

Section 13 – Tomorrow and the Day After

A New World Order

The Earth is indeed our Mother; we are made of the stuff of her, the atoms and molecules of her body. Life first appeared in the water that is her amniotic fluid. Without the good fortune that she sits in exactly the sweet zone in space, just far enough from the sun for water to be liquid; that the Van Allen Belt is there to protect her surface and her children from being snuffed out by solar radiation; that she is just the right size to have a gravity that keeps an atmosphere clinging to her body; without countless other things, all qualities of the Earth, we would not be here to observe how lucky we are to exist, or to delude ourselves that it was all created just for us.

The Earth and we who live here are literally stardust, and that stardust is everywhere. Life is the product of chemical processes that might exist wherever the conditions are right, and there is now a science of astrobiology dedicated to the study of life on other planets. Today that science estimates that there may be more than 100 billion potentially life-bearing planets in our galaxy alone, and there are about 500 billion other galaxies in the universe.¹ It is not mere anthropocentricity to imagine that we are the only sentient beings within all of that; it is a conceit of delusional proportions!

But we are adapted to live on this one. Even if we could reach another planet there is no assurance we could thrive, or even survive there.

Never, since Toba, has there been such a clear and present menace to humanity. While Toba was a natural cataclysm that even now we could not prevent, the threat we face today is of our own making. It is the product of 6000 years of patriarchy, its cults and economic systems. It is time for our culture to evolve again, to find a new spirituality based in reality and scientific understanding. The biosphere of the Earth is our true progenitor and changes in it will affect us. If we are to consider anything sacred, it should be that.

We are not hanged by the rope of 'original sin' or 'prehistoric savagery'. We now know that those concepts are patriarchal constructs and have no validity outside of that system. We are not bound by ancient socio-political codes invented to justify rape and destruction or by the nefarious cabals of patriarchal businessmen and politicians today. Even our rigid notions of

¹ <http://mnras.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2013/03/26/mnras.stt318> retrieved 01/02/2015

‘nuclear’ family, ‘sexually normative behaviour’ and gender expression, turn out not to be intrinsic to us, but amongst the techniques the patriarchy uses to enslave us.

We did not succeed as a species by being brutal murderers, but by being friendly and cooperative, and by building a culture that was centred on women and children. We are perfectly capable of devising ethical codes that lead to a good, moral and decent society without any ‘divine intervention’ or fear of divine judgement. Civilisation, which has given us so much, is not the product of military killing systems. Instead, the patriarchy, the animator of those systems, is an opportunistic parasite that bleeds all that is good and worthy out of our innate humanity.

So we can have our cake and eat it; we can have all the benefits that civilisation brings, and none of the horrors such as the inequalities, the constant rape of women, the routine slaughter of the innocents, the stockpiling of weaponry that could kill every human tens of times over, and the enslavement of the world’s population to vast and exponentially increasing, but completely imaginary debts. All we have to do is to emasculate the patriarchy, and put governance where it should be – with those who care about the whole community, not just the powerful.

The casting-down of the patriarchy and its replacement with a modern matriarchy might just be enough to save us. It is a far more practical solution than pipedreams of terraforming other planets or emigrating to live on space stations. We could do it now, while there is still a chance we might make deep enough changes to survive. We have the power to make this transition, and the prelates, politicians and corporate pirates cannot, in the end, stop us if our will is set.

Science and technology, which have allowed us to go so far in engineering our own demise, also have the power to save us. We could change the course of an approaching asteroid or comet and cause it to pass us by, plunging harmlessly into space. We could even, although there would unquestionably be great loss of life, survive tectonic earthquakes and super-volcanic eruptions that will happen; after all, we survived Toba with no knowledge of science. Surviving another Ice Age is within our competence. Most importantly, we could, even now, halt the ongoing destruction of the environment that sustains us.

The question is, will we? Will we put the future of our children before our personal and corporate greed and profligacy? Will we put our shoulders to the task of mitigating the harm we have already done by our unthinking exploitation of the planet we share?

We must change or the Earth, not through anger or malice but simply through a natural response to our depredations, will destroy us.