was commissioned to do a book about the occult ~ a subject in which, up until that point, he had no real interest in, but which he accepted for the money. However Wilson found himself becoming increasingly absorbed in the subject, and recognised the significance of occult philosophy to his own work, later stating; "***I realised that the paranormal has as secure a foundation as physics or chemistry.***"

1971 saw the publication of his first book on the subject, simply entitled '***The Occult***'. It was also the year that the '***Colin Wilson Society***' was formed. Based in London, the organisation is dedicated to the '*Wilsonian philosophy of will and consciousness*'.

Wilson however, did not categorise any phenomenon in terms of '*good*' or '*evil*', but merely pointed out that the great things throughout history have been achieved by people who have tapped into these unseen forces. The origin of these powers is up to individual assessment. Indeed, Wilson was not a cult figurehead in the sense of a revered leader to whom fanatical followers place their faith. He became regarded more as an intellectual

guide, who used rational concepts to focus the attention of his followers. Indeed, he dealt in logic of possibilities, not in promoting forces of the divine.

Wilson covered many fields of research, but the three core subjects of '*crime*', '*sex*', and the '*occult*', continued to resurface in his work. All three are products of human consciousness, reflecting the way we have learned to think. He stated that; "***Crime makes it clear that there is something wrong with human consciousness, that it's too narrow***".

Human psychology is so complex that we have actually evolved the capacity to become bored, a trait which fascinates Wilson. In the intuitive days before the rise of mankind, our primitive ancestors were at the mercy of same savage laws of nature which affect all wildlife. By evolving the intellectual capacity to reason we are no longer endangered by the cruel and wild laws of nature, yet the civilised existence that we have created for ourselves, having no precedence in nature, is entirely structured from human thought. However, civilisation has yet to devise a perfect social system that works in practice as well as it does in theory. It is as if we are programmed for survival, but now that we have overcome the primitive dangers of nature, our fundamental criteria for surviving has become confused, and contorted by social existence. In Wilson's words "***...human beings need more than a pleasant life in order to be happy***".

Sex too, is a concept which is unique to the human species. Other animals mate exclusively for the purposes of procreation. Even an orgy of sexual indulgence amongst a group of chimpanzees is purely instinctual. Only humans have developed the concepts of fantasy and perversion yet, just as sexual domination is a crucial part of many species continued existence, so it has become a major feature of human civilisation. In other animals, the female of the species is often attracted to a mate by his dominant position, which is usually expressed through a display of colour, a show of strength, or just sheer size. In the human species, the inherent desire to dominate is no longer vital to ensure the healthy continuation of the species, but the confused notion has become imprinted in mankind's illusory world of existence. Wilson regards the whole human concept of sex as an illusion, seeing it as a perpetual torment and wanting that is of our own creation. He notes that the '***male sexual impulse has a strength which is out of all proportion to any useful purpose that it serves***'.

In his later publications '*From Atlantis to the Sphinx*' (1996) and '*The Atlas of Holy Places and Sacred Sites*' (1997), Wilson again focused on occult, mythology, and religion as oases of human consciousness. He pointed out the obvious charades and prejudices of occult philosophers, and spiritual/religious leaders of the past. A fundamental aspect of human consciousness, and the source of all communication, is language, and Wilson once more investigated its role in civilisation. Noting that language enables us to mentally construct objects that do not exist in the external reality, he claimed that humans once had a better means of understanding the world than language. The ancient Egyptian mode of communication for example, Wilson claims, was somewhat more akin to animal intuition. Moreover, he maintained that we have developed intellectual tools such as language in an effort to regain some comprehension of the surrounding world, and the world that we perceive is more a '*construction of language*' than a recognition of '*universal reality*'. But language being an imperfect instrument, creates a longing for that ancient sense of '*being and belonging*' that we must have had before we learned to substitute reason for instinct.

A poignant example of the fallibility of language is the obvious frustration of those who have attained a sense of spiritual enlightenment, but are unable to express its exquisiteness through words. Enlightenment is attained through a sense of knowing, but language can only express the idea of knowledge, it cannot represent the most personal experiences of personal existence. To look at it from another perspective; everything in existence is ultimately part of a wider logic. We, as a part of that, must ultimately conform to the logical rules of nature. However language and the intellectual capacity to reason through our collective experiences and perceptions has allowed us to create our own systems of logic. In other words, everything that people say or do ultimately has a logical basis, however unreasoned, prejudiced or otherwise disagreeable it may appear to others.

Wilson believed that, as a species, we have advanced to the point at which we can glimpse the world as it is, but he maintained that we have not yet reached the stage where we can sustain it as our reality'. Back in 1957, Wilson commented that ***"Man will develop a sixth sense, a sense of the purpose of life, quite direct and uninferred"*** ~ an idea which has since blossomed; featuring in many philosophies and prophesies of the late 20th century. In the wake of scientific discoveries, such as *chaos theory*, *advanced binary systems*, and *genetic science*, Wilson saw a need to reassess our systems of knowledge. He recognised that there are many paths to conscious living, all of which rely on a continual exertion of will. However most people are so consumed with meeting the challenges of daily life that their ambition is absorbed by the stressful conflict of ego. Indeed society has created an environment in which it is easy to remain apathetic towards success.

The central theme to all of his books, regardless of genre, was an exploration of consciousness and reality. Wilson proposed that '*analytical man*' has evolved a civilised form of existence, but has lost some of the powerful traits that were available to the primitive but intuitive mind of the ancient past. Yet he maintained that mankind should not yearn to return to the chaos and dangers of '*jungle life*' but look forward to a new period of awakening. As he put it; (there is) ***"no point in wishing we were in an earlier stage in our evolution; what we have to do is use this kind of consciousness, we have to push on until we suddenly break through to new heights."***

However, Wilson stressed that civilisation cannot evolve further until the occult is taken for reality on the same grounds, for example, as '*atomic energy*'. He was not calling for return of *psychic sciences*, but believed that new heights will be experienced at an individual level as people become increasingly able to ***"...expand inwards until the true equilibrium of man is re-established."***

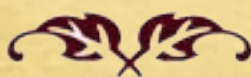
In Wilson's account of human existence, politicians, writers, artists, and historians are all responsible for a conditioned fascination with defeat, and so have contributed to the current chaotic state of society. Dated ideals and established prejudices are being stuffed down the throats of children at school and students at university, creating the mindset for adult social life. Indeed Wilson observed that mankind, whilst in a perpetual state of drowsiness, can never achieve its full potential unless a change of perspective is encouraged and embraced by the populace. Only then can civilisation survive its own pattern of self-destruction.

It is true that we are in an age of equal, if not greater, importance to historic ages such as the '*Renaissance*' period, or the '*Industrial Revolution*'. Our world of advanced *microchip technology, cybernetics, and genetic biology* has generated a tumultuous well of inspiration. Observing the wealth of scientific breakthroughs that surround our lives, Wilson pointed out that the great technological advances of the modern age originate from the same psychological spectrum as things such as *telepathy, faith healing, prophesy* or *second sight*. As intellectually dependant human beings, we have lost these telepathic faculties and substituted them for the narrow but intense vision of science.

We are all born with a neutral consciousness, but with a brain that is hungry to learn. As mankind has evolved and adapted perception through reason, the path of intellectual consciousness is naturally followed by all subsequent generations. However our world of reason is further shaped by our inherited culture which adds a particular '*flavour*' to the way that we learn to think. Picking up the experiences of our forebears as growing children, we absorb the conditioned reality of our native society. Moreover as a species, we tend to take our moral and intellectual knowledge (*as well as our religion background*) with us into adulthood, modify it to suit our needs, and pass it on to our own children.

As for the new millennium, Wilson remained optimistic despite the ominous signs of global warming, disease, and overpopulation. It is because, having glimpsed into what human consciousness is capable of, he believed that the **"...*brain will not fail when the will is in earnest*"**, stating **"*When difficulties force us to face up to these realities, then we shall finally apply our minds to solving them*"**. Indeed as '*time*' passes, the impossible becomes the possible, and all that prevents us from realising a higher reality within waking consciousness is our own conditioned thoughts.

Like many other occult philosophers, Wilson recognised the inexorable march of human consciousness to greater heights of intellectual and inspirational enlightenment. Like others, he also saw the development of a higher human consciousness as a race against time. Unlike many others however, he did not regard the next stage of human evolution as ushering in a state universal fulfilment. The so called '*new*' or '*golden age*', seen by so many prophets and spiritual leaders throughout history, have simply been interpretations of a future age when the growing spiritual realisation of humankind gains enough momentum to affect human civilisation as a whole. Indeed the notion that this '*golden age*' will be one of eternal bliss and perfection was dismissed by Wilson, who realised that it will bring its own challenges which we cannot as yet even perceive. However he did agree that our ignorance and destructive tendencies are at present making more of an impact on the physical reality of the environment than any comparatively minor benefits that have so far arisen from our push towards a higher consciousness. Although Wilson himself was an optimist, many others see this time of transition for human consciousness as involving such upheaval that it will inevitably hail the end of society as it exists in its present form.





iii.

(*millennial apocalypses*)

Despite a glut of scientific rationale, mythological and religious fear still persists, and the idea of a looming apocalypse from the year 1999 onwards has been the basis for many predictions of various inaccuracy. Ironically it is western culture that is both the driving force behind intellectual scientific advance and the spread of eschatological paranoia. Technological breakthroughs, advanced modern philosophy, psychology, cosmology and moral comprehension, are either neglected or abused by those who attempt to imprint their own beliefs on traditional Christian ideals.

The warping of traditional values to suit the perceived needs of emotionally dysfunctional individuals have arisen from a Christian culture that has allowed many different branches and sects to develop. Of those that are far from being benign, the millennium period became the focus of the Christian eschaton. Many religious leaders and prophets who have emerged from various Christian backgrounds, pointed to the transition between the 20th and 21st centuries as a time that humanity will witness a catastrophic change of biblical proportion. It has been built on a tradition that was started in the 16th century by French seer '**Nostradamus**' visions of 1999, and has served to re-ignite the fear of '**St. John**'s '*Revelation*' in Christians around the world. Consequently, the first few decades of the 3rd millennium are filled with dates of predicted apocalypse, reflecting many aspects of human thought.

To '**Mormons**' (members of the '**Church of the Latter-Day Saints**'), for example, the year 2000 was to be the year of eternal damnation for all of those who remained unconverted. Most of its six million members worldwide insist on the literal truth of the Bible, and so the concept of '*Judgement day*' is one that remains foremost in their minds. Meanwhile most of the two million or so '**Jehovah's Witnesses**' around the world blindly accept the irrational declarations of the '**Watchtower Bible and Tract Society**' who invariably announce the second coming of 'Christ', as and when it suits them.

A further perverse twist to Christian-Pagan tradition assimilates the biblical '*Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*' with the traditional four elements as '*polluted air*', '*diseased water*', '*barren earth*', and '*radioactive fire*'. Moreover, there are many who still believe that the Islamic eschatological requirements (*of 40 years of rain before the destruction reaped by 'Gog and Magog'*) have been met; equating religious scriptures with the notion that the Earth has been subjected to *over 40 years* of nuclear radiation and pollution since the inception of atomic research.

Yet it is not only western religious movements that behold this fascination for the new millennium. In western astrology, the millennium sees the transition from the '*Piscean*' age (*an aeon of religion and conformity*), to the '*humanist*' age of '*Aquarius*'; a change that has been embraced by many occult, theosophical, and spiritual leaders as a time of global catastrophe. Most speak of the 21st century as ushering in a '*new*' or '*golden age*',

and the new millennium is seen as something special from both a spiritual and secular perspective.

Other indigenous beliefs which have no connection to Christianity at all, have even been used to reinforce ideas of Christian eschatology. For example, '*Egyptology*', which is today characterised as a scientific study, began as a rediscovery of ancient Egyptian culture by a 19th century civilisation that was obsessed with Christian piety. Meticulous measurements taken of tombs and passageways were readily assimilated to historic global events, and were naturally decoded from a Christian perspective. One interpretation of '*mystical measurements*' taken within the '*King's Chamber*' in the '**Great Pyramid**', for example, placed the final phase of human existence at 2001. Another example can be found in '**Mayan**' tradition, where the year equivalent to 2012 'coincidentally' heralded the end of the current '*baktun*' or 160,000 year cycle of life. Indeed the whole notion of historical and mythological 'change' has become the cornerstone of modern theosophical beliefs.

In addition, greater scientific understanding has led to an increased awareness of the irresponsible actions of our species (*both now and in the past*). Many believe that we are evidently incapable of escaping our present predicament without having to take a giant leap of consciousness. We hold the most privileged position of all life on Earth, and only we are responsible for calamities such as overpopulation, famine, and disease. Moreover, only our species could ever hope to reverse the damage that we have already done whilst continuing with activities that bring us ever closer to an unavoidable global disaster of apocalyptic proportions. Indeed, far from slowing down, we continue to exploit our planet for its limited natural resources, pollute delicate ecosystems cause ozone depletion and accumulate greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere at an ever faster rate. Yet we do this despite becoming increasingly aware of the damage that are doing to the many natural mechanisms that prevent us from falling into climatic catastrophe.

For the scientific world, the stark realities of our irreversible destruction of Earth have begun to hit home, causing some liberal governments to reluctantly act. This is human reality, and scientific understanding of our predicament has actually caused some of those who wield power to act (*albeit belatedly*) upon the consequences of our collective greed. A modern world dominated by science and technology, however, whilst stimulating greater intellectual perception, has also encouraged the growth of a wide range of strange and obtuse beliefs. Indeed there are a myriad of conspiracy theories ranging from an alien infiltration of society, to the '*Big Brother*' scenario of modern technology encroaching on everyday life being a manifestation of the '*Antichrist*'. For many people the idea of statistical analysis, credit control, **CCTV**, and the advent of microchip implants, all represent a gradual infiltration of '*evil intent*' which is violating freedom and controlling lives. All of these many varied ideas constitute a collective map of perceived reality, and, whilst few prophecies are 100% accurate, the fact that they concentrate around the millennium is testament to the frail consciousness of human beings and their ability to think rationally.

As a species only we can conceive of our own death, and so are forever wary of our worst nightmares. The most rational way to deal with innate human fears is to ignore them. Ask any senior member of the establishment (*government or church officials*) if

they believe that the end of the world is nigh, and they would reject the idea as a preposterous suggestion born of wild imagination. However the thought of mutually assured destruction has led to much private debate, and curiosity. The governments of first world nations even employ scientific analysts to allay fears of the potential of human civilisation to collapse.

The largest such organisations, the '**RAND Corporation**', is a scientific and sociological think-tank, which works for the **US** and several other western governments, that creates computer models of virtually every conceivable scenario. For example, they pay particular attention to predicting the outcomes of the many unstable situations around the world, and attempt to foresee the shape of any potential new 'world order'. Such organisations keep many western governments ahead of perceived threats to the stability of modern society. Privately, even modern democratically elected governments are guilty of same paranoia that is incumbent in all people and organisations that find themselves in the position of power. What is interpreted through the advanced computer technology available to predictors today, is far more likely to be accepted by western thinkers as a 'probable outcome' than the messages spread by any spiritual messiah.

One thing has not changed however; people still tend to fulfil the things that they believe should happen ~ because they make decisions that are consistent with their beliefs. The human race, it appears, has become stuck in an '*unintuitive consciousness*' full of negative and potentially destructive decisions, so the threat of a global catastrophe of our own making remains very real. '**Carl Jung**', the founder of analytical psychology, believed that the culture of man will self-destruct if it doesn't learn to change. Towards the end of his life, he had a waking prophetic vision of his own, picturing a violent destruction of human society that would be engulfed in fire around the year 2010. This he saw as a vision which will arise from our collective '*hatred*'.

Modern psychology generally accepts the notion of a *human collective unconscious*. It is traditionally broken down, by most academics, into two fundamental states of instinctive conscious thought which are buried deep in the subconscious ~ known as '*eros*' (or *life wish*) and '*vanitos*' (*death wish*). As a species we survive and prosper when the desire to exist (*eros*) is greater than that of death and destruction (*vanitos*), but our consciousness, in the view of many pessimistic forecasters, is moving towards death. Whilst in eastern esoteric philosophy, humanity was striving to be reborn as a new being, many people, regardless of cultural background, saw the end of the 20th century as marking a time in which we would eventually experience a merging of the duality of our consciousness.



The freedom afforded to people in modern democratic societies has allowed many '*socially unwanted*' expressions to spread. Indeed any society that bases its constitution on the civil rights of individuals is faced with a paradox of its own creation. Whilst a vast majority of people living today may have a greater '*moral comprehension*' than their predecessors, the idea of '*individual liberty*' and '*freedom of speech*' should apply equally to people of all opinions, without inciting prejudiced beliefs or emotionally unbalanced obsessions. However, it is still unable to do so because the history of western

society is filled with the offensive actions of people who spread death and destruction through their warped ideas of 'love' and 'righteousness'.

Many religious or political ambitions of our forebears are naturally incorporated in various ideologies which have since become seen as morally unacceptable by the establishment. For that reason, there is a continual danger of belligerent religious cults and political organisations recruiting new members from the '*psychologically vulnerable*' ~ people who are easily made to feel alienated from their social peers. There will always be the situation whereby strong-willed and charismatic leaders are able to manipulate the willingly subordinate minds of their followers. Furthermore, many socially contentious sects tend to justify their own paranoia and isolationist policies by concocting illusory threats from the outside world. Curiously, the most audacious of these religious and political groups are most commonly found in societies which have evolved from Judaeo-Christian tradition.

The 'peacetime' history of society is punctuated with mass suicides and murders, often initiated by dangerous self-proclaimed '*Messiahs*'. One of the most notorious of all so-called '*mad messiahs*' was '**Charles Manson**', who, in 1969 initiated the brutal murders of seven people. The murders were not committed directly by Manson, but by his unquestioning devotees who, by believing his every word, became embroiled in his apocalyptic paranoia. Manson was inflamed by a psychotic belief that Armageddon will take the shape of a race war; a war that will be won by militant black supremacists. He saw himself as both '**Jesus**' and '**Satan**' in one, and demanded that his followers worshipped him as a god. Indeed he was idolised by his mostly female following (*known as his 'Family'*) and regularly indulged in orgies of sex and sacrifice. Having formulated his own pseudo-religion based on the '*Book of Revelation*' into which he integrated the lyrics of '**Beatles**' songs, Manson created a distorted scripture of racial Armageddon.

Almost a decade later in 1978, the largest mass suicide in modern history was initiated by the reverend '**Jim Jones**'. His cult, known as the '**People's Temple**' was originally formed in San Francisco in 1957 and became seen as a respected philanthropic organisation which was involved in numerous charitable functions. However two years after founding an agricultural commune in the jungles of Guyana, which he named '**Jonestown**', his increasingly despotic leadership brought about the deaths of 912 of his followers (*including 276 children*). Surrounded by armed guards brandishing guns and knives, he forced his followers to drink a suicide cocktail of '*Kool-Aid*' laced with cyanide. It was, as he called it, '*an act of revolutionary suicide*'.

Such is the power of revered cult leaders that even those who clearly lack moral integrity can manipulate the minds of entire communities. Another such cult figure who was seen as the Messiah by his followers was '**David Koresh**'; self-proclaimed leader of the '**Branch Davidians**' ~ an offshoot of the '**Seventh-Day Adventists**' based in Waco, Texas. Koresh was another '*mentor of the misguided*' who ran an increasingly repressive regime based on his own delusory beliefs. Not only did he reserve his right within the sect to have sex with any woman or child of his choosing (*an act that was treated as a divine initiation*), but used both physical punishment and extreme psychological pressure, such as threats of eternal damnation, to those who disobeyed him. He too had an

obsession with the 'Book of Revelation' and his many followers became caught up in his psychotic delusions.

Fuelled by paranoia, in 1993 Koresh led his followers towards a catastrophic showdown with the American authorities. Believing that the outside world was evil, he prepared for his version of Armageddon by heavily fortifying the Branch Davidian compound and stockpiling ammunition. The 'antisocial' activities of his cult inevitably aroused suspicion and, following a deadly gun battle with **ATF** agents investigating his activities, a 51 day siege by the **FBI** ensued. Koresh and his followers regarded the **FBI** as the forces of Satan, whilst the military style strong-arm tactics employed by the **FBI** exemplified their own prejudices and illusions about the cult; assuring an atmosphere of mutual suspicion. The stand off finally ended in the deaths of 87 cult members (*including 25 children*), either shot or engulfed in the ensuing inferno which was officially recorded as having been self-inflicted.

In 1973 '**Marshall Applewhite**', the insecure son of a Presbyterian minister from Texas, began a cult that was to attract many followers who readily confused sci-fi fantasy with physical reality. The highly persuasive Applewhite, who was said to have seduced followers with his hypnotic stare, along with his companion '**Bonnie Nettles**' (*a nurse whom he had met whilst recovering from a mental breakdown*), spread a strange religious propaganda which attracted many followers. Commonly known as '**Heaven's Gate**', his organisation started out as a series of meditation centres, but increasingly developed into a form of *Internet eschatology*.

The beliefs of the Heaven's Gate cult were based on fanciful pseudo-science but, like many other cults, they grew from the delusions of an emotionally unstable and dangerous individual. Applewhite's assertion that '*Luciferians*', a race of superior aliens, had infiltrated society, robbing humans of their bodies to use them as 'containers (*or earthly clothes*)' was actually believed by many people. He claimed that humanity is living an illusion, having been '*falsely programmed*' by the Luciferians who created the world's corrupt religious concepts to keep humankind occupied. Besides abducting human beings for genetic experiments, this race of 'super-aliens,' according to Applewhite, held the key to a higher spiritual life. Known to his followers as '**Do**', Applewhite claimed to be an alien in human incarnation, and promised his followers an end to suffering, doubt and confusion if they devoted their lives to his doctrine.

In order to be ready to be taken into the next level of existence (*the real Kingdom of Heaven as he called it*) devotees to the sect were told to shed off all '*mammalian behaviour*'. He required them to become detached from sexuality, family ties and all human relationships in order to "*...leave behind 'possessions, habits and self-concerns'*".

Inducting many believers into his company called '**Computer Nomads**', he ran a business that became an efficient recruiting tool. It was dedicated to building web pages in order to circulate strange propaganda and conspiracy theories over the Internet, involving **UFO**'s, government secrets, and hostile aliens. In San Diego, in 1997, 39 young people were killed in a ritual suicide organised in the wake of the passing comet '*Hale-Bopp*' over the skies throughout the northern hemisphere. They died believing that their souls would join aliens who were aboard the comet, convinced that its passing was a

sign of imminent Armageddon, and that by committing suicide they would access an *'eternal spiritual peace'*.

The fanatical and somewhat wayward beliefs of these Heaven's Gate devotees in 1997, generated a renewed call by conservative Christian authorities in America to heavily censor the Internet which they saw as an 'evil breeding ground of dangerous philosophies'. But it was inevitable that, as the 20th century drew to a close, extreme reactions to society originating in disillusioned or manipulated minds would lead to an increasing number of indiscriminate murders and mass suicides. Over the past few decades activity by fanatical groups and individuals in the United States has risen at an alarming rate. Moreover, hundreds of innocent people are shot every year because of the screwed-up emotions and irrational beliefs of loners and extremist organisations. Unfortunately school playgrounds and classrooms appear to be a popular target of psychotic individuals who want to make the biggest impact and end their lives in a blaze of destruction. However not all psychopathic killers are complete loners.

Many people commit crimes against humanity whilst under the influence of a 'warped' leader. Having attained a pathological misconception from someone whom they perceive of as being a 'superior' or 'divine' being, most deluded followers that commit deadly acts of violence do so, not out of a sense of despair or to end a miserable life, but in the belief that they will pass into a higher state of existence. Of course, it is not only in America that extreme reactions to society have continued to occur. Over seventy members of the **'Order of the Solar Temple'** throughout Europe and Canada committed suicide during the 1990's ~ most believing that their act of suicide would transport their souls to a higher life on a fictitious planet named *'Sirius'*.

Outwardly aggressive cults have also emerged in many places other than the United States. In 1995, a Japanese religious cult known as the **'Aum Shinri Kyo'** sect, which at one time reputedly had over 10,000 members, was responsible for several attacks on society. Meaning *'supreme truth'*, Aum Shinri Kyo was a billion dollar empire led by the sight-impaired guru **'Shoko Asahara'** ~ known to his followers as **'The Master'**. Asahara, who had founded several previous cults which had collapsed, declared himself to be the reincarnation of **'Imhotep'** ~ an Egyptian physician and architect who lived in the 3rd millennium BCE, and who was said to have designed the Great Pyramid. Like other cult leaders, his devotees followed him blindly, and Asahara was able to wield power over many people who felt the need to believe in a divine leader. In return for money and devotion, he offered his followers a route to enlightenment and salvation from the forthcoming apocalypse which he believed would come in 1997.

Asahara devised extreme methods of mind control including masochistic endurance tests, whereby initiates would be drugged, starved, subject to electric shocks, and ritual sensory deprivation. As a reward for enduring the *'Perfect Salvation Initiation'*, as he called it, he allowed chosen followers to drink from the *'Miracle Pond'*, his bath water spiked with hallucinogenic designer drugs. Years of abduction and intimidation of reluctant members had made this cult well known to the Japanese authorities. However they were unprepared for the attack on society in 1995, when members of Aum Shinri Kyo released Sarin gas into the busy Tokyo underground system, killing 12 commuters and injuring over 6000. Over 200 tons of chemicals used to make this deadly nerve gas were

subsequently found hidden within the cult's many compounds. Yet, despite having clearly immoral beliefs, his organisation has since developed several offshoots which have each made wild predictions of their own.

Many religious cult leaders throughout the world have claimed to foresee impending doom, and offered a release from the 'torture of life' (*or salvation from Armageddon*). There have also been countless political organisations that have offered their followers equally belligerent secular solutions to their discontented lives. Extremist groups that preach fascist ideals, such as those of enforced '*Aryan supremacy*', pose a greater threat to the established ideals of the democratic west than any '*left-wing anti-capitalist*' or even '*Islamic militant*' group. Throughout the USA and many parts of Europe, organisations *hell bent* on upsetting the world order are seriously willing a devastating battle of ideology to happen. Furthermore, Christian eschatology is even playing a part in Jewish-Palestinian conflicts throughout the Middle East. The Christian millennium has deepened a potential 'flashpoint' between ultra-orthodox Jews and opposing militant Islamic Fundamentalists in Jerusalem. There are those intent on levelling the '**Mosque of Omar**' which stands on the site of '*King Solomon's Temple*' ~ an act that would surely incite a major conflict in this historically volatile area, and potentially involve the wider world.

There have even been attempts to realise biblical prophecies in order to justify such acts of blide faith, including the genetic engineering of a pure red heifer ~ a sacred sign that is believed to herald the arrival of the Hebrew Messiah. Indeed, one of the greatest dangers faced by humanity is that fanatical believers, regardless of their faith, want an '*Armageddon*' to happen, believing that a utopian society would arise out of such an event, as a 'heaven on Earth' ~ or a '*New Jerusalem*'. Driven to a state of emotional instability by their faith, many religious fanatics see a post-apocalyptic world as being one in where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain or death ~ only a permanent paradise for them and their kind, whilst all enemies are cast into the eternal damnation of *hell*. As is the case with all extreme beliefs, when a foreseen incident doesn't happen as expected, fanatics inevitably try to initiate it, and attempt to realise the prophecies of their prejudiced beliefs.





iv.

(The irrational, the spiritual and the logical)

In the early 21st century, just over a billion people worldwide spend their entire lives surrounded by modern technology. The remaining 83% of the world population, however, exist in differing degrees of poverty, rarely benefiting from the intellectual advances of mankind. Most people living in a developed nation today are, for example, assured of basic health care and have no immediate fear of starving or freezing to death, unlike the neglected majority of people living in the ‘developing world’.

But modern society is much more than merely an aid to survival. The many developed nations of today’s world represent the intellectual zenith of human civilisation, and those of us fortunate enough to experience a ‘*modern way of life*’, have the cumulative efforts of our forebears to thank. There are countless things that people take for granted today, many of which result from problems that were overcome by our forebears, in much the same way as we pave the way for the lives of our descendants. Every healthy person who has ever lived has possessed the innate human trait of a ‘*desire to succeed*’, which often manifests as an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. Under suitable conditions, our capacity for intellectual thought flourishes, allowing us to evolve complex societies that are, in effect, extensions of our minds. It is through society that we apply ideas and innovations designed to improving everyday life.

Modern society has created a world in which our ability to survive and prosper has been strengthened by a rational understanding of the forces of nature. It has created an environment where scientific reality dominates our conscious world. Furthermore, it has made the lives of over a billion people more ‘*comfortable*’ than those of any other complex living creature that has ever existed on Earth. Yet it is clear that we live in a world of illusion. No individual can actually conceive how every action and reaction shapes and changes the web of life into which we are all entwined. So based upon our learned knowledge and own experiences of life, we each perceive human existence in a unique way. Only the collective knowledge and experiences of the entire species can truly paint an accurate picture of what constitutes human conscious reality.

Despite the fact that science and reason enable us to comprehend how ‘*untouchable*’ phenomena occur, many people still retain the primitive urge to explain unusual occurrences through intuitive or spiritual means. They are methods which have become increasingly confused as intellectual consciousness has strengthened. Indeed awesome natural events still inspire ‘*greater beliefs*’ as they have done throughout history. August 1999, for example, saw the last solar eclipse of the millennium. In an age dominated by scientific rationale, apocalyptic predictions still emerged from around the world, expressing different cultural beliefs and ideas that totally disregarded scientific reason. The more primitive faculty of mankind, it seems, continues to thrive behind what is essentially an intellectual ‘*façade*’.

In advance of the solar eclipse, doomsayers across the world issued warnings of mass destruction. There was even panic in regions of the world, far from the actual path of the eclipse. In Mexico, for example, millions of leaflets were distributed inciting fear and dread amongst local populations, prompting the government to make a public statement to assure people that it was not the end of the world. In France, the total eclipse of the Sun provoked apocalyptic predictions from various well known people; a common theme being that it would signal the destruction of Paris. One variation of this was announced by the world-famous fashion designer '**Paco Rabanne**', who predicted that the Russian space station '**MIR**' would, shortly after, fall to Earth and engulf the city in a ball of fire.

In Lebanon, popular local astrologer '**Samir Tomb**' predicted that the eclipse would have a mostly negative influence on Earth, believing that it would spawn a range of natural and human disasters ~ including having an adverse effect on the Middle East peace process. In Israel, senior rabbi '**David Batzri**' commented that the eclipse would augment a series of imminent catastrophes, predicting that, in its wake would follow a year of economic disaster, famine and war on a global scale.

Throughout much of the Moslem world, the eclipse was regarded as a '*divine sign*'. In Iran, for example, Islamic clerics called for the population to pray during the eclipse, proposing that it was a sign of God that demanded prayer from all the Islamic faithful. The passing of the eclipse over India, meanwhile, was met with trepidation, and many sacred sites throughout this deeply religious subcontinent were vigorously washed to '*clean off the evil spirits cast by the Moon's shadow*'. Unsurprisingly, many western analysts became wary of the possibility of increased tensions within the world's many conflict zones as the Sun eerily disappeared behind the Moon. Places such as Kashmir and the Iran-Iraq border were watched by western eyes with cautious trepidation.

Yet a solar eclipse is no longer a mystery. We can accurately predict its arrival and duration right to the very second ~ not through instinct or esoteric wisdom, but through science. Using scientific inquisition to habitually dissect and analyse the world around us, we increasingly understand how nature works, and various processes enable us to chart the exact course of all celestial bodies within our solar system. However whilst scientists around the world used the eclipse as an opportunity to conduct a variety of experiments, (*NASA, for example, ran a global experiment to track the effects of the eclipse on the ionosphere*), far more people paid attention to its mystical implications. This clearly illustrates our inherent preference to fanciful primitive beliefs over scientific validation (*which a vast majority of the world's population don't understand anyway*), even when it blatantly contradicts established methods of reason.

Millions of people around the world continue to rely on the words of prophets and seers, because the prophesies of a trusted leader can give purpose, and even provide comfort for those who yearn to know what their future may hold. What's strikingly evident is that, regardless of whether our collective future is determined by scientific discovery or spiritual belief, humanity has the power to change the course of existence. Alas, as the present moment changes the future, we continue to live on the preverbal '*knife edge*' though our own collective ignorance.



Our literal comprehension of existence ultimately comes down to the ‘*spiritual*’ and the ‘*logical*’. In other words; what we really want from life, and where we are at this moment in time (*in accordance with our perception of physical reality*). The spiritual expression of human thought embraces the idea of a Universe connected and shaped by a single natural law ~ the embodiment of which often assumes the form of ‘**God**’. The logical approach to existence, on the other hand, is based on science and rational philosophy, both of which depend on the intellectual disposition of encouraging reason. Our comprehension of the logical make-up of the Universe as a vast network of energy and matter connected by a single event, shares much similarity to the spiritual model, except that science endeavours to reduce the idea of ‘God’ to a mathematical equation that combines the four fundamental forces of nature as; ‘***The Theory of Everything***’.

Undoubtedly fascinating as ‘particle physics’ is, most people who long for answers to the ‘meaning of life’ find the attraction of intuitive and spiritual beliefs to be far greater than that of disciplined science. The spiritual endeavour to succeed is expounded very well by a book published in 1994 entitled ‘***The Celestine Prophecy***’. Written by American sociologist and astrologer ‘**James Redfield**’, it was a novel is built around a fictitious sacred document that explains the reason for all human conflict, and predicted a crucial spiritual transformation of society at the end of the 20th century.

Originally published privately in 1993, *The Celestine Prophecy* was a sincere attempt by Redfield to galvanise New Age beliefs around his 'rehashed' version of humankind's spiritual evolution. Cleverly embroidered into a fantasy story (*where factual inaccuracies are excused*), he generated interest in his personal philosophy based on the ancient wisdom traditions of both east and west. In 1994, the book was taken on by ‘**Warner Books**’ who, having recognised its commercial potential, reclassified it as fiction, turning it into an instant bestseller.

Essentially it was a tame, but appealing, adventure story detailing the rediscovery, in Peru, of an ancient prophetic manuscript that was written around 600BCE. In it, the Mayan document, which is inexplicably written in Aramaic, is composed of ‘*Nine Insights*’. Having been separated and dispersed by its keepers to avoid suppression by the authorities (*under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church*), the first insight is stumbled upon by an unnamed American social worker who has travelled to Peru. The essence of the ‘First Insight’ is that every single event in our lives is part of a much wider ‘*universal plan*’ in which chance coincidences are actually synchronous events. These events, in effect, act as signposts, directing anyone who cares to pay attention to them, leading them on the right path to spiritual truth. The idea that coincidences exist to awaken us to the inherent mystery of life is taken on board by the central character in the story, who acts accordingly.

As the story unfolds, the manuscript is rediscovered in its entirety through a series of seemingly chance meetings and coincidences between complete strangers, each of whom are privy to a different insight. Unable to study the manuscript as a whole, each insight is subsequently revealed to the central figure as and when he is ready to receive it. The more insights into human spiritual evolution that he encounters and consciously

acknowledges, the more he becomes aware of the many subtle energies that pass between people as they interact with one another.

Redfield's '*spiritual edict*' is essentially concerned with the transfer of energy, which, when properly recognised, has the capacity to build intuitive skills and psychic strength. The story, in effect, played a supporting role for Redfield's personal vision of universal existence and human destiny, and each chapter was followed by a summary of insights revealed thus far.

In brief, Redfield gets across the idea that all human conflict arises from an unconscious competition for energy, and that this unhealthy method of attracting energy by taking from others has alienated our species from the source of creation. The key to overcoming conflict and awakening our senses to positive energy, according to Redfield, is to tune in to natural coincidences, follow intuitions, premonitions and dreams, believe that everything in life has a purpose, and "*...open ourselves to the universal force of life*".

Like many theosophical writers before, Redfield described three stages of human development, but from a different perspective that focused on the past millennium alone. He asserted that the '*mystical experience*' of spreading positive spiritual energy is something that has been sorely missed by mankind. The first half of the millennium was spent under the dominance of the Christian Church, which repressed natural instinct and imposed its own system of spiritual beliefs upon people. Over the next 500 years, people became increasingly dissatisfied with the church, they escaped its restrictive authority and became preoccupied with material comfort ~ but spiritual ignorance remained. Through vague references to the spiritual revolution of the 1960's, (*described on the cardinal manuscript*), Redfield affirmed that, as the 20th century drew to a close, mankind was gradually awakening to a new era of universal fulfilment and enlightenment, and so becoming ready to discover life's ultimate purpose.

In this final stage of our conscious evolution, Redfield visualised that, by becoming aquatinted with the subtle energies of the Universe, the human race will have collectively begun to experience an irresistible force of intuitive wisdom. He saw a humanity vitalised by contemplation, meditation and natural psychic energies ~ one that has attained a heightened perception and therefore a greater insight into the harmonious nature of the Universe. Yet in order to attain such heights, people need to kick the habit of manipulating and using others, an undesirable trait that Redfield cited as being seated in childhood insecurity, and which has developed as a way to deal with the traumas of social life. The characteristics instilled in childhood, have arisen from what he referred to as '**control dramas**' ~ where people habitually take energy from others either through *intimidation, interrogation, remaining aloof, or through attracting pity*.

By losing this unhealthy dependence on other people and applying a new '*interpersonal ethic*', Redfield believes that people will no longer feel the need to control others or amass possessions in order to gain a sense of security. He envisaged a new millennium where people are led by spirit rather than ego, where consumerism is perceived as a primitive concept, and where no one prospers at the expense of another. Building on the commonly accepted idea that we are all inextricably bound together in the evolution of the species as a whole, he described a world in which scientific endeavour gives way to a

spiritual pursuit of the truth, allowing technology and spiritual insight to be brought together to create a paradise on Earth.

It is little wonder that *The Celestine Prophecy* appealed to so many disenchanted people who were drawn to his dream of an idealistic world in which even the great forests are allowed to regenerate and mature. By the same token that revered prophecies will often infuse doom and gloom into the minds of people who feel the need to believe them, prophecies based on positive beliefs can be equally persuasive. The Celestine prophecy became highly popular because it employed the use of '*seductive optimism*'. Indeed, despite masquerading as a fictional journey of discovery, the book is still treated by many people as a genuine spiritual guide and an allegory of human discovery.

Redfield himself readily assumed the role of a '*new age guru*' that was placed upon him by his many admirers. Indeed he built a spiritual and material industry from his popular novel, effectively becoming a parody of his fictional character through writing books that revealed further insights to his many interested followers. Touring America, and promoting '*The Celestine Vision*' on talk shows and radio programmes, for many people he became the source of eagerly anticipated revelations concerning the state of human consciousness. Indeed the '*reverse-eschatological attraction*' of his pseudo-religious tract was undeniable, and he even organised a worldwide millennial prayer vigil, that took place just before midnight on new years eve 1999. Perceiving it as a sacred moment in human history, his intention to welcome in the next thousand years with a '*common vision of peace*', was shared by millions.



Whilst spiritual beliefs can often seem enchanting, they are usually somewhat removed from the physical reality of existence. In the present mindset that dominates world culture, knowledge is often perceived as power, and when applied with '*cunning*' or '*wisdom*', will readily generate material wealth and power. A growing number of people in the western world have long since passed the point where their focus of attention, once been driven by necessity, is now driven by the desire to accumulate wealth and experience material luxury.

This has occurred because the genetically-driven desire of human beings to succeed knows no bounds. Indeed it is only moral conscience (*another perception based on reason*), which causes most people who live in comparative luxury to even pay a second thought to those who are less fortunate than themselves. Yet billions of people around the world continue to suffer from the horrors of disease, famine, war, and the many natural disasters that so often devastate the poorest regions of the world. Thanks to feelings of *compassion*, we still hold on to our humanity, yet few people who live comfortably spend their entire waking lives feeling contrite. So those of us living in nations that are guilty of vast over-consumption inevitably justify our comfortable existence through the concept of '*charity*', where organisations based on compassion survive by invoking the occasional feeling of moral duty. Registered charities enable most of us to feel that we can afford least a token gesture of '*giving*' to those far less fortunate than ourselves.

But just as we are endeared to perceptions such as '*love*', '*compassion*' and '*empathy*', another natural instinct that we are unable to leave completely behind us as we have taken up the mantle of intellectual wisdom, is the competitive desire to win. Out of this arises the illusory world of duality '*us and them*', '*good and evil*', '*right and wrong*'. Through the conditioning of society, we instinctively inherit our forebear's perceptions of what constitutes an '*enemy*' or an '*ally*'.

The mentality of intellectual competition is such that we would prefer to engage in war rather than succumb to the domination of our perceived adversaries. Indeed, as we evolved a greater comprehension of existence, the drive to perceive our uniquely human world through reason has created feelings of '*suspicion*', '*jealousy*' and '*hate*'. Despite the fact that there need be no such thing as an '*enemy*', these negative human perceptions are played out at an international level, substantiating deep irrational fears and involving whole nations of millions or even billions of people. Whilst most people in power realise the consequences of military confrontation, and therefore consider it to be a necessary deterrent, there are those who clearly regard its potential to upset the present world order, and would readily initiate a catastrophic ideological war.

The fact remains that the nuclear arsenals of the world, in the early 21st century, have enough power to detonate the equivalent of over 600,000 Hiroshima bombs. Indeed it only takes 85kg (*about 190lb*) of plutonium to completely destroy a medium-sized city should a capable party decide to do so. Yet around 1400 tons of plutonium have so far been produced as a by-product of nuclear reactors around the world.

As far as the potential end to civilisation is concerned, our continued survival relies on the logic of probabilities in an existence of ever-changing circumstances. Therefore the focus of our attention is '*prediction*', whether it is based on the scientific discipline of statistical analysis, or the spiritual insights and visions of those who claim to know what the future holds. The real challenge for scientific endeavour, however, should be how to make life better for those who continue to suffer despite its many advances. Most everyone agrees that there is no need for the pain and suffering that persists to blight the lives of billions, but a complete redistribution of wealth to level up the living standards of poorer nations in line with those in developed nations is deemed neither practical nor desirable.

So, irrespective of the somewhat misdirected attentions of science, humankind continues to exist in an uncertain world where those who have greatly benefited from human ingenuity are in the minority. To predict a time when the human species will be brought together through a collective realisation of oneness and so transcend to a plane of higher consciousness is fanciful to say the least. Such a radical change in human consciousness is only likely to occur through a catastrophic collapse of modern society. For example, the survivors of a global nuclear conflict would experience the aftershock of having experienced and lost the comfort that an ultimately futile civilisation once brought.

Life is ultimately about playing the odds, with a chance to better them at every living moment, because even the most seemingly random occurrences are ultimately logical. Science alone cannot solve the mysteries of existence, but it does offer the most accurate model of collective reality. It has allowed us to perceive a universe, which no longer

commands an irrational fear in our minds as it once did our distant ancestors. Indeed it is through intellectual and scientific means (*not spiritual or divine intuition*) that we understand how earthly nature is subject to the same fundamental forces that exist throughout the entire cosmos. Ultimately the future of humanity lies in the path that we *believe* the most.





Footnote:

The adventures of Arthur's '*Knights of the Round Table*', and the kingdom of Camelot was actually borne of 12th century myth designed to unite medieval laypeople of southern England. Following the end of the Roman occupation of Britain, the south-west of England had become divided. Although greatly *Romanised*, Cornwall was predominantly Celtic, whereas to the east, lay the larger kingdom of Wessex, an Anglo-Saxon culture. The reunification of these lands following the Norman conquest of England in the 11th century, led to an uneasy merging of these two medieval Christian cultures, and the development of Arthurian legend greatly helped to stabilise the area. Born in Tintagel in Cornwall, Arthur is said to have built a holy kingdom in the name of God.

Originally penned by 12th century French Poet '**Chétien de Troyes**', whose fictional romances introduced the code of chivalry, stories about the life of King Arthur became widely popular throughout Norman Britain. Further contributions from the Anglo-Norman poet '**Robert Wace**' and Welsh writer '**Geoffrey of Monmouth**' whose '*History of the Kings of Britain*' chronicled the reign of Arthur and even included accounts of the life of '**Merlin**' (*Arthur's legendary magician and councillor*), all served to weave fictitious characters and events into factual history, a ploy that was commonplace in medieval Europe. Indeed later accounts of the life and death of King Arthur come from the 15th English Author '**Thomas Malory**' who perpetuated Arthurian myths at a time when the established Roman Catholic authorities were facing an increasing atmosphere of discontent, and society was in urgent need of church reforms.

Surviving to this day in Glastonbury, stand the ruins of a Benedictine abbey originally built in the 10th century, and one of many sites throughout medieval Europe to become a place of pilgrimage at a time when Christianity was a new and overwhelming religion. The absolute power of Roman Catholic authority throughout medieval Europe shaped the very perceptions of the people who lived at the time, and it is from Glastonbury Abbey that many the legendary stories of '**King Arthur**' and his quest to find the Holy Grail in the 6th century were perpetuated.



Footnote:

A curious paradox exists in Wilson's perception of 'peak experiences'. Health and happiness do indeed appear to compliment each other. Yet because 'peak experiences' are not defined by a predetermined level of consciousness that exists independently of human action, the threshold for reaching exhilarating perceptual heights is personal and varies with each individual.

For example; An experienced marathon runner will often pass through the '*pain barrier*' during a race, and reach '*the zone*' after a certain amount of effort. An unfit person who rarely exercises, but decides to jogs round the block or rides a bike for a couple of miles, can experience exactly the same rush if they push themselves hard enough, without having to run twenty miles or so before it happens. However an unfit person is less likely to have the *willpower* to reach to these personal levels of exertion because it requires greater effort to do so. Moreover they are in greater danger of their body being unable to cope with such strenuous exercise. On the other hand, a seasoned athlete dedicated to winning, reaches *the zone* at a higher, but more comfortable level, often becoming addicted to repeating the experience.



Footnote:

Whilst almost everyone agrees that time is running out for humanity and modern civilisation in its current form, environmental ignorance, material overindulgence and our violent destruction of the planet continues whilst governments around the world lack the willpower to decisively act. Most sovereign nations appear to be too wary of each other; more concerned about losing potential economic or military advantage than of the impending climate emergency that will likely bring down our entire species (*and destroy most other extant species on the way*). Alas, it appears mankind is unlikely to collectively act upon our own environmental abuse, even out of the absolute necessity for our collective survival. In fact, any concerted action that we may eventually take to counter things such as climate change and environmental degradation are likely to be increasingly desperate and ultimately futile. Indeed some environmentalists have already cited the late 1980's as having been the last years in which we could have effectively reversed any permanent damage to the biosphere; believing that we are now well beyond that time, and the inertia of our nefarious activities will inevitably lead to cataclysmic change whatever we do. We can now only attempt to mitigate the terrible consequences of our shamefully ignorant actions.



Footnote:

Science is far from being the perfect tool that it endeavours to be. The art of weather forecasting is testament to that fact, because in order to predict events with any degree of accuracy it relies on ***probability***. By definition probability lies between *certainty* and *impossibility*, so the whole dynamics of the universe exist because of it, and it is this that makes our world so unpredictable. Even if the probability of something happening is great, it can never be guaranteed.

The possible combination of interacting forces that are responsible for directing the outcome of our future is phenomenal. Indeed attempting to devise a totally accurate method of predicting the future, even through scientific methods, is futile because there are so many factors which can influence change. The playing of a roulette wheel illustrates this point well. It is possible to spin the same number every time, but in order to *guarantee* the same number, you must recreate every possible circumstance that effected the outcome of the original spin. You must therefore apply *exactly* the same force, spinning the wheel with *exactly* the same velocity, let the ball go with *exactly* the same force at *exactly* the same moment of the wheel's revolution. The air pressure, humidity and angle of drop must all be *exactly* the same and even the wheel must experience *exactly* the same forces of friction, with the conscious efforts of the dealer, replicating the *exact* amount of attention to the task. Although the same number can result from totally different spins, the scientific methods of prediction habitually rely on statistical replication.

In life we have a virtually infinite number of continual choices that we are able to make, and all decisions made in the 'present' alter the future. In a controlled environment (*such as the 'roulette wheel' for example*), a process of decisions and actions can be copied almost exactly to the point that an outcome can be virtually guaranteed. But everyday life is not a process that can be copied and perfected within a controlled environment. Life, unlike scientific experiment, has no precedence.