

MIND IN DEEP TIME: ORIGINAL PARTICIPATION AND RE-ENCHANTMENT OF THE WORLD

Barry Cottrell, MA (Oxon), CFA

This paper describes my experiences exploring consciousness as an artist-engraver, in particular the sense of reawakening the participatory primal mind, which came about through the act of engraving. This 'original participation' is viewed as a fundamental characteristic of our early Acheulean ancestors and evidence is presented to show that they possessed both a 'modern' esthetic sense and also a prayerful, sacramental consciousness. It is suggested that this primal consciousness is a fundamental human quality that became eclipsed in the modern mind by the denial of participation and the Cartesian split between subject and object during the Scientific

Revolution. It is upon this denial of participation and the illusion of objectivity that the whole methodology of natural science and the alienated outlook of contemporary culture is based. A re-enchantment of the world can take place through the re-mythologizing of consciousness and the re-apprehension of original participation.

Key words: mind, consciousness, Acheulean, participation, re-enchantment, soul, beauty

(*Explore* 2017; ■■■■■ © 2017 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.)

INTRODUCTION

This paper is the outcome of a long exploration as an artist-printmaker into the origins and ontology of my specialist technique—burin engraving on copper. Making art, and especially engraving, has been for me primarily a means of exploring consciousness. The purpose of the research in this paper has been to go beyond recorded art history into an exploration of mind in deep time—of human consciousness spanning a million years or more. It is a journey, both interior and exterior, into the primal mind of our early human ancestors. These people displayed at times a remarkably 'modern' esthetic sense; and I think they also possessed—as the evidence suggests—a sacramental consciousness. Remembering, or re-awakening primal mind can bring deep healing to our painfully dislocated modern consciousness. The recovery of this repressed awareness reminds us of who we truly are, offering a safe spiritual haven for humankind in the throes of profound transformation and chaotic transition into the unknown. A process of healing takes place whereby the modern malaise of alienation and the 'metaphysical absence' is replaced by this primal presence and a sense of belonging.

THE ACT OF ENGRAVING

For me this recovery began as I learned to master the act of engraving, noticing the evaporation of passing time, and a growing sense of kinship and resonance with makers from all times who have lovingly engaged in rhythmic, creative acts with earthly substances and processes to manifest beauty and seek perfection of form. This ritualistic experience has been

documented by historian of religion, Mircea Eliade: "We shall see that, as the rite always consists in the repetition of an archetypal action performed...before "history" began...by ancestors or by gods, man is trying...to give "being" to even his most ordinary and insignificant acts. By its repetition, the act coincides with its archetype, and time is abolished."¹

I have been wedded to the technique of engraving, both as an artist and also as a student of human nature, for almost four decades. The act of engraving can ignite the imagination: *the steel tip of the burin, as it is driven through copper plate, gives rise to the elastic tension and beauty of the engraved line and sets fire to the imagination*; and as a kind of active meditation it can expand awareness into the wider, deeper cosmos, revealing the underlying 'radiant' or 'luminous' nature of mind, and tapping timeless realms suffused with joy and rapture (Figure 1).

Working with the burin has generated explorations into hidden realities of dream, imagination, and the shamanic universe, which underlie and inform our daily waking life. In the act of engraving, there is a conflation of transcendence with immanence: on the one hand there is a genuine sense of moving *beyond* one's ordinary everyday sense of self into a more timeless, transpersonal, perhaps transcendent dimension; yet the act of engraving itself remains totally grounded as if consciousness was also intensely fixed at the tip of the burin as the steel point is driven through the copper. It is a process of *creation as manifestation* in the here-and-now, yet also mindful of another intimate, interpenetrating order of reality in which there is no division between physical and spiritual, between mind and matter, or self and other.

So the purpose of this paper is to explore the seemingly timeless awareness of the primal mind and its healing return to modern consciousness through expressions of prayerfulness and the apprehension of beauty.

The Clock House, Widford, Burford, Oxon OX18 4DU, UK
e-mail: barry@barrycottrell.com; mail@barrycottrell.com



Figure 1. The artist engraving a copper plate at Oxford Print-makers, UK.

THE HAND THAT MAKES

In the beginning is the cutting tool²—Gregory Currie.

The study of human origins has revealed intimations of beauty and a strong drive toward perfection of form amongst our Acheulean ancestors: their elongated symmetrical ‘tear-drop’ hand axes make a compelling claim for an esthetic sensibility over a million years ago and for “a very deep history of esthetic production”³ (Figure 2).

The Acheulean is a widespread archeological industry found in assemblages throughout Africa and Eurasia and spanning huge swathes of time—up to one and half million years—only ending around 200,000 years ago with “the replacement of handaxes and cleavers by points, signifying a shift from hand-held to hafted tools, and the birth of projectile technology.”⁴

The early Acheulean—from around 1.7 to 0.8 million years ago (mya)—is the time during which the morphology of the



Figure 2. Lozenge shaped hand axe with convex faces, made of amethyst quartz about 800,000 years ago. British Museum: 1934, 1214.83.

human hand evolved into its present form. The main change was in the shape of the trapezoid bone in the wrist, from pyramid- to boot-shape that resulted in the expansion of the palmar aspect of the hand. This enabled these early humans to combine a *power grip* with a *precision grip* more effectively, making “an already capable hand better at making and using tools.”⁵ The grip could now carry out more and more refined, two-handed manipulation of materials.

Whilst the human hand was evolving during this time into a shape that is essentially the same as ours today, the human brain was also growing—from its 600 cm³ (*Homo habilis*) around 2 million years ago, to its maximum 1500 cm³ in our Neanderthal ancestors (*Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*) around 300,000 years ago, near the end of the Acheulean. Ours today is around 1350 cm³ having shrunk during the last 28,000 years.

A VITAL SENSE OF FORM

With their improving manipulative skills and enhanced cognitive powers, by around 1.4 mya the early Acheuleans were exhibiting an esthetic awareness, rendered in the characteristic simplicity, symmetry, and sometimes beauty of the Acheulean hand axe. In doing so, they were generating and sustaining ‘the great hand axe tradition’—the “longest-lasting entity in the human cultural record.”⁶

While the Acheulean is defined largely by the presence of hand axes, cleavers and other large cutting tools, many of these artefacts present a paradox:

The tool itself often displays such attention to detail in terms of symmetry and form that they appear over-engineered for the range of simple functional tasks envisaged. The finesse, exactitude and apparent esthetic sense worked into what are essentially meat knives continues to demand an adequate explanation, an explanation which might throw some light onto the fundamental relationship between form and function in the material culture of early humans.⁷

These Acheulean makers had the intelligence, the esthetic sensibility, and the hand–eye coordination to engage with materials in a manner that demonstrates consummate care, attentiveness, and skill. There is even the strong indication that the shape of these tear-drop ‘tools’ in many cases conform to the esthetic proportion of the ‘Golden Section,’ a proportion expressed as the ratio 0.61: 1, used in classical architecture and also underlying the European A series of paper sizes, allowing an A4 sheet to be folded into two A5s, at the same time retaining the same proportion. Another proportion that longer ‘tools’ have been found to exhibit is the shorter ratio, 0.50:1 (also described as 1:2) where “the seamless gradient of proportion from 0.61 in shorter to 0.50 in longer bifaces may indeed be one of the most remarkable things about the Acheulean.”⁸

Clearly our Acheulean ancestors possessed a very acute, ‘modern’ sense of proportion over a million years ago, which manifests over aeons in the form of their tear-drop biface. Philosopher Gregory Currie suggests that “we have here evidence for a very deep history of aesthetic production: a

history so long that it makes the Upper Paleolithic look positively contemporary.²

Yet the paradox of the Acheulean so-called “over-engineering” and the acute sense of proportion displayed by these makers remains inadequately explained.

A LITURGY IN STONE

*Stone is not only inert rock but a dormant intelligence, sluggish in our zone, dreaming and metabolizing a molecule at a time*⁹—Richard Grossinger.

John Gowlett is an archeologist who has studied Acheulean stoneworking for well over three decades. He comments on how hard it is to explain this common human disposition toward proportion and form across such a vast expanse of time: “The Acheulean biface has been the focus of all this discussion, because it is the earliest artifact which shows the imposition of elaborate form, and because elements of that form are tantalizingly hard to explain.” He then posits an explanation: “Those factors have led to a wide assumption of a plausible explanation—that the bifaces reflect a primitiveness or ‘otherness’ in the behavior of *Homo erectus*.”¹⁰

This explanation of “primitiveness or ‘otherness’ in the behavior of *Homo erectus*” lacks plausibility: it not only sidesteps the issue but also contradicts the earlier implied continuity and kinship between ‘us’ and ‘them’ in our shared acute sense of proportion. In the exploration of deep time, there is the continual danger of setting ourselves apart from the ‘object’ of our study. The suggestion of a “primitiveness or ‘otherness’ in the behavior of *Homo erectus*” drives a wedge between ‘them’ and ‘us,’ reflecting the impasse when scientists seek but fail to impose the dogma of their ‘single vision’—the utilitarian, uniformitarian, technological imperative—upon people from our past, who may simply have possessed a predominantly sacramental and open consciousness. As archeologist Adam Smith points out: “If archaeology is to succeed in articulating the past with the present in meaningful ways, then we must actively resist the construction of rigid boundaries that set the ancient apart from the modern as an ontologically distinct ‘other’.”¹¹

Ceremonial, liturgical, and esthetic concerns beyond the utilitarian may have been prominent in the Acheulean mind. The paradox of this “over-engineering” may be easily explained if the artefacts are understood as having spiritual rather than utilitarian value in a world where such conceptual distinctions did not exist: they may be understood, not so much as tools, or useful objects which have been “over-engineered,” as emblems or prayers in stone, artefacts of a Pleistocene liturgy, so that the value of the seeming excessive attention to shaping the form of the stone derives from an attitude of dedication—to a *devotional* interaction between the living stone and human being, ‘as one.’

For art historian T.J. Clark “Form is a way of capturing nature’s repetitiveness and making it human, making it ours—knowable and dependable.” He sees form as “controlled repetition,” as if the materials of the natural world invite us to carry out a variety of repetitive practices upon them; this variation in the sequence of operations had a logic and a “distinct semantic force” for our Pleistocene ancestors,

enabling “comprehension and control, giving pleasure by reason of some kind of appropriateness, and so on.”¹²

In the context of a world in which all life is intrinsically sacred, the “semantic force” of these forms could be expressing an Acheulean spirituality: the emergence of the Golden Mean through the shaping of an Acheulean biface could be the signature of a universal intelligence inherent in the Earth itself expressed through the stone, rather than an idea or intention inside the head of the artisan imposed upon inert matter.

Their repetitive actions and sequences of operations arising from the substances of Earth, with a logic and a “distinct semantic force” of their own, may have constituted the controlled repetition of religious ritual, and even have incorporated the meditative chanting or ‘speech acts’ of prayer. As scholar Theodore Roszak reminds us in his seminal and powerful, *Where the Wasteland Ends*:

Prejudice and ethnocentrism aside, what we know for a fact is that, outside our narrow cultural experience, in religious rites both sophisticated and primitive, human beings have been able to achieve a sacramental vision of being, and this may well be the wellspring of human spiritual consciousness.¹³

From this wellspring flow religious and philosophical traditions that are characterized by a magical worldview: Roszak calls these traditions the “Old Gnosis”—“the old way of knowing”—which “delighted in finding the sacred in the profane.” In this old way of knowing, through sacramental perception, any portion of nature “can quite suddenly assume the radiance of a magical object.”¹⁴ It is the magical radiance that I too experience when driving the burin through the sublimely intractable density of the luminous copper plate.

ORIGINAL PARTICIPATION

Suppose the whole of creation began to speak to us in the silent language of a deeply submerged kinship... Suppose...we even felt urged to reply courteously to this address of the environment and to join in open conversation...¹⁵

The capacity of material objects to ‘announce themselves,’ and also to mediate ritualistically states of mind beyond ordinary everyday consciousness would have been integral to the more mythical Pleistocene mind at home in an animated universe. In fact it is conceivable that normality for the early Pleistocene mind was a more diffuse, holistic awareness beyond what for us today is ordinary everyday consciousness. It may have been a *participation mystique* with the world around them, with ‘identity’ for our Early to Middle Pleistocene ancestors being a more open sense of self that was intimately embedded and extended within Earth’s ‘aura’ or consciousness, and which, for us, has been superseded by the modern mind. The great mythologist, Joseph Campbell, writes: “As the infant is linked to its mother in a profound *participation mystique*, even to such a degree that it will absorb, and thus inherit, her tensions and anxieties, so has mankind been linked to the moods and weathers of its mother Earth.”¹⁶

Deep within the layers of the human psyche there exists a more primal mind, a mind open to, and participating in, the

world around it. Campbell has written of this early form of cognition, how “there became established between the earliest human communities and their landscapes a profound *participation mystique*.” Wherever people went, they encountered plants, animals, hills, all of which “became their neighbors and instructors, recognized as already there from old: mysterious presences which in some sacred way were to be known as messengers and friends.”¹⁷

British thinker and scholar, Owen Barfield, also believed that the kind of world our ancient ancestors saw, and continued to see until recently, was one in which human consciousness participated. He describes this early state of innocence as *original participation*—“a primal unity of mind and nature with no separation between inner and outer worlds.”

At that stage of the evolution of consciousness, the distinction between “self” and “the world” was not as rigid as today....Accounts of nature spirits; folktales and myths about fairies, nymphs, and sylphs; legends of gods walking the earth, are all rooted in this “participatory consciousness”. This was the kind of world (and consciousness) that poets like Blake, Coleridge, and Goethe believed in and at times felt.¹⁸

For Barfield, whose landmark book, *Saving the Appearances*, was “expressly on the subject of participation,” the human mind is not an onlooker only, but participates in the “so-called outside world.” In perceiving the world “...we do not passively observe what is already there, but participate actively in its process...” and “...this includes the practice of science....” This would have been true throughout history and prehistory to different degrees, until the recent eclipse of our participatory awareness. He writes:

...these books of mine...all...seem to draw attention to the fact that there was awareness of participation between man and nature, down to about the sixteenth or seventeenth century—or let us say, to the Scientific Revolution—since when it has been more and more rapidly disappearing; that is to say, the *awareness* of it has been disappearing, not the participation itself, which is built in to the structure of the universe.¹⁹

For Barfield this eclipse of our fundamental nature is not the same as its destruction. The primal mind has simply been squeezed out or repressed through modernity’s overemphasis upon rationality.

The “Scientific Revolution” did not, because it could not, destroy participation; it did evidence a change in the center of gravity, or in the predominant *direction*, of participation between man and nature. And since then it has been increasingly the case that, although participation is still a fact, we are no longer aware of it; not only so, but this nonawareness culminated in a positive, but quite erroneous, *denial of the very fact of participation itself*.¹⁹ (emphasis added)

Yet Barfield’s and Campbell’s portrayal of the participatory primal mind, of early humans within their mythic mindscape, is based, not on the detached, mechanistic view of a purely physical Earth as an inanimate, material resource, to be

exploited by human greed within an amoral, meaningless universe. Rather, it would have been guided more by their understanding of the primal mind and its “*primary intuition of the earth as a religious “form”*”²⁰ (emphasis added). Author James Cowan illustrates this contrast between the sacred and the profane in the Australian aboriginal outlook upon their landscape: “...what to the early European settlers of the country was little more than a pristine landscape was for the Aborigines a complex and luminous spiritual edifice reminiscent of an open-air cathedral.”²¹

The suggestion here is that early humans possessed a sense of the sacred; that they were soulful people with hearts and minds, who loved—and also presumably feared—the Earth on which their lives depended, and within which their lives were deeply embedded. These are essential attributes and qualities *that make us human* yet remain beyond the grasp of science where the question of “soul” and “the sacred” was driven out of the scientific arena by the very denial of participation that Barfield describes in his books.

As Gary Lachman points out from his interview with Barfield, “The fact that we are unaware of our “participation” in the world accounts for our alienation from nature, as well as our mastery of it.”¹⁸ And this alienation projects an alienated vision onto our deep past.

...it is on that denial of participation that the whole methodology of natural science is based. That is why the denial of participation has become implicit in the whole elaborate structure of hypotheses which constitutes the current world-picture, including of course, our mental image of our own past. The denial was not only positive but also very sweeping, inasmuch as it affirmed, not only that there is no participation now, but also that there never was, or could never have been any such thing.¹⁹

Barfield points out that his book, *Saving the Appearances*, had as its subtitle, *A Study in Idolatry*, since the denial of participation is an illusion; but “the fact remains that on that illusion, or idolatry, the whole form and pressure of our age and its culture—the textbooks available to our students, the way we educate our children...have become inveterately and fixedly based.”¹⁹ The consequences of questioning this illusion are not to be taken lightly for it is “subversive in the most literal sense, and for that reason it has become more than an illusion, it has become a taboo.”¹⁹

THE RE-ENCHANTMENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

So the illusion of non-participation is also the basis of the dominant ‘mind-set’ about the distant past and the lives of our archaic ancestors—that they were just physical and functional, driven only by competition with other animals, and perhaps each other, and by the harsh dictates of survival; and that somehow they were less human than we are.

Most researchers looking back into deep time ask what *function* or *use* an object would have served archaic communities in their struggle to survive. However, this utilitarian assumption is questionable. An alternative assumption is that the deep past may not have been like the present, dominated by the overtly utilitarian values that have long characterized western civilization. The traces we find, or at least some of

them, may well be emblems of *a felt-sense for form and beauty* that was integral to the primal mind, and which is still integral—yet mostly dormant or eclipsed—to the modern mind.

The re-enchantment of consciousness evokes a cosmos of self-presenting, expressive forms that speak to us from a “world ensouled,” where we imbibe and re-dignify the soul and spirit of our early ancestors across time and place, whose communion with us asserts the fundamental continuity of our primal consciousness. The traditional sense of the modern subjective mind, “in here” and the world as external, objective and “out there” is dissolved: the whole world comes alive, animated by natural forces, which at the same time are imbued with the mythic. This re-mythologizing of consciousness is not “a regressive plunge into the premodern world.”²² Rather, it is the recognition of the “fundamental continuity of psyche and cosmos,” which overcomes the basic split in the modern mind between “in here” and “out there,” and also “then” and “now.”²³

In many ways, modernity was very much about banishing the deities of past civilizations in order to emancipate the modern mind from irrational superstition. Spiritual experience was denigrated as ‘mystical’ and repressed in mainstream Western society. However, as psychiatrist Carl Jung once pointed out, “the gods have become diseases; Zeus no longer rules Olympus but rather the solar plexus,”²⁴ while psychologist James Hillman sees an imaginative awareness of “the great God Pan” in our culture as vital to the future health of Earth’s planetary ecology: “Is not a basic cause of contemporary environmental devastation “out there” a continuation of Western history’s determination to keep control “in here” over the most potent and enduring of the ancient Gods, to ensure that the Great God Pan stays dead?”²⁵

Remembering our participation in the natural world entails the remythologizing of our culture—including the rebirth of Pan. Both require a special, “faithful attention” to the transformative potential of the inner life, our own direct line to the stirrings of Earth’s organic imagination.

This faithful attention to the imaginal world, this love which transforms mere images into presences, gives them living being, or rather reveals the living being which they do naturally contain, is none other than remythologizing. Psychic contents become powers, spirits, gods. One senses their presence as did all earlier people who still had soul.²⁶

Faithful attention to the stirrings of the inner life of the soul may involve solitude and a confrontation with the darker side of the psyche where all the forgotten, the disused, and the neglected residues are fused into emblems of restoration of the repressed. As Hillman says of the therapeutic value of fear: “...any complex that brings on panic is the *via regia* for dismantling paranoid defenses....It leads out of the city walls and into open country, Pan’s country.”²⁷ It is here that we come face to face with “Nature Alive” in its darkly creative, elemental power.

Panic, especially at night when the citadel darkens and the heroic ego sleeps, is a direct *participation mystique* in nature, a fundamental, even ontological, experience of

the world as alive and in dread. Objects become subjects; they move with life while one is oneself paralyzed with fear. When existence is experienced through instinctual levels of fear, aggression, hunger, or sexuality, images take on compelling life of their own.²⁷

Here we are approaching the threshold shunned by the modern mind with its fear of insanity and loss of self. It is the liminal zone inhabited by the shaman, but also explored by artists courageous enough—or driven—to move into this psychic region of fertile creativity. In many ways a deep, primal engagement with materials endorses the wisdom of historian Mircea Eliade who once said: “...it is not enough... to discover and admire the art of the primitives; we have to discover the sources of these arts in ourselves, so that we can become aware of what it is, in a modern existence, that is still “mythical” and that survives in us as part of the human condition.”²⁸ When it comes to an exploration of our ancestors in deep time, and the production of their artefacts, it is perhaps even more important to “discover the sources of these arts in ourselves,” to open up to the mythic and participatory dimension of mind that still survives in us.

In my own experience of engraving, it is this direct, waking experience of mind and consciousness expanding and extending beyond the brain into non-physical space that constitutes a participatory form of knowing, a non-rational epistemology, fusing *techné* (‘crafting/making’) and *epistémé* (‘knowledge’), a communion, healing the rupture between worlds, between realms of existence and experience. In this sense, the experience is religious in the true sense of the word of—“re-connection.” It is a reconnection with soul.

ANIMA MUNDI

The return to an awareness of ‘soul’ within the world is prominent in James Hillman’s work, with his invocation of *Anima Mundi*, the soul of the world:

In place of the familiar notion of psychic reality based on a system of private experiencing subjects and dead public objects, I want to advance a view prevalent in many cultures (called primitive and animistic by Western cultural anthropologists)...I am referring to the world soul of Platonism, which means nothing less than the world ensouled.²⁹

Hillman is trying to re-awaken us to the psychic reality or interiority of the outside world, so that it is no longer perceived as dead and inanimate; rather it is alive with “animated possibilities presented by each event as it is, its sensuous presentation as a face bespeaking its interior image...” He sees beauty as “inherent and essential to soul” so that “beauty appears wherever soul appears....Beauty is an *epistemological* necessity; it is the way in which the gods touch our senses, reach the heart and attract us into life.” Beauty is not the “lofty” idea that comes through heavenly revelation “as an epiphany.” Rather it is “the revelation in the immediate presentation of things as they are.” Hillman’s emphasis is upon beauty as revelation in the here-and-now, as “*Sheer appearance for its own sake.*”³⁰

The world comes with shapes, colors, atmospheres, textures—a display of self-presenting forms. All things show faces, the world not only a coded signature to be read for meaning, but a physiognomy to be faced. As expressive forms, things speak; they show the shape they are in. They announce themselves, bear witness to their presence: “Look, here we are.” They regard us beyond how we may regard them...This imaginative claim on our attention bespeaks a world ensouled.³¹

Beauty is intricately associated with the soul and its awakening: “...the soul’s awakening is a process of beauty. This implies that the criteria of esthetics—unity, line, rhythm, tension, elegance—may be transposed to the psyche, giving us a new set of qualities for appreciating what is going on in a psychological process.”³²

Here we have a key to understanding the Pleistocene mind: through the early markings on bone or stone, we are given the reflection of a mode of attention and apprehension uncluttered by the written word. It is mind seeking beauty and order within the mystery of the material world. It is a direct expression of the human soul in communion with the soul of the world, *anima mundi*, both as one. This reality, of beauty through the fusion of inner and outer, through presence incorporating the transcendent and immanent, is also, for Hillman, a way of being—an *ontological* necessity:

Beauty is the manifest *anima mundi*—and do notice here it is neither transcendent to the manifest or hiddenly immanent within, but refers to appearances as such, created as they are, in the forms with which they are given, sense data, bare facts, Venus Nudata. Aphrodite’s beauty refers to the luster of each particular event; its clarity, its particular brightness; that particular things appear at all and in the form in which they appear.³³

THE PRAYER OF THE BONE ON THE BEACH

“...to seize, or seize again, this world, this same, one and only world, to grasp it *otherwise*, that is not a dream, that is a necessity.”³⁴—*Bruno Latour*.

My main thesis in this paper is that engraving is a sacramental act in both origin and ontology, and that what we traditionally call ‘art’—intentional mark- and image-making—may have originated as a form of elemental prayer—that is, prayer in the widest sense of the word. For example, T.S. Eliot wrote in his poem, *Dry Salvages*, of “The prayer of the bone on the beach,”³⁵ By ‘prayer’ I mean communion between individual and universal consciousness, between the many minds and “The One Mind,”³⁶ using utterances (words, sounds, and mantras) or images as the vehicle for the expansion and relocation of consciousness. It is not so much the supplicatory prayer of recent religions, asking an exalted being for something we lack; rather it is a true communion of consciousness with the cosmos, with “the root of the universe,”³⁷ and with other nonhuman intelligences that orchestrate the miracle of life in the natural world around us.

A human being is by nature a technician of the sacred, hardwired for beauty, sacrament and wholeness; the prayerfulness of the primal mind is a healing power and mode of presence, “present from the beginning.”³⁸ Although briefly

forgotten by the modern mind, Earth holds this primal pattern and is now putting forward a very strong voice for that pattern to be re-recognized. Through this recognition we find healing and wholeness. Direct perception of nature’s mythic and spiritual dimension brings about a transformation of awareness. Ecological visionary, David Abram, invokes this mode of presence:

An eternity we thought was elsewhere now calls out to us from every cleft in every stone, from every cloud and clump of dirt. To lend out ears to the dripping glaciers—to come awake to the voices of silence—is to be turned inside out, discovering to our astonishment that the wholeness and holiness we’d been dreaming our way toward has been holding us all the way along....³⁹

This is the radical transformation of consciousness that the times we now live in are calling for: no less than *metanoia*, a complete change of mind, facilitated by remembrance of original participation. The material world is enveloped by the radiance of the spiritual, which “cannot be found *“in the where.”* The *“where”* is in it.”⁴⁰ This radical change in a person’s mode of being has practical effects: both Latour and Corbin write about breaking the usual passage of time, an absolute necessity in an age, more and more tyrannised by passing time. The experience of timelessness, as we have seen, may often be had through the deep, rhythmical, meditative, creative immersion in the substances of Earth.

POSTSCRIPT

This paper has described my experiences as an engraver, and how they have brought about a reconnection with the primal mind. Of course I am not advocating that everyone should seize a burin and attempt to drive some marks or lines into copper plate. Far from it. What I am advocating though is a strong willingness to recover that sense of participation with the world around us which I am convinced was the hallmark of early human consciousness. I do not think people became what we understand as ‘artists’ until the Upper Paleolithic—with cave and portable ‘art.’ But I do think that an awareness of what is artful and beautiful—even the sight of a flock of geese in flight—has always been uppermost in human consciousness.

The re-apprehension of original participation can also have another, magical effect: what was perceived as dead, can come alive, including ourselves. I would like to finish with some appropriate words of wisdom from that great and venerable psychologist, Lawrence LeShan:

“Do not worry about what the world wants of you. Worry about what makes you come alive because what the world *needs* is people who are more alive.”⁴¹

REFERENCES

1. Eliade M. *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. London: Sheed and Ward; 1958;3.
2. Currie G. Art for art’s sake in the old stone age. *Postgrad J Aesthetics*. 2009;6(1):12. retrieved from: (<http://pjaesthetics.org/index.php/pjaesthetics/article/view/76/76>). Accessed April 25, 2017.

3. Halverson J. Art for art's sake in the Paleolithic. *Curr Anthropol*. 1987;28(1):64. retrieved from: (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2743113>). Accessed April 25, 2017.
4. McBrearty S. Patterns of technological change at the origin of *Homo sapiens*. *Before Farming*. 2003;2003/3(9):1.<http://dx.doi.org/10.3828/bfarm.2003.3.9>. Accessed April 25, 2017.
5. Tocheri MW. Three-dimensional riddles of the radial wrist: derived carpal and carpometacarpal joint morphology in the genus *Homo* and the implications for understanding the evolution of stone tool-related behaviors in hominins. *Ph.D. Dissertation, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ*. 2007. retrieved from: (<http://www.paleoanthro.org/static/dissertations/Matthew%20Tocheri.pdf>). Accessed April 25, 2017.
6. Lycett SJ, Gowlett JAJ. On questions surrounding the Acheulean 'tradition'. *World Archaeol*. 2008;40(3):295. retrieved from: (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40388215>). Accessed April 25, 2017.
7. Pope M, Russel K, Watson K. Biface form and structured behaviour in the Acheulean. *Lithics: J Lithic Stud Soc*. 2006;27:45. Available at: (<http://journal.lithics.org/index.php/lithics/article/view/415>). Accessed April 25, 2017.
8. Gowlett JAJ. The vital sense of proportion: Transformation, golden section, and 1:2 preference in Acheulean bifaces. *Paleo-Anthropology*. 2011:184. Available from: (<http://www.paleoanthro.org/static/journal/content/PA20110106.pdf>).
9. Grossinger R. *The Bardo of Waking Life*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books; 2008;10.
10. Gowlett JAJ. The vital sense of proportion: transformation, golden section, and 1:2 preference in Acheulean bifaces. *PaleoAnthropol-og*. 2011:182. Available from: (<http://www.paleoanthro.org/static/journal/content/PA20110106.pdf>). Accessed April 25, 2017.
11. Smith. AT. The limitations of doxa: agency and subjectivity from an archaeological point of view. DOI. *J Social Archaeol*. 2001;1(2):157. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/146960530100100201> Accessed April 25, 2017.
12. Clark TJ. More Theses on Feuerbach. *Representations*. 2008;104:4–7. Available from: (www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/rep.2008.104.1.4). Accessed April 25, 2017.
13. Roszak T. *Where The Wasteland Ends: Politics and Transcendence in Postindustrial Society*. London: Faber and Faber Limited; 1973;117.
14. Roszak T. *Where The Wasteland Ends: Politics and Transcendence in Postindustrial Society*. London: Faber and Faber Limited; 1973;118.
15. Roszak T. *Where The Wasteland Ends: Politics and Transcendence in Postindustrial Society*. London: Faber and Faber Limited; 1973;177.
16. Campbell J. *Historical Atlas of World Mythology. Vol. 1: The Way of the Animal Powers*. London: Times Books; 1984;47.
17. Campbell J. *Historical Atlas of World Mythology. Vol. 1: The Way of the Animal Powers*. London: Times Books; 1984;49.
18. Lachman G. Owen Barfield and the Evolution of Consciousness. *Lapis*. 1996;3.
19. Barfield O. *Participation and Isolation. The Rediscovery of Meaning and Other Essays*. San Rafael, CA: The Barfield Press; 2007;235.
20. Eliade M. *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. London: Sheed and Ward; 1958;242.
21. Cowan J. *Mysteries of the Dream-Time: The Spiritual Life of Australian Aborigines*. Bridport, Dorset: Prism Press; 1989;24.
22. Gablik S. *The Reenchantment of Art*. New York: Thames and Hudson; 1991;57.
23. Gablik S. *The Reenchantment of Art*. New York: Thames and Hudson; 1991;55.
24. Jung C. *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Bollingen Series XX. Trans. Hull, R.F.C. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press and London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970. Quoted in Hillman, J. *The Essential James Hillman—A Blue Fire*. In: Read H, Fordham G, Adler G, McGuire. W, eds. *Thomas Moore*. ed. London: Routledge; 1989;146–147.
25. Hillman J. *Pan and the Nightmare*. Woodstock, CT: Spring Publications; 2000;72.
26. Hillman J. *The Essential James Hillman—A Blue Fire*. Thomas Moore. ed. London: Routledge; 1989;85.
27. Hillman J. *Pan and the Nightmare*. Woodstock, CT: Spring Publications; 2000;38.
28. Eliade M. Quoted. In: Gablik S, *The Reenchantment of Art*. New York: Thames and Hudson; 1991;49.
29. Hillman J. *Anima Mundi: The Return of the Soul to the World*. Spring. 1982:75–77.
30. Hillman J. *The Essential James Hillman—A Blue Fire*. Thomas Moore ed. London: Routledge; 1989;295–302.
31. Hillman J. *Anima Mundi: The Return of the Soul to the World*. Spring. 1982:77.
32. Hillman J. *The Essential James Hillman—A Blue Fire*. Thomas Moore. ed. London: Routledge; 1989;292.
33. Hillman J. *The Essential James Hillman—A Blue Fire*. Thomas Moore. ed. London: Routledge; 1989;301.
34. Latour B. Will Non-Humans be Saved? An Argument on Ecotheology *J Royal Anthropolog Inst*. 2008;V. 15:473.
35. Eliot TS. *Collected Poems: 1909-1962*. London: Faber & Faber; 1963;207.
36. Dossey L. *One Mind: How Our Individual Mind Is Part Of A Greater Consciousness And Why It Matters*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House, Inc; 2013.
37. MacKenzie, C. Personal communication.
38. Laszlo E. *Science and the Akashic Field: An Integral Theory of Everything*. Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions; Full quote: "... we affirm that both matter and mind—*physis* and *psyche*—were present from the beginning: they are both fundamental aspects of reality." 2007;147.
39. Abram D. *Becoming Animal: An Earthly Cosmology*. New York: Pantheon Books; 2010;180–181.
40. Corbin, H. *Mundus Imaginalis or The Imaginary and the Imaginal*. Paper delivered at the Colloquium on Symbolism in Paris in June 1964;4. retrieved from: (http://www.bahaistudies.net/asma/mundus_imaginalis.pdf). Accessed May 10, 2017.
41. LeShan L. *Cancer as a Turning Point: A Handbook for People with Cancer, Their Families, and Health Professionals. Revised edition*. Bath: Gateway Books; 1996;66.