

THE COLLECTED
BOOKS *of*

RICHARD
DENNER

Volume 22

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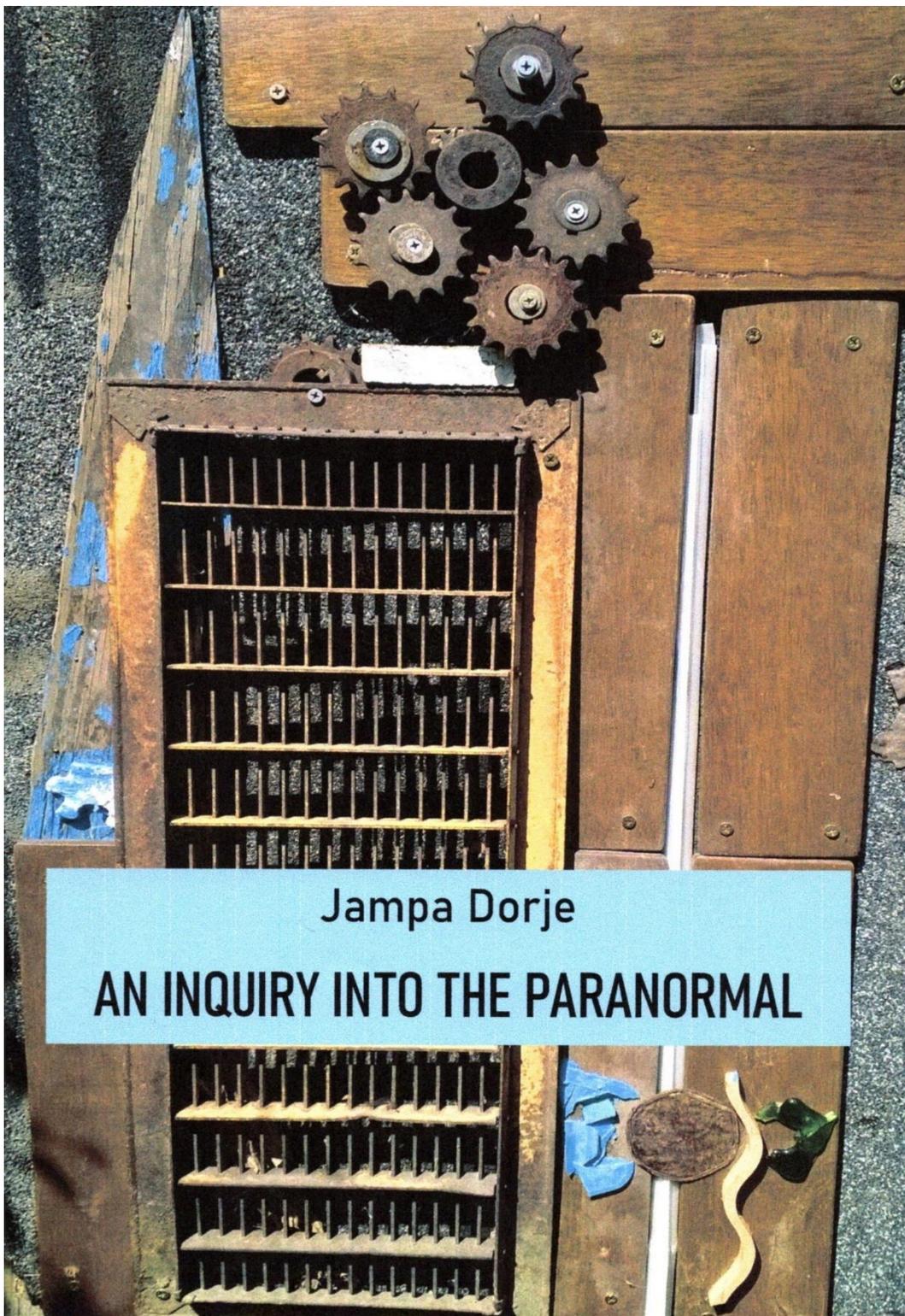


They are going on a journey
Those deep blue creatures
Passing us as though they were sunshine.

—Jack Spicer AFTER LORCA

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Jampa Dorje

AN INQUIRY INTO THE PARANORMAL



AN INQUIRY INTO THE PARANORMAL

JAMPA DORJE

Kapala Press 2021 Ellensburg

The three essays in this volume are writings from Dr. Clayton Bonhet's *Beyond Belief?*

Phil 110 Class at Central Washington University, Fall Quarter, 2020.



HOLOGRAPHIC HALLUCINATIONS

A wise man apportions his belief to the evidence.

DAVID HUME, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

I try to keep an equanimous mindstream and acknowledge the validity of paranormal experiences, while being influenced by both logical positivism and religious dogma. There is still much to discover in the search for the Self, if not in this lifetime, then, in those to come, or in revisiting previous lifetimes before I was born. I have had flying saucer experiences, levitation experiences, and mind-to-mind transmissions from my gurus. I have served as a sorcerer's apprentice. The universe of physicist Max Plank contains events that are non-simultaneous and only partially overlapping,—yet simultaneous events that concur, in scientific and Buddhist cosmologies, manifesting from interdependent origination, can seem magical. I like my reality to be reliable and match the data, but I want mystery in the storytelling.

Some history of the field of parapsychology can be useful when discussing the parameters of an empirical investigation of anomalous cognitions. Tracing the early investigations by scientists in the 19th century reveal a progression of developing rigorous analytical tools for determining the veracity of these psychic happenings. Beginning with simple observations by noted scientists, many were led to the study of psychic phenomena out of simple curiosity. Caroline Watt, in *Parapsychology: A*

Beginners Guide (Oneworld, London, 2016), says that the early investigations by Crookes and Rogers led, in 1882, to the formation of the Society for Psychical Research, that claimed it would study PSI events in “the same spirit of exact science and unimpassioned enquiry which has enabled Science to solve so many problems” (5). The game was on,— and with a good deal of passion, I might add, is being played right up to the present.

I have rubbed elbows and exchanged cards with theosophists whose lineages go back to Madam Blavatsky and Alister Crowley. I know that those with an interest in parapsychology can seem flaky, but authenticity is sought, although the rules (and spoons) are sometimes bent. The term *parapsychology*, in its present use, does not recognize all of the occult arts and is limited to ESP, extrasensory perception—which includes telepathy, precognition, and clairvoyance—and PK, psychokinesis, and SS, survival studies (reincarnation). Today’s specialists in the investigatory branch of psychic phenomena have impressive collegiate credentials and academic standing, although many of their peers throw shade their way.

No wonder. Research reveals that there is a lot of bamboozlement and devious, if not malevolent, machinations going on in the public use of these powers (if powers they be). However, it is often difficult to tell whether it is the mediumship of the individual that is in question or if more fundamental philosophical issues are under the microscope—issues concerning the notion of causation, of the configurations of cognition and reality, of the fabric of matter, energy, and spacetime.

The statistical predictabilities of parapsychological phenomena do not attain the gold standard of contemporary science, but something in the data, like a *ghost in the machine* (to use Arthur Koestler’s phrase), begs to be revealed—mind mirroring itself in etheric entanglement, seeking to see itself seeing the ground consciousness by communicating via vibratory movements on a ouija board. Reminds me of what Jack Spicer says in his poem, “The Scrollwork on the Casket”:

Whenever I hammer a nail into the outside of the casket,
I can hear someone on the inside, also hammering a nail.

In the 1980s, at the University of Central Washington, in Ellensburg, the chairman of the philosophy and religious studies department, Dr. Chester Keller, taught classes in mysticism. David Pond, a part owner of a hippie-style restaurant in town, The Outrageous Taco, was a practicing astrologer and decided to go to graduate school. In 1983, David received an Master of Science degree in Experimental Metaphysics. In 1984, I helped him publish part of his thesis as *The Metaphysical Handbook*. It is a handbook

for learning divinatory methods to do psychic readings. In exchange for my labor, I apprenticed myself to David and he taught me Astrology, Tarot, I Ching, Palmistry, and Numerology. I practiced reading Tarot and making charts for the clientele of my New Age bookstore, Four Winds, between 1984 and 1988. Over 200 readings, and like at the U. of Virginia, the results and feedback were positive. I stopped doing readings because of the heavy responsibility of entering into another person's life and giving advice on serious matters. Counselling is a rewarding endeavor, but it is very stressful, be you a Freudian, a Jungian, or a Adlerian. The *Metaphysical Handbook* is still in print, and David still makes a living as a professional astrologer. Me, I meditate.

People go to psychics out of fear of the unknown, confusion in love, the whole gambit of uncertainties that arise in a world of suffering and impermanence. We seek to see into the future to discover who we are in the present. And we like to be seen and heard and to be given encouragement, even when disaster is in the offing. Here is a David Pond reading for tomorrow, September 21, the Autumn Equinox:

Libra, represented by the scales of balance, strives for harmonious, cooperative, win-win involvement with others. However, it is not enough to wish for fairness—dynamic Libra is called on to be active in bringing about fair, just, and honorable agreements with others. Cultivate the ability to find the common ground with others by being more diplomatic, persuasive, and patient to create win-win negotiations, and if all else fails, be willing to compromise to keep the peace.

Good advice, two days after Justice Ginsberg's death.

Actions should be judged on the basis of intention. Young psychics like the thrill and sense of power over others. Psychics who have developed their abilities know Boerenkamp's data is valid, and that they are magicians, but every so often something shifts, and the reader feels a demiurge channel gnosis. In the Jungian camp, many psychotherapists merge the use of the occult arts with traditional western psychological paradigms. I offer my services at the local branch of Comprehensive Mental Health, teaching mindfulness meditation to counselors who practice Dialectical Behavior Therapy, to add to their toolkit of methods to treat borderline personality disorders.

Parapsychologists prefer to work with pure cognitive activity, cold readings without props, and the data of such studies reveal no validity to the process. However, as every artist, poet, gambler knows, the 1% of the time inspiration occurs and the accuracy of the PSI data defies statistical odds (e.g. the 28 consecutive times a roulette wheel came up black) feels amazing and has an addictive quality. The methods known as "selective

recall" (that a client remembers what they want to hear out of many statements), of using "general statements" (that have a high level of probability) work by themselves, but "fishing" (trying to hone in on the problem, if it is not forthcoming, is where the art lies (no pun intended). I favor the astrological sign. The data shows that the average astrologer has difficulty picking out a person's sign, but when the sign is offered, it represents a symbolic point of departure. The lore of western astrology can be traced back to the Babylonians and into the mists of prehistory. I quote the blurb on the back cover of *The Metaphysical Handbook*: "One needn't be a serious student to benefit from the expanded perspective on life that studying metaphysics offers. Even a casual involvement can sharpen your intuition and give deeper meaning to your life."

Skepticism. Formally, it is an epistemological stance, or a school of thought between realism and idealism, of remaining on the fence, holding a theory of knowledge that certain kinds of knowledge are impossible. More informally, skepticism as an expression of questioning or doubt can be applied to any topic, such as politics, religion, or pseudoscience (Wiki). The opposite is Dogmatism:, or believing in a philosophy or religion and adhering to the precepts because they are felt to be proper.

James Randi (b. 1928) is known as "The Amazing Randi," and he has had an amazing career both as a stage magician, appearing on a wide range of shows—in '60s hosting his own magic show on TV; in the '70s, appearing in the Alice Cooper Billion Dollar Babies Tour; and then, in the '80s becoming a debunker of public psychics who claimed to have paranormal powers. He did not like being called a debunker and preferred to be designated an investigator, claiming "...if you go into a situation calling yourself a debunker then it is as if you have prejudged the topic. It's not neutral or scientific, and it can turn people against you." A sign on his door reads: "Randi—Conjurer" (Wiki).

In 1973, Randi gained national attention with his appearance on Johnny Carson's *The Tonight Show* to confront psychokinesist Uri Geller. As reported online at groovyhistory.com, "...spoon-bending 'psychic' Uri Geller appeared on *The Tonight Show*—and walked into a trap set by host Johnny Carson and the magician/skeptic James 'The Amazing' Randi. It was one of the great 'gotcha' moments in TV history, and a highlight of a feud between Randi and Geller over the nature of magic." For Amazing Randi, this becomes a scientific endeavor, to purify the worldly domain of pseudoscience and psychic fakery, codename PROJECT ALPHA.

Randi's attack was two-pronged. First, he wanted to reveal the use of stage magic by practitioners of PSI phenomena; and second, he wanted to challenge parapsychologists

to tighten their experimental controls. He claimed that the scientific community was being hoodwinked by traditional methods used by magicians to fool their audiences—tried-and-true sleight-of-hand and mental suggestion that had been going on since prerecorded history. Project Alpha began in 1979, with Randi creating a hoax, whereby he planted two stage magicians, with no claim to special powers other than their knowledge of stage magic—who claimed to have psychic powers—into an ongoing laboratory experiment at the McDonnell Laboratory for Psychical Research at the University of Washington. When the hoax was revealed, in 1981, all the participating scientists found they had been chasing a rabbit around a bush, when they only needed to look in their hats to see how empty they were of valid data.

The next step in the process was for parapsychologists to prevent themselves getting caught up in anything like a Project Beta. For investigators in all areas of PSI research, the results of Project Alpha had several benefits: (a) tightened security in empirical methodologies, for example trying to weed out publicity seekers; (b) greater insight into how easy it is to be duped by the magician's artform and the general vulnerability of belief systems; (c) an all-around re-evaluation of what more than a century of research had discovered and a clearer focus on the anomalies revealed in that research; and (d) a good old-fashioned shaking-awake of the experts, who have a tendency to drift into dogmatic slumber. In all, it was a decent day's work by a guy who has "Amazing" for a first name.

The psychokinetic activities of James Hydrick interest me. The video of Amazing Randi blocking the performance of Hydrick on the *That's My Line* TV show, in the early '80s was embarrassing. The Little Lord Fonterloy outfit and Prince Valiant haircut and wisp of a mustache was pure camp, and that the dude is a child molester (and one who is caught by police, who hear him discussing his telekinetic powers on a talk show) is karmically poetic. Later, he revealed he developed his trick in prison, and that he had not learned it from a Chinese master on the fourth level of consciousness (whatever that is) as he originally claimed. Hydrick confessed, "My whole idea behind this in the first place was to see how dumb America was. How dumb the world is" (Wiki). Good job, Hydrick, as though we did not already know it. Thanks a lot.

Hydrick is a two-trick pony; he can move a pencil balanced on the edge of a table or move a page of a telephone book with the power of his mind. Actually, he was performing secret blowjobs. I will leave it there. He is still in prison.

Sai Baba may well have used his manifestation magic to impress the poor and the gullible and open them to practice, as well as reward his rich and sophisticated devotees with a bit of hocus pocus. Personally, I find Sai Baba a bit smarmy as a swami, but his legacy continues. I prefer the warrior-yogi sorcerers. Matter of taste, really.

In an etymological breakdown of the word, parapsychology, a number of words are suggested by the prefix, "para-": above, beside, near; but in our class, we settled on "beyond" to connect to "psyche": soul, personality, spirit, self. Beyond psychology. Beyond the self. Beyond the logos, or reason. Beyond belief.

Parapsychologists are interested in anomalous mental activity, thought processes that are different from the normal, that cannot be explained by the laws of physics or repeated with precision by scientific methods. If these "powers" can be measured, a more comprehensive understanding of how we know what we know can be determined, which is of epistemological interest to philosophy, psychology, and religion. Also, it might be of interest to art. Ted Sorios's psychokinetically projected images onto Polaroid film, utilizing a prop he called his "gizmo" (that contained a magnified image prepared in advance of the experiments) can be interpreted as an branch of the Abstract Expressionist school of happening art that was current during the '60s. Ted Sorios' manic "performances" need to be re-evaluated in this light.

Psycho/telekinesis, or psychokinesis (PK) is one branch of parapsychology, and is defined by Watt as "the influence of mind on an object, physical system, or biological system, without physical interaction" (221) . Mind over matter. Until the force of gravity is neatly integrated in a unified field theory of everything, Einstein will not rest in his grave, dreaming of spooky forces from afar. " Woo Woo" has been a term applied to this phenomenon, usually expressed with small, vibratory movements of the hands, perhaps sounding like the haunting sound of a ghost in the popular imagination. The "Woooo" sound can be drawn out.

Uri Geller's shtick was more sophisticated than Ted Sorios' pandemonium. Geller's professional showman style was more appropriate for TV audiences. He knew his way around a sound stage, and his manners were polished. Whether he could bend spoons without first manipulating the temper of the metal is doubtful. Amazing Randi debunked him on *The Tonight Show*, in the '80s. Geller had star quality and was resilient, as he also had (so the story goes) a clandestine career as a globetrotting Mossad spy. We were in the Cold War, and world governments were researching PSI to shift the balance

of power among nation states—in other words, a fake psychic power became a prop a world-wide discussion of PSI within the star circuit, feelers being put out, and flags raised in the collecting of data composed of rumors and disinformation and botched transmissions being received in counter-intelligence spying on the.. I'll leave this tale for another day. It all leads back to a store of documents in the Nazi archives and from there to the Tibetans.

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SAILING TO ÆTHERIAL ISLES

"Up anchor!"—Introduction

I will sail in the fundamental tack as Kant's *Prolegomena*—asking, how do I know what I know? How is my knowledge structured and verified? Can I determine my knowledge is valid, if it is based upon scientific data, religious authority, or personal experience? In this brief paper, I will compare and contrast two anomalous forms of experience—Out-of-Body Experience (OBE) and Near-Death Experience (NDE)—within the approaches of parapsychology, psychology, neurobiology, and religious experience. I hope that, as I sail between clashing rocks of contradiction, I uncover some semblance of meaningful knowledge.

"Ruby grapes of Proserpine"—OBEs described

An OBE, or out-of-body experience, is just that, an experience of being outside your body. Culling information from *Medical News Today*, an online zine, and from Caroline Watt's book, *Parapsychology*, the description of the experience is very consistent. One

floats smoothly out of the body, usually to a position above the body, where the person can see themselves and the world from another vantage point. According to Watt, sounds, vibrations, and/or lights are sometimes reported (83). In general, the experience is blissful, and no harm comes to the person. After a brief suspension in space (or in some cases, due to a rude interruption) they return to their body. One in ten persons report having had an OBE at least once in their lifetime (Ibid. 82). Whether something leaves the body or not is still debated; scientific data suggests not.

Since the days of the Fox Sisters (1840s), paranormal experiences have been sensationalized, monetized, weaponized, and scientifically analyzed. Another approach to these endeavors is to focus on the esoteric explanations of OBEs and other anomalous cognitive activity that may be of significance to someone on a spiritual path.

In 1964, under the influence of a massive dose of peyote, I suffered a psychotic break. In one phase of this experience, while incarcerated in a detention cell (“the hole”) in Alameda County Jail, I thought I was Michelangelo’s statue of David being transported in the cargo hold of an ocean liner from Paris to New York; in another phase I thought I was Duchamp’s *Glass*, which shattered en route. These imaginings led me to further cleanse *my doors of perception*.

In 2013, after four years in a solitary meditation retreat, I felt like I was, finally, fully in my body, and I left my cabin (Luminous Peak) on the mountain and got in my impulse red Toyota pickup, that I had stored, and drove to Santa Fe. Near Cerro Pedernal, a paranormal place, if there ever was one, I had a car wreck—no injuries but two totaled vehicles—that left me, and the two women and baby in the other car continuing in our same bodies yet seriously altered in our concepts of our ætheric bodies.

A Vajrayana OBE would be more elaborate than the usual scientific description because, with training in mind-body separation, you would be able to move your ætheric body across time as well as space: for example, the case of Jigme Lingpa (1730–1798), a Tibetan *tertön* of the Nyingma lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, to which I belong. He was the promulgator of the *Longchen Nyingthig*, the *Heart Essence* teachings of Longchenpa, from whom, according to tradition, he received a pure vision in which the teachings were revealed. The *Longchen Nyingthig* is the cycle of preparatory Dzogchen teachings that I practiced for my three-year retreat. The path of a *tertön* is the self-revelation of their own buddha mind, an ontological level of consciousness, recognized conceptually as the ground of Being. However, I have not yet learned the method of projecting myself into the future, except by archiving my written works.

Another radical OBE, told to me by Tulku Sang-ngag, is about an 11th c. Indian yogin, known as Padampa Sangye who was travelling to Tibet with an assistant. Padampa Sangye

was young and handsome, and his assistant was old and ugly. During their travels, they found a rotting elephant in a stream of water used by a nearby village and, out of compassion, Padampa decided to transfer his consciousness into the animal by practicing *phowa*—transferring his mindstream to animate a corpse (in this case, a form of psychokinesis)—thereby safely removing the pollution. While the mindstream of Padampa was otherwise engaged, his assistant decided to transfer his consciousness into Padampa's body and leave his own, worn-out body. Upon returning from his PK experience, Padampa (who became known as “Black Dampa”) continued to Tibet, where he became the teacher of Machig Lapdrön, the *yidam* (tutelary deity) of my retreat.

“Undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns”—NDEs described

A near death experience (NDE) is the reported experience during a time where this person is in an extreme state of unconsciousness (i.e., medically dead) and then, returns to awakened consciousness. People who experience a NDE report different features of their experience. As reported by Watt, Kenneth Ring found in his research that during the interim, before a person returns from this extreme level of unconsciousness, a similar number of basic components can be present to different degrees: (1) a feeling of peace, (2) a feeling of body separation from the self, like in an OBE but often described as moving through a tube, (3) entering the darkness, (4) seeing a light, and (5) entering a light (Ibid. p. 100). More extensive experiences are reported by theosophists, mystics, poets, shamans, and yogins in the proceeding stages of a death experience;—for example, it is claimed by Lee W. Bailey, in his essay, “A ‘Little Death’: the Near Death Experience and Tibetan Delogs,” that Tibetan *delogs* remain in a NDE for extended periods of time. However, so far, there is no data recording their brain waves in a continuous flatline.

The practice of *phowa* (sometimes called “spiritual suicide) is a Vajrayana meditation practice. A wiki elf describes this as the “practice of conscious dying” or the “transference of consciousness at the time of death” or the “mindstream transference” or the “enlightenment without meditation” practice. I have some accomplishment in this practice, but only some.

Soon after being ordained a monastic, in 1996, I attended a *phowa* retreat and received a transmission from Adzom Paylo Rinpoche. The ritual includes rigorous mantra recitation, visualization, and physical breath yoga. The vibratory activity of the practice initiates an opening in the cranium of the skull for consciousness to pass through. A stalk of kusha grass is inserted into the gap in the skull to signify the accomplishment of the practice. Of all the practitioners present, I was one of two whose cranium did not sufficiently respond. Adzom inspected my skull and said, “Good enough,” which I took to

mean a passing grade but with work yet to be done. I have the transmission and can work on this practice that promises to prevent me from encountering some of the less desirable aspects of the after-death experience,—if there is one.

“A pair of normals”—OBEs and NDEs commonalty

OBEs and NDEs commonalities:—(1) usually, they do not last long; (2) there is an experience of “floating” blissfully; (3) the experience is vivid; (4) the amount of *gnosis* (spiritual message) is sometimes minimal and, at other times, of profound importance to the person; (5) unlike ESP and PK, they are not stage magic “tricks” that can be monetized or sensationalized.

One difference is that NDEs are reported less often than OBEs, and NDEs do not always occur near the event of actually dying (Ibid. p.98).. Clinical death is defined by van Lommel as: “a period of unconsciousness caused by insufficient blood supply to the brain” (Ibid. p. 103). If the period is not too long, people have been known to return to “normal” consciousness. Medical scientists look at this return as a lucky break for the patient. Neuroscientists want to probe deeper into the brain’s functions. Parapsychologists want to know if it has meaning. People who have this experience report different features. Being conscious of non-being is a gnosis transmission from Being. As All-knowing Longchenpa (1308–1364), puts it, in *A Treasure Trove of Spiritual Transmissions*:

Mind as pure expanse of space, in which things vanish
naturally and leave no trace,
arises with intensity from within, pristinely lucid.

“For 1/32nd of a second there is buddhamind, and the rest is delusion”—Psychological approach

Psychologists look at the NDE reports as symptomatic of clients with certain personality traits and or complexes due to trauma. Neurologists look at NDE reports and search for some malfunctioning part of the brain. As for the question of whether there is life after death or not, the experimental data is non-conclusive. Outside of a laboratory of some kind, it is difficult to gather information while NDEs are in progress. Yogins like to think of their cave as a laboratory.

In Orphic literature, upon dying, you encounter two bodies of water, a spring and a river. In the Grail legends you find yourself in a perilous forest. In the Tibetan *Shitro* scriptures (e.g. *Bardo Thödo*) you are confronted by wrathful deities. I am unsure of the source of

the idea of a tunnel with light at the end in the standard model NDE, but it sounds hopeful, as in the expression, “There’s light at the end of the tunnel.”

Sogyal Rinpoche added a dimension to the *Bardo Thödol* in his *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, by directing the living to look on the process of dying as offering a person one more opportunity to awaken to the Clear Light of the ground of consciousness. The main point of death, in our transmigratory lives, or in our one & only life, is to help us learn to develop a compassionate heart-mind within this present embodied mind-consciousness.

While studying abnormal cognitive activity in the brain from both orthodox psychological and neurological paradigms, parapsychologists recognize that other explanations of reality and being may have validity. This open-mindedness (or mush-mindedness, as physicalists would have it) opens ontological and epistemological constructs and realms of inquiry usually reserved for literature, comparative mythology, metaphysics, and religion. The concept of what it means for something to exist must be stretched (in the sense of realist claims of the existence of abstract universals) to include areas beyond the Einsteinian description of three dimensions of space and one of time as a minimal requirement for something to exist. If the self, as Tim Newman, writing in *Medical News Today*, suggests, is a “neurological illusion,” what is it that is “dying”? And why (outside of the body experiencing pain in the process) should it be feared? When the physical existence of the self is called into question, a new notion of reality is required. As my lamas like to point out, “No self, no problem.”

“You never know”—Neurobiological approach

I have but little terminology and less understanding of this field of study. My daughter, Gina Turrugiano, who is faculty head of the Biology department at Brandeis University and who does research in homeostasis and neural circuit plasticity, told me that, apropos of the paranormal reports of OBEs and NDEs, the intense mantra recitations and visualizations over an extended period of time may allow yogins to develop what they designate as “secret channels” from the various *chakras* to areas of the brain that would otherwise be part of the autonomic nervous system.

“The body decays; don’t delay”—Comparing OBEs and NDEs

Drawing the following comparisons from Table 2, page 83, in Watts:—(1) a separation of the mind from the body is felt during an OBE but not in a NDE; (2) in an OBE the body is felt to separate from itself and can travel during the experience; in a NDE, the body remains in place but consciousness moves through a tunnel; (3) a “greater awareness of reality” is reported in an OBE, whereas, in a NBE, a greater appreciation of life is

reported afterwards; (4) vibrations can occur in OBE as part of the experience, usually experienced prior to the onset; in NDEs, vibrations from a defibrillator may be felt during a medical procedure; (5) a presence of beings can be experienced in OBEs, being touched or spoken to by another person, interrupting the OBE experience, whereas, in NDEs, persons from other timeframes and/or deities have been reported;—in mystical and yogic literature, these encounters can be interpreted in the context of a theological framework; (6) the experience of time can range for OBEs and NDEs:—without correct training, NDEs can alter physiological processes and create pathological conditions that do not seem to be in the best interest of the person having the NDE, whereas OBEs tend to end abruptly and are risky only when you are having sex and/or while driving at high speeds in an automobile; (7) seeing a bright light:—What kind of light is this? Is it sunlight, electrical light, or Dzog Chen “clear light”? In a Buddhist context, reflecting on the transience of life is an entryway for someone to turn Dharma; and as for feeling connected to the physical body,—if the OBE is a parallel experience to yogic levitation, the knowledge is useful for the yogi’s deconstruction of the sense of Self; if the OBE is induced (84), the entertainment factor of play can be exhilarating.

Entering the light is problematic. In Dzog Chen, entering the physical light, solar or electrical, is an erroneous path (*samsara*). My advice: be cautious with NDEs without a qualified teacher. My retreat wife, Lopön Beth, is doing daily practices, in the dark, in preparation for her Dark Retreat, where she will be sealed into an especially enclosed area for a week to introduce her to the intermediate states, or gap (Bardo Realm), between this life and her next one. She asked me, “Where do you think the light in my visions and dreams comes from?” Good question.

In both psychological and neurological approaches, the OBEs and NDEs are considered to be pathological conditions, as though something has gone haywire with the brain, whereas theosophists and religious ritual practitioners consider the OBE and NDE experiences to be meaningful. Parapsychologists hold their judgement and are interested in analyzing data garnered from these experiences. In this, they are becalmed in a Sargasso Sea of indeterminacy, while the psychoargonauts are having all the fun.

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SAINTS, PSYCHICS, AND SCIENTISTS

Sathya Sai Baba was an Indian guru and philanthropist. In 1940, at the age of fourteen he left his home to perform altruistic deeds. At the time of his death, he had founded 1,200 spiritual centers and established hospitals, clinics, drinking water projects, a university, auditoriums, and schools. Estimates of the numbers of his followers vary from 6 million up to nearly 100 million. Estimates of his wealth run as high as 1.4 trillion rupees, or close to 30 billion U.S. dollars. The usual allegations of financial shenanigans and inappropriate sexual activities have attended his reputation as a holy man, but he

appeared to his followers as someone who could walk the talk. Sai Baba was known for his quote “Love All, Serve All. Help Ever, Hurt Never” (Wiki).

With his wild afro hairdo, he looks like a '70s used car salesman in a saffron jumpsuit, but whom am I, *Mr. Guru Garb*, to criticize his look. He was a fully-manifested mid-20th century Hindu guru—just what the hippies wanted, as well as spiritual seekers from other lands. And, what if he did use a little stage magic? He was good at it. For beginners, the insight that occurs by entertaining the possibility of a “miracle” may be a first step in developing ritual practice and a more evolved understanding of causality and that, with further practice, can bring self-realization within reach. Should spiritual paths be measured by secular standards? Maybe science should stick with measuring the material world with their material instruments, reducing every particle to its smallest magnitude. just to satisfy the analyst's need for validity. I asked my lama, Adzom Palyo Rinpoche, if I should merge my visualizations of Avalokiteshvara with my Jesus visualizations, and he said it was not necessary, as there was room for both.

Sai Baba could seemingly make objects materialize out of nothing. Adzom can apparently put the imprint of his hand into solid rock. Both events fall under the PSI phenomena of macro-psychokinesis. Sai Baba conjures gold necklaces out of thin air. Adzom moves matter with mental control.

There are revealed techniques for making things manifest. Check out “Out of Nowhere: Easy Production Magic Tricks” on *youTube*. I watched the video, “Sai Baba's ‘Miraculous’ Power Exposed,” where he seems to be removing something from beneath the trophy being presented to a dignitary. The televised sequence was not shown on T.V. because the producers feared it revealed fakery; however it may have been just an awkward moment in the presentation itself, because it is not Sai Baba's usual routine, where the “trick” is more reliably set up by palming an object or retrieving it from his robes. One method of Sai Baba' ability to perform his manifestation of an object is to distract the audience, and another method is connected to the devotion of his followers which touches on their gullibility and shapes their acceptance of the activity. Among Sai Baba's materializations, he produces a substance called *vibhuti*, a “sacred ash” that falls from a large vase and seems to be of an enormous quantity, but (like fine gold chains that can be rolled into a small space of concealment), ash can be compressed and released in small amounts in a continuous flow and appears as more than can be estimated by the audiences' imaginations. In the youTube video, “Vibhutra Mantra”, there is an amazing amount o ash. We see the foreground and not the background from whence things arise. We see what we want (or need) to see.

I was present when Adzom Rinpoche pressed his thumb into a small piece of granite. I was standing inside a small cluster of people, at Tara Mandala Retreat Center, in Colorado, and I heard, felt, those in the front express the clear sound of astonishment, “Ah!” On the top of the rock was a clear imprint of his thumb, but on the back side, there was a trace, a smudge, of his forefinger, that he claimed was due to someone not fully believing. I was sure it was me, but I kept my mouth shut. I thought this last bit of half-finished artwork was a good touch, for believability. Afterwards,—seeing him sitting in a halo of rainbow light and feeling a double rainbow in my heart—watching him raise his vajra scepter at a dramatic moment in an dharma empowerment just as a bolt of lightning struck a tree, near the yurt where we were practicing—and after chanting the heart mantra of a wrathful deity with him during a rapidly approaching prairie fire and seeing it burn itself out when the wind reversed course, I developed devotion and learned to be a sorcerer’s apprentice. I wanted the knowledge and the insight that would come from it. I could have applied the formula $x_{n+1} = rx_n(1-x_n)$ that is the logistic map connecting fluid convection, neuron firing, the Mandelbrot set and so much more to the statistical probabilities of these being random events in the natural world without psychokinetic activity being involved, but where is the romance in that?

The Psychology of Psychic Deception

We go to psychic readers because we are worriers. We cannot see into the future. We have curiosity about fate and destiny but cannot construct a paradigm. Psychic readings are a kind of intoxication—a Grail—a communion with the spirit of oneself, in which all things are possible and all querents are rewarded. A psychic reading promises to let me out of my box, that I may have a temporary suspension of belief—an OBE, while in the body, sitting with the psychic—while ze “fishes around” in hir 3rd Eye, doing a cold reading with the intuitive mind—reading the client, assembling profiling signs from the features and mannerisms of the querent, analyzing the elemental spirit (æther) world, in a word—air, earth, water, fire—and their modes—fixed, cardinal, mutable—attempting to divine the psyche.

Much of this is done by the setting in which the “magic” takes place, the *mis en scene*—because mindset and setting are fundamental to tuning into the psychic channel, before dropping into another “bardo” of consciousness. Incense and crystals, smoke and mirrors.

An aside: My astrologer, David Pond, who has a handle of the position of the wandering planets, as well as the headlines, advises me that the game heats up later this week—10/5/2020, as The Donald leaves Walter Reed and the Proud Boys stand by—as Mars, the

warrior planet, gets activated by volcanic Pluto bringing the test of the right use of power. The high road is to use your power in such a way that is in your best interest as well as others, while also doing no harm to self or others. The challenge is in handling the volatility of this potentially explosive energy—as a militia calling themselves the “Wolverine Watchmen” get caught in a plot to kidnap the governor of Michigan.

Who and What Left the Body?

When someone feels they are traveling outside of their body, they are having an OBE, an out-of-body experience. Parapsychologists want to know who or what “leaves” the body of the embodied mind. Can my consciousness exist outside the hunk of meat I call my body? Is consciousness a creation of the kludge we call a brain or of some other “spectral” quality? Pretty much the project ends there, and the question, “If the mind exists outside the body, does this indicate it has a meaningful existence?” is left to the poets and philosophers.

Neurological research into the matter takes the physicalist approach further by boring into the tissue of the brain, as though it was a piece of computer hardware gone haywire. This approach is biased by its predisposition to look for pathological symptoms in the brain’s neurological structures and circuitry.

Nobody is really looking sub-atomically. With a “ghost in the machine” well documented by Koestler & Co., it would require a particle accelerator the size of the earth to measure the necessary “strings”—and this is not in the budget. Better to invest money in micrometry, claims Sabina Hossenfeld, a physicist I follow on YouTube.

Psychological approach: Clinicians do not want to see abnormal symptoms of behavior, so reporting too many OBEs between sessions, will imply you are self-medicating and intervention will occur with the risk of ensuing lockdown. If these experiences are not self-induced, brain scans and neurological tests can be administered. If the results do not indicate physical problems, psychological problems must be addressed. Personality types, age/race/class/sex/gender factors come into play. Freud will ask questions about my upbringing; Skinner will implant electrodes; Perls will suggest enhanced awareness (mindfulness meditation); and Jung will ask my astrological sign; and we are back to the first step in parapsychology, to be curious of the possibilities—can a paranormal experience be a “sign” of connecting with the something outside the box of personality (of Self), a step in the direction of awakening from dogmatic sleep? Or,—it could herald a psychotic break, the hearing of voices and seeing of visions that order me to do evil deeds? Always a risk in these waters. Requires a poet to guide the way.

WHO? WHAT? LEFT? BODY? The four elements of this sentence—who, what, left, and

body—require semiotic, phenomenological and inductive analysis within the three approaches of parapsychology—application of empirical methodologies, neurological abnormalities, and personality traits susceptible to pathological cognitive dissonance,—and the added dimension of “spiritual” markers on the slow path to enlightenment—must be supplied before my philosophical judgement is proposed. OBEs have common features with NDEs, the main one being “something leaves the body or is about to leave the body.” Or not.

What and Who, seem to be the same entity, only What has less personality—an essence of the person, a soul, as Christians term it;—or something more robust, something that includes both the consciousness of the person and their unconscious as well, a psyche, as Jungian psychologists term it. Whatever its form or content (and weight, 21 grams?), it “moves.” It “hovers” (like a drone) in an OBE or travels through a “tunnel” (on an allegorical Alice in Wonderland-like adventure), but without the body—in both cases, without the body, that implies disembodied consciousness (a *mindstream*, in a Buddhist context), that, in turn, implies a belief in transcendental dimensions of existence, not measurable by material instruments or delineated by rational interpretations of beingness. This concept in a radical form of idealism, where Emptiness is cognizant.

What is precognition? What is the difference between precognition and presentiment?

Watt defines precognition as the conscious “perception of information about future events” (also known as foresight or prophesy) and she defines presentiment as, “the unconscious perception of future events or information...measured indirectly, either through physiological measures or through performance on cognitive or behavioral tasks” (220). The difference lies in the degree of consciousness of the person receiving the information (or, in terms of someone on a spiritual path, gnosis).

Early ESP research, especially the work of the parapsychology pioneer, J.B. Rhine, involved applying earlier methodologies used to test for clairvoyance (observing events or things at a distance) to the phenomena of precognition. Rhine collected statistical data from the experimental use of Zeller Cards (a series of playing cards with 5 different symbols), that required the reader to mentally identify (without viewing with the eyes) a randomly chosen card. After more than a decade of research, Rhine concluded that “ESP is a natural mode of perception and an integral part of mental life (Watt, p.143). However, skeptics persisted in tightening the screws on the formation of the methodologies used to gather data. Kennedy and Uphoff called for more objectivity (144). As Rhine’s methods “improved,” his results were less conclusive (146).

In the 1960s, parapsychologists decided to shift course. Rather than trying to measure the activity of “guessing” (precognition), the focus was on “exploring volunteers’ hunches, intuitions, and ‘gut feelings’” (163). Stanford speculated that the source of precognition was connected to our evolutionary consciousness, that allowed us to sense danger, and was not easily accessed by our awoken mind. Vassy measured the precognitive effects of a volunteer’s behavior when an electrical shock was added to the randomness. In the 1990s, Radin and Bierman refined this to showing volunteers examples of shocking photos in the mix (164ff). The main idea was to “feel” the future, rather than “think” the future. Watts concludes that, as experimental controls have improved, the paranormal ESP events are more difficult to dismiss (168).

From my personal experience I can relate an instance, while I was in retreat, of coming to the end of a million recitations of the Arya Tara heart mantra, something like 900,000, as I circumambulated my cabin, Luminous Peak, and I looked down the valley and saw a shaft of rainbow light engulfing the Tara Temple. High mountain valleys produce many rainbow events, but this one was dramatic, and I regarded the sight as an auspicious sign of accomplishment. My lama would never say, “Good yogi, well done,” but I would know he was happy with my progress, when he gave me further practices to do, which he did,—and I was left to evaluate and integrate the richness of the rainbow experience by myself.

What is the nature and role of criticism in the history of the development of parapsychology?

“Science is the best thing that has happened to human beings...but we can do it better.”

—John Ioannidis (scopeblog.stanford.edu)

In scientific methodology, a researcher does not initially advance an opinion that a theory is right or wrong but inquires how it has been formed and follows the procedures as to how the theory was arrived at and checks, again and again, to see if the data is valid. Paul Feyerabend, in *Against Method*, says, “All methodologies, even the most obvious ones, have their limits.” Contending that science does not run on fixed rules, he further states that distinguishing science from pseudoscience on objective grounds is not possible (Wiki “Criticism of Science”).

The Society for Psychical Research was created by spiritualist, Edmund Rogers, in 1882, as an attempt to bring psychic research into a more respectable milieu. The field of parapsychology has formally been under attack as a pseudoscience, since John Edgar Coover published the negative results of his ESP laboratory trials, in 1917. By 1927, J.B.

Rhine had established laboratory research protocols into paranormal activity. The research had moved from the “spirit raps” of the Fox Sisters, in the 1840s, to studies in telepathy, precognition, clairvoyance, psychokinesis, as well as out-of-body and near-death experiences (Watt, *Parapsychology: A Beginner's Guide*, Oneworld, London, 2016).

Rhine comes under attack on multiple fronts—“no detectible medium for transference of data,” from the physicists; “too many possibilities for fraud,” from the ethicists; “more to know about the physical brain than with an unknown, imaginary brain,” from the psychologists,—so like reductionists to confuse mind (located in the heart chakra) with a brain that is another sense preceptor, located in the head. Rhine persisted in his vision, refining his praxis, creating an extensive meta-critical level of research into the nature of research itself (143).

Psychologists in the 1970s began to apply their own version of pseudo-yogic meditative techniques (*samatha*, *vipassana*, and guided visualizations) that emerge as the preliminary practices of “ganzfeld” mediumship. The ganzfeld technique attempts to isolate and create a conducive setting for the experiment of transference of image or thought data between two participants in separate, isolated environments. Initially, the data collected by Charles Honorton showed favorable results for the existence of extra-sensory perception.

Critical of Honorton's work, Ray Hyman claimed there were problems with “sensory leakage between senders and receivers, and poor randomization during the selection of the target” (152). In the process of their debate, they collaborated on a voluminous correspondence concerning research methods. In the 1980s, Honorton improved his methods by building a computerized system that automated and improved his data collection (*autoganzfeld*) and showed improved results for PSI phenomena (153).

In the 1990s, Honorton collaborated with Daryl Bem and produced new, reified results, and this, in turn, brought new scrutiny to ongoing parapsychological research, as well as to the new field of meta-analysis (the analysis of research methods). Social psychologist Robert Rosenthal claimed, “Science in general and parapsychological inquiry in particular have been well served by the...ganzfeld debate” (156).

What most intrigues me in this whole parapsychological endeavor is how the major contribution to science is the amount of work it takes to disprove something and, still, be left with something to prove.

With nothing to prove, I rest in my lama's mindstream.

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Paranormal Peculiarities: Part 1
HOLOGRAPHIC HALLUCINATIONS

Jampa Dorje



HOLOGRAPHIC HALLUCINATIONS

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Kapala Press 2020 Ellensburg

Photo of Dr. Clayton Bonnet making an astral projection
and cover collages by the author.

Writings from CWU Phil 110
Beyond Belief? class, Fall, 2020.



HOLOGRAPHIC HALLUCINATIONS

A wise man apportions his belief to the evidence.

DAVID HUME, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

I try to keep an equanimous mindstream and acknowledge the validity of paranormal experiences, while being influenced by both logical positivism and religious dogma. There is still much to discover in the search for the Self, if not in this lifetime, then, in those to come, or in revisiting previous lifetimes before I was born. I have had flying saucer experiences, levitation experiences, and mind-to-mind transmissions from my gurus. I have served as a sorcerer's apprentice. The universe of physicist Max Plank contains events that are non-simultaneous and only partially overlapping,—yet simultaneous events that concur, in scientific and Buddhist cosmologies, manifesting from interdependent origination, can seem magical. I like my reality to be reliable and match the data, but I want mystery in the storytelling.

Some history of the field of parapsychology can be useful when discussing the parameters of an empirical investigation of anomalous cognitions. Tracing the early investigations by scientists in the 19th century reveal a progression of developing rigorous analytical tools for determining the veracity of these psychic happenings.

Beginning with simple observations by noted scientists, many were led to the study of psychic phenomena out of simple curiosity. Caroline Watt, in *Parapsychology: A Beginners Guide* (Oneworld, London, 2016), says that the early investigations by Crookes and Rogers led, in 1882, to the formation of the Society for Psychical Research, that claimed it would study PSI events in “the same spirit of exact science and unimpassioned enquiry which has enabled Science to solve so many problems” (5). The game was on,— and with a good deal of passion, I might add, is being played right up to the present.

I have rubbed elbows and exchanged cards with theosophists whose lineages go back to Madam Blavatsky and Alister Crowley. I know that those with an interest in parapsychology can seem flaky, but authenticity is sought, although the rules (and spoons) are sometimes bent. The term *parapsychology*, in its present use, does not recognize all of the occult arts and is limited to ESP, extrasensory perception—which includes telepathy, precognition, and clairvoyance—and PK, psychokinesis, and SS, survival studies (reincarnation). Today’s specialists in the investigatory branch of psychic phenomena have impressive collegiate credentials and academic standing, although many of their peers throw shade their way.

No wonder. Research reveals that there is a lot of bamboozlements and devious, if not malevolent, machinations going on in the public use of these powers (if powers they be). However, it is often difficult to tell whether it is the mediumship of the individual that is in question or if more fundamental philosophical issues are under the microscope— issues concerning the notion of causation, of the configurations of cognition and reality, of the fabric of matter, energy, and spacetime.

The statistical predictabilities of parapsychological phenomena do not attain the gold standard of contemporary science, but something in the data, like a *ghost in the machine* (to use Arthur Koestler’s phrase), begs to be revealed—mind mirroring itself in etheric entanglement, seeking to see itself seeing the ground consciousness by communicating via vibratory movements on a ouija board. Reminds me of what Jack Spicer says in his poem, “The Scrollwork on the Casket”:

Whenever I hammer a nail into the outside of the casket,
I can hear someone on the inside, also hammering a nail.

In the 1980s, at the University of Central Washington, in Ellensburg, the chairman of the philosophy and religious studies department, Dr. Chester Keller, taught classes in mysticism. David Pond, a part owner of a hippie-style restaurant in town, The

Outrageous Taco, was a practicing astrologer and decided to go to graduate school. In 1983, David received an Master of Science degree in Experimental Metaphysics. In 1984, I helped him publish part of his thesis as *The Metaphysical Handbook*. It is a handbook for learning divinatory methods to do psychic readings. In exchange for my labor, I apprenticed myself to David and he taught me Astrology, Tarot, I Ching, Palmistry, and Numerology. I practiced reading Tarot and making charts for the clientele of my New Age bookstore, Four Winds, between 1984 and 1988. Over 200 readings, and like at the U. of Virginia, the results and feedback were positive. I stopped doing readings because of the heavy responsibility of entering another person's life and giving advice on serious matters. Counselling is a rewarding endeavor, but it is very stressful, be you a Freudian, a Jungian, or a Adlerian. The *Metaphysical Handbook* is still in print, and David still makes a living as a professional astrologer. Me, I meditate.

People go to psychics out of fear of the unknown, confusion in love, the whole gambit of uncertainties that arise in a world of suffering and impermanence. We seek to see into the future to discover who we are in the present. And we like to be seen and heard and to be given encouragement, even when disaster is in the offing. Here is a David Pond reading for tomorrow, September 21, the Autumn Equinox:

Libra, represented by the scales of balance, strives for harmonious, cooperative, win-win involvement with others. However, it is not enough to wish for fairness—dynamic Libra is called on to be active in bringing about fair, just, and honorable agreements with others. Cultivate the ability to find the common ground with others by being more diplomatic, persuasive, and patient to create win-win negotiations, and if all else fails, be willing to compromise to keep the peace.

Good advice, two days after Justice Ginsberg paranirvana.

Actions should be judged on the basis of intention. Young psychics like the thrill and sense of power over others. Psychics who have developed their abilities know Boerenkamp's data is valid, and that they are magicians, but every so often something shifts, and the reader feels a demiurge channel gnosis. In the Jungian camp, many psychotherapists merge the use of the occult arts with traditional western psychological paradigms. I offer my services at the local branch of Comprehensive Mental Health, teaching mindfulness meditation to counselors who practice Dialectical Behavior Therapy, to add to their toolkit of methods to treat borderline personality disorders. The dharma should not be sold, but dana can be given. Parapsychologists prefer to work with pure cognitive activity, cold readings without props, and the data of such studies reveal no validity to the process. However, as every artist, poet, gambler knows, the 1% of the time inspiration occurs and the accuracy of the PSI data defies statistical odds

(eg. the 28 consecutive times a roulette wheel came up black) feels amazing and has an addictive quality. The methods known as "selective recall" (that a client remembers what they want to hear out of many statements), of using "general statements" (that have a high level of probability) work by themselves, but "fishing" (trying to hone in on the problem, if it is not forthcoming is where the art lies (no pun intended). I favor the astrological sign. The data shows that the average astrologer has difficulty picking out a person's sign, but when the sign is offered, it represents a symbolic point of departure. The lore of western astrology can be traced back to the Babylonians and into the mists of prehistory. I quote the blurb on the back cover of *The Metaphysical Handbook*: "One needn't be a serious student to benefit from the expanded perspective on life that studying metaphysics offers. Even a casual involvement can sharpen your intuition and give deeper meaning to your life."

Skepticism. Formally, it is an epistemological stance, or a school of thought between realism and idealism, of remaining on the fence, holding a theory of knowledge those certain kinds of knowledge are impossible. More informally, skepticism as an expression of questioning or doubt can be applied to any topic, such as politics, religion, or pseudoscience (Wiki). The opposite is Dogmatism or believing in a philosophy or religion and adhering to the precepts because they are felt to be proper.

James Randi (b. 1928) is known as "The Amazing Randi," and he has had an amazing career both as a stage magician, appearing on a wide range of shows—in '60s hosting his own magic show on TV; in the '70s, appearing in the Alice Cooper Billion Dollar Babies Tour; and then, in the '80s becoming a debunker of public psychics who claimed to have paranormal powers. He did not like being called a debunker and preferred to be designated an investigator, claiming "...if you go into a situation calling yourself a debunker then it is as if you have prejudged the topic. It's not neutral or scientific, and it can turn people against you." A sign on his door reads: "Randi—Conjurer" (Wiki).

In 1973, Randi gained national attention with his appearance on Johnny Carson's *The Tonight Show* to confront psychokinesist Uri Geller. As reported online at groovyhistory.com, "...spoon-bending 'psychic' Uri Geller appeared on *The Tonight Show*—and walked into a trap set by host Johnny Carson and the magician/skeptic James 'The Amazing' Randi. It was one of the great 'gotcha' moments in TV history, and a highlight of a feud between Randi and Geller over the nature of magic." For Amazing Randi, this becomes a scientific endeavor, to purify the worldly domain of pseudoscience and psychic fakery, codename PROJECT ALPHA.

Randi's attack was two-pronged. First, he wanted to reveal the use of stage magic by practitioners of PSI phenomena; and second, he wanted to challenge parapsychologists to tighten their experimental controls. He claimed that the scientific community was being hoodwinked by traditional methods used by magicians to fool their audiences—tried-and-true sleight-of-hand and mental suggestion that had been going on since prerecorded history. Project Alpha began in 1979, with Randi creating a hoax, whereby he planted two stage magicians, with no claim to special powers other than their knowledge of stage magic—who claimed to have psychic powers—into an ongoing laboratory experiment at the McDonnell Laboratory for Psychical Research at the University of Washington. When the hoax was revealed, in 1981, all the participating scientists found they had been chasing a rabbit around a bush, when they only needed to look in their hats to see how empty they were of valid data.

The next step in the process was for parapsychologists to prevent themselves getting caught up in anything like a Project Beta. For investigators in all areas of PSI research, the results of Project Alpha had several benefits: (a) tightened security in empirical methodologies, for example trying to weed out publicity seekers; (b) greater insight into how easy it is to be duped by the magician's artform and the general vulnerability of belief systems; (c) an all-around re-evaluation of what more than a century of research had discovered and a clearer focus on the anomalies revealed in that research; and (d) a good old-fashioned shaking-awake of the experts, who have a tendency to drift into dogmatic slumber. In all, it was a decent day's work by a guy who has "Amazing" for a first name.

The psychokinetic activities of James Hydrick interest me. The video of Amazing Randi blocking the performance of Hydrick on the *That's My Line* TV show, in the early '80s was embarrassing. The Little Lord Fontenloy outfit and Prince Valiant haircut and wisp of a mustache was pure camp, and that the dude is a child molester (and one who is caught by police, who hear him discussing his telekinetic powers on a talk show) is karmically poetic. Later, he revealed he developed his trick in prison, and that he had not learned it from a Chinese master on the fourth level of consciousness (whatever that is) as he originally claimed. Hydrick confessed, "My whole idea behind this in the first place was to see how dumb America was. How dumb the world is" (Wiki)? Good job, Hydrick, as though we did not already know it. Thanks a lot.

Hydrick is a two-trick pony; he can move a pencil balanced on the edge of a table or move a page of a telephone book with the power of his mind. Actually, he was performing secret blowjobs. I will leave it there. He is still in prison.

Sai Baba may well have used his manifestation magic to impress the poor and the gullible and open them to practice, as well as reward his rich and sophisticated devotees with a bit of hocus pocus. Personally, I find Sai Baba a bit smarmy as a swami, but his legacy continues. I prefer the warrior-yogi sorcerers. Matter of taste, really.

In an etymological breakdown of the word, parapsychology, a number of words are suggested by the prefix, "para-": above, beside, near; but in our class, we settled on "beyond" to connect to "psyche": soul, personality, spirit, self. Beyond psychology. Beyond the self. Beyond the logos, or reason. Beyond belief.

Parapsychologists are interested in anomalous mental activity, thought processes that are different from the normal, that cannot be explained by the laws of physics or repeated with precision by scientific methods. If these "powers" can be measured, a more comprehensive understanding of how we know what we know can be determined, which is of epistemological interest to philosophy, psychology, and religion. Also, it might be of interest to art. Ted Sorios's psychokinetically projected images onto Polaroid film, utilizing a prop he called his "gizmo" (that contained a magnified image prepared in advance of the experiments) can be interpreted as an branch of the Abstract Expressionist school of happening art that was current during the '60s. Ted Sorios' manic "performances" need to be re-evaluated in this light.

Psycho/telekinesis, or psychokinesis (PK) is one branch of parapsychology, and is defined by Watt as "the influence of mind on an object, physical system, or biological system, without physical interaction" (221) . Mind over matter. Until the force of gravity is neatly integrated in a unified field theory of everything, Einstein will not rest in his grave, dreaming of spooky forces from afar. " Woo Woo" has been a term applied to this phenomenon, usually expressed with small, vibratory movements of the hands, perhaps sounding like the haunting sound of a ghost in the popular imagination. Sometimes the "Woouou" sound is drawn out.

Uri Geller's shtick was more sophisticated than Ted Sorios' pandemonium. Geller's professional showman style was more appropriate for TV audiences. He knew his way around a sound stage, and his manners were polished. Whether he could bend spoons without first manipulating the temper of the metal is doubtful. Amazing Randi debunked him on *The Tonight Show*, in the '80s. Geller had star quality and was resilient, as he also had (so the story goes) a clandestine career as a globetrotting Mossad spy. We were in the Cold War, and world governments were researching PSI to shift the balance of power among nation states—in other words, a fake psychic power became a prop a

world-wide discussion of PSI within the star circuit, feelers being put out, and flags raised in the collecting of data composed of rumors and disinformation and botched transmissions being received in counter-intelligence spying on the. I'll leave this tale for another day. It all leads back to a store of documents in the Nazi archives and from there to the Tibetans.

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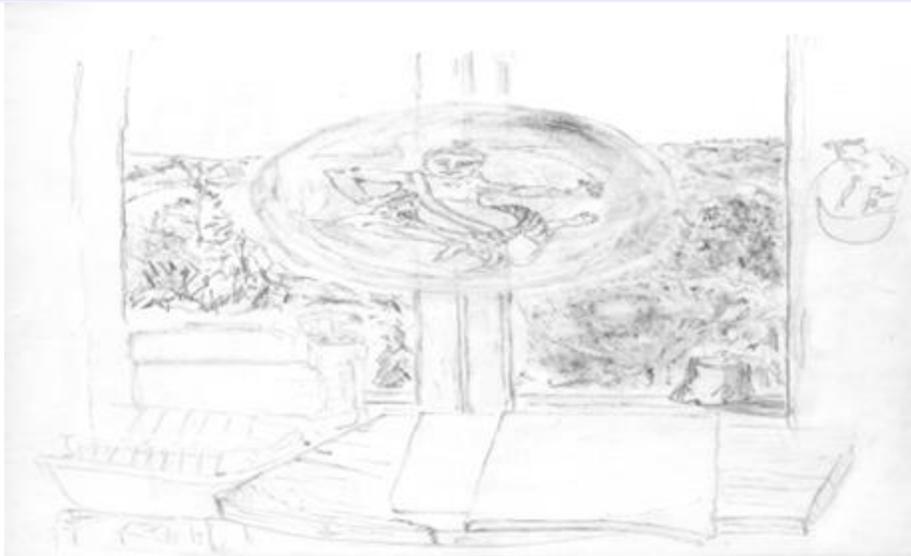
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Paranormal Peculiarities: Part 2
SAILING TO ÆTHERIAL ISLES

Jampa Dorje



SAILING TO ÆTHERIAL ISLES

Jampa Dorje

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Collage and drawings by the author.

Writings from Dr. Clayton Bohnet's CWU Phil 110
Beyond Belief? class, Fall, 2020.



SAILING TO ÆTHERIAL ISLES

“Up anchor!”—Introduction

I will sail in the fundamental tack as Kant's *Prolegomena*—asking, how do I know what I know? How is my knowledge structured and verified? Can I determine my knowledge is valid, if it is based upon scientific data, religious authority, or personal experience? In this brief paper, I will compare and contrast two anomalous forms of experience—Out-of-Body Experience (OBE) and Near-Death Experience (NDE)—within the approaches of parapsychology, psychology, neurobiology, and religious experience. I hope that, as I sail between clashing rocks of contradiction, I uncover some semblance of meaningful knowledge.

“Ruby grapes of Proserpine”—OBEs described

An OBE, or out-of-body experience, is just that, an experience of being outside your body. Culling information from *Medical News Today*, an online zine, and from Caroline

Watt's book, *Parapsychology*, the description of the experience is very consistent. One floats smoothly out of the body, usually to a position above the body, where the person can see themselves and the world from another vantage point. According to Watt, sounds, vibrations, and/or lights are sometimes reported (83). In general, the experience is blissful, and no harm comes to the person. After a brief suspension in space (or in some cases, due to a rude interruption) they return to their body. One in ten persons report having had an OBE at least once in their lifetime (Ibid. 82). Whether something leaves the body or not is still debated; scientific data suggests not.

Since the days of the Fox Sisters (1840s), paranormal experiences have been sensationalized, monetized, weaponized, and scientifically analyzed. Another approach to these endeavors is to focus on the esoteric explanations of OBEs and other anomalous cognitive activity that may be of significance to someone on a spiritual path.

In 1964, under the influence of a massive dose of peyote, I suffered a psychotic break. In one phase of this experience, while incarcerated in a detention cell ("the hole") in Alameda County Jail, I thought I was Michelangelo's statue of David being transported in the cargo hold of an ocean liner from Paris to New York; in another phase I thought I was Duchamp's *Glass*, which shattered en route. These imaginings led me to further cleanse *my doors of perception*.

In 2013, after four years in a solitary meditation retreat, I felt like I was, finally, fully in my body, and I left my cabin (Luminous Peak) on the mountain and got in my impulse red Toyota pickup, that I had stored, and drove to Santa Fe. Near Cerro Pedernal, a paranormal place, if there ever was one, I had a car wreck—no injuries but two totaled vehicles—that left me, and the two women and baby in the other car continuing in our same bodies yet seriously altered in our concepts of our ætheric bodies.

A Vajrayana OBE would be more elaborate than the usual scientific description because, with training in mind-body separation, you would be able to move your ætheric body across time as well as space: for example, the case of Jigme Lingpa (1730–1798), a Tibetan *tertön* of the Nyingma lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, to which I belong. He was the promulgator of the *Longchen Nyingthig*, the *Heart Essence* teachings of Longchenpa, from whom, according to tradition, he received a pure vision in which the teachings were revealed. The *Longchen Nyingthig* is the cycle of preparatory Dzogchen teachings that I practiced for my three-year retreat. The path of a *tertön* is the self-revelation of their own buddha mind, an ontological level of consciousness, recognized conceptually as the ground of Being. However, I have not yet learned the method of projecting myself into the future, except by archiving my written works.

Another radical OBE, told to me by Tulku Sang-ngag, is about an 11th c. Indian yogin, known as Padampa Sangye who was travelling to Tibet with an assistant. Padampa Sangye was young and handsome, and his assistant was old and ugly. During their

travels, they found a rotting elephant in a stream of water used by a nearby village and, out of compassion, Padampa decided to transfer his consciousness into the animal by practicing *phowa*—transferring his mindstream to animate a corpse (in this case, a form of psychokinesis)—thereby safely removing the pollution. While the mindstream of Padampa was otherwise engaged, his assistant decided to transfer his consciousness into Padampa's body and leave his own, worn-out body. Upon returning from his PK experience, Padampa (who became known as "Black Dampa") continued to Tibet, where he became the teacher of Machig Lapdrön, the *yidam* (tutelary deity) of my retreat.

"Undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns"—NDEs described

A near death experience (NDE) is the reported experience during a time where this person is in an extreme state of unconsciousness (i.e., medically dead) and then, returns to awakened consciousness. People who experience a NDE report different features of their experience. As reported by Watt, Kenneth Ring found in his research that during the interim, before a person returns from this extreme level of unconsciousness, a similar number of basic components can be present to different degrees: (1) a feeling of peace, (2) a feeling of body separation from the self, like in an OBE but often described as moving through a tube, (3) entering the darkness, (4) seeing a light, and (5) entering a light (Ibid. p. 100). More extensive experiences are reported by theosophists, mystics, poets, shamans, and yogins in the proceeding stages of a death experience;—for example, it is claimed by Lee W. Bailey, in his essay, "A 'Little Death': the Near Death Experience and Tibetan Delogs," that Tibetan *delogs* remain in a NDE for extended periods of time. However, so far, there is no data recording their brain waves in a continuous flatline.

The practice of *phowa* (sometimes called "spiritual suicide") is a Vajrayana meditation practice. A wiki elf describes this as the "practice of conscious dying" or the "transference of consciousness at the time of death" or the "mindstream transference" or the "enlightenment without meditation" practice. I have some accomplishment in this practice, but only some.

Soon after being ordained a monastic, in 1996, I attended a *phowa* retreat and received a transmission from Adzom Paylo Rinpoche. The ritual includes rigorous mantra recitation, visualization, and physical breath yoga. The vibratory activity of the practice initiates an opening in the cranium of the skull for consciousness to pass through. A stalk of kusha grass is inserted into the gap in the skull to signify the accomplishment of the practice. Of all the practitioners present, I was one of two whose cranium did not sufficiently respond. Adzom inspected my skull and said, "Good enough," which I took to mean a passing grade but with work yet to be done. I have the transmission and can work on this practice that promises to prevent me from

encountering some of the less desirable aspects of the after-death experience,—if there is one.

“A pair of normals”—OBEs and NDEs commonalty

OBEs and NDEs have much in common:—(1) usually, they do not last long; (2) there is an experience of “floating” blissfully; (3) the experience is vivid; (4) the amount of *gnosis* (spiritual message) is sometimes minimal and, at other times, of profound importance to the person; (5) unlike ESP and PK, they are not stage magic “tricks” that can be monetized or sensationalized.

One difference is that NDEs are reported less often than OBEs, and NDEs do not always occur near the event of actually dying (Ibid. p.98).. Clinical death is defined by van Lommel as: “a period of unconsciousness caused by insufficient blood supply to the brain” (Ibid. p. 103). If the period is not too long, people have been known to return to “normal” consciousness. Medical scientists look at this return as a lucky break for the patient. Neuroscientists want to probe deeper into the brain’s functions. Parapsychologists want to know if it has meaning. People who have this experience report different features. Being conscious of non-being is a gnosis transmission from Being. As All-knowing Longchenpa (1308–1364), puts it, in *A Treasure Trove of Spiritual Transmissions*:

Mind as pure expanse of space, in which things vanish
naturally and leave no trace,
arises with intensity from within, pristinely lucid.

“For 1/32nd of a second there is buddhamind, and the rest is delusion”—Psychological approach

Psychologists look at the NDE reports as symptomatic of clients with certain personality traits and or complexes due to trauma. Neurologists look at NDE reports and search for some malfunctioning part of the brain. As for the question of whether there is life after death or not, the experimental data is non-conclusive. Outside of a laboratory of some kind, it is difficult to gather information while NDEs are in progress. Yogins like to think of their cave as a laboratory.

In Orphic literature, upon dying, you encounter two bodies of water, a spring and a river. In the Grail legends you find yourself in a perilous forest. In the Tibetan *Shitro* scriptures (e.g. *Bardo Thödo!*) you are confronted by wrathful deities. I am unsure of the source of the idea of a tunnel with light at the end in the standard model NDE, but it sounds hopeful,

as in the expression, “There’s light at the end of the tunnel.”

Sogyal Rinpoche added a dimension to the *Bardo Thödol* in his *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, by directing the living to look on the process of dying as offering a person one more opportunity to awaken to the Clear Light of the ground of consciousness. The main point of death, in our transmigratory lives, or in our one & only life, is to help us learn to develop a compassionate heart-mind within this present embodied mind-consciousness.

While studying abnormal cognitive activity in the brain from both orthodox psychological and neurological paradigms, parapsychologists recognize that other explanations of reality and being may have validity. This open-mindedness (or mush-mindedness, as physicalists would have it) opens ontological and epistemological constructs and realms of inquiry usually reserved for literature, comparative mythology, metaphysics, and religion. The concept of what it means for something to exist must be stretched (in the sense of realist claims of the existence of abstract universals) to include areas beyond the Einsteinian description of three dimensions of space and one of time as a minimal requirement for something to exist. If the self, as Tim Newman, writing in *Medical News Today*, suggests, is a “neurological illusion,” what is it that is “dying”? And why (outside of the body experiencing pain in the process) should it be feared? When the physical existence of the self is called into question, a new notion of reality is required. As my lamas like to point out, “No self, no problem.”

“You never know”—Neurobiological approach

I have but little terminology and less understanding of this field of study. My daughter, Gina Turrugiano, who is faculty head of the Biology department at Brandeis University and who does research in homeostasis and neural circuit plasticity, told me that, apropos of the paranormal reports of OBEs and NDEs, the intense mantra recitations and visualizations over an extended period of time may allow yogins to develop what they designate as “secret channels” from the various *chakras* to areas of the brain that would otherwise be part of the autonomic nervous system.

“The body decays; don’t delay”—Comparing OBEs and NDEs

Drawing the following comparisons from Table 2, page 83, in Watts:—(1) a separation of the mind from the body is felt during an OBE but not in a NDE; (2) in an OBE the body is felt to separate from itself and can travel during the experience; in a NDE, the body remains in place but consciousness moves through a tunnel; (3) a “greater awareness of reality” is reported in an OBE, whereas, in a NBE, a greater appreciation of life is reported afterwards; (4) vibrations can occur in OBE as part of the experience, usually

experienced prior to the onset; in NDEs, vibrations from a defibrillator may be felt during a medical procedure; (5) a presence of beings can be experienced in OBEs, being touched or spoken to by another person, interrupting the OBE experience, whereas, in NDEs, persons from other timeframes and/or deities have been reported;—in mystical and yogic literature, these encounters can be interpreted in the context of a theological framework; (6) the experience of time can range for OBEs and NDEs:—without correct training, NDEs can alter physiological processes and create pathological conditions that do not seem to be in the best experience of the person having the NDE, whereas OBEs tend to end abruptly and are risky only when you are having sex and/or while driving at high speeds in an automobile; (7) seeing a bright light:—What kind of light is this? Is it sunlight, electrical light, or Dzog Chen “clear light”? In a Buddhist context, reflecting on the transience of life is an entryway for someone to turn Dharma; and as for feeling connected to the physical body,—if the OBE is a parallel experience to yogic levitation, the knowledge is useful for the yogi’s deconstruction of the sense of Self; if the OBE is induced (84), the entertainment factor of play can be exhilarating.

Entering the light is problematic. In Dzog Chen, entering the physical light, solar or electrical, is an erroneous path (*samsara*). My advice: be cautious with NDEs without a qualified teacher. My retreat wife, Lopön Beth, is doing daily practices, in the dark, in preparation for her Dark Retreat, where she will be sealed into an especially enclosed area for a week to introduce her to the intermediate states, or gap (Bardo Realm), between this life and her next one. She asked me, “Where do you think the light in my visions and dreams comes from?” Good question.

In both psychological and neurological approaches, the OBEs and NDEs are considered to be pathological conditions, as though something has gone haywire with the brain, whereas theosophists and religious ritual practitioners consider the OBE and NDE experiences to be meaningful. Parapsychologists hold their judgement and are interested in analyzing data garnered from these experiences. In this, they are becalmed in a Sargasso Sea of indeterminacy, while the psychoargonauts are having all the fun.

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Paranormal Peculiarities: Part 3
SAINTS, PSYCHICS, AND SCIENTISTS

Jampa Dorje



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SAINTS, PSYCHICS, AND SCIENTISTS

Sathya Sai Baba was an Indian guru and philanthropist. In 1940, at the age of fourteen he left his home to perform altruistic deeds. At the time of his death, he had founded 1,200 spiritual centers and established hospitals, clinics, drinking water projects, a university, auditoriums, and schools. Estimates of the numbers of his followers vary from 6 million up to nearly 100 million. Estimates of his wealth run as high as 1.4 trillion rupees, or close to 30 billion U.S. dollars. The usual allegations of financial shenanigans and inappropriate sexual activities have attended his reputation as a holy man, but he appeared to his followers as someone who could walk the talk. Sai Baba was known for his quote “Love All, Serve All. Help Ever, Hurt Never” (Wiki).

With his wild afro hairdo, he looks like a '70s used car salesman in a saffron jumpsuit, but whom am I, *Mr. Guru Garb*, to criticize his look. He was a fully-manifested mid-20th century Hindu guru—just what the hippies wanted, as well as spiritual seekers from other lands. And, what if he did use a little stage magic? He was good at it. For beginners, the insight that occurs by entertaining the possibility of a “miracle” may be a first step in developing ritual practice and a more evolved understanding of causality and that, with further practice, can bring self-realization within reach. Should spiritual paths be measured by secular standards? Maybe science should stick with measuring the material world with their material instruments, reducing every particle to its smallest magnitude. just to satisfy the analyst's need for validity. I asked my lama, Adzom Palyo Rinpoche, if I should merge my visualizations of Avalokiteshvara with my Jesus visualizations, and he said it was not necessary, as there was room for both.

Sai Baba could seemingly make objects materialize out of nothing. Adzom can apparently put the imprint of his hand into solid rock. Both events fall under the PSI phenomena of macro-psychokinesis. Sai Baba conjures gold necklaces out of thin air. Adzom moves matter with mental control.

There are revealed techniques for making things manifest. Check out “Out of Nowhere: Easy Production Magic Tricks” on *youTube*. I watched the video, “Sai Baba’s ‘Miraculous’ Power Exposed,” which seems to show him removing something from beneath the trophy being presented to a dignitary. The televised sequence was not shown on T.V. because the producers feared it revealed fakery; however it may have been just an awkward moment in the presentation itself, because it is not Sai Baba’s usual routine, where the “trick” is more reliably set up by palming an object or retrieving it from his robes. One method of Sai Baba’s ability to perform his manifestation of an object is to distract the audience, and another method is connected to the devotion of his followers which touches on their gullibility and shapes their acceptance of the activity. Among Sai Baba’s materializations, he produces a substance called *vibhuti*, a “sacred ash” that falls from a large vase and seems to be of an enormous quantity, but (like fine gold chains that can be rolled into a small space of concealment), ash can be compressed and released in small amounts in a continuous flow and appears as more than can be estimated by the audiences’ imaginations. In the youTube video, “Vibhutra Mantra”, there is an amazing amount of ash. We see the foreground and not the background from whence things arise. We see what we want (or need) to see.

I was present when Adzom Rinpoche pressed his thumb into a small piece of granite. I was standing inside a small cluster of people, at Tara Mandala Retreat Center, in Colorado, and I heard, felt, those in the front express the clear sound of astonishment, “Ah!” On the top of the rock was a clear imprint of his thumb, but on the back side, there was a trace, a smudge, of his forefinger, that he claimed was due to someone not fully believing. I was sure it was me, but I kept my mouth shut. I thought this last bit of half-finished artwork was a good touch, for believability. Afterwards,—seeing him sitting in a halo of rainbow light and feeling a double rainbow in my heart—watching him raise his vajra scepter at a dramatic moment in an dharma empowerment just as a bolt of lightning struck a tree, near the yurt where we were practicing—and after chanting the heart mantra of a wrathful deity with him during a rapidly approaching prairie fire and seeing it burn itself out when the wind reversed course, I developed devotion and learned to be a sorcerer’s apprentice. I wanted the knowledge and the insight that would come from it. I could have applied the formula $x_{n+1} = rx_n(1-x_n)$ that is the logistic map connecting fluid convection, neuron firing, the Mandelbrot set and so much more to the statistical probabilities of these being random events in the natural world without psychokinetic activity being involved, but where is the romance in that?

The Psychology of Psychic Deception

We go to psychic readers because we are worriers. We cannot see into the future. We have curiosity about fate and destiny but cannot construct a paradigm. Psychic readings are a kind of intoxication—a Grail—a communion with the spirit of oneself, in which all things are possible and all querents are rewarded. A psychic reading promises to let me out of my box, that I may have a temporary suspension of belief—an OBE, while in the body, sitting with the psychic—while ze “fishes around” in hir 3rd Eye—intuitive mind—assembling profiling signs from the features and mannerisms of the querent, analyzing the elemental spirit (æther) world, in a word—air, earth, water, fire—and their modes—fixed, cardinal, mutable—so as to divine the future.

Much of this is done by the setting in which the “magic” takes place, the *mis en scene*—because mindset and setting are fundamental to tuning into the psychic channel, before dropping into another “bardo” of consciousness. Incense and crystals, smoke and mirrors.

An aside: My astrologer, David Pond, who has a handle of the position of the wandering planets, as well as the headlines, advises me that the game heats up later this week—10/5/2020, as The Donald leaves Walter Reed and the Proud Boys stand by—as Mars, the warrior planet, gets activated by volcanic Pluto bringing the test of the right use of power. The high road is to use your power in such a way that is in your best interest as well as others, while also doing no harm to self or others. The challenge is in handling the volatility of this potentially explosive energy—as a militia calling themselves the “Wolverine Watchmen” get caught in a plot to kidnap the governor of Michigan.

Who and What Left the Body?

When someone feels they are traveling outside of their body, they are having an OBE, an out-of-body experience. Parapsychologists want to know who or what “leaves” the body of the embodied mind. Can my consciousness exist outside the hunk of meat I call my body? Is consciousness a creation of the kludge we call a brain or of some other “spectral” quality? Pretty much the project ends there, and the question, “If the mind exists outside the body, does this indicate it has a meaningful existence?” is left to the poets and philosophers.

Neurological research into the matter takes the physicalist approach further by boring into the tissue of the brain, as though it was a piece of computer hardware gone haywire. This approach is biased by its predisposition to look for pathological symptoms in the brain’s neurological structures and circuitry.

Nobody is really looking sub-atomically. With a “ghost in the machine” well documented by Koestler & Co., it would require a particle accelerator the size of the earth to measure the necessary “strings”—and this is not in the budget. Better to invest money in micrometry, claims Sabina Hossenfeld, a physicist I follow on youTube.

Psychological approach: Clinicians do not want to see abnormal symptoms of behavior,

so reporting too many OBEs between sessions, will imply you are self-medicating and intervention will occur with the risk of ensuing lockdown. If these experiences are not self-induced, brain scans and neurological tests can be administered. If the results do not indicate physical problems, psychological problems have to be addressed. Personality types, age/race/class/sex/gender factors come into play. Freud will ask questions about my upbringing; Skinner will implant electrodes; Perls will suggest enhanced awareness (mindfulness meditation); and Jung will ask my astrological sign; and we are back to the first step in parapsychology, to be curious of the possibilities—can a paranormal experience be a “sign” of connecting with the something outside the box of personality (of Self), a step in the direction of awakening from dogmatic sleep? Or,—it could herald a psychotic break, the hearing of voices and seeing of visions that order me to do evil deeds? Always a risk in these waters. Requires a poet to guide the way.

WHO? WHAT? LEFT? BODY? The four elements of this sentence—who, what, left, and body—require semiotic, phenomenological and inductive analysis within the three approaches of parapsychology—application of empirical methodologies, neurological abnormalities, and personality traits susceptible to pathological cognitive dissonance,—and the added dimension of “spiritual” markers on the slow path to enlightenment—must be supplied before my philosophical judgement is proposed. OBEs have common features with NDEs, the main one being “something leaves the body or is about to leave the body.” Or not.

What and Who, seem to be the same entity, only What has less personality—an essence of the person, a soul, as Christians term it;—or something more robust, something that includes both the consciousness of the person and their unconscious as well, a psyche, as Jungian psychologists term it. Whatever its form or content (and weight, 21 grams?), it “moves.” It “hovers” (like a drone) in an OBE or travels through a “tunnel” (on an allegorical Alice in Wonderland-like adventure), but without the body—in both cases, without the body, that implies disembodied consciousness (a *mindstream*, in a Buddhist context), that, in turn, implies a belief in transcendental dimensions of existence, not measurable by material instruments or delineated by rational interpretations of beingness. This concept in a radical form of idealism, where Emptiness is cognizant.

What is precognition? What is the difference between precognition and presentiment?

Watt defines precognition as the conscious “perception of information about future events” (also known as foresight or prophecy) and she defines presentiment as, “the unconscious perception of future events or information...measured indirectly, either through physiological measures or through performance on cognitive or behavioral tasks” (220). The difference lies in the degree of consciousness of the person receiving the information (or, in terms of someone on a spiritual path, gnosis).

Early ESP research, especially the work of the parapsychology pioneer, J.B. Rhine,

involved applying earlier methodologies used to test for clairvoyance (observing events or things at a distance) to the phenomena of precognition. Rhine collected statistical data from the experimental use of Zeller Cards (a series of playing cards with 5 different symbols), that required the reader to mentally identify (without viewing with the eyes) a randomly chosen card. After more than a decade of research, Rhine concluded that “ESP is a natural mode of perception and an integral part of mental life (Watt, p.143). However, skeptics persisted in tightening the screws on the formation of the methodologies used to gather data. Kennedy and Uphoff called for more objectivity (144). As Rhine’s methods “improved,” his results were less conclusive (146).

In the 1960s, parapsychologists decided to shift course. Rather than trying to measure the activity of “guessing” (precognition), the focus was on “exploring volunteers’ hunches, intuitions, and ‘gut feelings’” (163). Stanford speculated that the source of precognition was connected to our evolutionary consciousness, that allowed us to sense danger, and was not easily accessed by our awoken mind. Vassy measured the precognitive effects of a volunteer’s behavior when an electrical shock was added to the randomness. In the 1990s, Radin and Bierman refined this to showing volunteers examples of shocking photos in the mix (164ff). The main idea was to “feel” the future, rather than “think” the future. Watts concludes that, as experimental controls have improved, the paranormal ESP events are more difficult to dismiss (168).

From my personal experience I can relate an instance, while I was in retreat, of coming to the end of a million recitations of the Arya Tara heart mantra, something like 900,000, as I circumambulated my cabin, Luminous Peak, and I looked down the valley and saw a shaft of rainbow light engulfing the Tara Temple. High mountain valleys produce many rainbow events, but this one was dramatic, and I regarded the sight as an auspicious sign of accomplishment. My lama would never say, “Good yogi, well done,” but I would know he was happy with my progress, when he gave me further practices to do, which he did,—and I was left to evaluate and integrate the richness of the rainbow experience by myself.

What is the nature and role of criticism in the history of the development of parapsychology?

“Science is the best thing that has happened to human beings...
but we can do it better.”

—John Ioannidis (scopeblog.stanford.edu)

In scientific methodology, a researcher does not initially advance an opinion that a theory is right or wrong but inquires how it has been formed and follows the procedures as to how the theory was arrived at and checks, again and again, to see if the data is valid. Paul Feyerabend, in *Against Method*, says, “All methodologies, even the most obvious ones, have their limits.” Contending that science does not run on fixed rules, he further states that distinguishing science from pseudoscience on objective grounds is not possible (Wiki “Criticism of Science”).

The Society for Psychical Research was created by spiritualist, Edmund Rogers, in 1882, as an attempt to bring psychic research into a more respectable milieu. The field of parapsychology has formally been under attack as a pseudoscience, since John Edgar Coover published the negative results of his ESP laboratory trials, in 1917. By 1927, J.B. Rhine had established laboratory research protocols into paranormal activity. The research had moved from the “spirit raps” of the Fox Sisters, in the 1840s, to studies in telepathy, precognition, clairvoyance, psychokinesis, as well as out-of-body and near-death experiences (Watt, *Parapsychology: A Beginner's Guide*, Oneworld, London, 2016). Rhine comes under attack on multiple fronts—“no detectible medium for transference of data,” from the physicists; “too many possibilities for fraud,” from the ethicists; “more to know about the physical brain than with an unknown, imaginary brain,” from the psychologists,—so like reductionists to confuse mind (located in the heart chakra) with a brain that is another sense preceptor, located in the head. Rhine persisted in his vision, refining his praxis, creating an extensive meta-critical level of research into the nature of research itself (143).

Psychologists in the 1970s began to apply their own version of pseudo-yogic meditative techniques (*samatha*, *vipassana*, and guided visualizations) that emerge as the preliminary practices of “ganzfeld” mediumship. The ganzfeld technique attempts to isolate and create a conducive setting for the experiment of transference of image or thought data between two participants in separate, isolated environments. Initially, the data collected by Charles Honorton showed favorable results for the existence of extra-sensory perception.

Critical of Honorton’s work, Ray Hyman claimed there were problems with “sensory leakage between senders and receivers, and poor randomization during the selection of the target” (152). In the process of their debate, they collaborated on a voluminous correspondence concerning research methods. In the 1980s, Honorton improved his methods by building a computerized system that automated and improved his data collection (*autoganzfeld*) and showed improved results for PSI phenomena (153).

In the 1990s, Honorton collaborated with Daryl Bem and produced new, reified results, and this, in turn, brought new scrutiny to ongoing parapsychological research, as well as to the new field of meta-analysis (the analysis of research methods). Social psychologist Robert Rosenthal claimed, “Science in general and parapsychological inquiry in particular have been well served by the...ganzfeld debate” (156).

What most intrigues me in this whole parapsychological endeavor is how the major contribution to science is the amount of work it takes to disprove something and, still, be left with something to prove.

With nothing to prove, I rest in my lama’s mindstream.

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AN INQUIRY INTO CONS PIRACY THEORIES

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AN INQUIRY INTO CONSPIRACY THEORIES

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THE INVISIBLE GOD IN CONSPIRACY THEORIES

*The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing
the world he didn't exist.*

—Charles Baudelaire

As I write this, President Trump refuses to concede the 2020 election to President-elect Biden and promotes a conspiracy theory that the election was rigged. In our present political climate, conspiracy theories abound. In this essay, I will present some of the central concepts from Quassim Cassam's 2019 book, *Conspiracy Theories*. I will apply them to two contemporary conspiracy theories—The Sandy Hook School Shooting and QAnon. My plan is to posit two separate overviews of two separate conspiracy theories (CTs). I will, then compare these theories and from my conclusions claim that analysis of conspiracy theories is important and aids me in understanding the present social and political unrest.

Quassim Cassam is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Warwick who wrote an article for the digital magazine *Aeon*, in 2015, that dealt with conspiracy theories as “the result of bad thinking and of the intellectual character traits that result in bad thinking” (vi). In his book, Cassam moves away from his earlier thinking about conspiracy theories and presents a new thesis, that CTs are best understood as political propaganda (7). He understands that there are “conspiracies” in the historical record, but his focus is on theories that attempt to explain events by constructing Conspiracy Theory narratives with minimal factual data.

These CTs present themselves with recognizable characteristics. According to Cassam, the special characteristic of CTs are: they are *speculative*, and the ideas are not backed up by reliable evidence; the ideas are pursued by *amateur* detectives; the ideas are always *contrary* to the official story; the conspiracy suggests some deeper, *esoteric* cause to the events; the CT solution has a *premodern* ring to it; and the logic holding the theory together is circular and leaves the believer *self-sealed* in their mindset (97). Regardless of the amateur,

premodern, and contrarian nature of the enterprise, the main weakness of the CT are: (1) its speculative nature and the flimsy evidence presented, (2) the allure of the hidden meanings attached to the cause, and (3) the logic used to arrive at the conclusion. If you peak under the surface, you find an abysmal confluence of structural disjointedness. Cassam says:

From the fact that a theory is speculative it doesn't follow that it is false. From the fact that a theory is contrarian or esoteric it doesn't follow that it is false either. Amateurs can and do sometimes discover truths missed by professionals. And sometimes major events do have a deeper meaning. But now put all these things together and you have a type of theory that is unlikely to be true. That's why we aren't justified in believing Conspiracy Theories. They aren't credible (29).

Another aspect of the nature of CTs is in the epistemological biases that appear in the development of the construction from their foundational ideas. Cassam posits three biases: (1) *intentionality bias*—the tendency to assume that things happen because they were intended rather than accidental; (2) *confirmation bias*—the tendency to look only for evidence that supports what one already believes while ignoring contrary evidence; (3) *proportionality bias*—the tendency to assume that the scale of an event's cause must match the scale of the event itself (40-41).

Realizing that my own confirmation bias will enter into how I weight my evidence, I will relate the history of two Conspiracy Theories, The Sandy Hook School Shootings and QAnon, and analyze them in terms of Cassam's ideas.

Sandy Hook Conspiracy

On December 14, 2012, at 9:35 AM, Adam Lanza, a resident of Newtown, New York, walked into the Sandy Hook Elementary School with a Bushmaster rifle and 10 mags of ammunition and fatally shot twenty children, ages 5-7, and six adult staff members. At 9:40, he committed suicide with his rifle. Within five minutes, he had committed one of the largest mass shootings in modern U.S. history.

Shortly after the tragedy in Newtown, conspiracy theorists began speculating that, contrary to official reports, deeper, more sinister activities were behind the events. Some claimed the events were a hoax; some claimed the events had not even occurred, or, if they had, were different than what had been reported; and some claimed the events were a "false flag" operation, meaning they were a distraction from a different Machiavellian plot.

The *Wikipedia* article "Sandy Hook Conspiracy" details speculations by conspiracy theorists from a world of sources: (1) the N.R.A. claimed it was a government hoax to push through gun control legislation and overturn the 2nd Amendment and promoted armed police in every school; (2) Iranian TV suggested it was a crime perpetrated by Israeli death squads in retaliation for diminished Israel-US relations, echoing other anti-Semitic sentiments; (3) Ben Swann, a *Fox News* host, reported that there were other shooters involved; (4) a blogger offered an unsubstantiated report that the event was connected to a testimony that Alan Lanza's father was to give to a Senate committee in a financial scandal; (5) in a now defunct

YouTube video, “We Need to Talk About Sandy Hook,” it was revealed there were discrepancies in the time signatures of early Sandy Hook postings, although, according to a debunker at *Snopes.com*, such postings can occur due pages being repurposed; (7) James Fetzer and Mike Palacek, in a book, *Nobody Died at Sandy Hook*, claimed that the whole event was a Federal Evacuation Drill with child actors—a report that people were walking around in circles, as could be seen from helicopter coverage, and it was deduced that these people, the parents, actually were actors just milling around, waiting to “go on” rather than grief-stricken parents in a state of shock; and (8) perhaps, the most rigorous and egregious assault on the families of the victims was by Alex Jones, of *Info Wars*, who walked a fine line between freedom of speech and defamation, claimed that the Sandy Hook mass killing did not even happen. He now admits it happened and blames psychosis for his claims. He was fined \$100,000, but he remains resolutely uncontrite.

Turning to the intentionality in this tragedy, there are many questions about the motivations of twenty-year-old Alan Lanza that caused him to commit such a heinous crime. An online news show, TVT, reported extensively on Lanza’s physical and mental condition, diagnoses ranging from an obsessive-compulsive personality disorder, Asperger’s syndrome, anorexia, to undiagnosed schizophrenia. He did not leave a suicide note or a screed that detailed his objective or revealed his state of mind.

However, a year before the shooting, Lanza gave an interview on a segment of a New York radio show (called “Anarchist”), and he talked about an event in the news where a chimpanzee, named Travis, who had always been well-behaved, without warning, ripped the face off a woman. He compared this to a parallel attack by a mall shooter, and he chastised the mainstream media for not seeing the similarity, claiming: “Civilization is something which just happens to exist without us having to do anything, because every newborn child is born in a chimp-like state, and civilization is only sustained by conditioning them for years on end.” TVT host Ana Kasparian, who reported on this interview, dismissed Lanza’s claim as being deranged thinking and implied that he had other motives. This aligns with Cassam’s claim (26) that, in general, conspiracy theorists have a premodern feel to them—with Sandy Hook, the ages old “Militia” myth—rather than a causal sequence of events explained in terms of the existential idiom, “shit happens”—an American version of Camus’ character in *The Stranger*. In this reading, Lanza’s random act is an absurd event.

QAnon Conspiracy

QAnon followers claim that international liberal elites—mainly Democrat politicians and Hollywood stars—are involved in a Satanic pedophilia cabal. Billionaire George Soros and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton are designated the main culprits, along with such Hollywood celebs as Tom Hanks and Roman Polanski. Q, the anonymous source who has top secret clearance from the U.S. Department of Energy, generated this theory to his followers, during the 2019 impeachment trial, reporting online that President Donald Trump was in league with Special Council Robert Muller to track down the pedophiles. This theory seems to have morphed out of the earlier “Pizzagate” conspiracy, left-over from the 2016 election campaign, where a child-sex ring was being run out of the basement of the Comet Ping Pong pizzeria, in Washington, DC. During this time, Edgar Maddison Welch traveled to the pizzeria to investigate and discharged his semi-automatic weapon, much to the chagrin of the

clientele (*Wiki*). There is no basement at the Comet Ping Pong Pizzeria.

In an expanded cosmos of paranoiac thinking, Q is not a federal employee, working to save us from the Deep State; Q is a disguise for the “Queen of Peace” (Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven). The blurb on the back cover of the book, *The Big Q and the Little Q*, it says:

Everyone has heard of “Q”. Who is “Q” and “Qanon”? In every period there is a book for the time that man is in. This is the book. A must read now. Find out all about the coming storm in this edge of the seat read. A Friend of Medjugorje exposes the Divine mandate upon the earth and how it is manifesting physically and spiritually.

Everyone is invited to investigate with an open mind the events which are occurring in the small Bosnia-Herzegovina village of Medjugorje. I put on my critical thinking hat and headed for Medjugorje, but before I got far, I ran into my friend, Quornesha S. Lemon, a psychic transpersonal life coach and author, who told me:

“The Letter Q in your waking life, dream life, synchronicity, in a name is symbolic of high intelligence, integrity, class, and tenacity. Those who are opponents of the letter Q, will not stand...The letter ‘Q’ is a message that you are to use internal wisdom and call upon the assistance of higher help in every life challenge.”

The letter Q is numerologically an 8. Being a native of the Eighth House, Scorpio—the house of death, sex, and transformations—I was glad for the guidance.

. . . .

Both the Sandy Hook and the QAnon Conspiracies display Cassam’s 5 aspects:

Sandy Hook, speculative: false flag; QAnon, speculative, based upon a questionable source, Q

Sandy Hook, contrary: shooting did not happen; QAnon, contrary: no person per se (Epstein?)

Sandy Hook, amateur: detectives not at scene; QAnon, amateur: whole CT may be a Alternative Reality game

Sandy Hook, esoteric: Deep State benefits; QAnon, esoteric: Deep State & Satan combined

Sandy Hook, premodern: focus on 2nd Amendment; QAnon: long history of Blood Libel

Sandy Hook & QAnon locked logic: confirmation biases lead both followers to follow their own biases

. . . .

The Sandy Hook Conspiracy mirrors QAnon. You have children in both instances, but in one the children are being disappeared and abused (behind the scenes) and in the other they are being killed with bullets (meaningless bodies on the ground). In QAnon the demons are exterior—out there, beyond my perception, things I fear or hate, Clinton (misogyny) and Soros (antisemitism), and in Sandy Hook the demon is an individual with a triggered psychosis from within the system, a young person killing young children, and then the killer

killing himself in the aftermath. QAnon is speculative in the theological and political realms, and Sandy Hook is speculative in the existential and political realms. The two conspiracies involve contrary intentionality biases. QAnon projects a sinister but difficult to prove plot to throw shade on a political opponent, while the Sandy Hook Killings is raw data that must be denied or rendered harmless, for the horror that it is, and to disguise the abject stupidity of guns.

The idea of taking down a Satanic cult of pedophiles can make a person feel sexy or powerful or that one's consciousness is quirkily expanded (religious). As regards QAnon, the union of Soros and Clinton has a parallel with other CTs: the Jaqueline Kennedy-Onassis couple, the Princess Di-Dodi Al Fayed couple, and the Yeshe Tsogal-Padmasambhava couple. Or, it may be merely metrological—a measurement bias—in my case, the shortest distance between two thoughts goes through Tibet.

With QAnon, the proportionality of the scale of response is difficult to determine, as it is hard to evaluate what documented “event” Q followers are responding to. It can be a Zoroastrian duel between good and evil or a ubiquitous ontological malaise fueled by antisemitism and class warfare—George Soros is a billionaire Jewish philanthropist and Hillary Clinton is a woman and was a Secretary of State during the Obama presidency and should be “locked up.” If you fear women politicians and hate rich Jews and call them “Satanic blood-drinking, pedophilic cannibals,” your potent language, *a fortiori*, helps to indict them. Hatred lets a person focus on a single thing and simplify their metaphysics.

Hopefully, the Sandy Hook Conspiracy has been laid to rest, but QAnon is alive and flourishing. For no other purpose than to re-elect a tragically failed president and potential tyrant, the QAnonists are now co-opting the “Save Our Children” slogan from a legit non-profit group, the Save the Children Fund, a group that has been working for the last hundred years to improve the lives of children.

Not long ago QAnon was a fringe group, but it networked itself on the internet and became a form of propaganda. Media attention glorified the followers and brought focus to their message. There may be a grain of truth in this 11/06/20 *New York Times* article, “Study Considers a Link Between QAnon and Polling Errors,” by Cade Metz, that states there is

...a strong statistical correlation between state polls that underestimated Mr. Trump's chances and a higher-than-average volume of QAnon activity in those states, including Wisconsin, Michigan and Ohio. “The higher the support for QAnon in each state, the more the polls underestimated the support for Trump,” said Emilio Ferrara, the University of Southern California professor who is overseeing the study.

Ferrara concludes that QAnon is suspicious of polls and avoids them. I cannot vouch for the authenticity of the data, and it may be bogus, but QAnon is now a recognized player on the political stage. If Trump builds a media empire, QAnon will be part of the paying audience and contribute to the furtherance of misinformation and propaganda, and this will not align with my Mahayanist-Madisonian political persuasion.

From a Mahayanist perspective, a dangerous effect of both the Sandy Hook and QAnon CTs is the lack of empathy for the actual kidnapping and mistreatment of children and righteous indignation for those who are (or system that is) to blame. Personally, as a participant in the Red Sand Project to bring about awareness of those suffering in modern day slavery, I take offence at the shenanigans of QAnon. Cassam points out that conspiracy theorists are more interested in their secret sources than they are about solving human problems:

One effect of obsessing about events that are best explained in personal rather than structural term is to divert attention away from social issues that are best explained in structural rather than personal terms (87).

When asked why I do not cross the aisle and enter debate with conspiracists, I said, “I don’t want to be associated with those freaks.” This is an esthetic bias. I will work on my equanimity and find something adorable about the deplorables, but I am not buying into their Logos.

Jim Jeffries made this critique on his youTube show, “When you utterly trust yourself, it doesn’t get you to the truth; it gets you to *your* truth, in the Age of Bullshit.” Ok, it is easy to blow all this off as “bullshit”—however, I am reluctant to leaving the Socratic mission to attain clear understanding and lucid thinking in an epistemological outhouse.

Cassam believes that the Internet has had a great deal to do with the spreading of conspiracy theories in contemporary times:

The Internet increases the accessibility of Conspiracy Theories and the speed with which they can be transmitted from one person to another...But if the Internet is part of the problem, then it is also part of the solution. True, the Internet makes conspiracy Theories more accessible, but it also makes it easier to rebut them (117).

Conspiracy theories are seductive. There is a thrill that comes with solving a puzzle. It may be pointless to try and change the mind of Alex Jones, but there are young minds to attended to. As more information flows through the Internet, teachers will have to revamp their pedagogical models to teach critical thinking (combined with resting-in-the-nature-of-mind meditation, I would think) to earlier age groups, in the hope of improving their students’ ability to tell information from misinformation from disinformation. Thinking for yourself and finding space and time to think is a problematic practice, and though the vocation of teaching can be viewed as mundane, it comes with transcendental perks. All blessings flow from the lama.

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FOLLOWING IN THE WAKE OF QUASSIM CASSAM

How many conspiracy theorists does it take to change a lightbulb?

****You won't believe me.****

Conspiracy Theories are belief structures, often with gaps in the construction of the storyline, which reject the official story and propose other causal factors and reasons for the event in question. Since the symbolic nature of these stories is open-ended, they can be uniquely fused together, in part or in whole, to create explanations for any phenomenological activity.

In his book, *Conspiracy Theories*, Cassam distinguishes between theories about conspiracies that occurred in the historical record and those which he designates “Conspiracy Theories” (upper case) because they are bogus explanations of purported events. The Wiki elf says: “Conspiracy theories usually deny consensus or cannot be proven using the historical or scientific method and are not to be confused with research concerning verified conspiracies...In principle, conspiracy theories are not false by default and their validity depends on evidence just as in any theory. However, they are often discredited a priori due to the cumbersome and improbable nature of many of them.” In other words, always carry Occam’s Razor to your intellectual knife fights.

CTs present themselves with recognizable characteristics. According to Cassam, the special characteristic of CTs are: they are *speculative*, and the ideas are not backed up by reliable evidence; the ideas are pursued by *amateur* detectives; the ideas are always *contrary* to the official story; the conspiracy suggests some deeper, *esoteric* cause to the events; the CT solution has a *premodern* ring to it; and the logic holding the theory together is circular and leaves the believer *self-sealed* in their mindset. I will discuss the QAnon Conspiracy Theory with regards to: (1) its speculative nature, (2) the allure of the esoteric meanings attached to the cause, and (3) the premodern ring to the narrative.

QAnon is a group of theories or conjectures created by an anonymous personage, called Q, who works within the government, and sends messages to his followers, and who, in the first generation of the Conspiracy, claimed that there is a cult of Satanic blood drinking baby eating pedophiles running a sex ring out of the basement of a pizza parlor, and to this was added an opposing force led by President Trump, who is (still) planning a day of reckoning referred to as “The Storm”, during which time the evil forces will face a reckoning of Biblical proportions.

Many CTs arise after a horrific event, and then the suppositions about what happened and why lead to false conclusions (i.e. JFK, 9/11), but QAnon speculates on things that cannot be seen along with things that have not yet happened. The main thrust of Q’s intention is to throw shade on a wide variety of opponents: figures operating in political, financial, and social realms (Hollywood celebs, in general—with Tom Hanks, I am thinking it is *The Celestine Prophecy* CT connection). Mixed into this tossed salad of a narrative are motifs of misogyny (Clinton), antisemitism (Soros), and Satan. QAnon is speculative in both the theological and sociopolitical realms.

On the surface, the QAnon formula appears simplistic—throwing shade with hyperbolic terms. QAnon is more complex, and as regards the esoteric aspect (beyond the strange accusation and Leftist cast of characters), the Satanic element leads down an occult rabbit

hole. A traditional Satanic cult (e.g., Wicca) practices witchcraft and nature worship based on ancient rituals, yet with QAnon, the term Satan, in the early generation of the narrative, was used only as a scary derogatory adjective and later became the evangelical end-of-days overlay to a media-morphing Beast. When speculating on the QAnon meaning, there are branches of Cabbalistic, Astrological, and Numerological research that can be explored in a quest for the Source. Most QAnon followers are not versed in esoteric lore, but the connections open onto an array of exotic Biblical and metaphysical speculations, and this aspect can be intellectually enticing (e.g. the letter Q corresponding to the number 8, in the *Torah*, would be associated with the day following God's well-earned rest from His labors, which would be the day He planted the Tree of Knowledge, and so on).

I said the formula for QAnon appears simplistic, even with a Zoroastrian Cosmic Duel between Clinton and Trump, and this gives it a premodern feel, by resurrecting the Blood Libel Elders of Zion sitting down to eat babies at a world-wide network of pizzerias vibe, but there is a more frightening postmodern aspect to this particular CT—it is an information virus in the form of a virtual reality game that is playing puppeteer with its believers. It is tied to a natural propensity that humans have, allowing us to form pattern recognitions. The term *apophenia* means the tendency to perceive a connection or meaningful pattern between unrelated or random objects and ideas (Wiki).

QAnon has been compared to an Alternative Reality Game (ARG). However, QAnon is different from a game. According to Rabbit Rabbit's "A Game Designer's Analysis Of QAnon: Playing with Reality" (<https://medium.com/curiouserstitute/a-game-designers-analysis-of-qanon-580972548be5>):

Here apophenia is the point of everything. There are no scripted plots. There are no puzzles to solve created by game designers. There are no solutions. QAnon grows on the wild misinterpretation of random data, presented in a suggestive fashion in a milieu designed to help the users come to the intended misunderstanding. Maybe "guided apophenia" is a better phrase. Guided because the puppet masters are directly involved in hinting about the desired conclusions. They have pre-seeded the conclusions. They are constantly getting the player lost by pointing out unrelated random events and a meaning for them that fits the propaganda message Q is delivering. There is no reality here. No actual solution in the real world. Instead, this is a breadcrumb trail AWAY from reality. Away from actual solutions and towards a dangerous psychological rush. It works very well because when you "figure it out yourself" you own it. You experience the thrill of discovery, the excitement of the rabbit hole, the acceptance of a community that loves and respects you. Because you were convinced to "connect the dots yourself" you can see the absolute logic of it. This is the conclusion you arrived at.

Joe M (@StormIsUponUs) January 31, 2019, testified: "If you truly loved America, and you came across Q, you would support it even if you thought it was a guy in his mother's basement because of the good it is doing in uniting our fractured nation. MAGA who denounce Q are frauds."

This time, as Q bites his tail and eats crow, after the unfulfilled promise of Trump and MAGA, QAnon is going to assemble other correspondences and continue to be an epistemological nightmare.

To believe a Conspiracy Theory, a belief holder does not have to have proof of the validity of the belief. An ideology will be accepted as true if it serves to create a sense of continuity, coherence, and cohesion among its members by attempting to explain a given situation and, perhaps, by proffering hope for a better future. An ideology is more than a set of ideas because it promises a path to accomplish practical goals. Machiavelli, in *The Prince*, claimed that the main objective of politics was to acquire and hold onto power. Ideologies are a useful tool in this endeavor.

Leaving aside the Machiavellian endeavors of *conspiracy entrepreneurs* and the mental quirks of the human mind—e.g., the part of the brain, known as the *amygdala*, initiating what Dennett calls “drafts” of information to create a coherent narrative—the world quite often manifests as incoherent and downright dangerous. When people encounter complicated and confusing information, they look for explanations. CTs, no matter how screwy, offer explanations and pithy slogans to help set the agenda. Beyond the need to understand complicated ideas and a need to control one’s life during an existential crisis, the need to belong to a group that considers one’s ideas sane is a persuasive motivation to adhere to a one size fits all ideology (i.e., the code, “wwg1wga” means “where we go one, we go all”).

According to Cassam, anyone can get caught up in a Conspiracy Theory. Marginalized people, who feel psychologically and socio-politically disempowered, could well believe in Conspiracy Theories because of their personal experience of oppression, but why would a moderate, white, middle class, socially privileged individual get caught up in Conspiracy Theories? Cassam says: “For all the talk of about ideology and negative life events, there’s also the fact that Conspiracy Theories are actually *seductive*” (58), and he compares a CT to a good detective novel. Cassam pushes this simile further and compares CTs to morality tales. Taking the “morality tale” idea a step further, Cassam suggests there can be a deep religious element inherent in CTs. He quotes Tim Crane (*The Meaning of Belief: Religion from an Atheist’s Point of View*) that the fear expressed as “This can’t be all there is; there must be more to the world” (59) is an eschatological concern of Conspiracy Theorists. At this juncture, anyone of any social status can get drawn into a pattern of connections that give a feeling of meaningfulness. As Cassam says, “The religious impulse is to look for meaning, and one way to satisfy that impulse is to be a Conspiracy Theorist” (60). It feels empowering to fight for an ideal. Honesty and truth-telling are low on the value scale and the first casualties, when in conflict with attaining higher goals.

QAnon believers are presently on the ascendent. They seem to be predominantly white, poor, and uneducated, and in this they are predictable by having many of the commonly ascribed

traits associated with blood libel enthusiasts and anti-elitist Hillary haters, but personality traits do not a CTist make. On a different plane, I think QAnon believers are dangerously unpredictable. Here is a poem, written in 2016, emailed to me by my friend, Luis Garcia:

MEIN TRUMPF

The Titanic sails at dawn,
but this time,
I think
it's going to sink

into that garish light
now cast
upon this country's
rain-soaked lawns.

And, so, it has come to pass. I expect that many QAnoners will go down with the ship, waving their Qs and taking their clues from The Donald, while Q, typing randomly from both sides of the keyboard, will continue cutting oracular farts.

According to the historian Livy, in 186 BCE, the Roman Senate, suspecting that there was a conspiracy connected to the Dionysian Bacchanalia, investigated the cult, arrested and executed many of its members, and allowed the cult to be a part of Roman religion, if no more than five members congregated at any given time (Academia.edu 2010 article, "Bacchic Madness and Roman Justice" by Dwayne Meisner). I do not know if there is anything to learn from this historical tidbit, but I am doubtful the U.S. Senate will pass such a law, as much as it may be needed. Still, I believe that the government infiltrating chatrooms to sow doubt, as suggested by Sunstein and Vermeule (94), is a dangerous step in the direction of institutional mind control. Better to hash this problem out in public through education, media messaging, and conversation.

. . .

QAnon flourished before The Donald and can now morph in many directions. "Satanic-cannibalistic-pedophiles" is potent hyperbole, hitting on all cylinders, and can be used against a variety of enemies. Soon, The Return of The Donald CT will upgrade the Hunter Biden Burisma CT and will include a newly minted Arizona Five Card Monte Electoral College Steal claim. The QAnoners in Congress will clash with The Squad, and the Newt Gingrich Tea Partiers will be baffled at the power shifts created by Republican Women, some of whom are QAnon followers. An oddity of the "Satanic pedophile" label is that it has not been applied to Trump and his friend, Epstein. This issue may come to the fore. QAnon will continue to speculate and act contrarian, adding ever more esoteric nonsense into its WWWebbery as events unfold.

Given the present polarization in our political dialogue, CTs are a major challenge. The concept of a "fact" is in question. Climate Change, Nuclear Warfare, Plague, these are the Other—out there in the unknown—but, within our minds, the necessary facts (verifiable data)

for erecting symbolic configurations (language) that communicate accurate information are questioned and contradicted. We will not be able to address the big items listed above if we cannot agree upon our knowledge and explain how we know what we say we know.

Wikipedia—“A fact is an occurrence in the real world. The usual test for a statement of fact is verifiability—that is whether it can be demonstrated to correspond to experience.” We appeal to authoritative texts and use the scientific method. If these tools are not accepted and considered reliable, we have only our subconscious mind to guide us, oracles to learn from, and rituals to perform from memory. Oracles are easy to corrupt and rituals atrophy. Neither are a reliable foundation upon which to build an epistemology.

Cassam believes that facts derived from the research of experts will win out because the “alternative facts” are only opinions. He says: “People may have differing opinions about what the facts are, but actual facts are never a matter of opinion” (114). The challenge is in convincing someone to reevaluate their facts and form a new understanding. This is problematic. Cassam believes that if CTs are harmful, they should not be ignored, but he points out that engaging in debate can “backfire”, because a hard-core CTist will become recalcitrant and harden and “self-seal” themselves in their belief (97-98). There is a basic contrariness connected to CTs, and the followers claim to have their own experts, all of whom have a deep commitment to the theory. Cassam concludes that there is not much hope in changing the thinking of the hard-core and shifts his focus to those that are receptive to CTs without being true believers. Cassam’s strategy is to dissuade the undecided with an attack on the intellectual and the political dimensions of CTs.

The intellectual dimension: (a) ignore the CTs that are too crazy to take seriously (i.e., lizard people); (b) try and undermine the logical foundations of the CT by laying out the case in detail, if you can get the CT believer to listen, and, if not, (c) using social media and private conversations to publicize the alternative information. Cassam believes that the head on intellectual attack is likely to fail because the causes of the CT are more than just ideas; they are political propaganda and are tied to a follower’s world view.

The political dimension: (a) once the CTs are revealed as political propaganda, rather than simply being simple truth-telling, a CT debunker can reveal that there are underlying biases and phobias at play (i.e., antisemitism, misogyny), that may create a sense of embarrassment in the CT believer. The response is usually that the CT debunker is considered part of the conspiracy apparatus, but Cassam suggests the best way to diffuse this is to help the believer see that real criticism of the government is most effective if it is not disguised in bizarre trappings (110). Cassam suggests that assisting the believer to realize their real ideological agenda (106) can jog their perspective closer to fact-based suppositions. In this dimension, Cassam believes that it is effective to distinguish between actual conspiracies and theories historians have imposed on those events and what he designates Conspiracy Theories (by capitalizing the words) to designate theories about conspiracies that are bogus. He says, “...there are always going to be arguments about whether a particular theory is a conspiracy theory or a Conspiracy Theory. But that doesn’t mean that there is no fact of matter or that the truth is relative” (113).

Cassam shifts away from putting too much emphasis on the effectiveness of intellectual challenges in debate, because of the risk of projecting a pompous and possibly arrogant

superiority stance by the debunker in the debate. He realizes this is difficult territory. The Socratic method is truly being tested, and Cassam hopes that Education-Education-Education is still the way forward. He proposes the intellectual virtues of open-mindedness, critical thinking, respect for evidence, and instilling curiosity in young students (120), who are now faced with the new challenge of deciphering what is “information” on the Internet. But he also recognizes that intellectual values cannot be separated from moral values (122). In conclusion, Cassam proposes a multi-track strategy of rebuttal, education, and calling CTs out for being political propaganda.

Will Cassam’s proposals dissuade people from believing CTs? As a Buddhist and a Humean, I believe that our reason is the slave of our passions (123). And to Cassam’s proposals. I would add a need for mindfulness meditation being taught alongside of critical thinking techniques. Presently, there are ongoing Senate hearings on the role of the social media platforms have in influencing our democratic elections. As the government become involved, the people who fear a threat to their 1st Amendment Rights are fleeing Facebook and Twitter for Parlor, an open, uncensored message board. It is a new game of “whack-a-mole” in the making.

Here, I am going to depart from Cassam and turn to Lecan, and this will take the argument back to the psychological traits of Conspiracy Theorists, who are of the paranoid type. Their theories are delusional. The imagination (fantasy) is linked to the symbolic (language) in a fundamental relationship with the real (an unknowable unknown)—“...a set of operations that would tie together the real, the symbolic and the imaginary, and provide a compass in relation to the enigmatic desire of the Other” (Darian Leader, *What is Madness?* Hamish Hamilton, London, 2011, page 194). Conspiracies do occur, but not all theories of conspiracies are conspiracies that are real. The really real cannot be known, but the imagination contains images of this real-that-cannot-be-known, that can be interpreted, as if they were real, using signs to make sense of the internal contradictions that create confusion in the consciousness of the knower. The Self, attempting to explain events, constructs a sentence about the real-that-cannot-be-known, and this links unrelated events via the syntax of the unconscious (see Lecan’s diagrams) into new patterns of signs that help reduce the anxiety created by attempting to understand the Other—where the signifiers may be at odds with the signified—all while the one doing the signifying is creating a narrative, based on their unique psychological needs, with a data base that is axiomatically unstable. As Dylan sang, “Something is happen’ but you don’t know what it is, do you Mr. Jones?”



[In his 2019 book, *Conspiracy Theories*, Cassam had a new thesis—that CTs are best understood as political propaganda. In this paper, I return to Cassam’s earlier contention that CTs are “the result of bad thinking and of the intellectual character traits that result in bad thinking.”]

THE BORROMEAN RINGS OF A CONSPIRACY THEORY

Whether conspiracy theories reflect what's really going on in the world or not, they tell us a lot about our secret selves. Conspiracy theories resonate with some of our brain's built-in biases and shortcuts, and tap into some of our deepest desires, fears, and assumptions about the world and the people in it. We have innately suspicious minds. We are all natural-born conspiracy theorists.

—Rob Brotherton, *Suspicious Minds*

Hitler is alive and well in Argentina. The Masons were involved in the sinking of the *Titanic*. Chemtrails from jet airplanes release toxic chemicals to reduce population growth. The assassination of JFK was a contract hit involving the CIA and the Mafia. Aliens have been living among us for ages. The 9/11 Twin Towers destruction was a false flag operation designed by operatives in the Deep State. If you drink excessive amounts of Red Bull, you will grow wings. These tangled webs of secrets and deception are conspiracy theories. Conspiracy theories are belief structures, often with gaps in the construction of the storyline, which reject the official story and propose other causal factors and reasons for the event in question. Since the symbolic nature of these stories is open-ended, they can be fused together, in part or in whole, to create explanations for any phenomenological activity.

When something novel occurs, we are challenged to put what has occurred into words. We need to weave new sentences from old stories. In a rush, we grab whatever is handy, when the proper method is to think about it and, then think about it again, and then test it in relation to other ideas, before positing contradictory and fanciful opinions,—unless, that is, you underscore this mental product as a work of art and not philosophy. There is a long shadow cast by Plato upon the use of mimesis in the ritual poetry of the Dionysian rites and, by association, with the formal language of the State.

. . . .

Quassim Cassam, a thorough going Aristotelian, posits politics as the endpoint of his metaphysics. In *Conspiracy Theory* (Polity, London, 2019), he says, “What psychological studies don't prove is that being conspiracy-minded is a personality trait.” For him, “A different interpretation of the evidence is that the conspiracy mindset is an ideology rather than a personality trait” (45). This approach proves useful since specific profiles cannot account for the wide variety of people simultaneously seduced by CTs across the spectrum of psychological types. By reversing the paradigm, it would be easier to fit the CT to the client. Here, I assume that everyone is susceptible to a pet CT to some degree, since no metaphysical explanation can resolve the internal contradictions of our ontological condition. Looking at various maps of CTs, I would need to describe a taxonomy of Conspiracies, family, genus, and species.

Deep State conspiracies, Gun conspiracies, Save the Children conspiracies, Alien conspiracies. Each conspiracy type might be attractive because of one aspect—Children with guns, Deep State with child abductions, Aliens with abduction and Deep State connections. Or, using an occult mandala: the Astrological Houses of Conspiracy Theories—

the first house, CTs that include the self's role, the Sons of God, the Daughters of the Nile; the second house, the CTs of invasion of property rights, guns, airspace, rangeland, taking away protections; the third house, CTs of miscommunication, official documents, fraudulent elections, messages from Mars; the fourth house, CTs of family, gay couples and creeping values; the fifth house, the god out there, Deep State, Satan; sixth house, hygiene, vaccines, masks; and so forth.

At first, I thought I could delineate families of conspiracy theories—those that are horizontal, those that are vertical—like other researchers who had sets (see below). There are maps of secret societies, linking the Illuminati, Rosicrucianism, Masonic, and occultist conspiracies, like who wrote Shakespeare, or the search for the Philosopher's Stone, or Kabbalistic correlations of sacred texts. When you start a set, you suddenly find correspondence galore, JFK leads to Lancelot leads to Orpheus to Dionysus to Christ to Buddha to the whole Jungian-Cambellian pantheon of sacred heroes and avatars. I shifted to a single structure for all conspiracy theories.

In Darian Leader's book, *What Is Madness?* (Hamish Hamilton, London, 2002), he says:

Where in neurosis, the Oedipus complex succeeds in naming the desire of the mother, through an appeal to a normative fiction, in the psychoses the subject has to invent; for the paranoiac, in naming what is wrong with the world; for the melancholic, in naming what is wrong with themselves; and for the schizophrenic, as a perpetual and unresolved activity (87).

Conspiracy theorists seem to be the paranoiac type. I will make the supposition that this can be equated to Lacan's model of the self. The imagination (a fantasy) is linked to the symbolic (in language) in a fundamental relationship with the real (an unknowable unknown)—“...a set of operations that would tie together the real, the symbolic and the imaginary, and provide a compass in relation to the enigmatic desire of the Other” (194). Conspiracies do occur, but not all theories of conspiracies are conspiracies that are real. The real cannot be known, but the imagination contains images of this real-that-cannot-be-known, that can be interpreted, as though they were real, using signs to make sense of the internal contradictions that create confusion in the consciousness of the self. The self, attempting to explain events, constructs a sentence about the “real”-that-cannot-be-known, and this links unrelated events via the syntax of the unconscious (see Lecan's diagrams) into new patterns of signs that help reduce the anxiety created by attempting to understand the Other, where the signifiers are at odds with the signified, while working with a limited data base. As Dylan sang, “Something is happen' but you don't know what it is, do you Mr. Jones?”

A Conspiracy Theory is like a Zen koan, and can be approached from many sides of its matrix without there being a definitive meaning. Conspiracies are seductive: you can join a club and share stories, play it as a game of clues, get “metaphysical” with it, treat it like an alternate reality game (ARG), which is defined by a wiki elf as “an interactive networked narrative that uses the real world as a platform and employs transmedia storytelling to

deliver a story that may be altered by players' ideas or actions.” (See *The War Against the Unfavorable Maras*, Kapala Press, Ellensburg, 2020, that details my Buddhist Virtual Reality Game.)

Going to the *Wikipedia* article, “Conspiracy Theories”, I found that there already were theories on CTs. Jesse Walker (2013) has identified five kinds of conspiracy theories:

The "Enemy Outside" refers to theories based on figures alleged to be scheming against a community from without.

The "Enemy Within" finds the conspirators lurking inside the nation, indistinguishable from ordinary citizens.

The "Enemy Above" involves powerful people manipulating events for their own gain.

The "Enemy Below" features the lower classes working to overturn the social order.

The "Benevolent Conspiracies" are angelic forces that work behind the scenes to improve the world and help people.

Michael Barkun has identified three classifications of conspiracy theory:

Event conspiracy theories. This refers to limited and well-defined events. Examples may include such conspiracies theories as those concerning the Kennedy assassination, 9/11, and the spread of AIDS.

Systemic conspiracy theories. The conspiracy is believed to have broad goals, usually conceived as securing control of a country, a region, or even the entire world. The goals are sweeping, whilst the conspiratorial machinery is generally simple: a single, evil organization implements a plan to infiltrate and subvert existing institutions. This is a common scenario in conspiracy theories that focus on the alleged machinations of Jews, Freemasons, Communism, or the Catholic Church.[53]

Superconspiracy theories. For Barkun, such theories link multiple alleged conspiracies together hierarchically. At the summit is a distant but all-powerful evil force. His cited examples are the ideas of David Icke and Milton William Cooper.

Rothbard: shallow vs. deep:

Murray Rothbard argues in favor of a model that contrasts “deep” conspiracy theories to “shallow” ones. According to Rothbard, a “shallow” theorist observes an event and asks *Cui bono?* (“Who benefits?”), jumping to the conclusion that a posited beneficiary is responsible for covertly influencing events. On the other hand, the “deep” conspiracy theorist begins with a hunch and then seeks out evidence. Rothbard describes this latter activity as a matter of confirming with certain facts one’s initial paranoia.

The sophistries used in CT propaganda resemble literary modes like dada, allegory, and satire. On the Steven Colbert Show <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKr8i23RwiU> (7:32)

comedian Sarah Cooper remarked that if you do not understand satire and are the subject of satire, it is infuriating to be yourself (the material). This is how her humorous lip syncs of Donald Trump strip away his visual from his auditory facades and reveal what a bad actor he is. Conspiracy Theories have a subtext of being a satire of the thinking process (Zizek?).

Ideologies are systems of idea that form the basis of maintaining power within some institution. According to the *bingdefinition*, an archaic meaning is “*speculative*, esp. of an unrealistic or idealistic nature.” With Conspiracy Theories, we are resurrecting this older meaning. The *bingdefinition* of a criminal conspiracy is “a plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful.” This definition lists “opinions” and “persuasion” as associated words.

With Conspiracy Theories there are producers and consumers. Believing in the Conspiracy is optional. There is a marketing of Conspiracy with sportswear decorated with appropriate signs and symbols, protest signs, and maps of interconnective paths from one Conspiracy to another along with books and videos and more books.

In his critique of the personality-type-explanation for CT believers, Cassam notes a study by Goertzel (44) that suggests that a “monological thinker” (his term) thinks along conspiratorial lines, the more likely this thinker is to believe new CTs. Cassam says that CTs may be universal but that not all people believe in CTs. There may be a kind of conspiratorial mindset, like a mode of thinking, but it not a universal personality trait. This critique applies to neurological explanations, as well. As we discovered in our study of parapsychology, the psychologists and neurologists have pathological approaches to the problem. Cassam explains CTs in terms of political propaganda and sophistry with all the stops pulled out;—if you are going to a gun fight, bring a Shoulder-Launched Multipurpose Assault Weapon.

According to Cassam, the ideology of conspiracism is to throw shade on an opponent in the political arena (31). The QAnon ideology comes from the Right side of the spectrum, but the logic is sealed into a loop, meaning that both sides see the other as conspiratorial. In a world where I struggle to make sense of the changes presented to me via media bombardment, I am at risk of believing anything that gives me a semblance of stability. Such a line of thought, itself, can be viewed as a conspiracy of my educated elite Self, wanting is to be left alone with my thoughts, like Spinoza, only in my case I utilize my creative visualization powers and invoke Vajrayogini, a fierce red dakini, naked with bone ornaments, stomping on a human corpse, holding a moon-shaped skinning knife in her right hand and a skull cup of blood in the other;—she is an emanation of emptiness and wisdom, but I feel her presence in my meditative, panpsychic praxis and reaffirm to myself that the Self is an illusion. This is my inner life, but I keep it private.

What does ‘wwg1wga’ mean? This cryptic message has been trending on Twitter for several years now. Here is the meaning behind it, says Filiza Mustafa:

Social media has given a platform to a wide array of content creators. From TikTok to Snapchat, there are endless viral videos, dance challenges and

trending filters. However, the rise of social media apps, has helped a lot of hoaxes and false theories spread like wildfire, leading to a whole new world of cryptic messages. Twitter posts with 'wwg1wga' have been circulating in reference to QAnon and Donald Trump. So, what does the cryptic message mean? The acronym 'wwg1wga' means: "WHERE WE GO ONE WE GO ALL."

I recognize a Conspiracy Theory because it is so clunky, so kludge-like, so hokermokered—it looks like one; it sounds like one; ergo, it must be one. Back to my own Zoroastrian conspiracy model: on one side of the battle for good or evil, I have the Satanic pedophiles, organized by Hillary Clinton and Georges Soros, running a worldwide sex slave ring speaking in pizzeria language and on the other The Donald and his minion, Mueller, in cahoots to root out the pedophiles in the Deep State. This is as dystopian as it is preposterous. As QAnon manifests, in what may be a pivotal moment of U.S. history, the followers of the mysterious Q see themselves as chivalrous patriots saving children from a cabal of leftist pedophiles harvesting their blood in the basements of pizza parlors to energize a propagandist web of disinformation, all in hopes of changing the outcome of the upcoming election. Of course, this would also be true of a left-leaning CT, where a sex slave ring run from Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets (white meat or dark, thighs for boys, breasts for girls, mashed potatoes for orgies) by the late Jeffery Epstein, who was suicided by operatives of the Deep State, led by reptilian Mitch McConnell, was a false flag to cover up a real cabal of pedophilic priests by packing the court with Catholics.

Cassam's main contention, that the motivation to accept one conspiracy over another is based more on political ideologies than on personality profiles, suggests that there is a seductive quality to believing in a theory that fits into an already evolved belief system. He says that consumers of CTs "...are inclined to accept particular Conspiracy theories or particular types of Conspiracy theory...that are in line with their political outlook" (49). In this sense, it is the epistemological form of the CT that fits the person and not the other way around. If a researcher knows the political persuasion of a person, it is easier to predict what kind of Conspiracy to which they might be susceptible. Having like-minded friends helps to fill the void feeling of existential angst inculcated by a sense of alienation. A push factor for someone to leave the set structure of traditional ideas that do not relieve the angst is the chance to meet others of similar beliefs who can satisfy a need for understanding. The risk factor, in the present case, is that if The Donald loses the election (as he did), it will be a demoralizing denunciation of the QAnon cognitive constructs. Either way, we are in a shitstorm.

I began this Conspiracy Theory argosy on the flagship *Prolegomena*, and I will conclude my voyage on the same vessel. I would agree with Cassam, that CTs are political propaganda, with one caveat. As an aging epistemologist, it is still important for me to understand how I know what I know, and so, in the spirit of self-reflection, I am led to look at the various psychological paradigms dealing with the evolution of the Self and its belief structures in different cultures. I am looking at Lacan's Theory of Self and the paranoiac characteristic that

makes conspiracy theorists so contrarian and set in their beliefs. I am looking at a Jungian angle, as well. Metaphorically, there is no single astrological sign (or personality type or genetic disposition), but within each sign, there are planets with their elements and modes that configure the individual structure of a personality causing it to glom onto a Conspiracy in the inner world of the imagination or into acting out an actual conspiracy in the world of hard knocks. With Conspiracy Theories, we are tripping the light fantastic, while having a toe in both worlds.

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Sandy Hook Documentary
<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?>

TVT Show, Adam Lanza interview about Travis, the chimp: reported by TVT host, Ana Kasparian.
<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Adam+Lanza+interview+TVT+host2c+Ana+Kasparian.&view=detail&mid=5DC9348EA8E245C1BB9A5DC9348EA8E245C1BB9A&FORM=VIRE>

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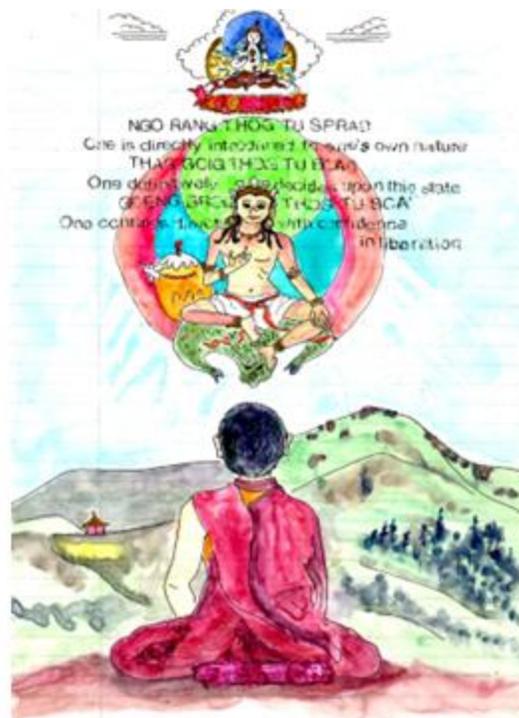
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Disclaimer: It's important to note we do not endorse any conspiracy theories and hope that this report has maintained objectivity.



A LOG OF JAMPA'S TRANSMISSIONS
Compiled by Bouvard Pécuchet



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Kapala Press 2021 Ellensburg

HOMAGE TO MY TEACHERS



Samsara and Nirvana are both creations of the mind.
—Padmasambhava

What follows is a list of empowerments, oral transmissions, and teachings that Jampa has received from his masters.

SOGYAL RINPOCHE

1989 Seattle: Dzog Chen Introduction to Mind

1990 Oakland: Dzog Chen Retreat

Longchen Nyingtik Ngöndro

Rigzin Düpa: *The Sadhana of the Embodiment of the Vidyaharas*
Daily Practice of Unsurpassed Vajrakilaya (terma of Ratna Lagpa)
Yanta Yoga

CHOGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU

1992 Vancouver, BC: Wangs and lungs for a variety of practices to be undertaken under the guidance of Lama Tsultrim Allione

1996 Conway, Mass: *Avalokitesvara Korwa Tongtrug* (terma of Adzom Drugpa)

1999 Tara Mandala: Blue Tara and Green Tara and Vajra Dance Empowerments
Training by Prima Mai in Vajra dances

Sadhanas extensively practiced: Tuns, short, medium and long

Waxing moon: Guru Tragpur; Waning moon: Simhamukha

Simhamukha: *The Profound Essence of Simhamukha, Queen of Dakinis*

Mandarava: *Sphere of the Vital Essence of the Vajra* (Norbu terma)

Guru of the White AH: *A Kar Lama Naljor*

Xitro: *Practice of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*

Gharuta Practice

Adzom Drugpa's *Sang Chöd*

Song of the Vajra (Norbu terma)

9.9.99 Consecration of Stupa for Nyagla Pema Duddul

Note: after the consecration of the stupa, on 9/9/99, by Namkhai Norbu (the tulku of Adzom Drugpa) and the arrival of Adzom Paylo Rinpoche (the tulku of Gyurme Dorje, a son of Adzom Drugpa), Lama Tsultrim moved away from Norbu Rinpoche's teachings and began to focus on those of Adzom Rinpoche. Jampa followed his female lama.

During 1995 through 1998, three summers and two winters, Jampa lived near Tara Mandala and worked in its bookstore, then located at the Spring Inn plaza, in Pagosa Springs, Colorado. He had opportunities to receive dharma teaching from many lamas and experienced practitioners.

1995 LAMA RINCHEN

Guru Rinpoche's Seven Line Prayer

1995 ANNE KLINE & HARVEY ARONSON

Guru Rinpoche Drup Chug

1997 TSOK NYI RINPOCHE

Dzog Chen Retreat (again in 2008)

1997 TULKU ORGYEN

Medicine Buddha Retreat: *Sky Dharma "A Stream of Lapis Lazuli"*

1997 GANGTENG TULKU

White Tara Empowerment of the Wish-fulfilling Wheel, along with *A Short Preliminary Practice of Longchen Nyingthig*; (Crestone, 2000)

Excellent Path of Awakening: Union of Samanthadra's Intentions

2000 LAMA WANGDOOR

Three Words That Strike the Vital Point (and again that year, in Berkeley, and again at Tara Mandala, in 2009)

In 1998, Jampa moved from Pagosa Springs to Santa Rosa to be a caregiver to his elderly parents; his father was 98 and his mother, then, 89. Each year, for the next ten years, Jampa returned to Tara Mandala, either in the summer or the winter, for a retreat to receive teachings. During those years that he lived in his parents' home, he was in semi-retreat. The West Coast Tara Mandala sangha met monthly at Christine Ho's house, in San Anselmo, where they rotated Adzom Rinpoche's practices and held Drup Chugs (accomplishment practices).

The path as laid out by Adzom Rinpoche is structured differently than that of Namkhai Norbu. Norbu's is more of a Dzog Chen approach. He holds nothing back, empowering his students to practice many sadhanas. He gives the wangs (empowerment), and you practice what seems to fit the level you are at with your sangha, getting lungs (explanations) from senior teachers. Adzom is more traditional. The practices he presents may be abbreviated for people with busy lifestyles, but the path is a gradual one and must be accomplished step-by-step in the following stages: (1) completion of Ngöndro (the foundation practices); (2) Mahayoga: completion of the three roots: (a) Lama Rigdzin Dupa (Guru Rinpoche), (b) Yidam: Practice of Xitro, (c) Dakini: Practice of Green Tara; (3) Chöd: *Laughter of the Dakinis*; (4) Rushen: Tri Yeshe Lama; (5) Trekchöd and Tögal.

ADZOM PAYLO RINPOCHE

1999 June 18-26, Tara Mandala: Nature of Mind Retreat. At this retreat, Jampa received pointing-out instructions. Called late at night to fix the lama's bed, Jampa was asked if he would like an interview, after he had put things right. The story is told in "The Lama & the Carpenter" (*A View from Ekajati*, D Press, 1999).

It was a peak experience for Jampa, having his mind essence revealed in a traditional setting, literally at the feet of the lama. His faith in and devotion for Adzom arose, and Jampa began to attend a small gathering, a group of four, to whom Adzom taught the Longchen Nyintig Ngöndro. At the time, Jampa was unaware of the significance of this rare and special opportunity. In Tibet, Adzom Rinpoche is something like a rock star and draws crowds that fill an entire valley.

2000 July, Tara Mandala: Dzog Chen Retreat

2002 May, Alameda, California, at Orgyen Dorje Den: *Xitro* empowerment

2002 Fall Residential Retreat at Tara Mandala, where Adzom (Rigdzin Dorje Ngag Rab Tsal) revealed a mind treasure (ter): "Trömai Drubtab Sang wai Yeshe Zhug" (*The Practice for Accomplishing Tröma, Known as Secret Primordial Wisdom*)

2003 Sonoma County: King of Retreats Drup Chen

2004 Sabud Center, San Anselmo: talk on the Union of Mahamudra and Dzog Chen

2005 Tara Mandala: Rigzin Dupa Drup Chen with Vajrasattva Empowerment

2005 Tara Mandala (at Lama Tsultrim's house): Ordained as a novice monk (*genyen*). Jampa happened to be holding one of his chapbooks in one hand and his pocketknife in the other, and Adzom Rinpoche named him Jampel Dorje (Indestructible Sword of Knowledge). Jampa maintains use of his refuge name, Jampa Dorje (Indestructible Lovingkindness), as the change of one syllable created both audio and ontological confusion. "Jampel" is the Tibetan name

for Manjushri, one of the Eight Great Bodhisattvas, and “Jampa” is Maitreaya, the Buddha of the eon to come. In either case, Jampa has a lot to aspire to.

2005 & 2006 Tara Mandala: *Tri Yeshe Lama* training while in retreat

2006 Calistoga: *Phowa Transference of Consciousness* at a residential retreat center

2007 Tara Mandala Residential Retreat, in December, back-to-back with a retreat in Houston

2008 Houston: Vajrasattva Empowerment, along with an ongoing exposition of Longchempa’s “Commentary on the Meaning” in January.

Adzom has also transmitted the “Laughter of the Dakinis” Chöd and a Green Tara from *The Luminous Vajra Treasury*. “Osel Dorje Sang Dzö Ley Pagma Drolma Zangmo Shug So” to Jampa in retreat. Adzom’s sister, LAMA JETSU KACHOD WANGMO, has given a Green Tara Empowerment to Jampa twice, once at Tara Mandala in 2000, and once at the Calistoga Phowa Retreat, in 2006.



TARA-PEACH TRANSMISSION

Adzom wants to learn how to can peaches.

Tsultrim is telling him how, step by step.

Erik translates. Adzom takes notes

while giving Tsultrim a short version of the Tara practice, which he wants included at the end of the main text.

I sit outside the tent, chuckling to myself,

waiting for the text to emerge,

so I can run off another edition of the book.

Adzom is transmitting it word by word.

Tsultrim writes down each word in phonetic Tibetan,

and Erik translates it into English.

Then, another step in the process of canning peaches,

and Erik translates that into Tibetan,

and Adzom writes it down in his notebook.

Then, another line of the Tara practice,

and Tsultrim writes that down, and Erik translates.

OM CHAG TSAL JETSUN TARE
OM Homage to Jetsun TARE Goddess
Wash jars, rinse. Place jars in hot water.
TU TA RA E YI DUNG WA KUNCHOB
TU TA RA E Save from all suffering
Pack the sliced peaches into hot jars.
TUGJE TOGMED TURE PALMO
Unimpeded compassion TURE Glorious One
Leave one finger of space at top of jar.
DAK LA DRUPCHOK TSOL CHIK SWA HA
Grant me the ultimate siddhi SWA HA
Cover with boiling syrup, leaving headspace.



In the aftermath of 9-11, Jampa found it difficult to travel wearing his robes. One official told him, as he was entering La Playa Airport, near Durango, that his experience had been that Lamas carried daggers. Jampa told him that *purbas* were ritual tools, but that he was not a lama. At San Francisco International, he was asked if he would rather enter a glass box or be frisked for explosives. Jampa said he preferred the box with the air currents—“Makes me feel like the Flying Monk”—a joke that was lost on the official. At the airport in Houston, it was announced that joking about hijacking was not acceptable. When Jampa asked why he was being searched, he was told it was because he was “bulky.”

SAMSARA IS AN AIRPORT

Samsara is an airport surrounding a delayed flight.

I'm stretched out with my eyes closed listening to the travelers and the intercom.

"...want my money back..."

"...want to be in San Francisco, now..."

"...really no reason for this..."

"...s it a red color code, today?"

"...is it really raining there?..."

"...will my luggage arrive?..."

"Will the pilots for flight 2807 please report to Gate A6?..."

This presence
that is all
that is

Given
each moment
each breath

"This is your last boarding opportunity."

On Jampa's return to Tara Mandala, in 2008, there was a change in the public's perception of monks. No one was yelling at him, "Go back to where you came from!"

The downside of the "Free Tibet" protests during the 2008 Olympics was that the Chinese Authorities got tough with the Tibetans. They confiscated Adzom's passport and forbade him to travel, even in Tibet. This left Jampa on his own to figure out what to do in retreat. Lama Tsultrim suggested he begin a cycle of practices called *Dzinpa Rangdröl*, which is a complete path from the preliminaries through the high Dzog Chen and is a mind treasure (*terma*) of Do Khyentse Yesh Dorje (1860-66). It features Machig Lapdrön (1055-1145), who established Chöd practice in Tibet, as the White Dakini.

Tulku Sang-ngag, who had moved with his family from Montana to Santa Fe, New Mexico, was planning to introduce *Dzinpa Rangröl* ("Self-Liberation of Clinging") in July of 2008. Tulku Sang-ngag is an incarnation of one of Padmasambhava's heart sons (first disciples),



and he received the transmission for this cycle of practices from H.H. Dilgo Khyentse, with whom Tulku Sang-ngag had studied, after spending nine years in a Chinese prison.

During Lama Tsultrim's visit to Tibet, in 2007, she was recognized as an emanation of Machig Lapdrön by the resident lama at Zangri Khangmar, the place where Machig spent most of her life. Jampa asked if there would be any conflict with what he had been doing with Adzom Rinpoche (*Longchen Nyinthig*) and this new cycle, and Tulku Sang-ngag said that they actually complimented each other, since Do Khyentse was the mind incarnation of Jigme Lingpa (1730-98), who discovered the *Longchen Nyinthig Cycle*. It all seemed to Jampa to fit together and be auspicious, and he began with the *Yang Sang Khadro tug Tig Ngöndro* ("Exceedingly Secret Heart Essence of the Dakinis Preliminary Practice") in retreat at Luminous Peak.

TULKU SANG NGAG (6th Gochen Tulku)

1996 Dudjom's "Extracting the Quintessence of Accomplishment" (Mountain Dharma Retreat)

1998 Riwo Sang Chöd Retreat at Tara Mandala

2008 Bardo Teachings at Tara Mandala

Introduction to *Dzinpa Rangdröl Tsogyel Karmo* (White Tsogyel). Jampa received the refuge name, Rangdrol Rigzen (Self-liberated Knowledge Holder)

10M of Yang *Sang Khadro Tug Tig Gi Ngöndro*

2009 Tröma Nagmo: *Quintessence of the Heart White Tsogyel* Drupchen (August 23-31)

Chöd: *Reflection of the Countenance*

Chöd: *Accomplishment in One Seat*

2010 Red Vajrasatva, lead by Khenpo Ugyen Wangchuk during the ceremony following the death of David Petit

2014 Trechöd and Tögal transmissions given at Rinpoche's land near Gloieta, New Mexico

After the White Dakini Drupchen, in 2008, Jampa performed five days of fire pujas with Beth Lee-Herbert, his "retreat wife" (who did her retreat in the cabin called Karuna), and then he was again sealed into retreat by Lama Tsultrim, Khenpo Sonang, and Khenpo Ugyen Wrichuk. After they had completed the traditional three year retreat, there was a ceremony conducted by Tulku Sang ngag at the Tara Temple on June 19, 2012. He honored Beth and Jampa by announcing that they were *Dzinpa Rangdröl* Lineage Holders, and he gave them each the hat of a Drupla (a lama who has accomplished the dharma in retreat). Lama Tsultrim could not be present for the ceremony, but she sent a poem.

A POEM FROM LAMA TSULTRIM ALLIONE

For Beth and Jampa, June 19, 2012

A young yogini and an old yogi
went up on the hill for three years,
To dance with bears and mountain lions,
Lightning and thunder,
Snow and rain.

Their gods and demons
Accompanying them through perilous winters, sweet summer days,
Wind blown Springs and the stark clarity of the autumn sky.
Moons waxed and waned,
feasts were offered,
hair grew,
clothes became tattered,
hearts opened,
minds stabilized.

They went knowing a little and longing for full awakening,
Held by the sweet arms of Tara
Tumbled by Troma's stomping dance,
Shattered and reconstructed in their subtle bodies by the tsa lung
And opening into the vast clear sky of the nature
of mind in the Trekcho.

Always brave, humble and diligent.
Supporting each other, praying for everyone.

I have known you both from the beginning of your paths,
And here you are at this time of fruition,
The first to finish three-year retreat at Tara Mandala.

Setting such a good precedence for those who will follow you,
With your strong hearts of devotion,
You have done it like it was done in the old country.
Setting the foundation for true discipline and accomplishment.
Becoming learned in the ritual arts,
Caring for family and Sangha,
Praying for those in need,
No time off,
Full time practitioners...

My heart is sad not to be there with you today,
But my heart swells in joy and love and celebration
For what you have done for all beings.

EMAHO! EMAHO! EMAHO!



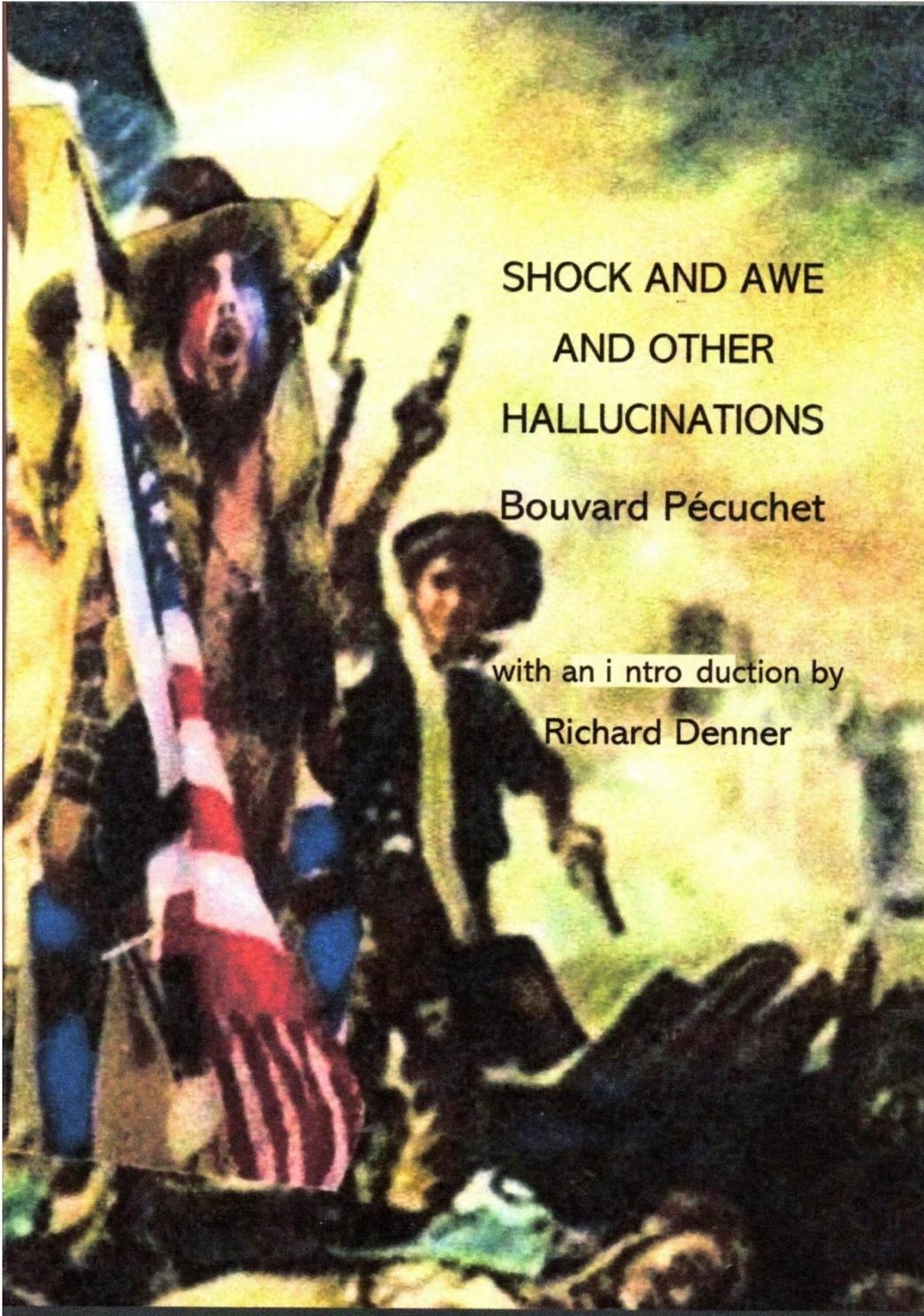
2014-2015: Jampa lived in Santa Fe with Lama Gyurme and practiced at Pema Khandro Ling with Tulku Sang-ngag. Jampa was installed as the Lama of the Boundries and lead the mantra chain at the White Dakini Drup Chen at Tara Mandala for seven years with Tulku Sang-ngag and two years with Lama Karma, until 2018.

2016: Jampa attempted to return his vows as a monk and was rebuffed with, "You don't want to return your vows; you want to break your vows" & "You've already moved on." He self-liberated himself as a monk and reinvented himself as a householder with refuge vows plus the vow of chastity.

2016-2021: Jampa returned to Ellensburg, Washington, and he now studies philosophy and religion at CWU, while practicing at the Ellensburg Zen Center, Ecumenical Church of Ellensburg, 400 N. Anderson Street, founded by Tuck Do Yu Forsythe.



ALL BLESSINGS FLOW FROM THE LAMA



SHOCK AND AWE
AND OTHER
HALLUCINATIONS
Bouvard Pécuchet

with an i ntro duction by
Richard Denner

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Kapala Press 2021 Ellensburg

Cover collage by the author
utilizing Delecroix's painting
Liberty Leading the People



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INTRODUCTION: DENNER AND I

I don't know which of us wrote this.

—Jorge Luis Borges

I peer out from behind my masks to address you in the first person. *Jampa's Worldly Dharmas* is my biography of Jampa Dorje and was written by me in the third person by Bouvard Pécuchet about me, in my guise as a monk in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. My initial impulse to write my autobiography occurred while I was in retreat at Tara Mandala, a Buddhist center in Colorado, between 2009 and 2014. I wanted to tell my tales, but I was unable to tell them straight out in a chronological order, and I was afraid I could not tell all of the truths. I have the urge to confess, but I—a double Scorpio—have secrets within secrets within secrets. I needed an objective observer. Bouvard is ideal—a continental philosopher-type with a touch of the poet.

I organized my project as an alphabet book. Starting with A, I thought of all the animals, pets and beasts in the woods, that I had encountered. And art, my adventures as an artist. B and business, my life as a bookseller. C, my experiences as a caregiver for my elderly parents.

A bookseller in Ellensburg, Washington, who came to Ellensburg to work on an 800 acre cattle ranch caring for animals. A caregiver in Sebastopol, California, who worked on his computer to create the printed art of his chapbooks of poetry. Following Rousseau, I tell of the worldly experiences that shaped my personality through an arabesque of adventures. Following Saint Augustine, I explore the labyrinth of my soul in search of redemption. Following Buddha, I contemplate my path to enlightenment.

Since returning to Ellensburg from Santa Fe, in 2017, I have been taking classes in

philosophy at Central Washington University. At present, I am taking Philosophy and Psychedelics, and the orientation of the class is to explore whether or not we can get a grip on the conscious mind through the use of psychedelic drugs. We have been reading Aldous Huxley's *The Doors of Perception*. We watched Ken Keysey's *Magic Trip*, a TED talk on the brain hallucinating consciousness, and a documentary entitled, *The Last Shaman*. I started chemotherapy for a rare blood disease at the beginning of the quarter, and I am experiencing the infusion of drugs as though it is an ayahuasca trip. Undergoing the treatment at Northstar Oncology Center, in Yakima, is a form of katabasis. I go on a journey, take my medicine, and deal with the nausea.

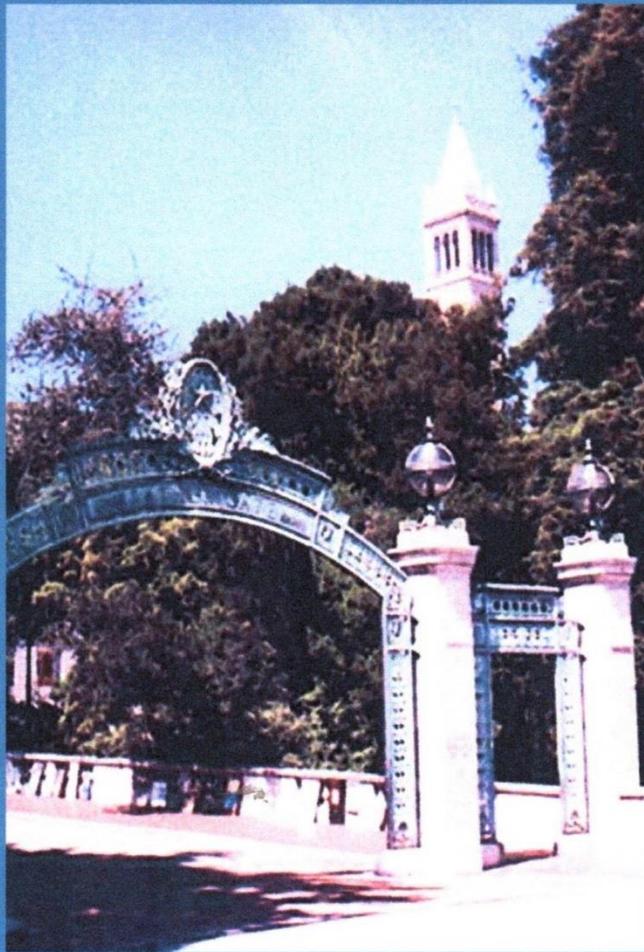
The psychedelic aspect of my philosophical investigations prompted me to retrieve the tales of my trips from *Jampa's Worldly Dharmas*. And this, in turn, offered an opportunity to tell the tales in chronological order. I haven't gone so far as to rewrite everything in the first person, but there is a sense of integrating my many selves. I own them, but I am not sure if I am entirely alone in my narrative.

Where do these thoughts come from? What are these pesky shadows, flitting across my brain pan like so many Chickadees? Funny, the name of a bird that sounds like the song of that bird, "Chick-a-dee-dee." God said to name things, and the poet in us names them. But where do these thoughts come from? Are they from my subconscious? But where is that? Do they arrive via neuronal rhizome-like pathways? Have they traveled etheric channels connecting with a Muse? Do they self-arise? Poet Jack Spicer says, somewhere, that poetry is a conversation among the dead and that the poet gets it second hand. In my case, it seems to be third hand.

..

Richard Denner

SHOCK AND AWE
IN BERKELEY: A MONTAGE
Bouvard Pécuchet



SHOCK AND AWE
IN BERKELEY
Bouvard Pécuchet



Kapala Press
2021
Ellensburg

JAMPA'S LOVE AFFAIR WITH BERKELEY

Let's you and me go burn down a couple of universities— Fairy International, flap your mothy wings to speed the blaze.

—Philip Whalen, “To Edward Dahlberg”

It is hard to know why Jampa has a fascination for Berkeley. It is like a love affair. Poets take cities to heart. Berkeley is for Jampa what Buenos Aires was for Borges, what Paris was for Baudelaire, an unending rose unfolding. Jampa has sat at the same table in the same coffee house at the same time of the morning, just as I now sit in The Betterday, in Santa Fe, and watched the light shift and seen travelers go and return and felt the world to be immaterial, a construct of his mind, such as is suggested by Bishop Berkeley (1685-1753), after whom the City of Berkeley is named. Perhaps, if he did not celebrate the city (and this is a misinterpretation of the bishop's philosophy), the city would not exist.

Jampa's paeon to Berkeley street poets, *Berkeley Daze: Profiles of Poets of the '60s* is such a celebration. It's an Orphic hymn. (See Big Bridge, <http://bigbridge.org/BD.HTM>)

Bob Kaufman sat at the table with Jampa. He did not say anything since he had taken a vow of silence after J.F.K.'s death. Peter Orlovsky sat with Jampa and read the poems in Jampa's binder. He gave Jampa's work the “Clean Asshole Seal of Approval.” Thomas Parkinson sat at the table. The wound from the shotgun blast that he had received from a lunatic, who accused him of being a communist, had healed, although the scar tissue disfigured his once handsome face.



Jampa sat with Allen Ginsberg, Ed Dorn, and Robert Creeley. Allen said to him, “Be quiet. I want to hear what Ed has to say.” Bobbie Louise came in from a shopping spree, and Jampa complimented her on her leather miniskirt. He was aware of Creeley keeping his one good eye

on his wife.

Max Scheer pressed Jampa into service on the Berkeley Barb seated at this table. William Boardman discussed a plan to go to Alaska with Jampa at this table. Jampa argued with his girlfriend and turned over her plate of spaghetti there. Jampa sold pot under this table. Johnnie, the owner, gave Jampa a Christmas fruitcake for being one of the Med's best customers.

It might have been the environs around the campus that Jampa liked. The ethnic foods, the bookstores, the telephone poles thickly covered with posters. Jampa attended many events on campus. He went to a lecture by Julian Huxley and one by Jean Renoir. There were art movies. He first saw Cocteau's *Beauty and the Beast* in Wheeler Hall and a premier showing of Orson Wells' *The Trial*, starring Anthony Perkins, based on Kafka's novel. And Kenneth Anger's films, which included *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome*, on three screens, showing past, present and future, with Anais Nin in one scene eating jewel-like objects that represented L.S.D.

It was not the easiest time to be a student with all that was happening outside the classrooms, on campus and in the streets. When Jack Weinberg was arrested by the Campus Police for distributing political literature in front of Sproul Hall and not being an enrolled student, Jampa joined others in a violation-of-free-speech-protest and sit-in to block the passage of the police car.

The Free Speech Movement became known as the Filthy Speech Movement after John "the Poet" Thompson stood outside Sather Gate with a sign that read "FUCK." John was a street poet. Here is a reminiscence of his from *Berkeley Daze*:

How to convey the giddy sense of infinite possibility that hung in the air? You didn't need pot, hash, or acid to get high. There was a feeling of weightlessness permeating the air. Every day was sunny, everybody smiled, students at UC Berkeley almost danced down the street on their way to class. The air was cleaner, purer, sweeter. The streets were litter free—this is actually true. People didn't lock their doors, strangers began talking on a street corner and became life-long friends, poets and musicians were everywhere, soon to reinvent the way America produced art and music. Hair was getting longer, morals were getting looser, women were getting stronger, men were getting gentler, non-violence was the word, even as the police beat down the anti-war and Civil Rights protesters.

Writing about Dzog Chen, Keith Dowman, in his introduction to *Eye of the Storm: Vairotsans's Five Original Transmissions* (Vajra Pubs., Kathmandu, 2006, pp. xi-xii), says, "Deprived of a lineal tradition, guides and precepts, it may burst out spontaneously as an imperative of the human

spirit, as it did in Europe and America in the 'sixties." Being at Ground Zero, Jampa "destroyed" his mind trying to fix a world that seemed broken.

Monkeyshines. During Jampa's first semester at Cal, he shared a large studio apartment, on Montgomery Street, in Albany, with a high school chum. Dale had a pet monkey, and it would ride to school with them on the handlebars of Dale's 2-cylinder B.M.C. motorcycle. The monkey caused a commotion in the main lecture room of Lawrence Hall, when it got loose and jumped from student to student, until they retrieved it from a student who had held on to the monkey's tail. The little monkey was short-lived. It died after eating a piece of tripe.

Dale had some canned tripe, and Jampa thought tripe was a kind of fish and should be fried before it was eaten. Wrong. Tripe is a part of a steer's stomach and very tough. Needs to be boiled for a good, long while. Inedible as it was, the monkey ate a piece they had left on a plate. In the morning, they found the beast dead in its cage.

More monkeyshines. During Jampa's second semester at Cal, he lived in Gilman Hall, on the corner of Dwight Way and College Avenue, in Berkeley. Jampa stole a fireplug from a construction site and placed it in the center of his room. One of the cleaning ladies reported him. As he was walking up the street, he encountered a tall, muscular policeman carrying the fireplug out of the dorm. Jampa was happy to see it go. He had a bruise on his leg from stumbling into it, drunk, in the dark.

And more monkeyshines. The dorm formed a radical government, and during the time when the House of Un-American Activities Committee was holding hearings in San Francisco, the Gilman Hall Entertainment Committee invited Archie Brown, a longshoreman and card-carrying Communist, to speak. The dorm president of Gilman Hall was subpoenaed before H.U.A.C., and the rest of the dorm residents were investigated by the F.B.I.



Jampa has touted his jail experiences as though he was a hardened criminal, but he knows his attempts at being a criminal were pathetic. He has a wild streak, a lot of unchecked energy, and he likes to experiment. A rebel, sometimes with and sometimes without a cause, his course has led him afoul of the law.

As Gail Chiarello puts it, in her essay, "The Invisible Circle: an Introduction to Berkeley Daze" (<http://www.bigbridgeorg/BD-IN.HTM>):

We were changed by the Free Speech movement. We walked in anti-war marches and read in anti-war poetry readings often one and the same event. Some of us were hyper-educated, others have rambled and roamed; their learning has been on the fly, on the sly, in the hoosegow.

In Jampa's case, all of the above. If we compare poets to Tibetan tulkus, Jampa is an emanation of François Villon (b.1431), a French poet who disappeared from history in 1463 after many scrapes with the police, within a lineage going back to Gaius Valerius Catullus (84?-54? BCE), a Roman bad boy. Even in grade school, Jampa had a fascination for bandits and for being a bit of a bad boy himself. After a good scolding, he would straighten up, for a while. Then, he could again be found sitting in the principal's office or in detention. He would get in scrapes, talk back, or cut class. He wrote and read to his sixth-grade class a paper on Willy Sutton, a notorious bank robber of the 1930s, renowned for his escapes from jails.



Jampa was first taken to jail, in Oakland, when he was 16, after attempting to evade arrest for speeding, which led him through a series of red lights and stop signs and an out-of-control dive from the top of a hill in a residential neighborhood into a fishpond in Diamond Park. The policeman in pursuit also wrecked his car. Luckily, no one was hurt. Jampa's parents' feelings were hurt by the grief he caused them, and Jampa's dad's pocketbook was certainly hurt making restitution for the damage his son had caused.

At age 17, Jampa went to jail (although he was not put in a cell) for sneaking through an exit door at the Fox Oakland Theater. Just as he parted the velvet drapes, he was grabbed by a policeman standing just inside the door who was there because he had been called to investigate a stabbing. Jampa had snuck into the middle of a crime scene. He turned around and ran down the metal fire escape, but the policeman tripped him with his nightstick and dragged him back upstairs. The usher said that Jampa was not the person who had done the stabbing, which cleared him

of the assault, but the policeman took him to the precinct station and called Jampa's dad. Jampa was not booked for this misdemeanor, which was fortunate, as he was still on probation for the auto crash. His dad, however, gave him Holy Hell.

Jampa says he does not remember being arrested and booked or going to jail, or to court, for stealing hubcaps with his friend, Dave. He remembers that there were two plain-clothes detectives waiting for him by his car, after school, and from what they told him, he knew the game was up. Perhaps, they saw it as a prank, because after he admitted his part in the thefts, he was told to meet them at Dave's house, across the street from his own, in the Oakland hills, and when he got there, Dave was waiting, and the two of them pointed to the manure pile by the side of the barn where they had buried their haul in some gunny sacks.

This is the part I have a hard time believing, but Jampa says the two detectives took off their coats, rolled up their sleeves, and dug up the sacks of hubcaps, while Dave and Jampa watched. Was it that the boys were from a privileged class? Yes. Had no one pressed charges? Maybe. Had their fathers made a sizable contribution to the Policeman's Ball? Could be. Dave told Jampa that a set of "moons" (designer hubcaps without an insignia on them, with a smooth, rounded face) that he had put on his hotrod, a '39 Ford with a '54 flathead V8, had an inscription inside that read, "If these hubcaps are not on my car, they've been stolen!" signed by the owner, who had reported them missing. Not hard to find, really.



Grand Theft Auto is a felony. I guess that the hubcaps value did not amount to that, and the detectives were just happy solving their case. However light-hearted they took this caper, one of the detectives told Jampa, "Going into some stranger's garage in the dead of night is a good way of getting yourself shot." Jampa gave this some serious thought and abandoned his "midnight auto" pursuit.

He had not, however, given up stealing. He read Karl Marx and decided that stealing books and selling them was a form of “redistribution of capitalist wealth.” The manager of Cal Texbook Exchange did not see it this way. He had Jampa arrested for shoplifting a tome on macroeconomic theory and Jampa spent a couple of nights in Berkeley City Jail. He found a dog-eared copy of *A Day in the Life of Ivan Illych* by Solzhenitsyn in his cell, and it made Jampa feel his surroundings were plush compared to a Russian gulag. Still, he was happy to go home, and he regrets this arrest above all others, because his probationary status with the court deterred him from joining the protesters who sat-in overnight in Sproul Hall in what became the largest mass arrest in U.S. History and signaled the onset of a growing student protest movement.

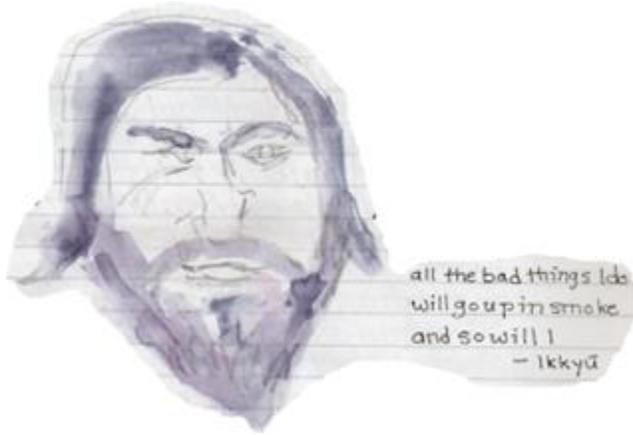
Being arrested for disturbing the peace and destroying state property looked serious on the blotter, but Jampa was innocent of this crime. He was trying to turn off a handle to a faucet with a rotten fire hose attached. The hose had burst open and was flooding the hallway of an apartment building owned by University of California, on LeRoy Avenue, where his girlfriend, Patricia, lived with her roommates, Lynda and Kioko.



Art and John, two of Jampa’s friends, were responsible for this mischief, but the arresting officer hauled all three of them in. If Kioko had not had money to bail them out, they would have spent the weekend in jail. Charges were dropped on account of the University’s faulty equipment and the

officer’s hasty arrest. Again, disgruntled parents, only this time there was a court appearance and a lawyer’s fee. And more disgrace.

Charges were not dropped for Jampa's bust for possession of marijuana and indecent exposure. Possession of the "killer weed," even if it was only a couple of seeds, was a felony, in 1964.



POEM ON MY BIRTHDAY

Once again this day protrudes
its ugly head out of the debris of the year

Bleary-eyed & melancholy, strung out
in my Imolean web

I contemplate my 23rd time-twisted
space-spun, yelping year

With River Lethe flowing
my Scorpion soul

Winds it wayward way
toward a shipwreck upon a seed

Poetry proceeds by hyperbole, but in this poem Jampa is understating his situation. If the doctors at Herrick Hospital, in Berkeley, had not recommended that Jampa be committed to the Napa State Mental Facility, Jampa would have been sent to

Vacaville, to the facility for the criminally insane. However, before Jampa was sent to Herrick, he spent time in Berkeley City Jail, and it was not as pleasant as the time before. He was in an altered state of mind from taking peyote, and after disrupting the cell block by vocalizing his theory of the universe as an *invoid*, he was thrown into a padded cell.

He carried his *Gideon Bible* tucked into the waistband of his jail suit, as he was led, chained hand and foot, to the courtroom. He planned to “throw the book” at the judge, but his sense of time was distorted, and he was remanded to the care of doctors before he knew what had happened. After the doctors’ reports were entered into evidence, Jampa was transferred to Alameda County Jail to be sentenced as an insane person by the Superior Court of California. Before Jampa’s case reached the top of the docket, he spent two weeks in D Tank; that is, he spent two weeks in D Tank, when he wasn’t confined to the hole.

Oakland may be meaner today than it was then, but it was still plenty mean, and many of Jampa’s cellmates were hard core criminals. Somehow, Jampa gained the respect of the Black contingent of the population. When he was first put in the tank, bearded, wild-haired, babbling, one of the men said, “Here comes Moses to set us free!” It may have been a facetious remark, but on two occasions these men, perhaps Black Panthers or members of the Islamic Brotherhood, but more likely just good people, kept Jampa out of harm’s way.

Once, Jampa tried to stop a fight, and he was pulled back before the guards broke it up with their clubs. And another time, a white kid started giving Jampa a bad time, and Jampa was rising to the bait with his fist clenched, when Homer Gideon, who liked to sit with Jampa, took hold of his arm and whispered in his ear not to go there. Jampa regained his composure. He read his *Bible*, rereading the *Book of Job*, and Homer colored the faces of people in the newspaper different colors with a set of colored pencils. Jampa thought it odd—it was rumored that Homer had murdered his mother—but Jampa guessed that since the faces in the newspaper were always white faces, Homer was seeing to it that everyone was a person of color.

The *Bible* was Jampa's mainstay. Unfortunately, he became so engrossed in his reading that he failed—or refused—to stand up for “count,” which was a daily occurrence to see if all prisoners were present. Glued to his seat in a state of *samahdi*, Jampa got what could be expected in those confines: a severe blow to the back between his shoulder blades and he was dragged semi-conscious down the hallway of the inner cell block, where his jail suit was stripped off, and he was thrown in the hole.

The hole: *a small, dingy abode, a dungeon*. Here, it was a cubical, not quite big enough to stretch out in, with metal walls and an open place in the floor to relieve yourself. For long periods there would be no light from the bulb in the ceiling, and then there would be. Jampa assumed this was day and night. The second night, he was given a wool blanket, and at intervals, a small hatch opened in the door and a tray of food was shoved through to him. Jampa had no complaints. Remember, Jampa was delusional. He thought he was the statue of David by Michelangelo being moved somewhere in the hold of an ocean liner.

He was let out of the hole after five days, so he could get ready for his court appearance. Pluto, a cigar-chomping trustee, who seemed to have the run of the place, took him to one of the private cells in the inner cell block, where he was given fresh coveralls and handed an electric razor. He started to run the razor over the stubble of his beard when he felt hands on his hips and a body close to his. He jumped to one side and began to wrap the cord around his hand to make a weapon, but the razor fell off the end of the cord, and he was left holding a wire with a plug at the end. The man with the amorous intentions laughed and said Jampa was expected at the barbers at the end of the hall. When he reached the barber's, he was told to wait in the chair while the man read a letter he had just been given. As he read the letter, tears came to his eyes. Jampa asked him if he was ok, and man told him that his mother had died. Jampa asked Pluto if he could please be put back in the hole. Pluto said, “You really should get rid of that ridiculous red beard.”

On the morning that Jampa was to appear before the judge for sentencing, he stood at the bottom of the staircase that led into the courtroom. The young man ahead of him began to sob. He was Persian. Jampa tried to console him, and the kid

moaned, "What crime did I commit? All I did was throw my books out the window." The kid went through the door into the courtroom and never returned. Swept away by the Shaw's secret police, Jampa surmises. It was one thing to be an American and an insane person and entirely another thing to be a crazy foreign student from Iran.



Regardless of our innate goodness, we can be sadists. Among all human acts, the one that is most unkind is torture. Anthropologists study man. They seek to find what distinguishes this animal from all the others. Language and tools have been noted. Chimpanzees use sticks to capture ants for food and use sign language to communicate. A mother thrush with a clear flute-like note stills her chicks at the approach of danger. The uniqueness of Homo sapiens seems to be in their degree of specialization. A cat will "play" with a mouse, and this might be construed as torture, but what other animal, except man, tortures a fellow creature to arrive at the truth? What other animal will forgo goodness and take away beauty for knowledge? The view that truth, at all costs, for a "higher cause" is of paramount importance is where humanity becomes misguided.

The interrogator does not pull out your fingernails and ask, "Is your beauty under there?" She does not hook electrodes to your genitalia and ask, "Have you been good?" No, the question is: "Where's the loot?" or "Who's in your gang?" or "When's the bomb go off?!"

There are different kinds of torture, just as there are different methods. Torture as punishment: being burned at the stake or being cut open while you are still alive and having your entrails removed. Torture for pleasure: a fiendish person torments

a hapless victim. And sadomasochism: sexual gratification that involves suffering and inflicting pain. Then, there is unintended torture, as in unrequited love affairs, where the unattainable object of desire is present. Experimentation on laboratory animals must be torture to those beasts. And, of course, systematic torture for political ends. Here, it is believed that the ends justify the means. Who is to say, in a world of relative values, who is the bad guy? “Best to do unto him before he does unto you,” is the creed.

During the Reagan Presidency, Tom Lineham, an Ellensburg city council member, and Roberto Freeman, a yoga instructor, traveled to Nicaragua to observe the Sandinista Revolution. They founded an organization called Ellensburg-Nicaragua-United-in-Friendship, ENUF. After Tom moved to Olympia, Washington, to be closer to the action of state government, and Roberto began working on his Ph.D., the Four Winds Bookstore became the headquarters of ENUF, and Jampa and Kim Secunda took over its leadership. It was mainly a forum for discussion and distribution of information on the aims of the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

The “disappearing” of individuals by Death Squads during the Somoza Regime became an issue. With the help of a group of art students at CWU, Jampa and Kim made dummies from old clothes stuffed with wadded newspaper and attached placards around the necks that gave the name, age, and condition of the body when it was found. The graphic details—the horror—was drawn from files they kept from their Amnesty International group, which also met at Four Winds.

The dummies (doused with ample amounts of red paint to simulate gore) were dumped in spots around the campus and in the downtown business district to bring attention to the United States involvement and complicity in these atrocities. The response to this act of street theater was mixed—ranging from “The City of Ellensburg should go on record as opposed to U.S. intervention in Central and South American politics” to “I think this display was in poor taste; it ruined my morning.”

SHOCK AND AWE

Carthage, plow it under

Sow the ground with salt

Hiroshima, then Nagasaki
Just so you know we know
What we are doing

Napalm the villages
Defoliate the jungle
Shoot the buffalo
Cut the life-sustaining links

It's a blitz
On a fortress, on a mosque
Creating a gulf of blood
And a nightmare of smashed faces

And in the aftermath
Open sewers and squalor

As torture is to the individual, so terror is to the group. It modifies their behavior, tempers their rage, and breaks down their will.



Returning to BEZERKELY

After “The Death of Hippie” ceremony (October 6, 1967) a tsunami of Hippie refugees arrived in Berkeley from the Height-Asbury. Telegraph Avenue, the main drag on the south side of the campus, was widened to help facilitate street artists in the selling of their wares. Head shops with black-light posters were in every nook and corner.

There was still much of Berkeley that reflected the values of the older generation. Frazier’s Furniture Store, with the latest in Danish Modern, Nicole’s Gallery, where one could buy a Picasso, a Salvador Dali, or a Miró original. As Jampa writes in his preface to *Berkeley Daze*:

Berzerkley is, or was in the 40s, 50s, and early 60s, the Athens of the West—the Berkeley of Baroque music, the Berkeley of Nobel laureates and little old ladies in tennis shoes,...the Berkeley of George Goode’s haberdashery, where you could have a bespoke suit cut; of the Cinema Guild & Studio which was run by Pauline Kael and Ed Landberg—a street with tobacco shops and Mom and Pop grocery stores, like the Garden Spot, or the Co-op, where Allen Ginsberg had a vision of Walt Whitman among the artichokes—a street that, in those days, supported many and various bookstores. I would bop down the street, get the time from the clock on the campanile by looking into the mirror in the doorway of See’s Candy Store, peer into Creed’s Bookstore and salute Big Daddy at his chessboard, check out the marquee on the movie house, buy a pack of Gualoise cigarettes at the Garden Spot, and then cut across the street to the Mediterranean Café [sic] for a shot of espresso.

Jampa is being nostalgic, but he tempers his sentiments with:

O, too surreal—of course the street needed to be liberated—there is only so much bourgeois charm one can stomach before the homeless puke on your shiny shoes, and the

street vendors camp on your doorstep, and the unread copies of Marx's *Communist Manifesto* clog the drains.

Chela said to Jampa, "You belong here; this place is you." He led Chela, Raven, and Charity through Sather Gate, took a short cut along Strawberry Creek to the Faculty Glade, showing them spots where he turned on, stopped at Kroeber Hall to look at the Ishi Exhibit, then back off campus to see Bernard Maybeck's Christian Science Church with its Belgium glass windows and trellises, winding up at Lu Garcia's apartment on College Avenue.

Chela's bus was parked nearby, and the friends went there to eat food Chela had brought in a wicker basket. Also, in the basket was a bag of homegrown weed that Chela said was a "hidden treasure" she had found under the dash, put there by her husband, Frank Wakefield, who, at this time, was building a stupa for W.Y. Evans-Wentz at the base of the sacred mountain of Cuchama, near San Diego. They took this treasure back to Lu's place, lit a candle and passed a joint—the old magic—and when they had all gotten high, Jampa recited a poem.

PATTERNS

Look at the numbers

Kant 478a-79d

There is beauty in the moral order

And Bacon who should

Be in Everyman's Library

Knew Augustine confessed

I have a friend who says

There are 3 principles

The good, the bad

And the whichisneither

As for the whichisneither

My friend told me to stop

Smoking, which changed my life

Because I smoke 2 to 3 packs

I write this sitting

On a Persian rug

Listening to a harpsichord

On a Victrola play

Partia #2 in C minor

Schmieder 826

478 79 3 2 3 2 826





PLAGIARISM

MILITARY SCIENCE

& POLITICAL DISSENT

A PHILOSOPHICAL MONTAGE

Bouvard Pécuchet



Plagiarism, Military Science, & Political Dissent:
A Philosophical Montage

Bouvard Pécuchet

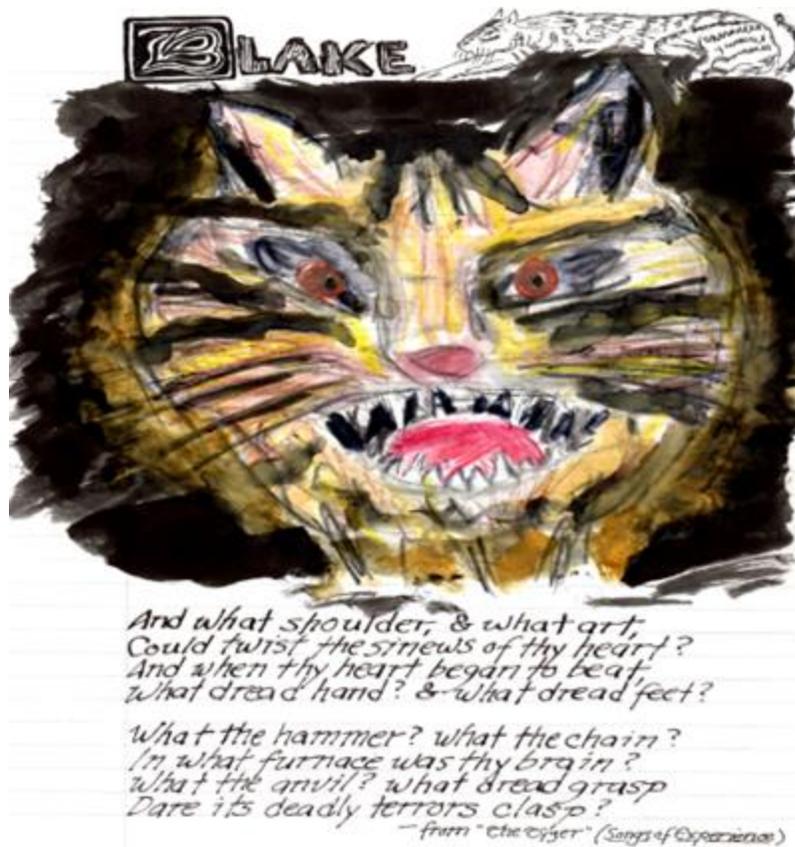
This book is a response to Clayton Bohnet's
Toward a Philosophy of Protest: Dissent, State Power, and the Spectacle of Everyday Life, 2020.

Cover combine: "Carthage" by Jampa Dorje, 2021.

Title page photo of Amanda Foreman performing
Terpsichore, Muse of Chorus and Dance, 2021.



JAMPA'S PLAGIARY OF W.M. BLAKE



One can sense the presence of the blacksmith and feel the heat of the forge, as the questions fly like sparks off his anvil in this central stanza of Blake's poem, "The Tyger." The questions are rhetorical, like the questions in the *Book of Job*: "Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?" We are with Blake in a forging house, at the creation of the world, and we are then asked, "Did he smile his work to see? Did he who made the Lamb make thee?"

Spelling was still arbitrary at the end of the 18th century. The *y* in Tyger immediately jumps out at me, and the lower case *h*—"he" could be Lucifer (or, since Blake mixed his mythologies, the smithy might be the Roman god, Vulcan) rather than the Almighty; but the "Lamb" could not be mistaken for anything but a symbol for Christ, Jesus. A dichotomy is being erected between the creators of Lambs and Tygers, as there is between other characters in the two books, *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*. It doesn't matter who is alluded to, really; it's that the question is raised at all which confounds the reader. We would naturally assume

God created both, since, at the time the poem was written, Darwin's theory of evolution was not known, "The Tyger" being etched sometime between 1789 and 1794 and *The Origin of Species*, still to be published in 1859.

I wonder if Blake would have dismissed Darwin's theory with contempt, as an extension of the mind's rationalistic projections, or if he would have been attracted to the organic and evolutionary aspects of the idea and embraced it in contrast to the mechanistic theory propounded by Newton then in vogue. Blake was so very original and saw beyond "Nature." His was a cosmological-psychological view, more in line with Tantric Buddhist metaphysics than with any religious or scientific concept then present in Western culture. Blake and Tibetan Buddhism? That is going to have to wait...

More to the point is Blake's use of metallurgy in the making of his tiger. *Song of Innocence and Songs of Experience*, which is subtitled *Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*, was written during the early stages of the Industrial Revolution, when the blast furnaces were going full tilt and the "Satanic Mills" were in continuous operation. This was a time when libertarian and anarchistic freethinkers pointed out social injustices, religious hypocrisy, and political tyranny. William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, Thomas Paine—William Blake was among them.

Blake's approach was different. As Mark Schorer points out in his seminal *William Blake: The Politics of Vision* (Vintage, New York, 1959, page 3):

To trace the dialectic of innocence and experience, he tried to express (and correct) the ideas of political thinkers like Paine and Godwin in the vocabulary of religious thinkers like Boehme and Swedenborg.

According to Schorer, through his poetry and art, Blake tried to "synthesize the contraries of a visionary temperament and a social intelligence." In his review of Mark Schorer's book, Alfred Kazin, in *The New Republic*, emphasizes this point:

...Schorer has done what so many Blake admirers have wanted to do...He has taken Blake out of the company of mystics...and has shown him as a poet and thinker who accepted and corrected the revolutionary thought of his

time. We, who have never corrected it enough, but show signs of abandoning it altogether, can now, better than ever appreciate Blake's relation to our age.

—from a blurb on the cover of *William Blake: Politics of Vision*

Jampa entered the University of California at Berkeley, in 1959, the year Mark Schorer's book and Alfred Kazin's review were published. Schorer also came to the University of California at Berkeley that year to teach a course on William Blake. The Schorer book was popular. It appealed to layman and scholar alike. *The Portable Blake*, with an introduction by Alfred Kazin, published by Viking Press, came out about this time, as well, and was on every intellectual's bookshelf. William Blake, due to careful scholarship, was having a revival. Bob Dylan would soon sing, "The times they are a changin'." In 1959, Jampa could already feel the wind blowing through the billows of discontent, fanning the flames of revolution.

During his first year at Cal, Jampa's academic career went from bad to worse to abysmal. He took English from Thomas Parkinson. In class, he was asked if he had ever read the same book twice. He claimed he had read Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* twice. Professor Parkinson said, "And, then, you probably wondered why you ever read it once." Jampa had never been dissed this way in high school. He turned in his first Blue Book essay on the subject "My Home." At the next class period, Parkinson announced that he had received (Jampa went unnamed) the worse essay he had ever read from one of the students. Jampa guessed it was his, and he felt this was confirmed by a huge, red F on the first page of his composition. Devastation!—but Jampa now knows that Thomas Parkinson pulled this stunt every semester, and Jampa also realizes that Parkinson did him a favor with this humbling experience. Jampa learned that he could not write a passable essay. He could diagram sentences, decline verbs, and spell in a haphazard fashion, but he had yet to learn how to organize his thoughts. The upside was his being introduced to *Walden; or, Life in the Woods* and the essay, "On Civil Disobedience," by Henry David

Thoreau.

Another text used in Professor Parkinson's class was *The Organization Man* by William H. Whyte. It is an analysis of the changes in the structure of the labor force, after World War II, from a previous time when individual initiative was appreciated to a time that emphasized playing it safe by working for a corporation. In his lectures on Whyte's book, Parkinson emphasized the Machiavellian need to be cunning and ruthless to survive in corporate life; and when Jampa considered this attitude in conjunction with Thoreau's call to disobedience, along with a need for healthy out-door lungs, it meshed diabolically in his mind and planted the seed-idea to get off the grid and be free of the system.

In the spring of 1960, Jampa took an English class from Professor Traugett. When he was instructed to write an essay on a poet of his choice, Jampa chose to write on William Blake. Oh, miserable wretch, had you but taken the time to outline some of your ideas or perhaps consulted with another student on your first draft! No, you stupidly and naively (in the sense of unsuspecting detection) plagiarized most of your essay from Alfred Kazin's introduction to *The Portable Blake*.

Everyone in the English Department had read Kazin's essay, and they were about to hear about yours. Kazin's essay was the brilliant work of a man of mature years, and you were a freshman not dry behind the ears. Were you intentionally putting a loaded revolver to your temple? If so, it made a nice hole, which you then fell down, turning your life inside out. That's a convoluted thought, I know, but it requires a stretch of imagination to understand—not so much your flagitious disregard for literary standards but your choosing such a noteworthy piece to plagiarize. You were lucky. Professor Traugett was kind. He promised to only give you the grade of D and not bring your action to the attention of the Dean of Men, which would have meant an expulsion.



Transcript of the University of California at Berkeley			Fall 1959			Spring 1960		
Class	units	grade	Class	units	grade			
Chemistry 1A	5	C 10	Chemistry 1B	5	F 0			
English 1A	3	C 6	English 1B	3	D 3			
Latin 1A	3	B 9	Latin 1B	3	F 0			
Physics	2	D 2	Mil Sci 1A	2	F 0			
Military Science 1A	2	F 0	Physical Ed 1	2	F 0			
grade point	15	27 = 1.8	Total GPA	1.0	3 = 0.2			

NB: In a review of Jampa's transcripts, I find that the PE class was 3 units, making a total of 16 and shifting the total GPA to 0.994. —BP

MILITARY SCIENCE

This is my rifle;
This is my gun.
This is for fighting;
This is for fun.
—Army Jingle

I was at home in
the Army. They liked
me, they paid to
look at my dong once
a month.

—Philip Whalen
“Homage to William Seward Burroughs”



BOUVARD: Were you in the Army, Jampa?

JAMPA: ROTC.

BOUVARD: That is the Reserve Officer Training Corps. When was that?

JAMPA: In my freshman year at Cal. Mandatory.

BOUVARD: Why so?

JAMPA: The University is a land grant college. Came with the territory.

BOUVARD: Is it still mandatory?

JAMPA: No. Part of the revolutionary acts of the Free Speech Movement was to change that policy. There was no reason it had to be mandatory. To meet the government's requirement, it was enough for it just to be offered.

BOUVARD: Did you drill in a uniform and carry a weapon?

JAMPA: We were issued uniforms and a M1 carbine. We drilled with the rifle and were trained in firing positions. We never fired our weapon, but we needed to know the nomenclature and to be able to field strip and reassemble it. The uniform and the carbine had to be kept spotless. There were inspections at our weekly drill period, and the inspectors issued merits and demerits on your appearance.

BOUVARD: Were there classes, too?

JAMPA: Two each week. Two one-hour classes on military science and one hour of drill on the track field each week for two units of academic credit.

BOUVARD: How did you fare as a man in uniform?

JAMPA: I was a lack luster soldier.

BOUVARD: What did your parents think?

JAMPA: I think my dad was proud of me. He had been too young for the First World War and too old for the Second. As a youth, he was exempted from combat and supported the troops as a member of the Farm Work Reserve. As an adult, he was in Civil Defense. He wore a simple uniform, a jacket and a cap with a badge, and he carried a flashlight. He went around the neighborhood during air raid warnings to be sure everyone's lights were out. You could say he served his country through both World Wars, whereas I was a failure as a soldier. Yet I think of myself as a patriot in the sense that I tried to keep my country from making a big mistake by going to war with Vietnam.

BOUVARD: When did you become active in the peace movement?

JAMPA: In the mid-Sixties, but I became aware of our involvement in Vietnam in 1961. At the main entrance to Cal campus, on the steps of Sproul Hall, I saw a young man sitting with a sign that said he was on a hunger strike until the U.S. withdrew its advisors from someplace called Vietnam. This was Fred Moore. His father was in the military, and Fred knew what



was on the horizon.

BOUVARD: Were you eligible for the draft?

JAMPA: I was classified 2D, a married student. Later, after I had been divorced and dropped out of school, I might have been eligible, but with my history as a mental patient, they wouldn't have taken me.

BOUVARD: What did you do to protest the war in Vietnam?

JAMPA: Don't you want to know what happened to Fred Moore?

BOUVARD: Yes, of course.

JAMPA: His father flew out from back east, and after consulting with university officials, he talked his son into committing himself to a mental hospital, a good place to be when you can't cope with all the "sane" behavior in the world. And what did I do? I filed that one away. I protested the Un-American Activities Committee in San Francisco, in 1960. I went to a candle-light vigil for Carl Chessman in a protest against capital punishment. I sat in the Mediterranean Café and had heated debates. I went crazy, myself.

BOUVARD: But were you not active in the anti-war movement?

JAMPA: Not to the extent of many of my friends. I went to the Vietnam Day Rally and spoke against the war. I covered the Stop the Troop Train demonstration for the *Berkeley Barb*. I signed many petitions. I wrote and read poems, which I believe is a revolutionary act, even if the subject is flowers. Think what conditions must occur to reduce a person to write of flowers. The most significant action I took was at the University of Alaska, when I was a student senator, representing married students, and I sponsored a call for the student body to formerly condemn the war in Vietnam and the secret war in Laos and Cambodia. The University of Alaska was one of the last universities to go on record in opposition to the war. Also, at this time, in 1972, the students and the Indians formed a coalition at the Democratic Convention held on campus and nominated Senator George McGovern as the anti-war candidate in his bid for the presidency. He didn't become president. Nixon had his infamous second term with the Watergate scandal, but this revealed to me how a small number of people can have an effect in politics. Let me posit a poem I wrote during the Second Gulf War.

PRAISE AND BLAME, LOSS AND GAIN

To be peace—empty, clear, compassionate
In this world and not escape through sleep
Through normalcy, through wrapping myself in the flag

A prayer tree flutters in our town square
Prayers for war to disappear in this warm breeze
The leaves are prayers blowing in the deadly winds

BOUVARD: Did you finish your ROTC. training?

JAMPA: No, I flunked the class, but before I go into that let me tell you of two events, dramatic events, that caused me to wonder about what I was doing dressing up and playing soldier. Just a normal beginning to the day. I was awakened by KPFA opening with Bach's *Canata No. 78*, ("Jesu, der du meine Seele") so lovely, and then an episode of *The Little Prince*, which I listened to as I put on my uniform and gave my shoes a quick buffing. I put my hat on backwards, as did other rebellious students, fully aware that we could be "dressed-down" by any officer on campus who sees us. My roommate, Dale, drove me to school on the back of his motorcycle with his pet monkey riding on the handlebars. As I walked along the trail to the armory, I saw smoke and a crowd of people looking at what turned out to be a fire at the side of the building. No one was trying to put out the blaze. It was a small fire, made with cardboard and some scraps of lumber. A guy was taking pictures. The flames were not having any great effect on the concrete wall, although they did scorch the surface. But, this was an armory for US Army! I walked on. I didn't want to be there when the cops came. The man with the camera might have been FBI. This anarchistic act was surely an act of treason, being some citizens attacking a military facility, even if it was only a few cardboard boxes being burned. The other event. Another fine day, but perhaps a little too warm to be wearing a wool uniform and marching in formation on the drill field. At some point, a soldier broke ranks, walked to the center of the field, pushed his rifle barrel into the earth, stripped off his uniform, tie, shoes, socks, and all but his shorts, piled them up, hat and coat draped over the rifle, and he walked to the exit and was gone. This was Frank Chin. I knew him from high school. He later had success with his play, *The Chicken Coup Chinaman*. It's a play about breaking restraints. When Frank went AWOL, I knew I was not going to be able to keep in step much longer. My grade for the semester was a F. I got 64% of the points on my tests correct. 65% was a D, which meant that I would have to take the class over again. I asked the captain, who was the head of the department, if we could go over the test scores and see if we might find one point, but he said it was "classified" information. I told him I could get an easier F by simply not attending his classes and walked out.

BOUVARD: Do you have a poem from that time frame to conclude our interview?

LETTER TO SITO IN TIME OF WAR

We find
ourselves
in a new world
speaking
an old
language

We speak
of beauty
and feelings
while the
machines
blast
the birds
from our
hearts

Watch
the words
hear
the howl
come
to the ear
eye, nose
lip

Scream
at the
dichotomy
of the
comma—
a dream
an illusion

how time
passes

Dinosaurs
dance off
the map
where you
and I sit
drinking
coffee

We hold
this loose end
of the
universe
feeling
at ease
in the smoke



I VOTED FOR IKE WHEN I WAS EIGHT

The Incredible Bureau does not discriminate
Between polished shoes and Greek statues,
And I didn't always talk with a stutter,
And I didn't always live in the gutter.

SINGIN' DIXIE

You're right, Charles
The South did win the Civil War

And America can't wait
For the next Texas Bar-B-Q.

These two poems reveal a range in Jampa's political sympathies. Jampa would have been more like 10, going on 11, when he marched with a placard that read "I LIKE IKE" on an Oakland grade school playground. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the 34th president, was inaugurated in January 1953, and served as Commander-in-Chief until 1961, when Jampa was marching around Cal Campus protesting mandatory ROTC. By then, he was a Kennedy supporter.

Jampa was too young to vote for JFK in the 1960 election, and his man did not live to run for a second term. Jampa could not bring himself to vote for Lyndon Johnson, who he believed might have been a conspirator in the assassination plot, a belief he no longer holds. Jampa was living in a cabin in Alaska during the Chicago riots at the Democratic Convention, in 1968, but he was in sympathy with the protests against Herbert Humphrey because he felt this presidential hopeful was following in Johnson's footsteps and was oblivious to the fact that the majority of primary voters were against the war in Vietnam. According to the Wiki elf, "After the Chicago protests, the demonstrators were confident that the majority of Americans would side with them over what had happened in Chicago, especially because of police behavior. They were shocked to learn that controversy over the war in Vietnam overshadowed their cause...It was often commented through the popular media that on that evening, America voted for Richard Nixon." In hindsight, Jampa often wonders if the actions of his cohorts were too rash. After four years of Trump and the January 6 Insurrection, he appears to be supportive of the establishment—an establishmentarian.

"That government is best which governs least," or as Thoreau amends Jefferson's statement, "That government is best which governs not at all." (Henry David Thoreau, *Essay on Civil Disobedience*.) Jampa is not a bomb-throwing type of anarchist, but he has doubts about the various forms of government humans have invented to maintain social harmony. Whether power is in the hands of the many, as in Athens, or in the hands of a few, as in Sparta, there is a cycle of liberalism followed by a cycle of conservatism. One group naturally checks the excesses of the other. This tug-of-war, this ebb and flow, is called the dialectic of history. No one is happy with it. As Buddha reminds us, this is samsara, the cycle of existence. And it's not just any old samsara; this is the samsara of the Kali Yuga, an especially nasty eon, coming to a close.

PRESIDENT BUCHAMAM SLEPT HERE

Expanding Our Dominions

With Might and Right
With Axe, Rifle, and Plow
With Computer and Hydrogen Bomb
In the Course the Propagandists
Mark on the Soil and in the Sky
For the Stars of Empire
With the Policy of New Possessions
(Be it the North Pole or Iraq)
Beyond the Seas and the Atmosphere
According to the Logic of History
And the Duty of Destiny

All for Power, Sex, Money, Death

The rhetoric of this poem is from a 19th century tract. James Buchanan (1791-1868) was the fifteenth president of the U.S. (1857-61), an expansionist period in the country's history. The Wild West was corralled, and some of the flavor of taming the west lingered in Alaska, when Jampa lived in the woods. Here are sections from "Woodnotes"—

Living in the woods is a fruitcake idea
Can others be influenced by seeing how
It's done—expanding circle—friends
Town, state, country, galaxy, cosmos
Returns me back to myself

Repression, exploitation—leaving
The city to avoid the establishment
And, in turn, I become the Man.
Good weather, one clear day in thirty
In this rain forest—ego hunting—lots
Of weird animals in the mind, the mind
Itself a crazy monkey

Somewhere, the governor of someplace
Makes money in real estate, and
Dr. Leary attends Altamont, says
It's a lesson to be learned, while
Theo and I float in our boat—far away

Neil Armstrong takes his giant step

On one of those rare, clear days at Deep Bay, a hunter in an outboard motorboat shot a sea otter in the cove in front of Jampa's cabin. Jampa considered this a rude thing for anyone to do. The man was within his legal rights, but Jampa took offence. He confronted the stranger, and he had a handgun tucked in his belt. From the deck of the cabin, Jampa shouted, "How would you like it if I pulled up in front of your place in town and shot your dog in your front yard?" The man offered to share the meat, but Jampa declined the offer and went inside without further insult to be with his family.

In a phenomenological sense, the entire range of politics was imbedded in these events. From Jampa's state of being the monarch of all he perceived, "the King of the great Outdoors," to an oligarchical dispute, to his decision to withdraw, which had it come to a vote with his wife and child would have been confirmed to be the best course of action before the situation escalated to a state of conflict and anarchy.

All the elements that precipitate conflict, since the days of pre-historic man to now, were present: territory, food, wealth (otter skin), machismo and saving face, protection of family, anger, greed, and paranoia. And there was blood. There's nothing like the sight of blood to stir up rage. Perhaps, what irked Jampa most was that the tranquility of the day was disrupted by a gunshot.

If human beings have any chance of surviving on this planet beyond a karmically determined condition of suffering due to negative emotions and wrong views, we need to evolve a mindstream that is less aggressive and inflexible and more compassionate and loving. Political solutions have their place, but what it will take is for every person to come to terms with their demons, their habitual tendencies, of overcoming their fear of "doing unto others as you would have them do unto you" and in finding happiness by helping others to be happy. It is a jungle out there—or worse, it is a civilization out there—and it is hard to survive the food chain, the chain gang, and the chain store.

Jampa feels he was lucky to have survived two terms of George W. Bush. He is not sure Obama is any better. He has been out-of-touch with current events, while in retreat. On February 17, President's Day, 2014, Jampa signed a petition against the right of any president to assassinate terrorists overseas with drones as a violation, by extension, of the 5th amendment of the Constitution. He heard Mary, his caregiver, question the validity of President Obama receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. He wrote her a note.

ON PRESIDENT OBAMA'S WINNING THE PEACE PRIZE

The Nobel Peace Prize is not given on a whim. The process is long and involved. As I understand the process, there are a large number of delegates appointed by the Nobel Committee, experts in their fields (including past recipients of the prizes), who submit the names of candidates. Then, the committee correlates the names of the nominees into a master list on which they vote. Each member of the committee has a final “short list,” and the name of the winner must be on all the members’ final short list.

There is, of course, a symbolic or political message to the Nobel Peace Prize. Here, it is that the world prefers peace to war. It was also a vote by the world that it had confidence President Obama would change course, after the Bush Administration—with the expectation of a real substantive endeavor would have been rewarded.

So, President Obama wins the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize. Things must have cooled off significantly in world affairs since I went into solitary retreat, in January. At that time, there was a world financial crisis, and “W” and his neo-com buddies were pushing on with their war in Iraq, while ignoring many frightening events and taunting Syria, Iran, and North Korea as members of what they construed to be an “Axis of Evil.” In such an environment of political and economic instability, a world war was not unthinkable.

In Africa, there was a continuing genocide in Sudan’s Darfur and unrest in the Congo; in Eastern Europe, the Bosnia-Croatia conflict was about to resume; the Russians were angry about our plans to build a missile defense system near their borders; the Pakistani president, about to be toppled, could leave a nuclear arsenal in the hands of Islamic fundamentalists; North Korea and Iran had every intention of continuing their uranium enrichment programs, adding to the nuclear threat; the Israeli-Palestinian crisis of terror and retaliatory strikes was at an intense pitch; and China continued to buy up the world. If any of these infernos have been quenched or contained, it would be worth ten fucking Nobel Peace Prizes.

I am of the opinion that this does not sound like Jampa, that he was playing to the stands. It is unlike him to express pro-establishment sentiments. He distrusts institutions, following Blake, that governments are “a pretense of Liberty to destroy Liberty.” Jampa believes that the only kind of democracy is the kind that promotes true liberty and equality but, like Spinoza, he is happy if he can just have his thoughts, even if he has to keep them to himself. What Jampa is expressing in his note to Mary is sympathetic joy, and he is simply sharing in Obama’s triumph. I also sense wistfulness for the youthful expectations of the Kennedy Era.

Jampa has given his entire literary output a political slant. At his dPress website. when you enter the area behind the stupa icon to reach *The Collected Books*, a line appears, as you touch the page with your cursor: “You asked what I could do for my country, Jack.”

Jampa is not a naïf. He knows the Kennedy Administration was tragically flawed. Robert MacNamara, JFK's Secretary of State, has confessed in public that their Vietnam Policy was wrong. Politics is called the art of compromise, and it wreaks havoc on a person's integrity. The character of a politician (whatever that might be) probably lies somewhere between the depiction of the senator, played by Jimmy Stewart, in *Mister Smith Goes to Washington* and the senator, played by Kevin Spacey, in *House of Cards*. As Melville pointed out in *Moby Dick*, all politicians have had their assholes sewn shut.

Jampa flirted with Communism, and she flirted back. He claimed he was a Marxist, and his parents were terrified. His picture was in the newspaper showing him in a protest against the Un-American Activities Committee. He was sent to a psychiatrist, who hypnotized him and told him to repeat, "I am not a Communist" over and over. Jampa did, but he kept his fingers crossed behind his back. I am going to conclude this section with Jampa's telling of these events, as it was published in *Berkeley Daze*, online at *Big Bridge*.

BLACK FRIDAY

(Prefatory note—I have always told the following story as it is here presented, but recently Michael Rossman, author of The Wedding in the War, pointed out some historical inaccuracies. He wrote—"Don Bratman says that the suicide did NOT happen while he was working there, but before that. As for your reference to Fred Moore, who was sitting-in alone on Sproul steps in '61 to protest compulsory ROTC, I can correct that from my own memory. Gosh, it's hard looking back that far without documentary sources, isn't it? Also, I believe you are referring to William J. Lederer, who co-authored The Ugly American with Eugene Burdick. Professor Lederer may well have been subpoenaed to appear before HUAC in their planned 1959 visit in San Francisco, as many people were, but that visit was cancelled; and it was not until May 1960 that HUAC actually did visit, to interrogate other dozens of subpoenas, and to face the protest you speak of, in which we were hosed down the steps.")

Political Science lectures at U.C. Berkeley, 1959. Professor Learner is showing us both sides to an ideological conflict, revealing positive and negative forces in two systems of economics and government, Marxism/Communism vs. Democracy/Capitalism. For this he is accused of corrupting youth and is subpoenaed by the House of un-American Activities Committee (HUAC).

Black Friday. I go to the county courthouse in San Francisco with my friend Dennis Wier. I've known him since grade school. We're on assignment for KPFA, the non-profit, listener-sponsored radio, and we are trying to record for posterity hundreds of agitators giving the seig heil salute to Congressman Willis, the chairman of HUAC. Later in the day, the

demonstrators gain admittance to the courtroom, which has been packed with American Legionnaires and Daughters of the American Revolution. The city police, fearing they are losing control of the crowd, turn on the building's fire hoses and wash the protestors down the steps of the courthouse to the sidewalk.

The first edition of the "San Francisco Chronicle" reports: POLICE ATTACK STUDENTS, but the next edition quickly reverses this headline to read STUDENTS ATTACK POLICE. This is the first use of force by municipal authorities on the public since the San Francisco General Strike during the Great Depression. In the morning, my father sits down at the kitchen table and opens his Oakland Tribune and begins to choke.

He's sputtering. "What. . . what is this?" The newspaper is being wildly waved in my face, but it is clear to me — my picture is on the front page. I had climbed up on the cement portico with a hand-held microphone, and someone from the "Oakland Tribune" took a profile shot of me with my hand held up against a backdrop of placards and protesters giving the seig heil salute. A protest movement is arising, and I can still feel the exhilaration. It is the formation of a hive, what is later to be called the Birth of the New Left. The buzzing of mindful bees.

My parents send me to a local psychoanalyst, who hypnotizes me and gets me to repeat after him, "I am not a Communist. I am not a Communist. I am not a Communist." I think of myself as the patient of the phrenologist in Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness having my cranium measured, a 19th century scientific method of determining psychological change in people sent into the jungle. I'm headed up the river. I have read some psychology and know a little about hypnosis. I fake my trances and give myself auto-hypnotic suggestions to counteract any effects of Dr. Gompertz's attempts at brainwashing. I gaze at the reproduction of a Gauguin painting of Tahitian maidens in the doctor's office. I lift my finger in response to the doctor's inquiries. "Yes, I hear you. No, I am not a Communist."

I'm moving upstream. Up to this bend in the river. I write a diatribe. I'm on my way to the Dean's office with this scabrous piece of scatology in my fist when I'm waylaid on the steps of Sproul Hall by Don Bratman. Don is a poet, older and wiser, and he knows I am headed for trouble and steers me in a different direction.

Don has been working as a watchman in the bell tower of the Campanile, and a man jumped—perhaps while Don is sorting out the pattern of alliterative "s" sounds in Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." (The guy climbed up on the guardrail, tossed his briefcase over, yelled "Look out below," and followed it down.) Glass partitions are finally installed. There is talk that the Campanile is a phallic symbol which is across the bay from the Golden Gate Bridge, which is designated a maternal symbol because the spans form the shape of breasts. There sure are a lot of interesting theories floating around. Somehow the combination of male and female symbolism creates a vortex of energy that works on the unstable psyches of people prone to suicide. Interesting. Nothing about both

structures being tall and accessible, and that falling from them is lethal.

Don tells me he thinks it would be better to revise the poem and correct some of the misspellings. We walk back across the plaza towards our dorm. We stop to look at a young man sitting just inside the campus boundary with a sign on his chest, indicating he is on a hunger strike until the U.S. withdraws its advisors from someplace called Vietnam. America sleeps. A war machine is slowly slouching its way towards Saigon to be born. I watch the son of an Air Force officer sit in his hunger strike for several days. Finally at the prompting of the university administrators, his father flies out from Washington D.C. and talks his son into having himself committed to a mental institution. This is the beginning of the Litany of the Dead.

AFTERWORD

In conclusion, let me return to *Jampa's Plagary*:—

...which would have meant an expulsion. Professor Traugett was a man of his word. Jampa got his D. It was the best grade he received that semester. And his name was already on a list before the Dean for subversive activities. He was a member of SLATE, a student organization putting forth a slate of candidates for student government offices.

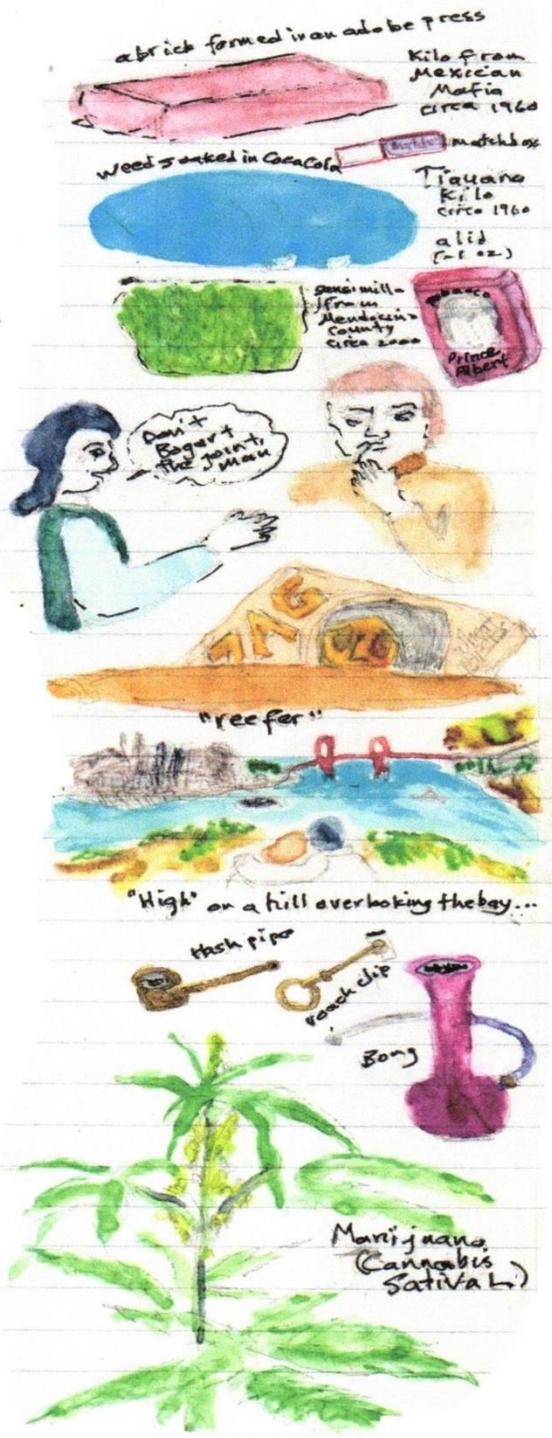
Jampa had been haranguing students from the planter boxes in Dwinelle Plaza, at noon, about various university injustices; and he was a resident of Gilman Hall, which had been investigated by the FBI after Archie Brown, a card-carrying member of the Communist Party, had been invited to speak at the dorm, while the House Un-American Activities Committee was holding hearings in San Francisco. Jampa was convinced that Big Brother was watching. The only thing to do was to drop out and go underground.

Sounds romantic, but all it really meant was that he quit going to class and began hanging out at the Mediterranean Café on Telegraph Avenue. The decision to drop out was precipitated after he had an interview with his Commanding Officer in ROTC. This course was mandatory, along with signing a loyalty oath to the United States of America. He had received a failing combined grade of 65 on his tests for the previous semester. 66 would have given him a passing D grade. He was told that a review of his test scores was impossible because they were TOP SECRET. Jampa told the captain that he could get the same kind of F without ever going to class or to a drill period.

In his chemistry class, the substance that Jampa had been given to analyze remained an “unknown,” and this Jampa dropped in a wastebasket as he left the lab. His copy of the *Aeneid* went unread, and the squiggly notes he had made in his physics class, Atomic Radiation and Life, were left behind without being deciphered. The predictable rotations he

had been taught electrons travelled were revealed to be as uncertain as the next steps he was to take. William Blake would not have approved of the young man's plagiarism, but the old poet would have been proud of Jampa's social and political vision. For Jampa, it was a glad day.





Bouvard
Pécuchet

The
Hedge
at the
Bottom
of the
Garden



Bouvard Pécuchet
The Hedge at the Bottom
of the Garden

Kapala Press 2021 Ellensburg

This philosophical montage is a product of Michael Goerger's
Philosophy and Psychedelics class, CWU, Spring 2021

Sections of this book are excerpted from
Hollow Air, D Press, Sebastopol, 1999

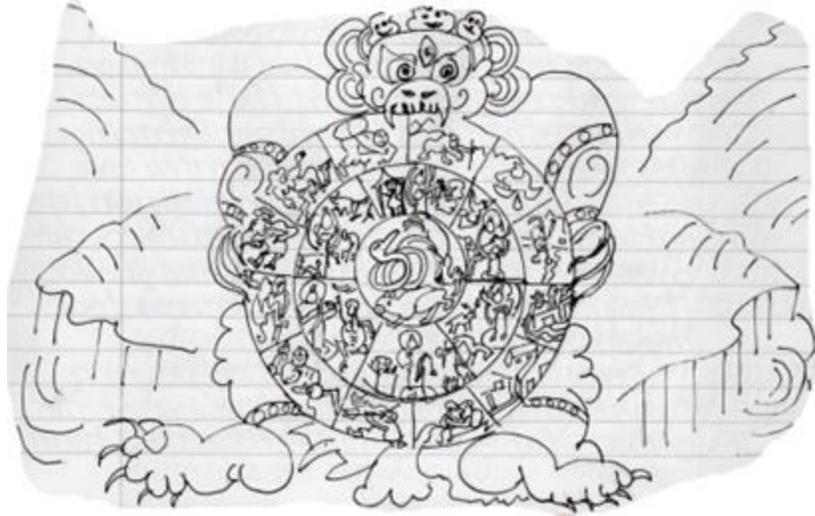


The Hedge at the Bottom of the Garden

*If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear as it is Infinite.
For man has closed himself up, til he sees all thing thro' narrow clinks of his
cavern.*

—Wm. Blake *Marriage of Heaven & Hell*

The word, *cleansed*, as Aldous Huxley uses it in *Doors of Perception*, has its source in one of William Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. The term can be interpreted on at least five levels. Literally, the cleaning of sense organs means 20/20 vision, better hearing, and so forth. Historically, Huxley is a representative of modern western culture dabbling in the use of a psychedelic drug to find out if our human senses (including mind) can perceive a reality beyond the present reality,—this following in a tradition of reality-seekers leading back in philosophy to Plato's Cave Allegory and beyond.



Metaphorically, “cleaning” means allowing more sense data into consciousness by changing the physiology of the brain. Huxley says: “Mescaline raises all colors to a higher power and makes the percipient aware of innumerable fine shades of difference, to which, at ordinary times, he is completely blind” (DP 27).

Allegorically, cleansing is related to spiritual purification and a profound sense of the significance of objects. In his meditation of a bamboo chair, Huxley says: “Like Wordsworth’s daffodils, they brought all manner of wealth—the gift, beyond price, of a new direct insight into the very Nature of Things, together with a more modest treasure of understanding in the field, especially of the arts” (DP 28).

Morally, the experience will hopefully lead to good actions, a wholesome life. Regarding the conflict between contemplation and action, Huxley says: “The full and final solution can be found only by those who are prepared to implement the right kind of *Weltranschauung* by means of the right kind of behavior and the right kind of constant and unstrained alertness” (DP 42).

Mythologically the hope is to reach some ultimate, perhaps “perennial” state of consciousness, as described in various world religions as the Godhead, the Source, the Unmoved Mover, Buddha Mind, or the Ground of Being.

Anagogically, the path leads to higher levels of spiritual attainment, and reveals where you are in your quest for a place in the hierarchy of beatific aspirants, to which

bhumi (spiritual level) you've reached on your way towards attaining Buddhahood, to the degree of intimacy you have in your Union with God (although Saint Teresa never revealed the color of Jesus' eyes), or to non-denominational Ontological Timelessness and the Nature of Mind. Such an awaking might come with a Spiritual Understanding that is a gift of grace from the Holy Spirit, like in Christian Cabbala, where the Awakened One sees all the correspondences in scripture (The Roots of Christian Cabala [Glitch Bottle podcast #72] - YouTube) as well as in the world of events.



Blake goes further. He means that cleansing would open a pathway to freeing the mind from its reliance upon Reason and allow the Imagination to function at a higher capacity. There are some deep levels in the apocalyptic last part of the second “Memorable Fancy” in Blake’s *Marriage of Heaven & Hell* (1790);

The ancient tradition that the world will be consumed in fire at the end of six thousand years is true, as I have heard from Hell. For the cherub with his flaming sword is hereby commanded to leave his guard at the tree of life, and when he does, the whole creation will be consumed and appear infinite and holy whereas it now appears finite & corrupt.

This will come to pass by an improvement of sensual enjoyment.

But first the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul is to be expunged; this I shall do, by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away,

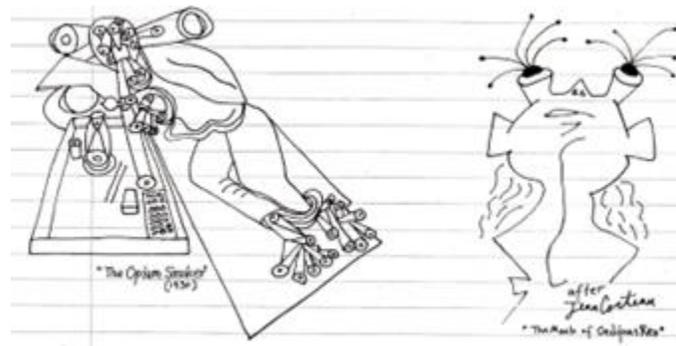
and displaying the infinite which was hid.

If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite.

For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.

Blake's line, "This will come to pass by an improvement of sensual enjoyment" sounds exceedingly Tantric to me with its emphasis on sensual enjoyment, along with the idea of the soul not being distinct from the body. Tantrism is difficult to define, because of the many different ritual activities in Buddhism and Hinduism. Teun Goudriaan, in his 1981 review of Tantrism, states that Tantrism usually means a "systematic quest for salvation or spiritual excellence" by realizing and fostering the divine within one's own body, one that is simultaneous union of the masculine-feminine and spirit-matter and has the ultimate goal of realizing the "primal blissful state of non-duality" (Wiki, Tantra). The wrathful energies of Tantra might well be analogous to Blake's "corrosive" methods since Tantra is a path of transformation of negative activity into wisdom.

The Doors of Perception, Aldous Huxley, Harper Perennial, NY, 2009



RADICAL DZOGCHEN IN BERKELEY

By the time Leary proclaimed "Tune In, Turn On,

Drop Out,” I had already dropped out
And turned on to my own tune.

We had no discipline, but we had *l'espirit*.
We had no patience, but we had the grit.
Our mantra—sex, drugs, rock ‘n’ roll.

And power to the people.
We saw the body as a temple, and we abused
4:4 time until you couldn’t march to it.

L’ IDÉE DU DÉLUGE by Jampa Dorje

I finished reading Hydiat’s *Blind Owl* and ingested eight capsules of peyote. August, 1964, I awaited what a writer of an article in *Time* claimed would be the strangest experience of my life. My patience wavered, so I took another eight caps, lit up a joint, and drank a beer. Then I walked to the corner druggist and signed for two bottles of codeine cough syrup, knocking them off at the end of the alleyway. A door slammed.

Streaks of purple light, raw as butchered beef, flood in on a high tide of effulgent hallucination as one solitary child stands upon the brink of knowing the Meaning of the Universe, partially seeing—furry clouds modulating in confusing colors—the essence as if always known, what does essence mean?—the primary substance emerging in eclamptic convulsions, granted by Divine Sophia a priori understanding, a fateful step into the opaque transparency of contradiction, where each generation is relative to absolute birth, an aftermath of rhythm and sound contrasting with shades of fuming gray, curling, covering, uncovering the piano of Armageddon.

I lean against the alley wall. Currents of mist form and play in and out between the fence slats—a child’s first sight of unrecognizable twinkles of bronze light, a partial appearance in one dusty corner of desolate shapes of undulating turmoil, fluctuating figments of remorse and fear, a paraphrase of past captured, held in wonder, accepted as the fragrant blossom of fragmented eternal fruition—an epiphany of my mortal nature draped in flowing lavender—but as I look closer, my clothes are wrinkled, my hands are wrinkled, and as this synapse fires, an abundance of wrinkled lines becomes saturated in green and then drip from gashes in my fingertips.

I reach the street, the sidewalk snaking, parking meters drooping like sunflowers,

people moving in ectoplasmic quivers—can they see the ecstasy and nightmare of tremulous trepidation on my face?—the street a sulfurous plane of carrion, the sky is yellow, and at my feet an abyss of weird, wild delight and grizzly horror, butterflies of gas and putrid phantoms nourished on tortured prayers.

My heart twists like a bucking bronco, ice-blue blood in my nerves, animal blood cursed and coursing, translucent blood trapped in a fiery alchemical casement, even as this alchemy converting each moment to the next, fashions freeways in my heart.

I decide I need a haircut and enter a barber shop and emerge with a new style of haircut, very punk for this time, the barber not pleased with his work, but I can't stop jabbering, and I keep craning my neck to see around the corner in the double mirror reflection, my life in seaward ruin, retreads bare, a mummy cloth stuffed in my bloodclot soul, breaking full tilt to the moon.

I sit in the Mediterranean Café drinking double espressos, listening to ethereal voices drift over, then to the Garden Spot for a pack of Gualoises, stop by Mario's for a plate of rice and beans, decide to take in *Battleship Potemkin* at the Cinema Guild, but when Mother Russia comes down the Steps of Odessa, I freak-out and head down Dwight Way to the Steppenwolf where I can drink and blaspheme in peace—Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here and below that, another sign—*For Madmen Only!*

A table of Hell's Angels are deep in their cups with Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* accompanying their animated movement, strobed by candles in the deep shadows—Scorpio, Scorpio rising, I feel gladness linked to madness.

I sit at a small table by the wall down range from the boisterous boys with their furious guise, and the wood grains form hieroglyphs, characters moving in rhythms syncopated to my breathing, waves of color, flowers whispering I am a special guest in this sad dream—knowing, when a moth flies out of my eye, the Dead will teach me to dance.

A heavenly biker named Michael joins me, and I am trying to concentrate on what he is saying, but his words come out like we are in slow motion—something about efficient work starts from idle, not from toil, or perhaps his motorcycle is idling and he want me to pay the toll, so I project myself frame by frame through the flames onto an accelerating explosion of leather and chrome. Oh, God, I will keep on until I reach your blesséd Paradise!



PLANNING A TRIP?

First, disconnect from your phone.

We have a Self that is a mask for emptiness. We are not an I.D., an address or zip code, a social security number, an online personae—or any combination of these—nor are we our vague and selective memories. We have a body that contains a brain that registers impressions and processes “ideas” (whatever they are—signals from Mars or electro-chemical synaptic events within our neuronal circuitry). We are a stack of elements, a set of fleeting epiphanies, enigmatic manifestations of beingness, an epigenesis of channels, winds and lights.

When the fiction of the Self is gone, one merges with the Infinite Self, also a fiction, which is the Here and Now. If this situation occurs without guidance, without a disciplined mindset (or view) and in an unsafe setting, there is the likelihood of danger for the individual to be caught up in subjective hell realms. The Bardo of Ego Death and the Bardo of Physical Death are analogous.

The fission of elements, the power of the Sun, freed from gravity and, thus, from time, transformed into a body of light, traveling at 300,000 km/sec—this was Jampa walking the streets of Berkeley, talking, talking, telling of the New Day. In an art gallery, he judged the art passé and spoke of the coming vanguard. In a barbershop, he saw in the double mirrors the infinite reflections of himself curving towards a confrontation with his end and his beginning. It frightened him that he might be no more than a reflection of himself.

At night, Jampa fused with the darkness. After one experience, where he shed his black sport coat because he thought it was a Specter taking possession of him, then,

imagined he had wings and was a raven. He entered a church. The outer door was open, but an inner door to a vestibule was locked. A voice said, "This is your house; go in." Jampa kicked the door with a Titan's force, and the wood splintered. He picked up two long fragments, a sword and a wand, and he formed a cross. A figure in a cassock appeared from a side door and grabbed him. They struggled, until Jampa broke free and fled through an exit door.



A No Exit door.

Whenever Jampa smoked weed, knowledge of hidden relationships was revealed. Arcane subjects seemed to him to be transparent. Jampa made drawings of his occult revelations. At a party in the Berkeley hills, he showed one of his drawings to his host. "It's not quite dry," said the professor, and he hung it on a clothesline with a clothes pin. Jampa did not feel his friends were taking him seriously, and in fact no one could understand his ramblings, and they were doing the best they could to humor him.

The movement of the Brahms symphony they were listening to was a waltz. Jampa whisked a girl standing nearby off her feet and spun her across the lawn. A contralto with an ample bosom, she sang an aria just for Jampa.

, , ,

Stepping out of civilization into the primeval garden, Jampa discovered the naked lineage of yogic realization. But it was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Someone called the police. Jampa was in meditational samadhi when the front door into the foyer of the apartment building on Blake Street hit him in the back. This prompted him to rise and rapidly climb the stairs to the top floor, which was a laundry room. There was a large window open, and he got up on the sill. He planned to ascend. A gentle voice pleaded with him not to jump. Jampa looked back and saw a young police officer with a gun in his hand. There was a slight tremor to the weapon. Beast,





Buddha, Angel, now Jampa felt he was Christ on the cross. He uttered the terrible words of doubt: *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?* (Matt. 27.47) Then, he fell back into the arms of the Law.

Two policemen helped Jampa dress and handcuffed him. The ride to jail was short. A rookie at the wheel and a veteran riding shotgun, they slowed once to warn a street walker she was in the wrong

neighborhood. **He that s without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.** (John, 8.7) At the Berkeley Police Station, Jampa was interrogated. Receiving little from their prisoner, the officers asked him to strip off his clothes. They parted his garments, looking for evidence of drugs. “Here’s some seeds,” said the young centurion. “That’s all we need,” said the older, “one for analysis and one for exhibit.” This is he that received seed by the wayside. (Matt. 13.19)

After being fingerprinted and booked, Jampa was put in a cell next to the one he had been in when he was incarcerated for stealing a book. In the previous cell, he had found a tattered copy of Solzhenitsyn’s *A Day in the Life of Ivan Illych*, which had made his stay seem like a holiday vacation compared to the rigors of a Russian gulag. In his present cell, Jampa found a *Gideon Bible* and fell to reading *Isaiah*, aloud: “Then said I, woe is me! For I am undone...” (Isa. 6.5) And someone in another cell said, “What does this babbler say; he seems to be a setter forth of strange gods...” (Tim. 17.18)

The wailing and the gnashing of teeth in the cell block brought the guard from his cage. He wrestled the book from Jampa, who stuck his head in the toilet, saying, **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.** (Matt. 16.16) As Jampa pulled the handle, the guard grabbed him by the ankles and drug him out of the cell, or Jampa would have gotten a good flushing. You could quite literally say that Jampa flew off the handle. The guard put Jampa into a padded cell. “And in the dungeon, there was no water, but mire.” (Jer. 38.6) So, Jampa, sank into the mire. He had feces in his hair, on his clothes, on his hands, and he could taste it in his mouth. Sitting in the shit of this jail hole, Jampa was hard-pressed to explain to himself how he came to be there. It was a humbling experience. Through humility one purifies clinging and attachment to one’s reputation. Without hardship one does not become disillusioned with samsara and find the Dharma.

On his court date, Jampa sat in a holding cell outside the court room. He had a lady lawyer, who his father had retained. She came to interview Jampa. Seeing his disheveled appearance, she asked, “Do you even know who you are?” Jampa replied, **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.** (*Rev. 22.13*) She asked, “Do you think you are Jesus?” And he answered, **Thou sayest it.** (*Mark 15.2*) Jampa was declared incompetent to stand trial, and the court ordered him to be held for observation at Herrick Hospital, in Berkeley, until the doctors’ evaluation would be entered as evidence.

When Jampa arrived at Herrick Hospital, in Berkeley, after his bust for indecent exposure and possession of marijuana, while tripping on Peyote, he was spewing verbiage from the deepest recesses of his subconscious mind. You might have thought he was quoting from James Joyce’s *Finnegan’s Wake* or enacting the part of Lucky in Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*, perhaps both at the same time.

riverrun past Eve and Adam’s brings us to the stones of Connemara by a circulation of Commodus vicus to the works of Fartum and Belcher past Howth Castle the stones know the secret...

After listening to Jampa for a few minutes, the admitting psychiatrist leaped from his chair and left the room, returning with a colleague to listen to Jampa rant. After the interview, Jampa was allowed to enter the dayroom, where he met his fellow inmates. There was a hierarchy among those that weren’t catatonic. The matriarch was Mrs. Melick, the Queen of Hearts.

Mrs. Melick confided to Jampa that between the digits of her feet there was toe jam, and in her belly button there was rot, and in her nose was snot, and although it might seem gross, like it or not, if you took a close look, there were bugs with homes and families, who on Sunday went to church, if not eaten by birds on their perch, and in their shit lived microbes, happy as could be, a pure world, dazzling and bright, and what you miss of beauty is what you don’t like.

There was a Seventh-Day Adventist Japanese woman whose husband had locked her in a closet because she believed she was the Virgin Mary. She said that at the time of the Immaculate Conception, her womb had “burned with the heat of a thousand



suns.” Jampa painted a small canvas in the arts and crafts room, blotches of color, in the style of Hans Hoffman. Raw pigment pleased him, the magenta flowing into the cobalt blue. No meaning except painted color and emotional expression.

Although confined, the ten days Jampa spent at Herrick, in the mental ward on the top floor, seemed like staying in a penthouse at an exclusive club. In 1964, Psychedelic drugs were a new phenomenon for the general public, and Jampa’s condition was considered a rarity. All the attending psychiatrists wanted to interview him, and he gave them an earful. Once he had been interviewed, he was prescribed some medication,

and he settled into a routine with the other patients.

At the head of table was the Queen of Hearts. To her left was the Mad Hatter. At the end of the table was tiny, confused Alice. Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum, the Cheshire Cat, a walrus, a carpenter, and a Japanese Seventh Adventist lady, who thought she was the Virgin Mary, along with an extra from *Marat/Sade* filled out the cast. “And who are you?” Jampa was asked. “I’m not sure I rightly know,” he replied. “I think I may be Dante, trying to find my way through this dark forest.”

Across from the hospital was an apartment building. Jampa was in the arts and crafts room. He could see Kate Coleman at her window. The back door that led out onto the fire escape was grilled and secured by a heavy chain. Jampa yelled across the parking lot to Kate, and she came over to see him and brought him a pack of Gualosis cigarettes. Thirty years later, Jampa and Kate saw each other again. She came to a reading Jampa gave at the Berkeley Art Center. She had just published her book on the Black Panthers, and he finally had the opportunity to thank her for a kindness that gave him a beatific happiness.

The details of Jampa’s arrest presented a problem for the doctors. He was charged with felony possession of a controlled substance and with a misdemeanor for being indecently exposed in a public place. The drug charge was clearly a criminal offense, but the nudity implied insanity. Combining the charges could mean he would be incarcerated in a facility for the criminally insane.

This was not a desirable place to be put for what the doctors considered a minimal infraction of the law, so they recommended the court to judge Jampa “to be an insane

person until such time as he should be sane” and to send him to the State Hospital for Mental Patients at Imola, near Napa. He would be held there for ninety days on a locked ward to undergo intensive observation. Sounded to Jampa like the best of alternatives. Hi ho.

Once he was transferred from the Alameda County Jail to the facility near Napa, Jampa began to relax. To some extent this had to do with regaining a stable routine. Jail is like that: three meals each day and lights out at a certain time. On D Ward, Jampa was given Stelazine, an anti-psychotic drug or stabilizer, and the erratic and hallucinatory nature of his mind stream subsided. Indeed, the ability to think on any but most fundamental level—ground zero—seemed to disappear. Jampa says, “Anything I would look at appeared like cartoons or symbols of symbols to me, although I could not have said this to anyone. I would have been incapable of forming such a complex thought constructed as a simile.”

Jampa sat in a walled garden beneath a willow tree, in what appeared to him as rainbow light. Looking at the leaves on the tree, he could not be sure if the leaves moved or the wind moved the leaves or if it was his mind moving.



He could not deal with television programs, especially the cartoons. There did not appear to be any screen, and the actions were raw and violent. The news programs covered the war in Vietnam. It, too, was raw and violent. President Johnson, who had become president after the assassination of President Kennedy, was running for his first term against Governor Barry Goldwater, who declared he might have to use nuclear weapons, if elected. Jampa says, “I needed a rest from all of this, and this mental hospital in some ways was a pure land.” Jampa goes on, “My doctor, when I was first admitted, was a Black man with a soothing voice which conveyed a healing vibe. When

he put his large, fleshy hand on my shoulder, I felt a confidence in my ability to recover my life. To me he was a guru like Padampa Sangye.”

SEASON IN PURGATORY by Jampa Dorje

“Do you see any visions? Do you hear any voices?”
From D Tank in the Alameda County Jail to D
Ward at Napa State Mental Facility. Here, I’m
being interviewed by the admitting psychiatrist.
His recommendation is, “Just take these pills at
pill call and be good for ninety days.” Stelazine and
something to knock out the side effects.

Napa State contains painted landscape walls. I’m
to be a hermit on one of these furry mountains with
fabulous beasts for companions. I muse on the darkening wall. Friends write letters;
family visits; doctors change; books from the Red Cross; even permission to freshen
things up. Marionettes leave their cells to scrub and mop and scrape sperm, spit,
shit, piss, blood and vomit from the halls and walls, ceiling-crack-crevice-hole-spot-
place.

This is an extravagant society, elastic in its tolerance. We plant periwinkles and sit
beneath shade trees manufactured by Dame Kindness’ computer, while within the
walls within the walls, lobotomy is performed, shock treatment, psychotropic drugs,
strait jackets, hydrotherapy, and ping pong.

Our food is wheeled in on a stainless steel contraption. Richard, as it would be, is the
Mongoloid idiot in the first chair. He is an age-old case of bad manners at the table.
He stuffs oranges and bananas, peel and pulp, into his maw with delicate, aquiline
hands of a bluish hue. After his meal he goes back to rocking in a stationary chair
in the dayroom. He looks out the window or at the continuously present TV. He
varies this routine by hitting himself with his fists. Then the orderlies on duty outfit
him with a football helmet and shoulder pads, and if he begins his bear dance and
tries to spar with anyone, he is escorted to his cell. We are warned his bite is
poisonous. Richard is here when I arrive and here when I leave, a doupleganger.

Bob has arrived in a Rolls Royce and is now undergoing his sixth series of shock
treatments. He is a Seventh Day Adventist, convinced that he’s Jesus-The-Word-



Incarnate-Daddyoson&holyO. His mission at the moment is to make Richard talk. X-rays reveal gaps in Richard's brain, but Bob doesn't believe this matters. My last glimpse of Bob is of him standing in his cell with his hands outstretched, the front of his skull red and swollen from blasts of electrical shock, crucified in the midst of his misery.

Smitty has been transferred from San Quentin because he is stir crazy. His most prized possession is a blanket made of stitched-together Bull Durham bags. This is a gift for his daughter, if he can just get his hands on her. D Ward will be his permanent home. Spirits in his heart want vengeance.

Lewis is huge. He is unconscious when they wheel him into his cell. Upon regaining consciousness, he breaks the straps holding him to the bed, breaks off the bolts holding the bed to the floor, crunches the bedframe into a ball, and smashes the bed into the door. Four orderlies enter his room with needle guns, and after a bit of scuffling, all is again quiet. We are in the garden the next morning when he crawls through the barred doors and begins cruising along the walkway nuzzling the flowers, tame as a housecat. Every moment presents a new pattern in the tapestry.

Wayne, a logger, who's taken one too many rides down the high lead, is setting choker in the backwoods of his mind now. The theory with shock treatment is that a patient gets better or gets worse. Wayne doesn't change at all. Tiiiiiiiiimmmmmber.

Mike is undergoing a series of brain scans. He shot his wife and daughter with a .22 and then put three slugs into his right temple. The bumps are still there...one, two, three. The women were lucky to receive only superficial wounds. And so, the family survives, and they visit and seem concerned about Mike's condition. Trephined by his own hand, Mike has attained a state of grace.

Peter is a cocksman. Tall and dark with curly hair, he's a smooth jazz tenorsaxman. After a couple of days in D Ward, he is transferred to an open ward, but he soon returns, having been busted for doing the two-backed beast in the women's head. Lockup puts him uptight, so he blows his anger through his horn. They take his sax away and put him in solitary until he quiets down. He receives a visit from his parents. I sit at a table near the john, and Peter enters from the garden. "Do you

want to see me make a break?” He enters the john, and when the doctor and his parents walk down the hall, Peter is out the door and over the wall. I continue with my game of solitary Scrabble. E1S1C3A1P3E1. Eleven points—a cosmic number. He’s not detected AWOL until suppertime. By now he has made it downtown for a test-drive of a used car and driven it to Oakland before wrecking it and getting busted. Man, so much energy expressing itself. Let the dog bark.

Tom has cut his wrists. He proceeds to blow my mind by turning me on to his copy of *Dawn Visions*. We have a mutual acquaintance, and this coincidence breaks the ice. Confused and disorientated, he stares into my copy of Pound’s *Cantos* and I into Daniel Moore who

sing(s) like a clear— visionary.
The Silent Yes that doesn’t fall
a writhing bleeding warrior from our lips

but flutters
poised on their curved edges,
a dry / precise drum-tap!

“Listen to the sweetness, Tom.”

Daniel Duffy, a friendly nurse, interested in the philosophy of Alan Watts and par Scrabble player was an angel of mercy on the night shift. Jampa had had a toothache for a couple of days and asked if he could go to the dentist, who drills the tooth. When the Novocain wears off, Jampa jumps up from his seat in severe pain. An orderly on the day shift doesn’t want a scene and gives him a shot of Sparine, a muscle relaxant and straps him in his bed. He can’t move his lips to moan, let alone his limbs. He lies there with his toothache, looking out his window at the moon that appears like a giant tooth.

When his friend, Dan, comes on his shift, he checks Jampa’s chart and unlocks his cell. By then, he can mumble that his tooth is killing him, but Dan says he can’t give him anything for the pain—just something to knock him out. Energy follows consciousness. Where am I?

Loraine came on D Ward with other female patients for a Saturday Night Dance. It may have been an experiment. The dance only happened once during Jampa’s three months on the ward. Loraine sat next to Jampa. She had a presence of forceful energy. She told Jampa that she and her boyfriend had tried to rob a bank and that

it had gone wrong. She had climbed up on the counter and pissed on the teller who had set off the alarm.

Lorraine and Jampa were sitting at an oblique angle to the glassed-in nurses' station, facing one another with their knees interlocked, and she seemed ready to mount him yabyum style, when an orderly interrupted them and suggested that they dance. Jampa has a weakness for bank robber women. Must be a Bonny and Clyde Complex.



This was 1964, and because the widespread use of psychedelic drugs was a new phenomenon, the doctors, who had not yet received Leary, Alpert, and Metzner's field notes, were interested in the pathology of "bad trips," and Jampa had a room full of shrinks at his first interview.

He was considerably calmer, after being repeatedly dosed with an anti-psychotic medicine, called Stelazine, and he was more coherent, if less imaginative, in the descriptions of his state of consciousness.

He pointed out the irony of being interviewed in the same room where he had once been a guest, during a visit with his high school American Problems class. Now, sitting on the opposite side of the table, he was experiencing what it was like to be a "problem." He must have made a good impression, since he was not given shock therapy, and he served his time without incident, being released after ninety days and transferred back to Alameda County Jail to await the formal "return of his sanity" by the State of California.

JAMPA: If you wonder whether or not I am sane, I have papers to prove I am.

BOUVARD: Jampa, people who are sane, do not need papers to prove it.

When Jampa reached the bottom of the steps of the courthouse, he kissed the pavement. His dad may have thought this crazy behavior, but I think he understood. Having to go through security checks and peer through a porthole to talk to his son in the tank, as well as appearing in court, was humiliating for him, and he was glad it was over.

For Jampa, it was as if had been holding his breath under water. Freedom felt good, but the transition was not easy. For one thing, the silence in the neighborhood around the Santa Rosa Country Club was unnerving, as Jampa had become accustomed to

the clanging of iron doors, the rattle of chains, and the moans and groans of his fellow prisoners and inmates. The squawk of Stellar Jays and the whap of tennis racquets was not the same racket.

POEM ON MY RETURN

I'm back
among the living
back from where angels & devils dwell

I'm back
and see the meager come, the greater go
day follow day as usual

I'm back
and will live lustily
among the oak trees

When Jampa began to despair of redemption, or when he was just at a loss as to what to do with himself, he committed himself to Mendocino State Mental Hospital, near Talmage, a facility for those needing drug and/or alcohol rehabilitation. Jampa found the mountain air more to his liking than the sweltering heat of Napa Valley. He was told, however, "Don't try and get comfortable. We don't want you here." Dr. Wurtzel was old school, Viennese. She had Jampa's maroon spring-bound binder, the one that Lu Garcia had given him to keep his poems together. She said that Jampa's dad had lent it to her because he thought it was a big part of why Jampa was acting crazy. It contained early drafts of this poem:

FLOWER POEM

Gladness linked to
Madness to amuse you
Characters move—

Rhythms, waves of color
Flowers.

They whisper to me.
I am a privileged guest.

They let me do as I please.
They do as they please.

In the core of the bud
Is fire,
The bone of desire.

Dr. Wurtzel said, “As long as you are not following orders from these flowers, it seems harmless enough.” Jampa did not know quite how to take that comment. He decided he should make his poems more dangerous.

SOUL OF THE ANTI-POET

Spring into movement, like 111 or 666—
It’s all in the wrist.
Take your hat off, and stand alone
Wipe that smirk off your chops.

It’s ok to fart, it’s healthy.
Make it loud.
Salute the sun.
The mucus of life is before you.

Eat up!

Jampa had more freedom at the Mendocino asylum than he did at Napa. After he had worked for one day in the laundry, operating a steam press, he was transferred to the Admissions Office. In the laundry, some of the patients were handcuffed to their irons, so that they would not wander. Jampa says it was a strong image of a hell realm with the hissing of machines and plumes of steam. One woman sat on a bench and with ornate gestures swatted at invisible flies. To Jampa they were invisible.

It was a better fit for him as an “administrative assistant” in the Admissions Office, where he welcomed new arrivals. When Lu Garcia and Marianne Baskin came to visit, he was at work and acted, much to Lu’s chagrin and Marianne’s amusement, as though his friends were to be processed for admittance.

Jampa had a roommate, a young man named Bill, who had cut the fabric and sewn an entire bespoke suit for himself. It was a sad affair. It made Jampa want to cry, yet Bill was proud of his work and wore it with such aplomb that Jampa always complimented him on his appearance. It made Jampa realize that his own work, his poetry, might be just as ill-fitting and homespun in its way.

Did Jampa have a girlfriend at Mendocino? Yes, he did, a girl named Rose. There were dances. They held hands. They kissed. That is as far as it went. After Jampa left the hospital, he drove back up to Talmage and went to the hospital to see Rose. She was standing alone by a cyclone fence, when he drove up, as though she knew he was coming. He asked her if she wanted to get together, after she was released. She smiled and said, “A Black girl from Richmond and a rich, white boy, not likely. Too crazy!”

Soon after returning to Berkeley, in 1966, after his first adventure in Alaska, he was with his girlfriend, Cheri, and his mom in a café. Dousing his cigarette in a cup of coffee to put it out, Jampa told them he was feeling unstable. In fact, his hands were shaking, and



there was a nervous twitch near one of his eyes. Cheri and Helen took him to Herrick, where he self-committed himself. He spent a couple of days there and was released as an out-patient, out during the day and sleeping on the ward at night.

Cheri cooked him huge meals and baked pies for dessert, trying to put weight on him. Jampa’s main diet was usually coffee and cigarettes. They were living on Ward Street, which was an appropriate name. He was on meds, and, helped by Cheri’s home cooking, he began to regain his composure. He repainted the whole apartment, except for one wall in the back bedroom. On this wall, Walter Duesenberry painted a mural of a bright yellow ball (the sun) traveling along a road to infinity.

Cheri helped Jampa paint the bathroom. The lower half of the walls they painted a dark blue; the trim board that ran around the middle of the room, they painted red; and the upper half of the walls and the ceiling they painted white. The outside of the claw-foot bathtub they spray-painted gold, and they hung a large American flag upside down in the window. American society was in distress, and so was Jampa.

Cheri became pregnant, and Jampa's condition reversed itself. He had been giving his meds to his guitarist friend, Robbi Bashō, who said it helped him with his music. Jampa was glad about that, but he was now afraid to go outside his apartment. When Mike Lovewell, who had helped Jampa on his production of *Waiting for Godot* at Cal Poly, came to visit, he could not even get out of bed to say hello. Cheri became concerned. Usually, when the going got rocky, Cheri's solution was to take more Acid, but this time she called Jampa's psychologist, who came to the apartment and diagnosed him as "schizophrenic-non-decisive," which in today's parlance might be "bi-polar" but could have meant that she was unable to tell which direction he was headed.

This psychologist, whose name Jampa can't remember, helped him apply for Aid-to-the-Totally-Disabled. She came to Berkeley to interview Jampa at the Mediterranean Café, once he showed signs of recovery. She said it gave her an excuse to get out of her office, in Oakland. It is amazing how the prospect of a means of income, a sort of grant from the State of California to maintain his Bohemian lifestyle improved Jampa's outlook on the world. However, there were strings attached. Visits to a psychiatrist, medications, and occasional reviews of his condition. It was not going to be easy to play the ATD game.

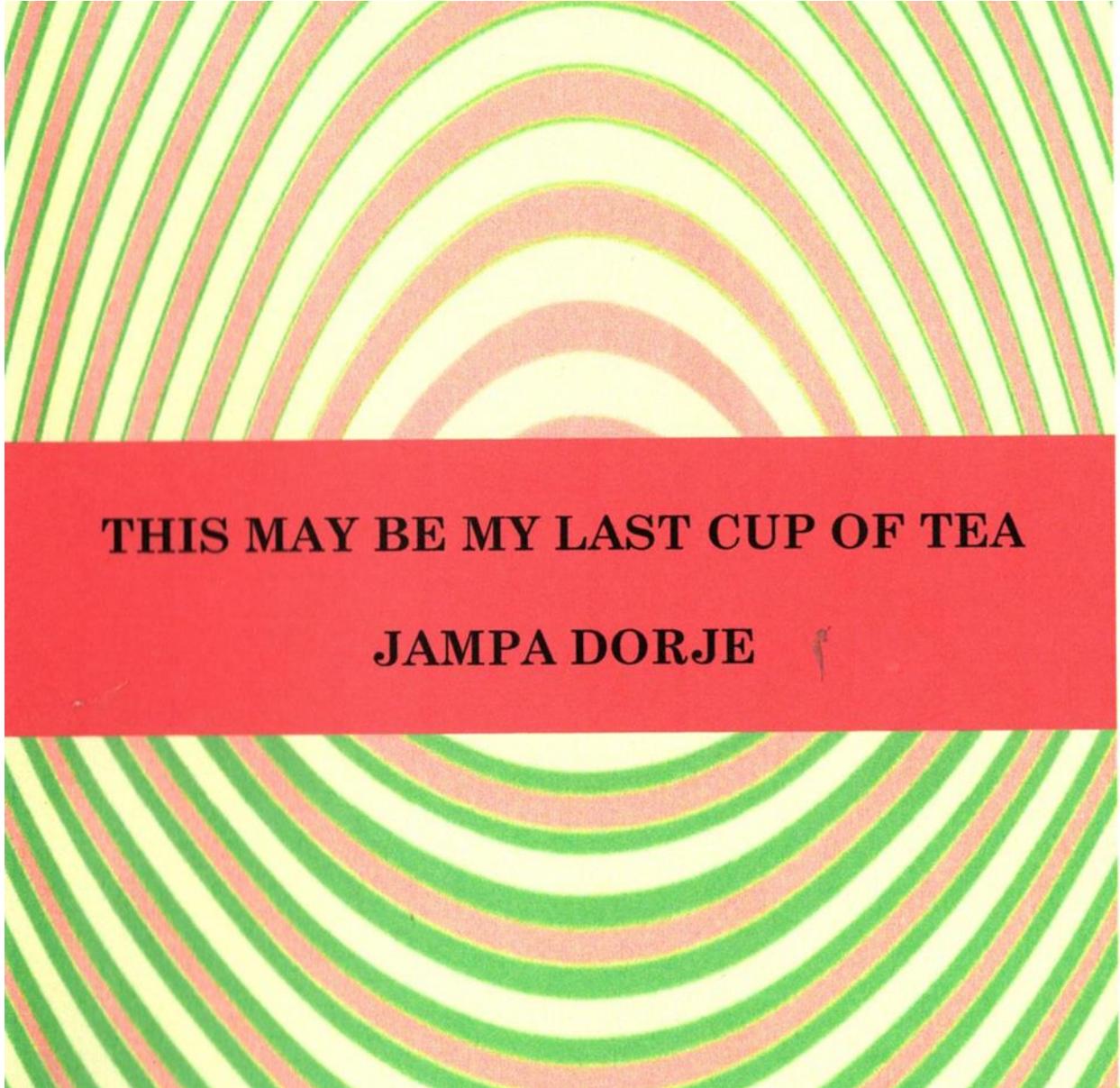
During the Summer of Love, in 1967, Cheri and Jampa went to San Francisco to the *Gathering of the Tribes for a Human Be-in* in Golden Gate Park. Jampa remarks: "It was overcast, but it wasn't raining. Cheri and I and David Cole wandered through the crowd; I've heard that 10,000 people showed up; there was a bandstand and Allen Ginsberg was up there, along with Leonore Kandel, the "fuck with love" goddess poet, and Gary Snyder, Ram Dass and Leary. Some bands played: Quicksilver, Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother. We weren't sure what it was supposed to mean or what we were supposed to do. I read later that the whole event was an attempt to bring together different branches of the counterculture. I had some poems with me and read to a small circle of Hippies. At some point, I remember someone came floating down in a parachute, and there was much applause. I had taken a swig out of a jug of wine handed to me by a Hells Angel, and I was feeling very high."

When the first retroactive ATD check arrived, nearly \$800 total, Jampa and Cheri,

pregnant with Theo, drove their VW camper to Reno, got married by a Justice of the Peace, camped at Lake Tahoe, visited Cheri's family in Seattle, drove to British Columbia, boarded a ferry headed to Ketchikan, and kissed the craziness goodbye.

. . .

A postscript: Mendocino State Mental Hospital is now The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, a Zen Retreat Center. Jampa was just a little ahead of his time. Yes—a mental hospital that became a pure land and a mental patient who now sees all appearances and events as the enlightened activities of the buddhas.



THIS MAY BE MY LAST CUP OF TEA

JAMPA DORJE

Jampa Dorje

This May Be My Last Cup of Tea



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This essay evolved out of Dr. Michael Goerger's Psychedelics and Philosophy class
CWU spring quarter, 2021.

The Aldous Huxley text:
The Doors of Perception, Harper Perennial, NY, 2009.

Thanks to Milan Bazic for the design element.



In his book, *The Doors of Perception*, Aldous Huxley claims each one of us is potentially Mind at Large. By exploring his specific mind, he finds mescaline to be a way to “cleanse the doors of perception” and, thereby, enter this Mind of the universe.

The phrase, “cleanse the doors of perception” comes from William Blake’s *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*: “If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear as it is Infinite. For man has closed himself up, til he sees all things thro’ narrow clinks of his cavern.” This idea echoes Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave” (*Republic* 514a–520a).

One way the “Allegory” can be interpreted is epistemologically. What can we know? And how do we know it? Plato contends that we are limited in our knowledge because we only see shadows of the real world. In the cave, prisoners see the flickering images of objects projected onto the cave wall by the light of a fire. One prisoner breaks away from his fellows and ventures outside the cave. He is overwhelmed by the intensity of the true light and the intellectual satisfaction he receives from the display of forms he experiences in the real world; he returns to the cave to tell of his vision; here, no one believes him; and the group convince him he has been mistaken.

On his mescaline trip, Huxley experiences something of the true light, the drab being bright, the inside being outside, the insignificant being important:

Mescaline raises all colors to a higher power and makes the percipient aware of innumerable fine shades of difference, to which, at ordinary times, he is completely blind (p.27)

and

It was odd, of course, to feel that “I” was not the same as these arms and legs “out there,” as this wholly objective trunk and neck and even head (52)

and, finally, he realizes that

Today the percept had swallowed up the concept. I was so completely absorbed in looking, so thunderstruck by what I actually saw, that I could not be aware of anything else. Garden furniture, laths, sunlight, shadow these were no more than names and notions, mere verbalizations for utilitarian or scientific purposes, after the event (53).

My own experience corresponds to Huxley’s. I took peyote and had a rush of superpowers granted by Mescalero, wild colors, crazy movements, significant encounters. Here are my field notes from this peyote trip.

I finish my reading Hydiat's *Blind Owl* and ingest eight capsules of peyote. August 1964, I await what a writer of an article in *Time* claims will be the strangest experience of my life. My patience wavers, so I take another eight caps, light up a joint, and drink a beer. Then, I walk to the corner druggist and sign for two bottles of codeine cough syrup, knocking them off at the end an alleyway. A door slams shut behind me.

Streaks of purple light, raw as butchered beef, flood in on a high tide of effulgent hallucination, as one solitary child stands upon the brink of knowing the Meaning of the Universe, partially seeing—furry clouds modulating in confusing colors—the essence as if always known, what does essence mean?—the primary substance emerging in eclamptic convulsions, granted by Divine Sophia *a priori* understanding, a fateful step into the opaque transparency of contradiction, where death is relative to absolute birth, an aftermath of rhythm and sound contrasting with shades of fuming gray, curling, covering, uncovering the piano of Armageddon.

I lean against the alley wall. Currents of mist form and play in and out between the fence slats—a child's first sight of unrecognizable twinkles of bronze light, a partial appearance in one dusty corner of desolate shapes of undulating turmoil, fluctuating figments of remorse and fear, a paraphrase of past captured, held in wonder, accepted as the fragrant blossom of fragmented eternal fruition—an epiphany of my mortal nature draped in flowing lavender—but as I look closer, my clothes are wrinkled, my hands are wrinkled, and as these synapses fire, an abundance of paisley swirls are saturated in green and then drip from gashes in my fingertips.

I reach the street, the sidewalk heaving, parking meters drooping like sunflowers, people moving in ectoplasmic quivers—can they see the ecstasy and nightmare of tremulous trepidation on my face?—the street a sulfurous plane of carrion, the sky is yellow, and at my feet an abyss of weird, wild delight and grizzly horror, butterflies of gas and putrid phantoms nourished on tortured prayers.

My heart twists like a snake in hot water, ice-blue blood in my nerves, animal

blood cursed and coursing, translucent blood trapped in a fiery alchemical casement, even as this alchemy, converting each moment to the next, fashions freeways in my heart—my life in seaward ruin, retreads bare, a mummy cloth stuffed in my blood-clotted soul, breaking full tilt to the moon.

I sit in the Mediterranean Café drinking double espressos, listening to ethereal voices, then to the Garden Spot for a pack of Gauloises, stop by Mario's for a plate of rice and beans, decide to take in *Battleship Potemkin* at the Cinema Guild—but when Mother Russia comes down the Steps of Odessa, I freak-out and head down Dwight Way to the Steppenwolf where I can drink and blaspheme in peace—*Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here* and below that, another sign—*For Madmen Only!*

A table of Hell's Angels are deep in their cups with Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* accompanying their animated movement, strobed by candles in the deep shadows—Scorpio, Scorpio rising, I feel gladness linked to madness. I sit at a small table by the wall down range from the boisterous boys with their furious guise, and the wood grains form hieroglyphs, characters moving in rhythms syncopated to my breathing, waves of color, flowers whispering I am a special guest in this sad dream—knowing, when a moth flies out of my eye, the Dead will teach me to love.

A heavenly biker named Michael joins me, and I focus on what he is saying, but his words come out in slow motion—something about efficient work starts from idle, not from toil, or perhaps his motorcycle idles and he want me to pay the toll, so I project myself frame by frame through the flames onto an accelerating explosion of leather and chrome. Oh, God, I will keep on until I reach your blessed Paradise!

Like Dante, I returned from my trip to Paradise. There was laundry to do—I had to write my *100 Cantos* (D Press, Sebastopol, 2004). Like Plato's prisoner, I came back to the cave. After my peyote trip, I knew there was another reality, and this solved my epistemological questions. However, a metaphysical question remained. Why is there a laundromat rather than emptiness? I spent four years in solitary retreat doing Tibetan yogic practices to reframe the question: Why is there emptiness that manifests as something rather than nothing?

AFTERWORD by Richard Denner

KNOCK, KNOCK...WHO'S THERE?

If you think you are free, there's no escape possible.

—Ram Das

In *The Doors of Perception* (1954), Aldous Huxley uses the term “a door in the wall”—a term he borrowed from H.G. Wells—to indicate an escape from our limited worldview. The drug mescaline was Huxley’s door of choice, but anything that can alter consciousness and enable a person to experience new vistas of self-awareness and understanding of one’s environs can be considered “a door in the wall.” The use of tobacco was my first and alcohol my second door in the wall. I was well-underage, so there was the risk of being found out, but the suspense-induced adrenaline hit only added to the thrill. I experienced the speeding up and slowing down of time consciousness and the fleeting feeling of well-being in my indulgences. I always felt like a genius between my second and third drink, and the swirls of smoke contributed to this illusion.

Books are a door in the wall. My twelfth-grade American Problems teacher, Mr. Cambell, encouraged us to read far-out stuff. Allen Ginsberg’s “Howl” was circulating, still warm from the poet’s breath, and seeing those lovely Anglo-Saxon four-letter words—*fuck, cunt, shit, piss*—in print blew my mind. *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1821) by Thomas de Quincey and *Opium: Diary of a Cure* (1930) by Jean Cocteau circulated among the intelligentsia, when I was a freshman at university. I dreamed of floating through a wall.

Outside of sampling small amounts of marijuana, a marijuana that was less potent in 1960 than it is in 2021, taking a heroic dose of peyote was my first psychedelic experience; and it went badly, me being busted in my birthday suit on Blake Street in Berkeley (believing it was a “New Day”) with two seeds of pot in my coat pocket, which the police officers decided was enough evidence to bust me for indecent exposure and possession of a controlled substance (a felony). A trip to the loony bin was ordered by the court. I had not learned about “set” and “setting.” The only thing I knew about psychedelics was what I had read in Time Magazine, and the writer had become paranoid and worried about hurting his family. This did not sound like a good experience around which to establish a mind-set; and taking the caps of peyote in an alleyway behind a drugstore in the center of town was not exactly copasetic. Still, the so-called door in the wall was really, really thrown wide open, and I (?) was swept into a tumbling pandemonium of agony and ecstasy.

I was swept into the byways of my mind while in the custody of the State. In a sense I became a version of the *homo sacer*, a figure of Roman law: a person who is banned and may be killed by

anybody but may not be sacrificed in a religious ritual. I was cast out of society inwardly rather than outwards, and while Aldous Huxley was wandering around in the Largest Drugstore in the World in LA discovering his cleugy world of consciousness, I (or my ego-dead self) sat in the day room of Napa State Hospital, feeding bananas to my doppelganger. This type of psychedelic experience is not closed to the public, but it is not recommended as a ritual.

Still, ego death is ego death; and, as Huxley says, “the man who comes back through the Door in the Wall will never be quite the same man as the man who went out.” Whether he or she will be wiser is the question. The Law, the Church, and the Medical Profession consider drug use that is not prescribed by a physician to be prohibited. The Law fears the anarchy of lawbreakers; the Church fears anything resembling a Dionysian cult; and medical practitioners pay dues to AMA to protect their livelihood. Also, the Philosophers are afraid a psychedelic experience might upset their ontological well-being by deconstructing their hold on the Logos. Psychologists fear their patients might cure themselves. Politicians fear the discovery that governments are unnecessary. Corporations fear that the consumer’s desire for goods will diminish. My parents were afraid that I would remain crazy forever. And I have. But I have learned not to get busted when I am high. And I have learned how to get high without taking drugs. I follow William Blake and walk “among the fires of hell, delighted with the enjoyments of Genius, which to Angels look like torment and insanity...” (*A Memorable Fancy*).

I met Richard Alpert in Berkeley in 1964. He was standing on the steps of Sproul Hall talking to some students, and I joined them. He was a celebrity after having been ousted from Harvard over the psychedelic experiments he had performed with Timothy Leary, but he had not yet traveled to India and become Ram Das. He was a co-author, along with Leary and Ralph Metzner, of *The Psychedelic Experience* (1964). I had read this book, which is based on a loose translation of the *Bardol Thodol* (a mind terma of Karma Lingpa (1326–1386) known as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*), which I had also read. I had a couple of polished agates in my pocket known as Tibetan God Eyes, which had been given to me by a Berkeley Shaman, a guy who hung out on the street, who was into the occult, and the stones may have been the real thing. I gave them to Richard, because (who knows?) we shared the same first name.

Once Ram Das moved beyond his use of psychedelics to contemplate the Divine Order of the Universe, he began the practice of meditation. Meditation is another door in the wall. It is not a psychedelic experience. It is hard to sit still and observe one’s monkey mind in action. First, the practice of *samatha*, or mind calmness, is taught. Then, *vipassana*, or insight meditation, is taught. They are inseparable, but they are traditionally taught in this order. With insight meditation, I seek knowledge of the nature of reality. It is hard work with many attempts failing. It helps to have a teacher. How to find a good one in the spiritual meat market can be a problem. James Freeman’s experience in Peru, filmed in *The Last Shaman* documentary, is a case in point.

I got a powerful mind transmission from Sogyal Rinpoche when I first entered the Vajrayana path, but soon after this, he published a best seller, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* (2002), becoming a rock star on the Tibetan lama circuit. I found Lama Tsultrim Allioni, an American woman, who had a vision of creating a center for long retreats in Colorado and was more accessible, and I joined her and her stable of Tibetan and Bhutanese masters of meditation. I have been a devoted student in her sangha for thirty years. All blessings flow from the lama.

I completed a traditional Tibetan long retreat. Tibetan metaphysicians say that each second contains $1/32$ of Wisdom Mind (the true nature of mind), but the wisdom moment always went by so fast I missed it. One year contains 31,536,000 seconds. The cosmological idea behind the retreat is to take all the wisdom moments that would occur in a hundred years and compress them into one framework of time and put this time to good use by doing ritual practices for three years and three fortnights. The regime consists of four sessions of daily meditations and extra ceremonies that must be performed on a yearly or monthly basis. Making it through this door in the wall takes more time than most people have available.

I have banged my head against the wall. I have tried to tunnel under the wall. I have thrown my body against the wall while wearing a strait jacket. Finally, I gently knocked on the wall, and a door opened. I was asked what I wanted. I replied, "More light."

Wonderfully trippy.

—John Keats

A trip that launched a thousand books.

—Neil Cassidy

Jampa doesn't need drugs. He is drugs.

—Salvador Dali



JAMPA DORJE, author of twenty volumes of *The Collected Books of Richard Denner*. Born in Santa Clara, California, educated as a Cal Berkeley fringe. Lives in Ellensburg, Washington.

