

Section 11 – Turning the Tide

Reconciling Spirituality and Science

Just as the feminist movement needed Goddess theology, the Earth movements needed something similar, and as the damage humans are causing becomes both more evident and well-supported by science, such a spiritual element has appeared.¹

The umbrella term for this is ‘Pantheism’ though, within it, there are numerous expressions of similar concepts.² Pantheism expresses the idea that there is no deity apart from Nature.³ Pantheism and Goddess theology are extremely closely related because at the heart of both is the Earth, the material form of the Goddess.

Pantheism contains a holistic world-view in line with James A. Lovelock’s Gaian philosophy, which holds that the Earth is a self-regulating, autonomous organism that will respond to changes that occur to its environment. Pantheists range from those who have a very materialistic conception to the passionately spiritual, and they find resonances in many different religious ideas and philosophies from all over the globe and from all periods of human history. The essential concepts are: we are the products of the Earth; it is our only home and we must protect it; and only science can provide real answers about the nature of the physical universe.

Pantheists are open to the experience of awe and wonder and mystery and majesty that has informed many religions, but they eschew the idea of a supernatural deity. Thus, they may be described as ‘spiritual but not religious’. Their philosophy is informed by science, in addition to the wisdom of a free and educated humanity. Some Pantheists anthropomorphise the planet as Gaia, while others are quite content to consider the Earth sacred just as it is, without any special names or designations.

The patriarchal Sky-Fathers were invented to control the Goddess when the new technology of agriculture began to control the Earth’s fertility. At the same time women, the human form of the Goddess, were subjected to the control of men and the patriarchal structures they developed. The

¹ As of 2014, 97% of climate scientists agree that not only is climate change happening, it is being provoked by human activity. A consensus as unanimous as this is rare in science; it is equivalent to the consensus on Evolution, the Big Bang and Plate Tectonics. It may be regarded as fact.

² Most Taoists, some Buddhists, deep ecologists, pagans, animists, followers of many native religions, and many Unitarian Universalists are also Pantheists.

³ The word comes from the Greek pan (meaning ‘all’) and theos (meaning ‘God’ or ‘Divinity’). Pantheists see all of Nature (which can be taken to mean the Universe) as sacred, and do not believe in a distinct personal or anthropomorphic deity.

consequences of this have been extreme. Human women have for millennia been abused, vilified, denigrated, obliged to hide themselves, tortured, beaten and killed. And the planet has been brought to the point at which its ability to support human life may collapse, causing our species to be marginalised, if not worse.

The Fermi Paradox asks: Why, if life exists elsewhere in our Galaxy, have we not encountered it? One answer is that there are challenges intelligent life must survive in order to become advanced enough to travel outside its own immediate space. In other words, advanced civilisations may destroy themselves before they develop the technology required for interstellar travel. The question is, 'have humans passed this point or not'? It seems likely that the impending climatic catastrophe is such a challenge, and humanity, led by the patriarchy, appears determined to fail it.

Since the patriarchy and its religious, political and economic systems are now threatening the very planet they feed on, we should consider what alternatives are available. Women are the majority of the world's population and it is only through violence and the fear of it that men have established dominance over them. It is time to challenge that dominance in spiritual, cultural, sociological, political and economic terms. It is time to emasculate the patriarchy before it destroys us. It is time to rediscover the Goddess Earth and re-establish the matriarchy. Our future may depend on it.