

Article

The Resplendence Codex: Reflowering Apocalypse in the Tree of Life (Part III)

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ABSTRACT

This article was written in response to a life-and death wake-up call, in which I realized I needed urgently to write down before it was too late and the threads became scattered and lost. Resplendence is an innovative concept and nascent social movement, complementing science and transcending religion, with the wisdom of conscious insight and motivation, to reflower the planet as a living paradise, abundantly resilient over evolutionary time, and ultimately, to reach to the stars.

Part III of this four-part article includes: 9. Resplendence: A Paradigm beyond Religion to Reparadise the Earth; 10. Transcendence and the Physical Universe; 11. Ten Clarifications on the Nature of Existence; and 12. Accounting Religious Apocalypse and its Greening in the Traditions.

Keywords: Resplendence, apocalypse, evolution, science, religion, reflowering, tree of life.

9. Resplendence: A Paradigm beyond Religion to Reparadise the Earth

This article is the Resplendence Codex. Resplendence evokes the paradigm shift from religion to paradise in a single word. Codex - *caudex* means the "trunk of a tree" - in this case the Tree of Life.

Resplendence means many things. We usually think of it as a glorious state of natural splendour, but its root meaning *re-splendere* is to "shine brightly" or "shine again". It is thus both the full overflowing abundance of paradise, and as a global consciousness, it is the light of the world. But it has a deeper meaning, as the true immortal condition of humanity and is hence the natural paradigm successor to religion.

Resplendence is both an attitude of mind and a social dynamic attuned to bringing Earth back to a state of resplendent paradise, sustainable and resilient over evolutionary time scales, to ensure our own survival and the survival of the diversity of life.

[Revealing Resplendence - Text of the talk](#)

Instead of leading to the physically unrealizable imaginary scenarios of religions, such as heaven and hell in the Day of Judgment, resplendence leads to a single real and positively resplendent

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outcome - the reparadising of Earth in natural abundance, through a democratic culture empowered by climax technology, medicine and science and based on the principles of ecosystemic diversity.

Resplendence complements the knowledge provided by science with the wisdom of what to do about it, in the same way religion has sought to complement practical knowledge in human history. Science deals with the pursuit of the knowledge of how nature and the universe work, while the wisdom of resplendence deals with what we creatively do with this knowledge, in reflowering paradise - the ultimate manifestation of wisdom in action.

We all want to find meaning in life and want it to have a meaning which extends beyond our own lifetime. We also want the security that we are living in a world that has a viable future for our offspring and the future generations. The critical source of our angst that many of us turn to religion to alleviate, is that we are living in a world which is not only teeming with injustice, violent conflicts and weapons of mass destruction, but is lurching towards an uncertain future as a result of human impacts on the world's living habitats, climate and resources which could take us to an irreversible tipping point, undermining the future of unborn generations.



Okavango Delta. One of Africa's richest biodiversity hotspots.

These are problems we need to deal with and heal in this life to have a sense of fulfillment, not just pass them on to future generations to worry about, or to an imagined afterlife full of even more graphic tortures and punishments. The only meaningful contribution we can make to the future is through our offspring, our contributions to understanding in culture and society, in the humanities, science, art and music, through innovations we bring to society which produce lasting benefit and through actually protecting the living planet through our actions to guard the diversity of life.

No selfish, expedient, greedy or jealous motive, or action - can serve to give anything more than a futile and temporary distraction from the central goal of creative integration with the immortal

flow of life around us. Redemption comes through coherence and integration with paradise pure and simple. And paradise is a realizable condition, if we only put our collective resources and inspiration to work to achieve it.

Science, Resplendence and Religion in a Nutshell

Science

Science is the foundation of our description of nature and the physical universe:

1. **Cosmic Evolution:** Symmetry-breaking of the forces of nature leads to the physical and biological structures in the universe. Gravitation causes collapse to form galaxies full of stars radiating through the nuclear forces in turn forming planetary systems, with gravitation causing collapse to black holes, also modulated by the effects of dark matter and dark energy.
2. **Biogenesis:** There is strong evidence that life is an [emergent property of the laws of nature](#), ubiquitous throughout the universe. Biomolecules, including amino acids have been found in gaseous nebulae, on meteorites and in primitive lab syntheses. The process has a cosmological basis. Stellar radiation leads to the formation of complex molecules, including the organic precursors of life. In interaction, these form fractal structures constituting the most complex interaction of the forces of nature. Under favorable conditions, these can lead to [cellular life](#), which evolves at the edge of chaos to form ever more complex life-forms.
3. **Complex Organisms:** Symbiosis between the two main branches of life then existent on Earth, bacteria and archaea, has then led to the [complex nucleated eucaryote cell](#) that forms the basis of complex animals, algae and fungi, with further symbiotic events involving photosynthesis leading to the land plants.
4. **Sexuality** is essential to the evolution of complex organisms because recombination creates an almost endless variety of viable individuals, which can manifest new evolutionary features, fend off mutational decline and resist catastrophic epidemics from diseases and parasites. Humans are one of the most sexually polarized mammalian species. The reproductive strategies of men and women are thus in a state of [strategic conflict](#).
5. **Sentient Consciousness** arises as an [emergent property of complex organisms](#) through sexual evolution, as their interactive behavior creates new survival crises requiring a field-of-view anticipation of the world in real time. While science has made great progress in identifying brain regions giving rise to certain kinds of conscious experience, how objective physical processes could in principle give rise to subjective experience, remains one of the deepest unresolved enigmas of science.

6. **Cognizant Culture:** The evolution of intelligence ultimately leads to a species developing culture and with it a capacity to describe and understand the nature of the universe around it. This runs a significant risk of planetary crisis and a mass extinction of life, as this species multiplies, and appropriates a disproportionate share of the planet's resources. Critical is the active symbiotic relationship between such a species and life as a whole, so that the biosphere retains fecundity and robustness to external crises.

Resplendence

Resplendence complements scientific cosmology providing **three existential raisons d'etre** for humanity as a climax cultural species:

- (a) To cherish and **replenish the diversity of life on the planet** so that the immortal passage of the generations will continue
 - (b) To **facilitate** the unfolding **illumination of all conscious beings**.
 - (c) To **support** a caring **community to realize resplendence** as a creative process.
1. **Replenishing Planetary Paradise:** Our primary goal in life is to sustain Earth as a living paradise so that the generations both of humanity and the other diverse lifeforms including those on which we co-depend shall continue to flourish.
 2. **Mortality and Sexuality:** We experience mortality as individuals because fertilization contributes only half our genes to make up each new individual, with half coming from our sexual partner, our most altruistic act, resulting in the almost endless variety of sexual individuals. Since we arise from the fertility process, we redeem our individual mortality by giving our energy and creativity back to the flow of life in our creative life expression.
 3. **Female Reproductive Choice:** In the fertility between the sexes, due to a [high degree of sexual polarization](#), women have a primary place as the live bearers of the next generation, enduring a massive sometimes risky pregnancy, lactation and long periods of early child-rearing. It is thus essential, both genetically and socially, that women retain the right to reproductive choice.
 4. **Conscious Transcendence:** As a climax species, we experience subjective consciousness, in several forms - waking life, dreams, contemplation and visionary and [entheogenic states](#), which may in turn be a manifestation of cosmological principles and may thus have transcendent properties. We need to keep this quest completely free of religious doctrines, so that we can explore it in an unfettered discovery process.
 5. **Autonomy and Personal Responsibility:** Replenishing life is an existential necessity providing our central meaning in existence, not a moral imperative. It is however a fulfilling ethic. We are autonomous beings and so we need to take responsibility as intentional agents. What each of us do as individuals of a climax cultural species will affect the future viability of the planet. This is the one and only meaningful response to the existential condition.

Religion

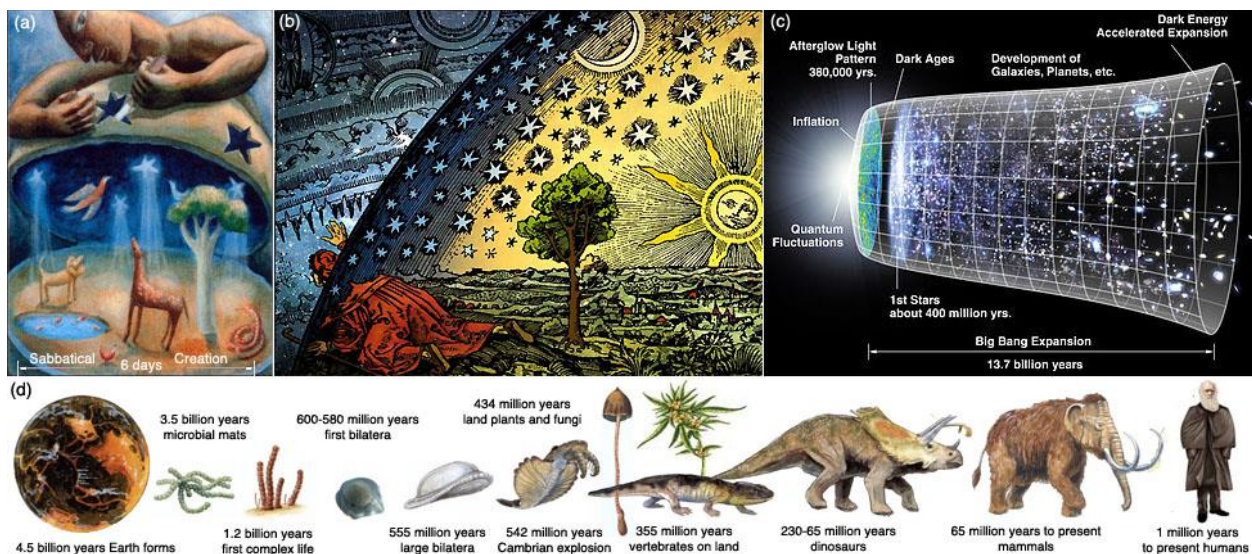
Traditional religions are in fundamental conflict with both scientific cosmology and human survival. [Monotheism is particularly dangerous](#), because it invokes a violent End of Days, leading to conflagration, triage of all life and destruction of the Earth in favor of a heavenly kingdom:

1. **Creation by Command:** Monotheism conflicts with the generative nature of the physical universe by claiming that the Earth and heavens were ordered by a creator deity out of formless chaos in six days by verbal command. The heavens are a firmament, or great dome over the flat Earth in with the stars are placed. The plants are made before the sun and moon. and the animals of the sea air and land created complete and fixed for all time, designed much as we shape our artifacts. Finally man and woman are made male and female in the likeness of the 'Elohim, to be fruitful, and multiply, to replenish the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over over every living thing that moveth.
2. **Mortality and God's Curse on Women:** But then in the paradisiacal garden of Eden a falling out occurs which has corrupted history ever since. Woman seduced by the serpent for seeking wisdom, eats of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and persuades man to do likewise, making them both sexually aware. YHVH then withdraws the tree of life which could have made them immortal and throws them out into the wilderness to struggle by vanquishing the thorns and thistles, with woman cursed with the pain of childbirth, to be ruled over by her husband and both doomed to mortal existence.
3. **Jealous Conflict and Apocalypse:** The entire biblical paradigm becomes a moral cosmology reinforced with fire and brimstone against the whoring of the unfaithful wife Israel by the jealous God Jehovah. Jesus referred to the loving father God, but this deity is claimed to have sacrificed him as his only begotten son in the crucifixion leading to centuries of martyrdom, Crusade and Inquisition. Rolled into this toxic mix is apocalypse in the End of days - a time of tumult and triage of all life, annihilating all in a day of judgment leading to a heavenly Jerusalem.
4. **Dominion over Nature:** Christians throughout history, have thus regarded it as our sacred duty to have dominion over nature, while women became the 'Devil's gateway', to be seen but not heard, or burned at the stake as witches. Although some denominations, now advocate responsible stewardship to address climate change and species loss, the basic influences remain those of a desert religion regarding nature as an inferior realm to be conquered.
5. **Jihad, Repression of Women and Genocide:** Islam adapted the same end of days desert tradition to the patriarchal tribal law of Muhammad's day, turning the violence outward in jihad, partitioning the world between [the domain of submission to Allah and the domain of war](#), in conversion by the sword. In addition to beheading 700 Jewish men in the souk of Medina, taking their wives and children into sexual slavery, Muhammad adopted the invocation to stone women for adultery, discarded for centuries by the Jews, so that it continues to this day in Sharia as a cruel homicidal punishment for female

reproductive choice. Women are only half the value of men, forcibly veiled, chaperoned and sequestered as instruments of male control of female fertility. Religion is compulsory, with death for apostasy and blasphemy, in contradiction to the claim that Allah is compassionate and merciful.

6. **Reproductive Domination:** Both Christianity and Islam attempt to out-populate their competitors at a time when overpopulation is stressing the planet's resilience.
7. **Nirvana and Samsara vs Nature:** Buddhism is an atheistic meditative religion based on the renunciation of egotistical desires and the ensuing fear of mortality, through escaping the round of birth and death in the emptiness of nirvana. However samsara and its karma of rebirth remains a morally causal mind-over-nature cosmology in which the animals are assigned to the inferior status of ignorant or corrupted sentient beings. It thus tries to solve the existential dilemma by negation without the key redeeming life purpose of replenishing living diversity, although both Buddhism and Upanishadic Hinduism invoke an autonomous path of contemplation in which individual consciousness can ultimately gain transcendence.

Religion, according to Augustine comes from *re-ligare* to "bind again" or "bind fast". Religions bind together spiritually-minded people into mass movements, but religions are also contaminated with the notion of bondage to a potentially oppressive utopian moral order. This is a fascist totalitarian notion that makes traditional religions dangerous and harmful to world futures. The fasces is a bundle of sticks, sometimes with a protruding axe, or labrys, whose strength bound together is greater than the sum of its parts.



Cosmological Paradigm Shift: Ancient religious notions of a universe created by God are in fundamental conflict with the scientific description of reality confirmed by experimental investigation. The six day sabbatical creation of Genesis (a) has the 'Elohim or God as a manufacturing designer creating the life forms and the firmament of stars as a dome over the flat Earth. The Sun and Moon are created before the plants. This view continued into the middle ages

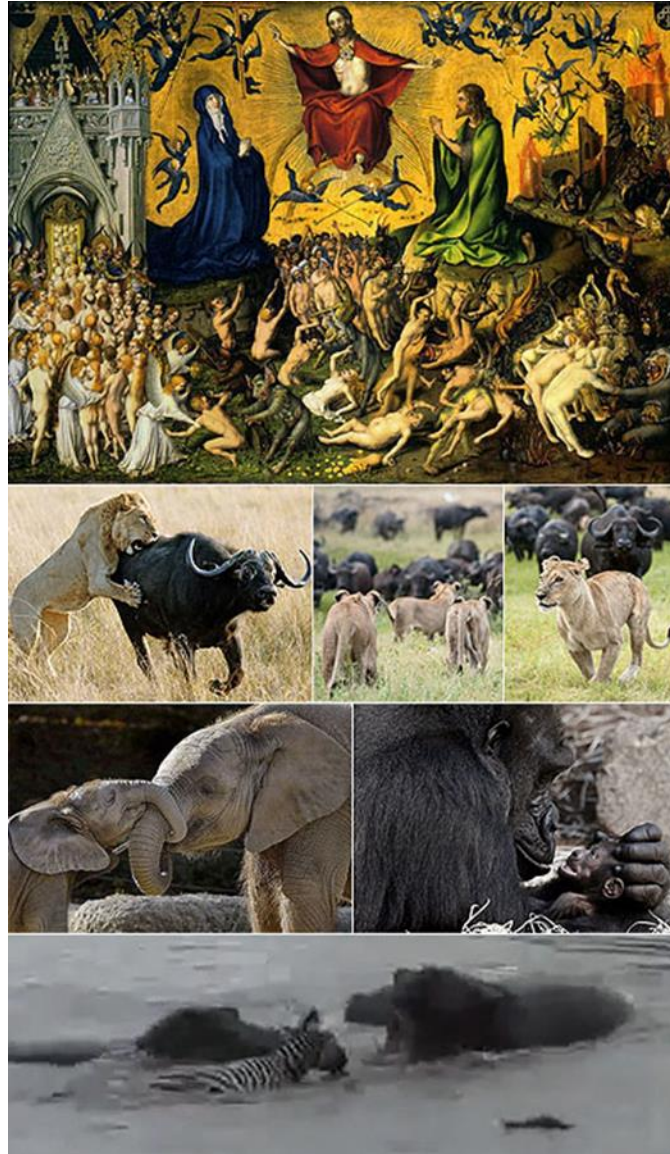
(b), but with the scientific revolution a conflicting paradigm has emerged (c), in which the Earth is a planet in a vastly bigger more complex universe, which has emerged from an explosive origin over 13 billion years ago, with processes such as cosmic inflation providing the dynamics to induce the formation of galaxy clusters, stars and planets in the form we see today amid accelerating expansion caused by dark energy. This is a cosmogenic process with no evidence for an external creator God. Life was not generated de-novo in a fixed machine-like act of manufacture at a single point in time, but shows exhaustive genetic, fossil and developmental evidence of evolution (d) to form complex organisms and ultimately conscious sentient beings. Resplendence, as a democratic social process, seeks to reparadise the Earth by applying the scientific paradigm correctly to the human existential condition. This provides a more effective view of our life-giving role in the universe, in terms of protecting the generations of living diversity and of conscious beings on the planet over evolutionary time scales, thereby enabling a deepening of conscious awareness as a whole in the universe, as a cumulative emergent manifestation of cosmology.

In scientific revolutions, the sceptical principle of inquiry, seeks verification from nature, confirming a theory to be true only when all attempts to negate it result in contradiction, rather than imposing preconceived beliefs. This means that descriptions of reality only remain stable over limited epochs, called paradigms, punctuated by evolutionary leaps. When a new theory, or description of reality, is discovered, which generalizes, or replaces a previous one, a new scientific paradigm is born. The term paradigm itself has an ancient origin in Greek *paradeigma*, "pattern, example" from *para*, "beside, beyond" and *deiknumi* "to show, to point out" meaning "exhibit, represent, expose". The term was used in Plato's *Timaeus* as the model or pattern that the Demiurge (god) used to create the cosmos. Resplendence in making a paradigm transition from religion does precisely this, transforming the naive view of religious creation of the cosmos by God into a wisdom tradition to guide human action based on the extraordinarily confounding and detailed scientific knowledge of the universe we have more recently accumulated.

Human societies and individual consciousness have been driven by two complementary sensibilities. On the one hand, the practical understanding of nature is essential for survival, manifest in gatherer-hunter society, for example in knowledge of diverse food and medicinal plant species and in the practicalities of hunting and developing arrow poisons and this has eventually become science. Complementing this are feelings of belonging and meaning in a precocious natural world, associated with beliefs in spirits and deities that guide behavior towards societal strength through morality, and explain the mortal condition and the vagaries of fate. These have over time become what we call science and religion.

However, religions have resisted natural paradigm evolution because they seek permanent ascendancy. Thus Jesus, Buddha and Muhammad remain fixed male entities impeding the natural evolution of human insight and world guardianship of nature. Buddha has become a symbol of perfection unattainable in the round of birth and death. Muhammad is claimed to be the last prophet under pain of execution. Jesus is claimed to be going to return in the 'second coming' as the avenging Lord. This prevents natural evolution, even though our understanding of the world, and the closing circle of the biosphere have been transformed, both by science, and human impacts of our burgeoning planetary technological society, leading to climate change, ecocrisis and potentially irreversible risks to human and natural survival.

Resplendence accepts the paradigm shift to the scientific description of reality in all its manifestations, while at the same time resolving the dilemma of existence in a way religions are failing to do, by coupling our sense of purpose and collective action to the one thing that immortalizes us - protecting the life flow of the living planet and its generations.



Morality and Redemption: Christianity asserts a corrupt moral imperative that human beings are flawed by original sin, stemming from Eve's transgression, and that human free will is set in a moral cosmology, in which those who do not believe in God, and/or commit any of the seven deadly sins, will suffer eternal damnation in the Day of Judgment. Resplendence asserts that humans possess original virtue in their emotional makeup, which allows for love and empathic relationship as well as expedience and betrayal, and that moral behavior is a natural feature of sociobiology in which individuals in a species, or human society, or religion, forgo immediate advantages over their peers to enable the society as a whole to gain dominance over competing societies and better survive in the wider environment. Below: Three features of morality in

mammals (a) Protective behavior at risk to the individual. Lion attacking a wildebeast. A pride of lionesses cooperating to try to capture a young, or weaker, straggler are rounded on by a herd of buffalo also cooperating with one another, making a classically moral decision to act together for the benefit of the group at some risk to their individual lives, forcing the predators to flee. (b) Clear evidence of emotional bonding in elephants and chimps showing they can make emotional decisions. (c) Collective altruistic action. A group of hippos act together to save a zebra at a waterhole from a crocodile. Altruistic punishment is neither necessary, nor sufficient for morality, although it is very effective in human societies. Compassion and empathy are natural mammalian emotions which have also been observed, even across species in animal societies. Notice also that the carnivores have an essential role in the ecosystem of avoiding boom and bust in the herbivores, which could lead to a famine resulting in them becoming extinct, so their role in tooth and claw is also beneficent. The lion lying down with the lamb of Isaiah is thus a misguided fantasy. The religious moral imperative in urban societies arises from the imposition of cultural values which rob the human individuals of their deeper relationship with the passage of the generations in nature. As a climax species having major impacts on the planet, we are only now becoming aware of our cognizant role in planetary life. Resplendence, by restoring the natural relationship between humanity and life as a whole, applies the redemptive principle, which heals cultural tendencies towards selfish exploitation, because they are futile mortal strategies with no long-term fulfillment and no lasting outcome, except for diminishing the regenerative process by short-term exploitation and tragedy of the commons..

Gods are projections of conscious personalities onto the cosmos that come from an earlier phase in human emergence, where gatherer-hunters devised parent-like entities to guard over their vulnerable lives in a tumultuous world, and later in our cultural adolescence, agricultural civilizations used increasingly powerful deities as punishing moral entities holding sway over life and death, and the implied after-life as the final moral end-of-days scenario.

With the coming to maturity of human culture in reaching a state today where human actions themselves can irreversibly harm the planet's future, we have to accept we have entered a state of de-facto maturity and accept that it is we ourselves, neither God, nor Jesus as Lord in the Day of Judgment, who must assume responsibility for beneficent guardianship of the planetary future, and achieve the enlightenment to be able to do this successfully. This is a complete fulfillment of our life meaning and purpose and enables the mystery of conscious existence to be more and more deeply explored over the lifetimes of all the sentient participants as an open-ended process.

Resplendence seeks a condition of unfolding visionary transcendence in sentient consciousness and in human society at large. This is a quest that spans both the foundations of cosmology and neuroscience and the deepest insights of the religious traditions. It is a greater perspective than the lofty pretensions of religions because it encompasses all conscious experience in an open-ended discovery process, neither limited by materialistic assumptions that the conscious mind is no more than the workings of the chemical brain, nor pre-empted by doctrines and dogmas of prescribed religious assumptions..

Spiritually, resplendence seeks a condition where every individual is able to explore the mystical and visionary undercurrents of the conscious condition first hand, without becoming subject to oppressive forces seeking to assert any religious belief or creed, or to deny people the

opportunity to experience such states themselves through legislation to prevent the use of visionary sacraments or drugs which induce visionary states. Attempting to ban access to mind altering substances is a benighted policy aimed more at shoring up mindless consumer materialism and existing traditional religious beliefs than any protection of society from misadventure. Any forms of societal abuse of substances need to be treated as a health matter to avoid the growth of violent criminal organizations seeking to profit from banned substances in an age where technology is making synthesis on demand ever more available.

Women and Sexuality: Left: Enforced veiling and homicidal stoning. [Islam, imposes stringent and violent restrictions](#) on female reproductive choice, social, educational and career opportunities, enforced by torture and homicide for adultery, as part of an archaic patriarchal tribal code. Such reproductive control of the female to ensure [patriarchal reproductive imperatives](#) has been an almost universal feature of world religions for millennia. Centre to right: In contrast with religion, resplendence seeks a high degree of sovereignty for female reproductive choice in an overall climate of mutual partner choice consistent with the needs of the human family. This is because humans are at an extreme among mammals in the dissonance between the male reproductive strategy which is primarily focused on fertilization and the female strategy focused on parenting.



Because mammals bear live young and the females engage lactation and a pivotal role in infant care, females need to be able to choose the best combination of resourcing partner and good genes for what is a massive commitment, with a long pregnancy leaving the woman vulnerable and travail, a risky delivery bearing a large head, months to years of breast feeding and years of young child care. In addition mammalian [XY chromosome sexual selection](#) favours males displaying single X-linked characteristics, while females are able to apply sexual selection to these, again emphasizing the importance of female reproductive choice. In an overpopulated world, universal access to contraception is essential, but in addition, there need to be social

incentives to enable capable achieving women to both pursue and maintain their professional careers and have security of parental leave, to avoid the conflict between parenting and women's careers that has blighted democratic countries from Italy to Japan. At the same time, this predicates a pro-choice position concerning terminating pregnancy, not least to avoid the risks women suffer when these rights are withheld in the name of religious conviction. Finally resplendence implies ensuring natural childbirth remains a viable process, and advising against routine cosmetic [Caesarians](#) based on a false image of womanhood, and giving responsible advice about the implications for future generations of technologies such as in-vitro fertilization and intra-cytoplasmic sperm implantation, as well as more advanced techniques such as generating gametes from stem cells, to avoid the human species becoming perpetually dependent on medical procedures to survive. Right: Sexuality commands respect as sacred to the natural order, as we each become conscious beings through sexual fertilization and sexual recombination to create the diversity of all sexual beings, without which higher life forms would never have come into existence.

Politically, resplendence aims at an ecosystemically diverse informed non-violent democratic society of mutually enlightened beings, possessing maximal autonomy of choice, avoiding the tyranny of the majority democracies are prone to , while recognizing the need to actively oppose all forms of totalitarianism that could lead to a loss of democratic autonomy, both from political movements such as totalitarian fascism and communism and from world religions with totalitarian doctrines that form an even more all-encompassing utopian threat to freedom of choice and world futures.

Technologically, resplendence seeks a society utilizing the most advanced techniques in a sensitive way, which works closely with evolutionary principles to achieve a high standard of living and fully informed intelligence, while having minimal impact on and actively restoring the biospheric resilience of the planet over evolutionary time scales. The energy economy needs urgently to move to renewable forms of energy not having deleterious impacts on the climate and biosphere as a whole. The information economy needs to remain as free as possible from governmental surveillance and accessible to all people.

Consciousness and Enlightenment: Resplendence rejects the notions of heaven and hell (top left) because they have no place in the physical universe and they are a product of a fantastic moral punishment causality that is in fundamental conflict with nature, where moral systems are simply a natural evolutionary manifestation of sociobiology, implying that heaven and hell are imaginary realms generated by conscious experience, as religions endeavour to come to terms with the mysteries and paradoxes of conscious existence. It likewise rejects the contrivances of cults, such as the Galactic Dictator Xenu of Scientology. Top right: The Buddhist realms of the hungry ghosts and titans are likewise representations of mental states with a false anthropocentric emphasis on a universal morality which falsely demotes the animals to a realm of inferior incarnations due to previous moral dereliction. Biological incarnation is a sexual process inconsistent with the reincarnation of individual souls. Resplendence wisdom thus remains clear of false misleading assumptions based on preconceived religious notions. However resplendence accepts the discoveries of neuroscience concerning the brain-mind relationship and the full diversity of experiences and personal accounts spanning the [spectrum of mental states](#) (lower right), from waking, through dreaming, meditative, contemplative, visionary and

sacrament induced, because these are a central part of the discovery of the inner nature of conscious experience. Cosmology would suggest that, since the brain is the most complex interactive process manifest by the forces of nature in interaction, consciousness may be the most inscrutable mystery in cosmology and one that may take evolutionary time scales to fully elucidate. This in no way rules in or out forms of consciousness extending beyond our biological life spans, consciousness being shared directly between beings, or prophetic forms of conscious anticipation, all of which remain to be explored over time, without prejudging the nature and scope of consciousness in fixed religious doctrines, or preconceived beliefs - a fatal error, given the sensitive nature of consciousness. Right: The Huichol [nierika](#) or portal to the visionary world induced by peyote is a valid part of subjective sacramental exploration of the conscious condition because it can be experienced first-hand.



Above all resplendence seeks to prevent the destabilization of the entire planet's resilience and robustness to survive, through rampant habitat destruction, burning the fossil fuels accumulated over three hundred million years and climate change running to tipping points which could compromise both human survival and the survival of the diverse species upon which we depend.

[Weapons of mass destruction](#) need to be replaced by programs to provide defences against events on an astronomical scale threatening to the continuity of life, such as asteroid impacts and nearby supernovae. Questions of interstellar migration, or communication, need to be considered cautiously for their deeper implications.

Great precautionary care needs to be applied to bootstrap **genetic technologies** such as **germ-line editing** and **engineering**, which feedback directly into the process of genetic evolution itself and hence the informational foundation of the biosphere. These technologies have vast utopian potential, and invoke the temptation to make choices which result in an elitist dependence on advanced reproductive technology. They are liable to lead to 'poisoned chalice' dystopias, lacking the resilience to survive over evolutionary time scales.

Because resplendence is founded on the resilience that natural evolutionary ecosystems have over cosmological time scales and the super-computing power of parallel genetic algorithms in a diverse natural ecology, as a concept it needs to apply a very strong precautionary principle against forms of technology which bootstrap genetic technologies such as [germ-line editing](#) and engineering, which feedback directly into the process of genetic evolution itself and hence the informational foundation of the biosphere. Eugenic genetic engineering and/or cloning, or using other genetic reproductive technologies for "brave new world" utopian aims is a key potential threat to long term ecosystemic viability that needs to be avoided, because it is most likely to lead to irreversible loss of characteristics essential to the long-term adaptiveness of both human beings and the species upon which we depend for our future survival. These technologies have vast utopian potential, and invoke the temptation to make choices that result in an elitist dependence on advanced reproductive technology. They are liable to lead to 'poisoned chalice' dystopias, lacking the resilience to survive over evolutionary time scales. Use of technologies such as germ-line editing, particularly in humans and the species upon which we depend, thus has to be examined very carefully on a case-by-case basis.

Primary Threats to Evolution and Survival: Top: Hiroshima after the nuclear holocaust. Middle: Intentional deforestation in Indonesia. Bottom: Genetic technology hold both great promise and great risks, requiring careful ethical assessment to avoid irreversible damage. (Left) Macaques genetically edited using CRISPR to alter three genes. Right: Parthenogenetic and stem-cell generated mice using reproductive genetic technology.

[CRISPR](#), a new gene editing technology based on a key bacterial immune system, has already been shown to be able to make changes in specific genes and yet enable the birth of live gene-edited primate offspring, leading to the potential to make selective changes to genes such as those causing diseases in humans. But this technology has to be very carefully assessed. Combining it with 'gene drive' techniques, which can selectively result in the edited genes being transmitted to virtually all offspring when an organism containing the edited changes mates and produces offspring, rather than the natural 50-50 ratio, could eliminate a disease such as malaria by precipitating an explosive loss of mosquito fertility, but could also cause irreversible changes to both species and ecosystems. Such gene drive mechanisms could continue to cause collateral damage, resulting in the loss of essential characteristics in species upon which depend or even our own species. A decade ago Monsanto tried to introduce 'terminator technology' which would cause seeds produced by the company to become genetically infertile in the second generation

leading to a similar risk of irreversible loss if the natural varieties ceased to be cultivated on an adequate scale by farmers dependent on the technology.



Resplendence is the natural paradigm successor to religion, in which we cherish and replenish the Earth throughout the generations of the diversity of life, no longer seeing through a glass darkly, but now face-to-face, coming into coherence with our sexually-immortal condition, becoming the source of a collective illumination of enlightenment, both scientific and visionary, to flower the future generations and sustain the epoch of paradise on Earth.

10. Transcendence and the Physical Universe

There is no basis to the cosmological argument for God because there is no meaningful way to mount an initial cause, since space-time begins with the cosmic origin and time does not extend to before but curves to meet itself in much the same way as all the lines of latitude come together at the south pole of the Earth. There is thus no meaning to trying to apply linear causal logic that

something beforehand must have made the universe, except as a classical misconception. This problem only gets worse If the universe is part of a larger fractal cosmic inflation process, because it is fundamental to general relativity that the curvature of space-time is shaped by gravity.

Likewise it is meaningless to talk about a 'final' cause of life - a single external defined purpose to which it must converge. Just as dark energy suggests the universe will expand forever, so the quantum physics of biology leads to the evolutionary diversity of life and the vision quest of consciousness as open-ended outcomes. In this process we, and the generations of life with us, will discover, ever more deeply, the nature of conscious existence, which is the most inscrutable process in the universe.

For this reason we need to protect the evolutionary diversity of life and of conscious existence throughout the generations as a prime purpose in life, while at the same time exploring as deeply as possible the conscious condition. We also have a prime purpose to safeguard the genetic diversity of life in our use of technology.

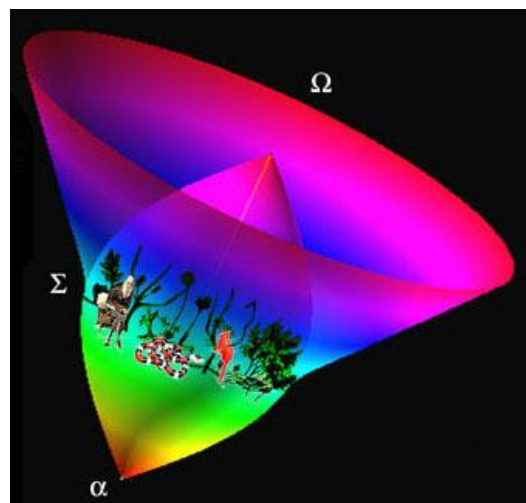
Recent research connecting [quantum entanglement](#) to space-time and gravity implies that quantum reality, with its spooky wave functions connecting past and future, may define the large scale structure of the universe and hence space-time as well. Elapsing time is a feature of an observer inside an entangled state. Outside this state, the observer sees space-time extension with no time evolution - i.e. eternal existence. It is everything forever - alpha to Omega.

Because the conscious brain depends on edge-of-chaos sensitivity and quantum entanglement to anticipate reality and survive in an uncertain world, we can experience both the temporal aspect and the eternal aspect of the existential condition. In the temporal, we witness things change and evolve and we are born and die. In the eternal, everything we have witnessed and will ever witness is encoded in the entanglement of past and future.

Consciousness and intentional will are a process which enables us to anticipate the immediate future and to act to perpetuate the process in terms of survival. Thus the consciousness in every sentient being is subjectively participating in determining the causal destiny of the universe. The universe coming to experience itself is the ultimate interactive consummation of the symmetry-breaking of the forces of nature in the cosmic origin. It is thus fully cosmological - the Sigma state complementing alpha and Omega.

[Cosmological life](#) - paradise on the cosmic equator.

In the temporal aspect of existence, we are discovering ourselves while discovering nature and collapsing the cosmic wave function so that we all experience a temporal line of world history in the making. From outside the entanglement, this is the universe having come to know itself in paradise on the cosmic equator.



This knowing is eternal - spanning space time - so that it is of significance only that it came to pass at all, not when it begins or ends. It doesn't matter if life ends on Earth, or even the entire universe meets its heat death, because the experience is eternally encoded in space-time.

The eternal aspect of this collective consciousness, spanning the entire history of the universe, is what religious people think of as God generating the universe as a dream, a thought, an intellectual pronouncement, or ultimate cause. Let there be life and there was life! Vishnu, the sustainer, dreaming the universe out of Brahman emerging from a lotus in his navel, lovingly overlooked by Lakshmi. The Pauline Logos as a demiurge pronouncing the universe into being through his intellect.

These worldviews are allegorical myths, not literal accounts. We need to explore the actual mysteries of sentient existence in the first person to validate them, just as good science discovers the natural world by sceptical inquiry. This is a primary responsibility of being a sentient being alongside protecting the diversity of the generations of life.

11. Ten Clarifications on the Nature of Existence

1. **Biogenesis, Evolution and Consciousness:** Biogenesis is a cosmological interactive process leading, through biological evolution, to consciousness as the most complete expression of all the fundamental forces of nature in interaction. It is thus the Sigma point on the cosmic equator in space-time, standing in consummating relationship to the alpha and Omega.

2. **Transcendence lies in the Biota:** Transcendence is thus manifest principally or exclusively in the biota, and hence in the human vision quest. The messianic quest, the mystical quest, the shamanic vision quest and the quest for enlightenment are thus real, as is the sacredness of sexuality, but worship of deities, including the monotheistic God, is a false vision based on idolatry and bibliolatry. There is no final prophet or messiah, because the *mysterium tremendum* of existence is manifest in every sentient being.

3. **The Origin of Apocalypse:** Our conscious awareness of the existential condition during the epochs of human emergence and the development of civilization has led to an awareness of tumultuous future shock converging on the covers being thrown off reality, a phenomenon that has come to be described in religious traditions as apocalypse.

4. **Transcendence versus Deity:** Transcendence is not manifest in the monotheistic God or other deities, which are projections of human nature and transcendence into imaginary personalities in heavenly and hellish domains. The Day of Judgment is thus a false morally punishing apocalypse.

5. **Sexuality, Fertility and Incarnation:** Sexual complementarity and fertility is key to the emergence of complex life and consciousness and secures the creative and perennial passage of the generations of life, even though as individual organisms, we suffer a mortal life-span, inescapable in biological life. Sexuality is thus integral to the sacred condition and the

immortality of the generations of life. Because incarnation is sexual, the idea of reincarnation of individual souls, possibly in different species is a natural fallacy.

6. Religion and Nature: The purpose of spirituality and religion is to cherish and replenish the planet throughout the generations of life. Nature is thus central and pivotal to the sacred condition.

7. Religion and Morality: The social value of religion is to encourage collective respect for, responsibility about, and action to, protect the living planet and life in the universe. It is neither to worship God, nor to create a dominant culture through morally prescriptive punishing deities and doctrines, nor to repress female reproductive choice, all of which are oppressive worldly instruments of male power.

8. Realization and Fulfillment: Individual realization and collective fulfillment comes through contributing to the future fecundity of life and discovering the inner nature of conscious experience and the natural world and communicating these experiences to others. This is fulfilling the destiny of the universe coming to understand itself in space-time through conscious illumination.

9. Conscious autonomy and Will: Consciousness and intentional will exist to bind together the complementary subjective and objective physical aspects of existential reality in such a way as to enable subjective intentionality to alter the course of physical history and bring about a more blessed and aware world and cosmological condition. We are thus responsible for our actions and their ultimate affects.

10. Selfishness and Mortality: While free-will can also be used for selfish ends, or to create dominant dystopias, these aims are ignorant and ultimately doomed to mortality because they do not achieve fruition of the immortal condition. The aim of enlightenment is to help everyone see the futility of such selfish manipulative and oppressive actions and to act with joy and vitality to protect the living generations of life.

12. Accounting Religious Apocalypse and its Greening in the Traditions

Apocalypse is a cosmological nightmare generated by a patriarchally dominant culture generating religions of conflict and destruction in the name of the male reproductive imperative and its ensuing male mortality anxiety inflated to cosmic proportions in the quest for eternal life and the cosmic war between God and the devil. This is itself a betrayal of faith in both our evolutionary original virtue, which sustained us into this situation, and for believers in the divine, a betrayal of the genuine power and essential goodness of God, by placing Him in mortal combat with equally oppressive forces of darkness, which have no place in any cosmological description, outside the all too natural human failings of jealousy, betrayal, anger, contempt, disgust, envy and expedience.

The scientific revolution has shown us in astounding ways how the universe actually works and how it comes about, and it does have moral and ethical implications for conserving the diversity

of nature, knowing how long evolutionary time-scales take to generate the living and genetic diversity upon which the robustness of the planet, and our future with it, depends.

The unique role of religion, when it is functioning for the human and planetary good, is to bind us together in a paradigm of caring and of moral and ethical goodness and togetherness in which major decisions for the long-term welfare of the planet and its ongoing life may take personal sacrifices on the part of all of us to avoid a tragedy of the commons (Hardin) caused by winner-take-all exploitation and greed.

This is precisely the theme of the current Pope's encyclical to care for the planet, to avoid severe climate change and loss of biodiversity, paralleled by similar responses from the Anglicans and a group of Muslim scholars which we shall examine in the next section, so it is possible for religion to have a helpful role when it is not oppressive. However, religion also needs to respect female views on contraception and reproduction in an era of peaking and potentially unsustainable human population. Its role should be to mitigate human violence with a sense of wisdom and mutual compassion, rather than to invoke homicidal violence and dismemberment through outmoded doctrines and prescriptions, such as stoning for adultery, amputation for stealing, and death for apostasy.

As Rosemary Radford Ruether (1982) notes: both the [Covenantal and Sacramental] traditions are marked by a legacy of patriarchalism and must be reinterpreted, if they are to be genuinely affirming of dominated women, men and nature. Even then, the question of whether they can be adequately liberated and made liberating will remain. ... I assume there is no ready made ecological spirituality and ethic in past traditions. The ecological crisis is new to human experience. This does not mean that humans have not devastated the environment before. But as long as populations remained small and human technology was weak, these devastations were remediable by migration, retreat from top-heavy urban centers, or adaption of new techniques. Nature appeared a huge inexhaustible source of life and humans small. Only after the bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki did humans begin to recognize the possibility that they could destroy the planet by their own expropriated power. The radical nature of this new face of ecological devastation means that all past human traditions are inadequate in the face of it.

Many of the ways religions act already encourage compassionate sentiments, in the virtues of charity and love for others, celebrated collectively in rites-of-passage, from birth, through sexual union, to death, and in the festivals of the seasons. They also encourage caring for others in creating a fairer world for all. This is the joy and magic of people coming together in love with a common cause of the fertility of life itself and the part each of us plays in the fabric of existence. We are thus the agents of giving meaning to existence through the meaning we give to life itself, rather than seeking it in subservient worship and unquestioned archaic doctrines. Extended to an opportunity for mystical experience as well, provided by the living sacraments completes the cycle in the first person, making the whole process one of confirming reality through personal affirmation, rather than prescriptive belief.

We nevertheless need to hold all existing religions to account for their history of violence and deal with them in terms of tough love, resisting all violence and coercion, to avoid them taking

humanity and our very ability to protect our future generations, hostage to their coercive and often violently enforced utopian ambitions.

Muslims hold Muhammad as a sacred perfect being, peace be upon him, under pain of death for his mere depiction, but it is clearly documented that he ordered the summary beheading of 700 Jewish men and took their women into sexual slavery by appointing a dying warrior judge over their fate when they had parleyed with the Quraysh besieging Medina, but had not betrayed the Muslims by actually opening their gates in the Oasis (Armstrong). Thus a genocide was committed, even though an actual betrayal had never occurred, or the Muslims wouldn't have been in a position to exact such a diabolical punishment. Muhammad personally ordered apostates to be killed and women to be stoned for adultery. All people on the planet need to recognise that the prophet's own actions are completely inconsistent with Islam's pretence to be a religion of peace. If any religious leader in this day and age were to commit such heinous offences, the international community would hunt them down and put them on trial for crimes against humanity. We need to come to a day of reckoning about those who have committed unconscionable violence in founding a major world religion with utopian aims for world domination, and steadfastly oppose all rights to commit homicidal violence in the name of religion, or scripture.



The Genocide in the Souk of Medina (Fitna)

For this reason I close with a series of abrogations of scripture invoking violence or repression, as possibly the one person on the planet who has declared the need, taken the prerogative, and the had insight to do so, in the spirit of culminating the violent epoch of apocalypse once and for all time to follow, for the liberation of all sentient beings from bondage and religious homicide.

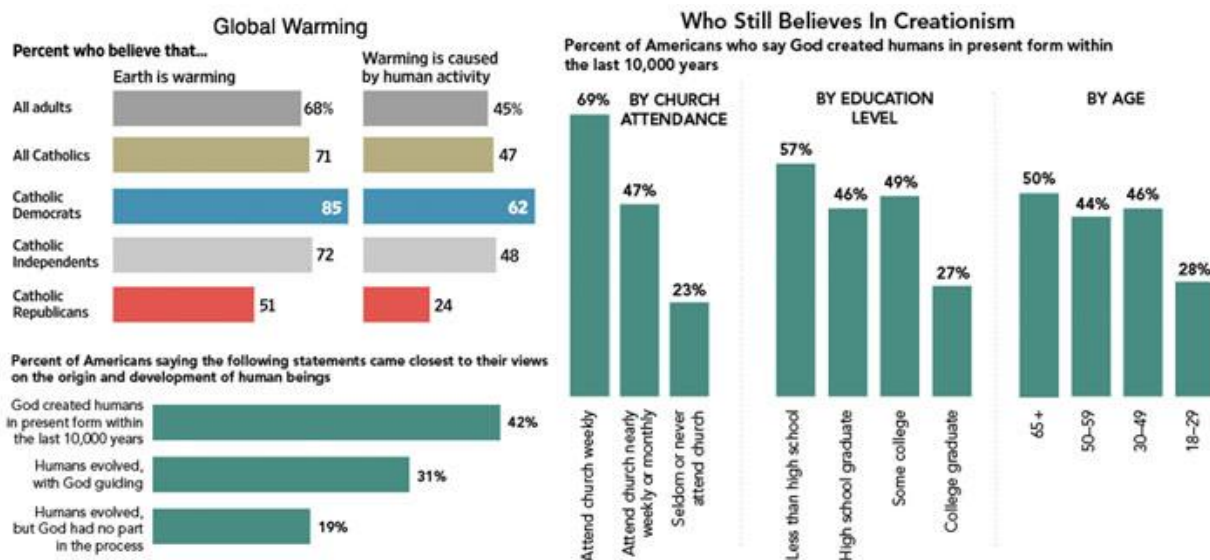
But to consummate this process, we need to consider the wider horizon. The world is suffering from a schizophrenic mismatch between the scientific and religious traditions. On the scientific side, paradigm shifts (Kuhn) - fundamental changes in the description of reality - are happening at an accelerating pace, just as Albert Einstein's quantum theory and relativity formed a new paradigm, generalizing and replacing those of Isaac Newton. Whole new developments, from the theories of fundamental physics, through cosmology and the ultimate origin and fate of the universe, to the human genome project, biological genetics and neuroscience, are completely transforming our understanding of the natural world, using the sceptical principle of accepting only those theories that are confirmed by nature.

Physicist Richard Feynman put it this way: *In general we look for a new law by the following process. First we guess it. Then we compute the consequences of the guess to see what would be implied if this law that we guessed is right. Then we compare the result of the computation to nature, with experiment or experience, compare it directly with observation, to see if it works. If*

it disagrees with experiment it is wrong. In that simple statement is the key to science. It does not make any difference how beautiful your guess is. It does not make any difference how smart you are, who made the guess, or what his name is - if it disagrees with experiment it is wrong. That is all there is to it.

By contrast the world's major religions are caught in a sabbatical flat-Earth view of existence, in which evolution doesn't exist, God made the living species in an act of creative manufacture as we make tools, autos and computers, the heavens lie in the clouds and we all wait in fear for the Day of Judgment. In the middle stands the planet and its biosphere and the human impacts documented by science which could jeopardize the long-term future of planetary life. Despite efforts on both sides to paper over the cracks and claim some consistency between science and religion, these two world-views have become fundamentally inconsistent and in a state of conceptual and actual conflict.

Central to this question is the way religions try to infer the reality of their models by reference to a-priori assumptions, untestable hypotheses and notions invoking supernatural processes transcending any form of human examination. The Hellenistic cosmogony of Christianity posits a divine ultimate being in turn giving rise to a creator god, who creates the universe as a kind of conscious mental imprint of their own intellect. Modern versions of this Christian idea see God becoming all things to all men - the Biblical god of Israel invoking jealous wrath in the Old Testament, the forgiving father God of Jesus, who sacrifices his only begotten Son, the Logos-Christ at the beginning and end of the universe, and finally the god imagined to be standing somehow behind the inordinately complex physical universe we have now discovered through science, and in the conscious minds of its diverse inhabitants, along with all the good and beneficent feelings of compassion and awe we can come to express – i.e. God is in everything!



Despite the US being a developed country with strong scientific and secular traditions, over 42% of people still believe in Genesis 1 creationism, sometimes disguised as 'intelligent design', and most, particularly Republican Christians continue deny human impacts on climate change.

Caught up in this confusion are the endless arguments for the existence of God. The original ontological argument was "that than which nothing greater can be conceived" must exist in the mind; even in the mind of the person who denies the existence of God. The cosmological argument, which we shall consider and refute in detail, is generally in the guise of a notion of the cosmos as a causal process, which thus must be set in motion by a primal first cause claimed to be God.

There are fundamental reasons why the cosmogony and cosmology of both the physical universe and conscious sentient existence should apply the standards of sceptical inquiry, only confirming theories which could actually be disproved and for which there is confirming evidence, either objective or subjective. The picture emerging both from quantum theory and the relativistic universe clarifies why positing first causes of this nature are likely to be fundamental misconceptions originating from mental introspection in the classical world, which do not hold in general.

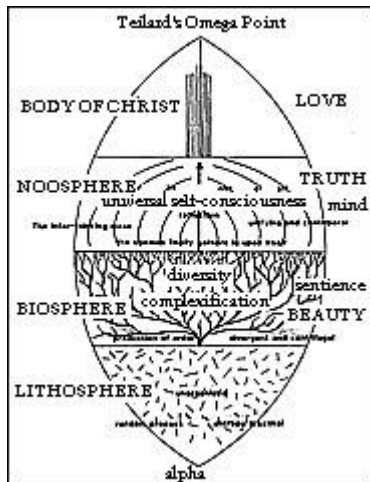
Quantum theory is stochastic, with deterministic Hamiltonian wave functions interleaved with causality-violating processes invoking the probability interpretation, either from the notion of collapse of the wave function and other theories such as many worlds. Quantum processes also admit both advanced and retarded solutions, so that implicitly time-reversing properties such as the many versions of the Wheeler delayed choice experiment become manifest in diverse forms of quantum entanglement. Causality in the physical universe is generally associated with the "arrow of time" in that causes precede their effects, but general relativity invokes the curvature of both space and time, so that for example in the source of the big bang, space and time become rather like the north pole where the lines of latitude come together, with there being no meaning in asking what came before hand, as a primal first cause. Ideas of internal symmetries and symmetry-breaking have better explanatory power, although there are also cosmogenic physical theories in which a clash of higher dimensional 'branes', a recurrent bounce from a big crush, or a fractally inflating cosmos, could introduce new big-bang baby universes in the process.

Likewise the study of conscious experience is better served by empirical discovery than *a-priori* assumptions about transcendence and notions of first-causes, even though subjective consciousness may not conform to the notions of objective replication experimental science usually applies. Since we are all subjectively conscious beings, we can each enter into the cosmological spectrum of mental states achievable by the human brain and psyche and into a discovery process, just as shamans and mystics have done since the dawn of human culture. To have veridical validity, this needs to be pursued in the first person rather than surviving third-hand on doctrines of a priesthood or religious prescription.

Centrally in terms of the religious pursuit of eternal life in a mortal world, we need to understand that the redemption of mortality lies not the apocalyptic genocide of "a new heaven and earth", but the living immortality of the passage of the generations. Complex intelligent life could not have evolved without sexuality providing the almost endless repertoire of viable variations that sexual recombination enables. This leads in turn to the variety of each of us as sentient beings with a common compassionate basis in mortal incarnation as individual organisms. We are thus as individuals, 'emanations' of sexuality and gain our physical immortality in the immortal web of the generations of life. In return we owe it to the passage of the generations to cherish and

replenish it. This is the best of all possible outcomes, not a flawed universe doomed to mortality of the individual. Through empathy and compassion we become united in life.

The caveat on *a-priori* assumptions also applies to Christogenic theories, such as that of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, the Catholic philosopher/archaeologist who was prevented by the church from publishing his work during his lifetime and produced an evolutionary Christology occurring in qualitative 'phase transitions' in which successive phases supplanted one another due to their invoking more efficient and novel forms of emergence, from physical and chemical complexification, through biological evolution from simpler to more successful complex organisms, in turn succeeded by human culture proceeding from primitive societies through early civilizations to democracy and technology, leading to a unitary mind, reminiscent of the 'global village of the world-wide web, culminating in unidirectional causality in the 'body of Christ' in Love, realizing the Hellenistic notion of the cosmic redemption. Rosemary Radford Ruether notes the dark side of this unilateral 'privileged axis', leading to 'sanguine acceptance of extinction of species as the acceptable price of this progress' although it has been widely recognized by scientists for its integrated view of humanity in the universe.



Chardin's Christogenesis model.

The idea that there is a beneficent underlying basis for the deeper and deeper integration of conscious experience, which is also a manifestation of the interactive cosmology of the universe is consistent with it being manifest subjectively in the cosmological nature of consciousness itself, which can be experienced in meditation and contemplation. But this is something we need to explore very carefully without preconceptions, because it is the most subtle manifestation of the sentient cosmos. We have no evidence that this will lead to a linear axial Christology, rather than an increasing diversity of indwelling mystical insights in a resonating tapestry of living experience, just as we are still trying to determine whether the current physical universe will expand

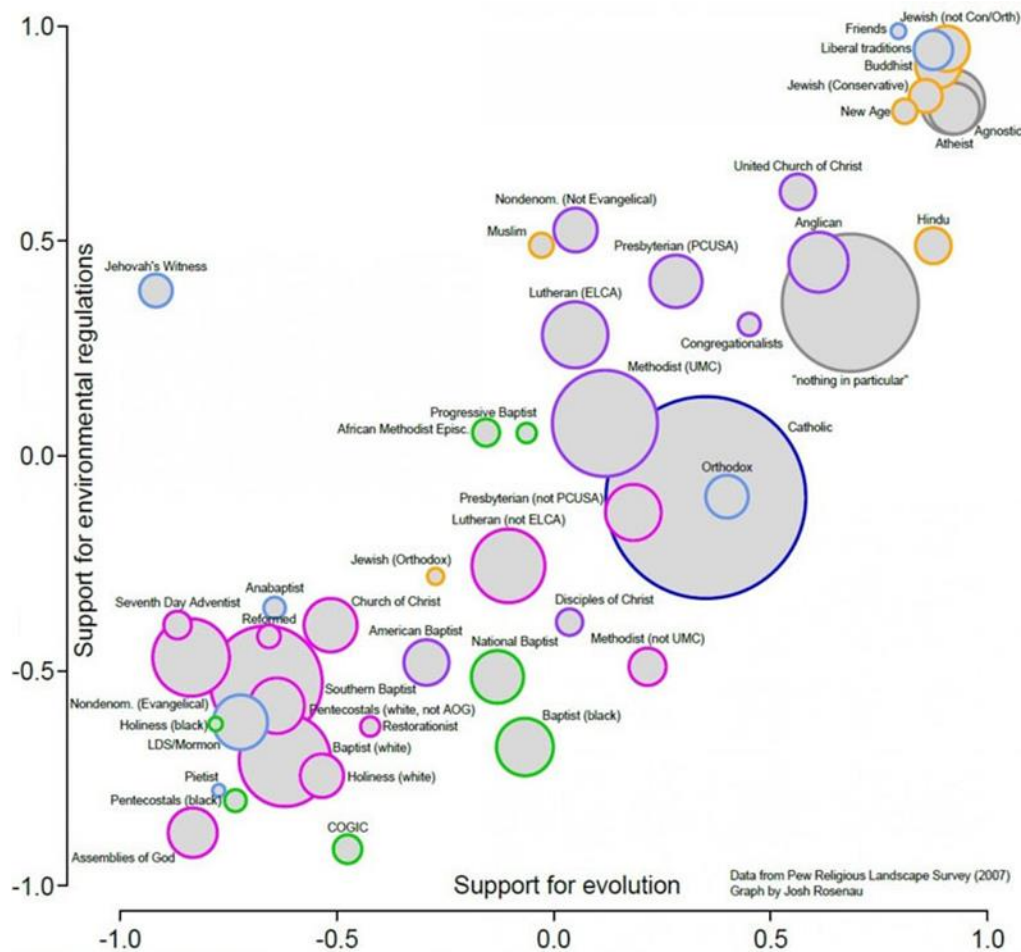
forever, rather than ending in a 'big crunch'.

Science, as the pursuit of natural knowledge, can tell us the planet is in trouble, but it falls to social activists, such as Greenpeace, to try to bring human consciousness to bear on the problem, while world leaders dither and argue, urged on by a few more enlightened of their members, often hobbled by conservative forces aligned to business interests who depend for their wealth on the status quo, leading towards a tragedy of the commons. Traditionally the complementary role falls to religion to give people a view of reality in which life makes sense, to motivate people to act for the common good, and in which our collective prospects and sense of meaning in life and death are given real hope.

Science and religion in deeper human history over the last 100,000 years have appealed to complementary aspects of how the human brain has evolved. Science is basically an abstraction of the practical natural skills of hunters developing potent arrow poisons and gathers learning the nutrient and medicinal properties of diverse plant species, and potential uses of natural products

to achieve diverse cultural ends. It is the knowledge of how to live in nature successfully. Religion plays into our sense of meaning, our togetherness as a people, our sense of moral rightness towards one another in the face of potential betrayal, and the subconscious realms where visionary experiences, our mortal fears and sense of belonging play out in senses of ecstasy and ultimate meaning.

It is thus religion that has been the motivating force for the rise and fall of successive cultures and civilizations. The world is in absolutely urgent need of the ability to have paradigm revolutions of its religious traditions, so that humanity can come to constructive engagement with the closing circle of one biosphere. Now the tragic fallacy in this equation is that Christianity, Islam and even Buddhism too have set up toxic traps to prevent natural paradigm change. Buddha embodies a state of perfection unattainable in the round of birth and death. Islam has declared that Muhammad is the final prophet, preventing any change to the paradigm under pain of execution. Christianity has in many ways set up an even more lethal trap by claiming the only messiah is Jesus who will return as avenging Lord in the day of judgment, thus not only being the final prophet, but the judge and executioner as well.



Correspondence between attitudes to climate change and evolution in US religious groups shows negative attitudes to both are broadly correlated with religious fundamentalism.

Try to imagine for a moment the relationship between Newton and Einstein. If Jesus, as the historical founder of Christianity, is compared to Newton, how can an Einstein ever come into being in this tradition? No Meister Eckhart, Saint Paul, or Mother Teresa can do it because all are caught in the gilded cage of having to worship the Christian doctrinal package, unadulterated by heresy, as good faithful Christians. The current Pope Francis who is a genius about protecting diversity and addressing global warming in his encyclical compiled by world class scientists, and has moved to soften the hard line against divorce, and abortion through forgiveness, is still stuck with claiming that "Good weeps" for the victims of church child abuse. What kind of God of creation lurks in the aether, expressing human emotions and "biological" tears for Catholic wrongdoings, while genocidal religious war rages in Syria and the planet is in ecocrisis?

So, is it true that the only way a Christian Einstein could come about would be by founding a completely new religion, overthrowing the broken paradigm of Jesus stuck on the Cross bleeding for all eternity? Since Christianity is the central cultural religious tradition of the Western world, this is like saying Einstein would have to overthrow science to discover relativity. It is madness pure and simple. It is possible but it would clearly take a huge challenge to the zeitgeist to accept a human innovator daring enough to do a stealth raid as the "thief in the night". The acid test ultimately is universal credibility of the innovation.

Hence we need to look very carefully at what the natural revolution of this stasis is, in complete honesty and transparency. The answer, in the closing circle of the biosphere, is clearly that the central meaning, raison d'être and purpose of all our human lives is to cherish and replenish the Earth throughout the generations of living diversity. There is no other end game, no other Unveiling, no other solution - this IS it! It's not a matter of affirmative belief, such as "I believe in the one God", but the ultimate truth of existential reality itself, and our conscious place in the process. This is what I describe as the way, or Tao of the Tree of Life, the natural successor to Christianity in the Western tradition.

And it comes with two clear implications about nature and fertility, both of which run diametrically opposite to the view of reality pronounced in Eden - that nature is evil, as the serpent is evil, and that woman is the devil's gateway. The truth is that nature is sacred, sine qua non, as paradise is sacred, and that sexuality is as sacred as nature. Reproductive fertility, its underlying genetics and the parental investment of the human female stipulates that female choice reproductively and culturally is at least as sacred as male choice.

(Continued on Part VI)