

# From ecopsychology to transpersonal ecosophy: Shamanism, psychedelics and transpersonal psychology

*An autobiographical reflection*

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## Abstract

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This paper is an autobiographical overview of the variety of influences that continue to foster my ongoing transition from ecopsychology to transpersonal ecosophy. These influences (both personal and professional) are discussed throughout this paper; and include transpersonal psychology, shamanism, and psychedelics. This chronicle of influences and associated events serves to reclaim ecopsychology's history. In addition, a brief examination of the eco-dissociated limitations within Hinduism, Taoism, and Buddhism are discussed as a reminder of the fragmentation of theory and practice within traditions that are otherwise considered to be pathways to enlightenment.

**Keywords:** transpersonal, ecosophy

## Prologue

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On March 27, 2004, I chaired a symposium I organized on "Psychedelics: Their value and social responsibility" for the spring conference of the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness, held at the University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, California (UC-Berkeley). Participants included Ralph Metzner, Adele Getty, Stanley Krippner, Maura T. Lucas, and among the audience members was Mary Gomes. Gomes (along with Theodore Roszak and Allen Kanner) served as editor of *Ecopsychology: Restoring the Earth, healing the mind* (1995), yet her interest in my symposium stemmed from the fact Getty and Lucas were among the authors in a 2003 issue of *ReVision* that Gomes edited on "Women and Entheogens". Telling us, "It seems to me that a shadow of psychedelic exploration, at least as it has

unfolded in the West, is a fascination with strange and abstract experiences that expand the mind but fail to open the heart” (Gomes, 2003: 2). Getty (formerly married to Francis Huxley) agreed with Gomes, saying:

...over the years there have been large conferences that address in great detail various aspects of psychedelics ... most of the speakers are what I call ‘Molecule Men’ ... They can rattle off long chemical alphabets and even longer polysyllabic terminology explaining neurotransmitters, MAO inhibitors, [etc.] ... Considering the times we live in, this is a wonderful accomplishment, and these scientists should be congratulated and supported. ... [But] the healing aspect of psychedelics is ancient and traces its roots back through our genetic memories, into indigenous tribal cultures, around the fire with the drum, rattle, and song of the shaman ... Shhh! Women have [been] burned at the stake for much less (Getty, 2003: 14-7).

In my online correspondence with Robert Greenway (from 2000 to 2010 – which was focused on history and theory), I learned it was Ilan Shapiro (a graduate student of Greenway) who, in 1989, formed a peace studies group at UC-Berkeley in protest of the first Gulf War. This group attracted Gomes, Greenway, Kanner, and eventually Roszak as participants. Among the insights that emerged from this group was that the conflict of war always produces widespread environmental destruction. In this way, “peace studies” and anti-war groups (which are always politically motivated) are directly connected to the conversation and interests that led Roszak to write his 1992 book, *The Voice of the Earth*.

## Introduction

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Krippner has pointed out ‘It is therefore time for transpersonal psychology, and transpersonal studies in general, to reassess and reclaim its history regarding ecopsychology so it can step forward and fill this void. I have to say that the psychedelic movement caught on to this long ago. I remember back in the 1960s, when people began doing informal work with psychedelics. One theme that came up time and time again was we are destroying the environment, and that taking psychedelics increased not only our appreciation of nature, but all forms of life. I think too the psychedelic movement has been given short shrift by historians in a number of other ways, because it also helped stimulate interest in the Peace Movement, the Civil Rights movement, et cetera (Schroll, et al, 2009: 47)<sup>1</sup>.

Krippner’s comments support my decision to write an overview and autobiographical reflection on my involvement in ecopsychology’s historical development, and how the

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<sup>1</sup> See Schroll, Krippner, Vich, Fadiman & Mojeiko (2009). Metzner (1999: 169-70) echoed this view. See also Krippner & Luke, 2009; Metzner, 2008, 2009; Schroll, 2009b.

ecopsychological perspective dovetails with studies of shamanism<sup>2</sup>, psychedelics<sup>3</sup>, transpersonal psychology<sup>4</sup>, and the emergence of *transpersonal ecosophy*. My knowledge and understanding of transpersonal ecosophy emerged from a symposium I organized on “The History and Future of Ecopsychology” for the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness 2009 conference on “Bridging Nature and Human Nature”. It was during this symposium Alan Drengson pointed out, in response to Warwick Fox's *Toward a Transpersonal Ecology* (1990), that Arne Naess said a better title would have been “Toward a Transpersonal Ecosophy” (Schroll, 2011c: 4). Shortly after this conference Drengson sent me a copy of his book *The Ecology of*

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<sup>2</sup> For a comprehensive inquiry of shamanism see Walsh (2007). My use of the word “shamanism” (which includes my use of the word “shaman” throughout this paper), is consistent with Peter N. Jones linguistic and phenomenological inquiry. Specifically:

The term shamanism defines a phenomenon that occurs among only a select few individuals (the “shamans”) at any given spatiotemporal moment, and that operational definitions of the phenomenon must be limited to those specific spatiotemporal moments; and... only a nominal definition is possible when discussing the phenomenon diachronically or cross-culturally, and this nominal definition is contingent upon ethically understood notions of the folk epistemology and folk ontology of the cultures compared... : shamanism is a phenomenon consisting of an individual who has voluntary access to, and control of, more aspects of their consciousness than other individuals, however the components of that consciousness are emically understood, and that this voluntary access is recognized by other members of the “shaman’s” culture as an essential component of the culture (Jones, 2006: 21).

Understandably Jones’ strict definition of shamans and shamanism is a response to the widespread phenomenon of neo-shamanism (Townsend, 1988, 1990) that we shall discuss later in this paper. Yet it is important to point out non-Native’s and non-shamans have been shown to experience transpersonal states in sweat lodge ceremonies (Hibbard, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Psychedelic has been defined, as Metzner (2004: 4) tells us, by “Humphrey Osmond, the English psychiatrist who pioneered the use of LSD in the treatment of alcoholism and who gave Aldous Huxley his first mescaline experience, coined the term *psychedelic* (‘mind manifesting’). This term was adopted by the Harvard psilocybin research projects”. David Luke further clarifies the use of this term, telling us: “A psychedelic substance, as opposed to other substances, has been defined as that ‘which, without causing physical addiction, craving, major psychological disturbances, delirium, disorientation, or amnesia, more or less reliably produces thought, mood, and perceptual changes’” (Luke, 2011: 357-8).

<sup>4</sup> Lajoie and Shapiro have examined 202 original citations pertaining to transpersonal psychology (1992). Contemplating these lead to my own definition: “The transpersonal is equally present in states of ecstasy, sensuality, and somatic experiences that are capable of just shaking you to your roots and really waking you up: life encounters that make you come alive and experience the kinesthetic, the tactile, and the erotic. Each of these human drives (and their various nuances) is equally important toward the creation and maintenance of a healthy personality. Nevertheless, no definition of transpersonal psychology should be viewed as a description of some finished or final product of enlightenment. Rather, transpersonal psychology’s emphasis is on the continuous process of transcendence and transformation within the realms of the personal, the planetary, and

*Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess* (2008), edited with Bill Devall, which reiterated this point:

Warwick Fox suggests that those, including Naess, whose ultimate premises call for an extended sense of identification with an ecological self be called transpersonal ecologists, but Naess would say that they have transpersonal ecosophies (p. 37).

Ecosophies are not platforms for a political movement or policies [Drengson and Devall explain] but are personal philosophies of life in a worldview (p. 33).

Ecosophies therefore serve the same function as personal myths or our personal mythology, defined as “more than just intellectual constructs; they are ingrained models of reality that determine how you see your world and understand your place within it” (Feinstein & Krippner, 1988: 2). Moreover the term transpersonal ecosophy fosters an interdisciplinary perspective more so than the term ecopsychology, as well as helping to free us from the criticism put forth by Susan Clayton and Gene Myers:

The relationship between ecopsychology and psychology however, is contested. Not all ecopsychologists are trained as psychologists, and writings on ecopsychology have been criticized for a lack of scientific objectivity, referencing concepts like spirituality and indigenous wisdom that are difficult to clearly define. Reser in a thoughtful critique [(1995)] concluded that the assumptions and methods of ecopsychology are too disparate from accepted psychological standards to be considered an area within psychology (Clayton & Myers, 2009: 10).

First, Clayton, Myers, and Reser are incorrect that spirituality is difficult to define – see Elkins et al (1988) and Lazar (2009) for definitions of spirituality. Whereas the difficulty associated with spirituality, according to my discussions with John Rowan, is not our inability to define it:

It is because of the various meanings and [often conflicting] uses of the term spirituality that I [Rowan] prefer to use the term transpersonal. ... The main advantage of using the term transpersonal is ... [it places or refers us to states of awareness that follow] after the prepersonal and the personal in the process of psychospiritual development. ... Not so with spirituality, which roams all over the place (Schroll, Rowan & Robinson, 2011: 124-5).

Second, Jurgen W. Kremer has given precise definitions of “indigenous wisdom” or “indigenous science” in an issue of the journal *ReVision* (1997). See also Pamela Colorado's (1996) paper, “Indigenous Science”. Third, confining ecopsychology to standards within psychology limits it to something that Roszak and Metzner agreed it was never intended to be (Metzner, 1993, 1999: 2). Roszak argued, “Saving the life of the planet is the biggest political cause humans have yet taken on; it requires a

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the cosmological” (Schroll et al, 2011: 125).

vision of the human personality that is just as big” (Metzner, 1999: x).

All this harks back to Krippner’s observation about informal assessments with psychedelics in the 1960s, and supports the view, “that taking psychedelics increased not only our appreciation of nature, but all forms of life”. This is supported by a frequently quoted passage from Albert Hofmann’s book *LSD: My Problem Child* (1983: ix-x), recalling a peak-experience in nature at age nine, that provided him with the ability to recognize his accidental ingestion of LSD, in April 1943, was of similar psycho-spiritual origin. Metzner adds the observation that LSD’s discovery “in 1943 at the height of WWII occurred within months of Enrico Fermi’s first controlled nuclear chain reaction, which led directly to the building of the atomic bomb; as if it was a kind of psycho-spiritual antidote to the death weapon” (2008: 21). Unfortunately the wealth of knowledge that could help us support these claims about the connection between psychedelics and ecology came to an end in 1965, “when the government clamp-down occurred, [and] even clinical research was banned” (Smith et al, 2004: 123). Some recent exceptions have been made, such as MacLean, Johnson & Griffiths (2011), the significance of which we shall discuss later in this paper. Still, for most of us, the ban on any experimentation with psychedelics continues. Thus, on the one hand, this “makes the surviving early researchers a uniquely valuable group,” and “because of their advancing age are clearly an endangered resource” (Smith et al, 2004: 123). On the other hand, the near total ban on psychedelic research eliminates most of us from replicating its influence on our relationship with nature and other species – with the exception of anthropologists of consciousness who investigate indigenous cultures (Beyer, 2009, 2012; Dickens & Tindall, 2013; Harrison, 2011; Webb, 2013).

Among these endangered resources is Stanislav Grof (a pioneer in psychedelic research and transpersonal psychology), who said, in response to the question, “Can you describe the circumstances and impact of your first psychedelic experience”:

I began to realize that, even after a long time, the results [of psychoanalysis] were not exactly breathtaking. My own analysis lasted seven years, and I loved every minute of it: playing with my dreams, and finding that there was some deep meaning in every slip of my tongue. But if you had asked, “Did it change you?” I would have hesitated. I would say that, while I changed during those seven years, there was no convincing causal relationship between the free-associating that I did on the couch and the changes that happened in my life. Whereas, *when I had my first LSD session, I was one kind of person in the morning and a whole different kind of person in the evening, and there was no question that this change was the result of the experience* (Grof et al, 2008: 156, italics added).

This raises the question, what kind of person did he become? Grof adds:

Ultimately, we don't have a fixed identity. ... You can eventually experientially reach the cosmic creative Source and become that Source. When you have that experience [like I have,] you realize that this Source is no different from the overall field of cosmic energy" (Grof et al, 2008: 167)

[Consequently] It becomes obvious that the universe is a unified web, of which we are all meaningful parts ... . [and,] that we are facing a problem of a collective nature that only a determined cooperative effort can solve. ... [Thus] a radical and lasting solution is inconceivable without inner transformation and a move toward global awareness (Grof, 1985: 39).

Therefore in an attempt to put all of these concerns into their proper perspective, this paper will proceed chronologically from past to future (and periodically flash forward and backward in time so that particular points can be addressed). Equally important for us to know before we enter the main body of this paper is portions of it have been published elsewhere, which also raises the question why is there a need to repeat this discussion again? The answer is that I have learned from the past mistakes of Naess and Roszak. Neither of them repeated themselves enough, nor referred back to their early work enough, nor clarified their basic concepts enough, nor explained well enough what it was that motivated them to pursue their respective areas of research. Consequently the task of creating a coherent statement summing up their respective contributions has been left to others. A summing up of Naess' legacy can be found in Drenghson, 2005; Drenghson and Devall, 2008, and Drenghson, Devall, and Schroll, 2011; whereas a summing up from ecopsychology to transpersonal ecosophy is this paper's focus, and listening to the music of the lyrics quoted in this paper will deepen the readers experience.

## **Recognizing an internal pollution crisis in humankind**

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Mama nature said, it's murder what you've done,  
 I sent you forth my brightest world, now it's nearly gone.  
 Virgin bees been telling me, you can't see the forest for the trees,  
     Cover up your eyes with sympathies.  
 And I've got no solution, to your persecution,  
     I'm so disillusioned.  
 Mama nature said, you're guilty of this crime  
 Now it's not just a matter of fact, but a matter of time.  
 Cruel will be the vengeance, some say I don't believe that story,  
 And I've got no solutions to your own pollution.

– Phil Lynott/Thin Lizzy, 1973, Belfast, Ireland

As a teenager growing up in the 1970s, instead of listening to disco, I was contemplating the rock lyrics of songs such as *Mama Nature Said*. Likewise, this zeitgeist was shaped by a cultural background of films such as *Soylent Green* (1973), (based on Harry Harrison's 1967 book *Make Room! Make Room!*) vividly warning us about the forthcoming dangers of overpopulation,

pollution, and food shortages, with ominous overtones of fear, guilt, and self-sacrifice as the only solutions to an otherwise impending apocalypse. At best there were TV commercials featuring Hollywood's version of indigenous tribal elders shedding a tear as garbage was thrown from cars desecrating the landscape, which concluded with a message pleading with us not to litter. But the idea of some kind of "internal pollution" contributing to the ecocrisis was absent in the environmental rhetoric that I was hearing from the adults shaping my adolescent development (Schroll, 2009: 29).

My search to understand this "internal pollution" is what led me to "ecopsychology" (which I suggested in the introduction can be more accurately described as "transpersonal ecosophy"; I will, however, continue to refer to both ecopsychology and transpersonal ecosophy throughout this paper). It was therefore an immediate flash to my memories of *Mama Nature Said* as I heard Ian Prattis tell us in *Failsafe: Saving the Earth From Ourselves* (2008): "I must be blunt from the outset about the context of [our] current ecological, social, and psychological crisis. There is an external environmental pollution crisis on the planet because there is an internal pollution crisis in humankind" (p. 38). Prattis identifies this internal pollution as symptoms (p. 27), which agrees with (yet fails to cite) the work of Roger Walsh who pointed this out in his 1984a article "World at Risk" (pp. 10-14), and elaborated on this point in Walsh, 1984b, 1985). This is an important point that Prattis and Walsh raise, and provides us with the starting point of transpersonal ecosophy: "how, and in what directions, can we move beyond simply treating the symptoms of the world's growing number of social and environmental crises?" (Schroll, 2007: 30). Pondering this question represented a real turning point in my thinking:

It allowed me to realize that healing the world's social and environmental crises was not going to come about simply by creating new technologies and discontinuing the use of fossil fuels, nor by rejecting the development of new technologies and trying to live more simply. It is not a matter of philosophers envisioning a better environmental ethic to guide the practice of conservation biologists and urban planners, allowing us to serve as better stewards of the land. Nor would a concentrated effort of protest by eco-activists employing guilt, fear, and letter writing campaigns, urging politicians to enact stiffer environmental laws, create the kinds of changes needed in our behavior. Necessary as all these approaches might be, I believe that the real starting point toward healing the social and environmental crisis begins with self-confrontation and self-examination. We need to examine the worldview influencing our attitudes and our behavior (p. 30).

Some mainstream environmentalists may take offense with this turning point in my thinking, believing that I no longer support the work of environmental activists, or those involved in resource management, conservation biology, environmental psychology and conservation psychology. But this is not correct. I continue to support

these concerns<sup>5</sup>, yet I stand in opposition to technocracy, that is, the social engineering of culture. Indeed it was the insights that Roszak gleaned from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1816/1983) with its critique of science and culture (Roszak, 1980), that motivated him to write *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition* (1969). This particular point was overlooked in both Jonathan Coope's (2010), and Tristan L. Snell, et al's (2011) assessment of Roszak's contribution to ecopsychology. A preliminary effort to address this concern was attempted by Schroll and Greenwood, 2011, yet a more comprehensive inquiry is still needed. Non-fiction critiques of transforming scientific knowledge into technologized social policy include Batteau, 2010; Drengson, 1995, 2011; Fromm, 1968, Glendinning, 1994; and Roszak, 1973, 1999, and are echoed in several fictional critiques (Huxley, 1932/1969; Orwell, 1949; and Zamyatin, 1972). Revisiting these concerns 30 years later, Roszak wrote:

Cultures keep secrets; they illuminate some things and suppress others. Every culture conceals as much as it reveals; that is its style and its distinctive contribution. Cultures survive as long as they can maintain that style, which means as long as they can hide from themselves. There is a sense in which every culture is a conspiracy, a coordinated effort to open a few doors of perception and to close others (Metzner, 1999: viii).

The difficult problem we face is this, freeing ourselves from the “technocratic paradigm’s” grip (Roszak, 1969; Drengson, 2011) will not be easy, because our path to liberation cannot be achieved solely on the basis of logical arguments built on incremental bits of data. Roszak agrees:

Ecology already hovers on the threshold of heresy. Will it be brave enough to step across and, in so doing, revolutionize the sciences as a whole? If that step is to be taken, it will not be a matter of further research, but a transformed consciousness (Roszak, 1973: 371).

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<sup>5</sup> Two examples of my support for conservation biology and resource management are: (i) On May 14-15, 1990, I served as a volunteer forester at Fort Robinson State Park, near Chadron, Nebraska, during which I planted 200 seedlings of *ponderosa* pine. Fort Robinson has the ominous legacy of being the place where the Native American tribal leader and shaman Crazy Horse was shot in the back while purportedly escaping, yet the door to his cell had conveniently been left open. (ii) In November of 1997, I attended an annual conference sponsored by Pheasants Forever in Grand Island, Nebraska. During a workshop facilitated by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission that dealt with the concern of preserving habitat, I articulated the idea of treating the symptoms versus getting to the ecopsychological origins of these symptoms. Not only did the farmers and ranchers attending this workshop grasp the importance of this concept, this idea was published in the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission newsletter as a central concern toward guiding the considerations of future policy and planning of habitat restoration.



Asking himself similar questions, former Apollo astronaut and founder of the Noetic Institute Edgar D. Mitchell concluded that what we need to solve the ecocrisis “is a transformation of consciousness” (Roberts, 2011: 6). In other words we need a positive vision of the future based on a cultural (anthropological) and personal (existential) understanding of what it means to be human. Only the most skeptical continue to deny that we are now in the midst of the ecocrisis that Rachel Carson (1962) predicted nearly 50 years ago. Skeptics and believers arguing for and against the reality of the ecocrisis have nevertheless missed a more essential point – Carson warned against relying on a “technological fix” as a solution to the ecocrisis, yet this does not mean that technological innovation is not important; it is. I am right now using several kinds of innovative technologies in the completion of this paper, and rely on others in my daily life. What Carson meant was that by itself new technologies will not be enough to solve the ecocrisis, and these solutions are frequently thwarted by technocracy.

Likewise (as I have previously discussed in greater detail):

in conversations I have had with ecopsychologists who support the hypothesis that a transformation of consciousness is needed, many have asked if it will take some serious apocalyptic environmental catastrophe to motivate most of us (Schroll & Hartelius, 2011: 84).

Ram Dass raised this same concern in his interview with John Seed (Ram Dass & Seed, 1991). Ram Dass asked: “Will it take incredible trauma to trigger a transformation of consciousness?” To which Seed replied (paraphrasing): “We have already had so much trauma this does not seem to be a sufficient means to trigger a change in our awareness. In fact trauma often has the opposite nullifying influence on us”<sup>6</sup>. Instead Seed suggested that what we needed was some sort of miracle that would allow us to “wake up one day different” (Schroll & Hartelius, 2011: 84).

Harking back to Hofmann's anecdotal recollection of the similarities between his experience in nature, and initial psychedelic experience, this raises the question, could ingesting a psychedelic plant such as psilocybin mushrooms influence personality traits and ultimately trigger a transformation of consciousness? Recent experimental evidence in a clinical setting (MacLean, Johnson & Griffiths, 2011) provided data to establish that increased openness did result from subjects ingesting psilocybin. They define openness as “a relatively broad range of intercorrelated traits

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<sup>6</sup> I have referred to “this opposite nullifying influence of trauma as the reliance on the fear approach or the rhetoric of catastrophe, the guilt approach or the rhetoric of shame, and the self-sacrificing/voluntary simplicity approach or the rhetoric of redemption as negative motivating techniques” (Schroll et al 2009: 47).

covering aesthetic appreciation and sensitivity, fantasy and imagination, awareness of feelings in self and others, and intellectual engagement. People with high levels of Openness are ‘permeable to new ideas and experiences’ and ‘motivated to enlarge their experience into novel territory’” (DeYoung et al, 2005: 1459). Hopefully additional research designed to test similar hypotheses will be approved, and help to shed more light on whether or not a transformation of consciousness could be triggered by psychedelic experience. MacLean et al (2011: 1459) cautiously agree, telling us:

Although the findings are suggestive of personality changes that might be associated with hallucinogen<sup>7</sup> exposure, it is not possible to isolate the effects of hallucinogens per se because of the self-selection bias that may confound results of cross-sectional studies. Longitudinal studies will be required to replicate hallucinogen-related changes in personality, attitudes, and values.

Their initial research findings support Metzner's same echo of hope:

The potential of psychedelic drugs to act as catalysts to a transformation into *gnosis*, or direct, ongoing awareness of divine reality, even if only in a small number of people, would seem to be of the utmost significance. ... the discovery of psychedelics, in facilitating such experiences and processes, could be regarded as one very important factor in a general spiritual awakening of collective human consciousness (p. 81). ... The knowledge derived from altered states has been, can be, and needs to be applied to the solution of the staggering problems that confront our species (Metzner, 1989: 88).

Beyond this introductory discussion, to make sense of the context within which MacLean et al's clinical research apply – as well as the concerns expressed by Mitchell, Prattis, Getty, Ram Dass, Seed, Roszak, Gomes, Grof, Krippner and Metzner – and gain a broader understanding of how the concept of “internal pollution” emerged, requires sorting out and framing the historical development out of which ecopsychology emerged.

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<sup>7</sup> Defining and sorting out the confusion associated with the word hallucinogen, Metzner tells us:

The older term hallucinogenic ('hallucination inducing') was universally rejected by those investigators who had actually experienced these substances, since it was clear that they do not cause one to see hallucinations in the sense of illusions; rather one sees all the ordinary objects of the sense world plus another whole range of energies and phenomena normally not seen. However, etymology reveals that the original meaning of the Latin verb *alucinare*, from which 'hallucination' is derived, means to 'roam or wander in one's mind'. This is actually a fairly appropriate metaphor for the experience – a journey in the mind, in consciousness; a 'trip', as it became known colloquially (Metzner, 2004: 4).

## Ecopsychology's roots in humanistic & transpersonal psychology

I see the resignation of nothingness  
 I hear the repercussions of pointlessness  
     I'm completely torn  
 My whole attitude bears my scorn.  
     I hear the silence of another day  
 While our existence gets wiped away,  
 You know the games that we all play.  
 I see you're playing with my tolerance,  
     Gotta rise above this consciousness.

–Tim Masters, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1997

When the confluence of events that eventually lead to the birth of both humanistic and transpersonal psychology (and eventually ecopsychology) were being sown, I was four years old. Greenway has generously contributed to my understanding of this early history, recalling (in one of our many email exchanges from 2001-2010) that one rainy afternoon in late fall 1962, Abraham Maslow was looking out the window, saying, “It’s not enough, humanistic psychology is not enough”. This initiated Maslow’s thinking about the limits of humanistic psychology, and it was during this time that he became influenced by Sir Julian Huxley’s view of transhumanism (1957). Another four years would pass until the next break-through would come, as Anthony Sutich (1969: 13) tells us: “In January, 1966, several members of the Board of Editors of [*Journal of Humanistic Psychology*] were invited to a seminar titled ‘Humanistic Theology’ with Father [Patrick] MacNamara”. Maslow was among the participants in this seminar, who afterwards developed its inquiry through an exchange of letters with Sutich. Sutich adds (p. 13) that “Early in January 1967, the term ‘Transhumanistic’ ... became the key word for this force”.

And yet further clarification was still needed, as Miles Vich (1988: 107) points out, that the name for this new frontier did not come without some initial floundering. Maslow was among the first to use the term “transpersonal” in a communication to Sutich in 1967, and again in 1968 in a letter referring to a meeting with Grof:

The main reason I am writing is that in the course of our conversations we thought of using the word transpersonal instead of the clumsier word transhumanistic or trans-human. The more I think of it, the more this word says what we are all trying to say, that is, beyond individuality, beyond the development of the individual person into something which is more inclusive than the individual person, of which is bigger than he is (Sutich, 1967).

This reference to something bigger, more inclusive, or whole than the individual person, is the creative insight that motivated Maslow to investigate what he called

peak-experiences (Maslow, 1964), and harks back to Hofmann's nature experience at age nine that provided him with a way to integrate and internalize his first accidental LSD experience.

It would require a more careful analysis of humanistic and transpersonal psychology's early history (beyond the limited one provided here) to learn if any of its members, or MacNamara, was at this time influenced by the clarion call of Lynn White, Jr., who (the same year as MacNamara's pivotal seminar) boldly criticized the Western form of Christianity in 1967 as “the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen” (White, 1973: 25). Summing up his argument, White asserted: “Both our present science and our present technology are so tainted with orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature that no solution for our ecological crisis can be expected from them alone. Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious, whether we call it that or not” (pp. 29-30). Metzner has criticized “the minor inelegance of [anthropocentrism,] a term of mixed Greek and Latin derivation” (Metzner, 1991: 148), suggesting instead the “diagnostic metaphor the *human (or humanist) superiority complex*” (Metzner, 1999: 84).

Additional memories of this early history were provided by Krippner, who recalled in his last conversation with Maslow that Abe spoke of founding a new psychology he was calling trans-human psychology: “We should therefore extend our concerns – go trans-human – and not make this a human-centered psychology” (Schroll et al, 2009: 40). Krippner added, “As we talked about it, in retrospect, I now realize he was talking about what we now call ecopsychology” (Schroll, 2008/2009: 16). “Unfortunately Maslow never had this dream realized” (Schroll et al, 2009: 40); summing up his views on this recollection, Krippner added the opinion “that ecopsychology is [now] absolutely critical” (p. 46).

To recreate in our awareness the turbulent social psychological context within which both humanistic and transpersonal psychology emerged, let's recall one of the most shocking images of our twenty-first century selves that came screaming into our lives: the stark vocals of the song *21<sup>st</sup> Century Schizoid Man*, whose lyrics explode with a rant characteristic of the 1960s revolution in sound, presentational style, and content:

Cats foot, iron claw,  
Neurosurgeons scream for more  
At paranoia's poison door  
Twenty-first century schizoid man.  
Blood rack, barbed wire,  
Politicians' funeral pyre  
Innocents raped with napalm fire

Twenty-first century schizoid man,  
 Death seed, blind man's greed,  
 Poets' starving children bleed,  
 Nothing he's got he really needs,  
 Twenty-first century schizoid man.

These are the words and poetic illuminations of Peter Sinfield, whose inspirations in 1969 flayed our skins, and burned these thoughts into our brains, assisted by the searing blast of controlled fusion known as the musical group *King Crimson*. Sinfield's chilling reference to the schizoid personality type continues to loom large on the horizon of humankind's future, warning us to wake up from our dissociation from self, society, and nature, because the schizoid person is no longer in touch with their feelings. Instead, the schizoid person lives in a state of psychological disconnection from other people and the world of nature. All of us are in danger of becoming this schizoid man (Schroll, 2008/2009: 16-7).

This schizoid man is what Metzner refers to in his book *Green Psychology* as "the collective psychopathology of the relationship between human beings and nature" or, in other words, "dissociation" (Metzner, 1999: 94-97). Psychology should therefore be on the front lines of the endeavor to examine our worldview, and ourselves, but mainstream psychology is currently dominated by technophiles. These technophiles, or perhaps more poignantly necrophiles, actively encourage technology's consumptive behavior and instrumental use of nature (the systematic transformation of nature into its use by humans)<sup>8</sup>.

1969 witnessed the *Association for Transpersonal Psychology's* birth, whose inception found inspiration in Maslow's 1968 vision that "without the transcendent and the transpersonal, we get sick, violent, and nihilistic, or else hopeless and apathetic" (Maslow, 1968: iv). Recognizing this, it is hard to say whether psychology was influencing pop culture or if pop culture was influencing psychology, because in 1969, Alan Watts was also describing the emotional autism of Seinfeld's 21<sup>st</sup> century schizoid man in *Does It Matter?: Essay's on Man's Relationship to Materiality*, telling us that:

... People, whether Western or Eastern, need to be liberated and dehypnotized from their visions of symbolism and, thereby, become more intensely aware of the living vibrations of the real world. For lack of such awareness our consciousness and consciences have become calloused to the daily atrocities of burning children with napalm, of saturation bombings of fertile earth with all its plants, wild animals, and insects (not to mention people), and of manufacturing nuclear and

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<sup>8</sup> See Schroll and Greenwood (2011) for a discussion of the 'Night of the Living Dead' model, which is our critique of technocracy that builds on Roszak (1969, 1999) and Drenegson (2011). Likewise this paper further illuminates this reference to technophiles as necrophiles.

chemical weapons concerning which the real problem is not so much how to prevent their use as how to get them off the face of the earth. [If we can ever hope to survive this madness, we will] need to become vividly aware of our ecology, of our interdependence and [our] virtual identity with all other forms of life (Watts, 1969: xiv).

Watts could have written these words yesterday, and we owe it to his and Maslow's legacy to honor their vision and give birth to ecopsychology, and a transpersonal ecosophy. Equally poignant, as if it could be today's top news story, this prevailing sprit of dread, anxiety, and dissociation was eerily summarized in Roszak's *The Making of a Counter*:

If the technocracy in its grand procession through history is indeed pursuing to the satisfaction of so many ... universally ratified values as The Quest for Truth, The Conquest of Nature, The Abundant Society, The Creative Leisure, The Well-Adjusted Life, why not settle back and enjoy the trip? The answer is, I guess, that I find myself unable to see anything at the end of the road we are following with such self-assured momentum but Samuel Beckett's two sad tramps forever waiting under that wilted tree for their lives to begin. Except that I think the tree isn't even going to be real, but a plastic counterfeit. In fact, even the tramps may turn out to be automatons ... though of course there will be great, programmed grins on their faces (Roszak, 1969: xiv).

Is “this discovery that we are nothing more than soulless creatures playing the starring role in some theater of the absurd really the image of the world and the future that we have all be waiting for? It is certainly not the vision of the future I have been waiting for, yet before any of us slips into some kind-of deep depression about this dismal prediction of the future – it is important we call to mind that “if” is the key word in Roszak's scenario of the future. That is, if the resistance of the counter culture fails, ... if we fail to transform our present crisis of perception into an opportunity for transformation... If we do not become active in the political process needed to create better communities, if we neglect the cultivation of our transpersonal growth” (Schroll, 2008/2009: 17), then yes our future looks bleak.

Flash forward 27 years to hear again how these concerns continue to impact our understanding of science, culture, our collective future, and those of transpersonal psychology in particular, as David Fontana and Ingrid Slack persuasively argued in their paper “The need for transpersonal psychology”:

In an increasingly shrinking and independent world, it therefore seems vital that Western scientific psychology [begin an active exploration of] the influence that transpersonal experiences and beliefs have upon human motivation and behaviour. Such exploration must also take in the extensive and culturally important formal psychologies generated by non-Western traditions, the majority of which have their basis in, or make reference to, alleged transpersonal experiences. ... The very future of mankind (a grand phrase, but not inappropriate in the circumstances) depends increasingly upon international understanding, and if Western scientific psychology is to play a

role in this understanding ... it would therefore seem imperative that it make its presence felt in the areas concerned without delay (Fontana & Slack, 1996: 4).

Fontana and Slack's call to action led to the formation of a Transpersonal Psychology Section in the British Psychological Society, whose concerns parallel similar conversation taking place within the current paper, and ecopsychology as a whole. To foster further synthesis between these conversations it is therefore important to acknowledge limitations within our view of transpersonal psychology.

## **Recognizing the limitations of transpersonal psychology**

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Tried so hard, but I just can't relate  
 Is it mind control, or just a separate state?  
 I see millions of people moving to the right,  
 Afraid of one another, afraid of the light.  
 Yuppie vermin consumers, a generation lost,  
 When up pops another breathing their exhaust.  
 It's dawn of the dead, or zombie land,  
 While new abuses of power are seen throughout the land.

Our seas are filled with oil,  
 We worry about burned flags,  
 All these contradictions are really such a drag.  
 So keep those closed minds humming  
 Bolting down the screws,  
 These complicated questions  
 Are a new case for the blues.

– Jim Jacobi, Seattle, Washington, 1998

Much of the theoretical basis for transpersonal psychology has been constructed from the religions and psychologies of Asia: Hinduism, Taoism and Buddhism. Even though I spent five years studying Zen Buddhism and attempting to practice its meditative methods, the feeling of treading on (or infringing upon) foreign soil was always present. Despite this somewhat unnatural feeling that always crept into my experiential encounters with Zen, and my theoretical study of the religions and psychologies of Asia, Maslow's founding spirit of transpersonal psychology continues to hold a hope for me. I continue to find that the Hindu myth of the universe resonates in my own unconscious and my psilocybin inspired experiential cosmology (Schroll, 2004a). Taoism provides philosophical insight (Kasulis, 1981), and Zen koans unify my body/mind (Schroll, 2011b)<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> It is worth mentioning that Sufi stories provide invaluable pathways capable of reawakening our primordial ecological wholeness, in addition to serving as gateways into other ways of knowing

Nevertheless, the limitations of transpersonal psychology (especially the possibility of enlisting its help in expanding EuroAmerican ecopsychological awareness) became shockingly evident when I read Philip Novak's (1987) paper "Tao how? Asian religions and the problem of environmental degradation". These include: (i) The case of India; (ii) The case of China; and (iii) The case of Japan. Beginning with India, Novak reveals the discrepancy between Hinduism's theoretical teachings and the daily behavior of its practitioners:

The Vedic literature repeatedly expresses a vivid appreciation of and deep reverence for Nature. [Yet n]othing illustrates more vividly the paradoxical nature of India's relationship to the environment than the condition of the Ganges. ... It is estimated that 'at least 10,000 half-burned bodies are tossed into the river every year either at Varanasi or towns upstream. Whole leprous corpses are often thrown into the river by ignorant townsmen who fear that burning would spread the leprosy bacilli in the air through the smoke. Benares alone dumps 20,000,000 gallons of raw sewage into the river every day. One huge sewer pipe empties into the river only 100 yards upstream from the city's main drinking water intake pipe' (Novak, 1987: 33-6).

Those of us familiar with Hinduism know that the Ganges is sacred to Hindus, who believe its waters are holy and purifying. Each year thousands of Hindus make pilgrimages to the Ganges to bath in and drink its sacred water. This certainly speaks to the power of ancestral wisdom; it also speaks to the power of denial.

Second, Novak proceeds to talk about China. Telling us that throughout China's history the behavior of the spiritual practitioners of Buddhism and Taoism has resulted in many devastating effects on the natural environment:

Even Buddhist monks share the blame. [René] Dubos notes that they used enormous amounts of timber for the construction and constant reconstruction of their halls and temples, [resulting in widespread deforestation,] and that despite their supposed vegetarianism, kept livestock which overgrazed the surrounding lands. ... Dubos wryly suggests that the famed Chinese attitude toward Nature arose as a response to the environmental damage done in antiquity, and that we owe our romantic notions of Chinese reverence for Nature to the writings of retired bureaucrats who lived on estates where Nature was systematically submitted to the pruning shear (Novak, 1987: 36).

Novak goes on to add that the ink, with which the beautiful calligraphy of Buddhism and Taoism was traditionally drawn, came from the soot of trees. But cutting down a full grown tree is a labor intensive task, so monks eventually adopted the practice of using small saplings to obtain the ash for their ink. This practice of course added to the deforestation of China, while Buddhist and Taoist monks wrote beautiful

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(Schroll, 2011b; Schroll, Rowan & Robinson, 2011). See also Shah (1970). Sufism has some roots in Islam, as well as external influences, particularly from India.



calligraphy about nature with this ink: bringing to mind the colloquial phrase, *is there something wrong with this picture?*

Third, during the 1989 conference “Gaia Consciousness: The Re-Emergent Goddess and the Living Earth” (organized by James A. Swan), Novak followed up his 1987 criticisms of Asian religions; specifically the profound contradiction of Asian religions actual treatment of Nature with that of their professed worldview. Adding one more nail in the coffin, Novak writes:

Up until 1970, when a number of stringently enforced environmental laws were passed there, Japan, largely because of its post war industrial push, had become the *Itchiban*, the number one industrial polluter in the world. Japan Scholar, Edwin Reischauer, said that the Japanese have done more than any other people to defile nature, though no people love it more (Novak, 1989: 51).

Meanwhile, as the people and corporations of Japan continue to clean-up their act at home, the Mitsubishi Corporation (and related groups) are contributing to an alarming rate of deforestation. According to the EcuadorExplorer.com (2013), this planet-wide rate of deforestation equals 86,000 hectares per day, an area equivalent to New York City. This breaks down to 1 hectare (2.4 hectares) per second, or two U.S. Football fields, 31 million hectares per year, an area larger than Poland. Novak reminds us that while the homeland of Japan is sacred to the Japanese, the rest of the world is perceived as a frontier that is wide-open for corporate development.

In summing up these examples of transpersonal psychology’s limitations, I want to reiterate that I continue to believe the traditions of Hinduism, Taoism, and Buddhism are capable of providing us with valuable sources of wisdom that can assist us in re-establishing our lost connection with the nonhuman world. Nevertheless, these examples serve to illustrate the fact that just because we become a practitioner of these traditions does not automatically guarantee that our attitudes and behavior will be transformed regarding our relationship toward all natural systems. Moreover, these examples also serve to demonstrate that even if we become practitioners of Hinduism, Taoism, and Buddhism we may still find ourselves falling-victim to the effects of what Kremer and Donald Rothberg call our collective shadow:

We can define the collective shadow as the unknown or little-known aspects of a society and culture [that continue to remain hidden in our unconscious because of voices emanating from] ... dominant discourses” (Kremer & Rothberg, 1999: 3).

Elaborating on this concern, Rothberg has begun the task of bringing these limitations of Asian psychologies and religions to the attention of the transpersonal

movement, telling us:

...it is important to ask critical questions about the extent to which the transpersonal field has given a selective reading of spiritual traditions and highlighted some kinds of spiritual expression rather than others. ... While the idea of a 'perennial philosophy' and an emphasis on contemplative and mystical traditions, particularly Asia, has broadened contemporary Western understandings in philosophy and psychology tremendously, it remains vital to ask whether certain aspects of human development are also brought to high levels in other kinds of traditions[?] (Rothberg, 1999: 46).

Rothberg goes on to point out that what has been missing from the transpersonal field is a consideration of the importance of "the indigenous traditions of all continents" (p. 46). He offers a brief mention of "African-Christian Voodoo in Haiti, which played a pivotal role in gaining Haitian political independence at the end of the eighteenth century" (p. 57), yet overlooked in his otherwise thorough assessment is Molefi Kete Asante's (1984) paper "The African American mode of Transcendence". Asante provides the insight that "*Samba* the Brazilian dance, *Sango* the Cuban folk religion, *Umbanda* the Brazilian folk religion, *Voodoo* the Haitian folk religion, or *Myal* a Jamaican religion" and the African idea of Sudicism all have the "same source of energy, the rhythm or polyrhythms that drive the spirit toward transcendence" (p. 168). It is an internalized resonance with the groove of percussion sound and movement that gives expression to the African American holistic personality, and can be accessed "in any good blues or jazz club [where] you can get the same soulful sound as you get in the church" (p. 176). This source of transpersonal wisdom is especially consistent with that of ecopsychology or transpersonal ecosophy, as Asante makes clear: "it does not depend upon icons of faith but the incessant collective drive of people for harmony with self, fellow earthlings, and nature" (p. 176). This view is consistent with, and supportive of, my own life-long inspiration through blues and rock music, including its storytelling capacity through powerful lyrics such as I have used in this paper.

Metzner too shares Rothberg's concern with other traditions missing from the transpersonal field, which led him to explore the indigenous roots of his Germanic ancestry in *The well of remembrance: Rediscovering the Earth wisdom myths of Northern Europe* (1994). In pursuing this inquiry, Metzner raised the question: "Those of us descended from European ancestors are naturally moved to ask whether anything in our own tradition is relevant to surviving the ecological crisis. This book explores the animistic-shamanistic worldview of the aboriginal inhabitants of Europe" (Metzner, 1994: 1-2). Through his thorough inquiry, he convincingly demonstrates that "shamanic otherworld journey practices [are] at the very heart of

the religious worldview of the ancient Germanic people” (p. 198). Therefore those of us who are descended from Germanic (including Anglo-Saxon) and Celtic peoples of Northern Europe who are often criticized for borrowing, intruding upon, or stealing the wisdom of indigenous peoples can now answer back that this is our tradition too.

This analysis of the Earth wisdom myths of northern Europe concludes in Metzner's final chapter with his discussion of the eschatological myth of the Ragnarok, which he explains “is usually translated as the ‘twilight of the gods’, but more precisely means ‘final fate of the gods’” (Metzner, 1994: 244); and calls to mind for most of us an apocalyptic vision where the forces of evil destroy the world, leaving the Earth a barren and uninhabitable place – thereby necessitating a new kingdom of Heaven, which is sent down to earth by God. Yet, according to Metzner, this interpretation completely misses the point that the Ragnarok is trying to teach us; instead he draws our attention to the fact that this final battle does not involve all of the gods. Much to the contrary, it is only the warrior oriented Aesir sky gods that are involved in this cataclysmic earth transforming battle, which Metzner explains is followed by “a renewal of the Earth and a new beginning of life, with a new generation of gods and humans telling stories and remembering ancient knowledge. ‘A new green earth arises again out of the flood’” (pp. 249-50).

Consequently the peace-loving Vanir nature gods and a new generation of humans who were absent from this battle are left to re-inherit the earth. In other words, the final fate of the gods calls to mind a vision of “worldviews in collision”, symbolized by a battle between logos-oriented male heroes and the forces of nature they have sought to dominate and control. Today these groups are represented by technocracy and its oppression of both humankind and the non-human world. This is a good point on which to end this discussion from both a substantive perspective, and because we have gotten ahead of ourselves in this autobiographical chronology.

## **Shamanism and the neo-shamanic revival**

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In 1989 Walsh published a series of articles on shamanism in the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* and *ReVision* (Walsh, 1989a, 1989b, 1989c)<sup>10</sup>. Immersed in this literature, I was invited by Stephen Glazier to organize a symposium on shamanism for the 1990 *Society for the Scientific Study of Religion* (SSSR) conference, held in Virginia Beach, Virginia. I accepted this invitation, motivated by the theme of creating a symposium to deepen our commitment toward envisioning a technology of transcendence or a renaissance of mysticism with an ability to

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<sup>10</sup> During this same time I became increasingly influenced by the work of Michael Harner. His paper “The Role of Hallucinogenic Plants in European Witchcraft” (1973) is particularly relevant to our discussion of psychedelics and ecology.

produce the necessary transformation of consciousness to awaken a heart-felt response to the ecocrisis. Clarifying this idea in a marginal note in Larry Peters article 'Shamanism: Phenomenology of a Spiritual Discipline' (Peters, 1989), I wrote, it will [only] be through an authentic cultivation of *communitas* and the deep ecology movement that we will be able to transcend our presently destructive interaction with nature, and, thereby, transform our presuppositions about reality (Schroll, 2011a: 29).

This reflection reminded me that Joan Townsend had expressed a similar viewpoint:

Periods of religious enthusiasm are not uncommon in the history of the Western World. This latest trend seems unusual, however, and distinct from earlier religious movements such as the Great Awakening of the 1740s and the Second Great Awakening after 1790 in the United States, because it combines a number of different systems of belief and is fostered by a network of individuals sharing a communication system that is unprecedented ... this new mystical movement owes its initial definition to the 'hippie' and related movements that began in the 1960s. ... Characterized by the search for a new meaning in life, ... a feeling of kinship among all people. ... and the valuing of simple, 'natural' lifestyles and conservationist concerns. Significantly, there were also a strong interest in nonorthodox theologies, especially spiritualist, mystical, and Eastern religious philosophies, as well as native American culture, including shamanism (Townsend, 1988: 74) (quoted in Schroll, 2011a: 30).

Townsend referred to this movement as *neo-shamanism*, adding 'important to the development of neo-shamanism in the West were Michael Harner's work. ... [and] the publication in 1969 of Carlos Castaneda's doctoral dissertation in anthropology... Thus by the early 1970s the stage was set for the rise of neo-shamanism' (Townsend, 1988: 75).

Here I must interject: at this phrase of inquiry I had yet to organize the symposium "Castaneda's controversy: Examining consciousness studies' future", which took place April 3, 2003, at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Society for the *Anthropology of Consciousness* conference. This attempt to understand contemporary culture and provide some analysis is discussed in Schroll, 2010a, whose inquiry is deepened in Schroll, 2010b.

Flashback to 1990 – inspired by the shared sense of vision in this passage with my own, I telephoned Townsend on April 20, 1990, to discuss these ideas. Our conversation convinced me we were moving in the same direction, suggesting an elaboration on her work might be titled "Authenticity and Delusion: Shamanism and Neo-Shamanism" (Townsend, 1990). She agreed, accepting my invitation. Another important contribution "Personal Reflections on My Journey into Shamanism" emerged through my phone conversations with Michael Schneider. This was his first public discussion of a life-threatening illness and miraculous recovery that called Schneider to become both a Certified Shamanic Counselor and a close associate of Harner. Prior to his illness and recovery, Schneider had been a New York City ad man (Schroll, 1990). Schneider's personal story provided additional anecdotal

testimony of the influence transformations of consciousness have on the way we lead our lives.

The continuing resurgence of this interest in shamanism was raised again five years later, when in her chapter “Shamanic Counseling and Ecopsychology”, Leslie Gray concluded: “It would be tragic to waste this accumulated [indigenous] knowledge, and it would be redundant for ecopsychology to generate models of a sustainable future without learning from the way of life of the more than 300 million indigenous people living in the world today” (Gray, 1995: 182). Krippner supports this view (2002).

Summing up shamanism’s critical importance to our inquiry in ecopsychology and transpersonal ecosophy, and offering insights she and I developed through our correspondence following our meeting at the 2004 symposium I organized on “Psychedelics: Their Value and Social Responsibility” (Schroll, 2004b), Maura Lucas illuminates the concerns facing us:

Cultural anthropology has long been in a difficult place, feeling the squeeze between postmodernism on the one hand, with its point that there can be no analysis of another culture that does not contain one’s own culture and personal preconceptions, and biological anthropology on the other hand, claiming that if anthropology is subjective, then anthropologists should rely on hard, empirical data for the study of humanity. The point of [Jeremy] Narby’s and [Francis] Huxley’s edited book *Shamans Through Time* (2001) is that Western anthropologists have always seen shamanism through the lens of their own preconceptions. Anthropologists looking at shamans and interpreting their experience are not objectively describing shamans or shamanism, but coming to a kind of subjective middle ground between what they have observed, and their own culture’s ideas at that point in history. If there can be no objective understanding of shamanism, then it makes sense for anthropologists to debate what constitutes appropriate expertise for writing about shamans and psychedelics (Lucas, 2005: 49-50).

Nevertheless, once again I am getting ahead of myself, as it was actually several months before I convened the 1990 symposium on shamanism that another significant break-through took place.

## **A breakthrough in 1990:**

### **Continuing to trace transpersonal ecosophy’s many paths**

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There’s colors on the street, red, white and blue  
 People shufflin’ their feet, people sleepin’ in their shoes  
 There’s a warnin’ sign on the road ahead  
 There’s a lot of people sayin’ we’d be better off dead  
 Don’t feel like Satan, but I am to them  
 So I try to forget it any way I can.

We've got a thousand points of light for the homeless man  
 We got a kinder, gentler machine gun hand  
 We got department stores and toilet paper  
 Got styrofoam boxes for the ozone layer  
 Got a man of the people, says keep hope alive  
 Got fuel to burn, got roads to drive.

– Neil Young, 1989

In Spring 1990 two significant papers were published: Fox's paper, "Transpersonal ecology: 'Psychologizing' ecophilosophy" and Metzner's, "Germanic mythology and the fate of Europe". I began corresponding with Fox sometime in June of 1990. In August, I read in Harner's *Foundation for Shamanic Studies Newsletter* that Metzner was forming the Green Earth Foundation:

Through its projects, the Green Earth Foundation aims to help bring about changes in attitudes, values, perceptions, and [our] worldview that are based on ecological balance and respect for the integrity of all life forms on Earth. Specifically, this involves re-thinking the relationships of humankind with the animal kingdom, the plant kingdom and the elemental realms of air, water and earth/land (Metzner, 1992).

Becoming a member of the Green Earth Foundation I soon began a correspondence with Metzner. Through our correspondence, Fox and Metzner agreed to serve as dissertation supervisors on my doctoral committee through The Union Institute. During this time, Jeremy Hayward, vice president of the Naropa Institute (now Naropa University) and editor of Shambhala's New Science Library, edited Fox's doctoral dissertation, which was published in the summer of 1990b. Eugene Hargrove, editor of *Environmental Ethics*, noted in a media blurb that Fox's "*Toward a Transpersonal Ecology* ought to be read not only by supporters of the deep ecology movement but also by its critics. It is destined to be a classic in the field".

I agree, Fox's book continues to be a classic in the field and a rich source of information to assist our understanding of the deep ecology movement's relationship with transpersonal psychology. Still, when Drengron informed me that Naess had suggested to Fox that "Toward a transpersonal ecosophy" would have been a better name for his book, I began to wonder why in the four years Fox served as one of my dissertation supervisors (2/9/91 – 1/29/95) that he never mentioned this to me? Perhaps one day this and other important questions about ecopsychology and its transition into transpersonal ecosophy will be answered. These and other questions will need to wait for future papers, even though (except for occasional references to my more recent work), this autobiography stopped short of discussing my present activities by more than ten years.

## Conclusion

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They can domesticate music, they can do most anything,  
 They can teach us how to dance, they can teach us how to sing,  
 But you can't tame a real wild thing.

– Jim Jacobi, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1999

The “they” in Jacobi’s song refers to the technocratic paradigm, and its widespread influence on the humanities, natural and social sciences. It was Roszak’s concern with technocracy, as I pointed out at the beginning of this paper, that motivated him to write his book *The Making of a Counter Culture* (1969), and this has been a recurring theme in all of Roszak’s work. This paper, if successful, sought to provide an autobiographical overview of ecopsychology, and its transition to transpersonal ecosophy. Psychedelic experience (its historical influence on elders such as Krippner, Metzner and Grof), MacLean, et al’s clinical investigation of psilocybin, as well as anthropologists of consciousness (Beyer, Harrison, Tindall, and Webb) are contributing to transpersonal ecosophy’s emergence. Further inquiry is needed, and for better or worse, pro or con, this paper offers us a place to start. Here too I recall my memory of conversations with Hofmann at the “Worlds of Consciousness” conference (at the University of Heidelberg, Germany, on February 22 and February 25, 1996), and a group of German graduate students on February 24, 1996.

Pointing to the Necker river which was the predominant feature of nature that could be witnessed from the second floor window of Stadthalle (where the “Worlds of Consciousness” meeting was held), I explained that the resource preservationist might variously proclaim: Oh the river, it is so beautiful and inspiring! It must be preserved (the art gallery/cathedral argument). Oh the river, I love to sail my boat on it (the gymnasium or health club argument). The river, it has so many valuable forms of life that it sustains, it must be preserved (the silo argument). The river is my special friend, and is essential to my way of life, because I am a farmer and I use the river to sustain my crops in times of drought (the life support system argument). These were paraphrased statements based on my memory of Fox’s examples in *Toward a Transpersonal Ecology* (1990b). Each of these arguments for preserving the river transforms it into an object for human use. Our cries of concern to preserve the river have the appearance of championing the concerns of the non-human world, and yet, the source of our alarm is our own self-interest. This is not a criticism of our actions, but merely an observation to raise into our awareness what our actual motivations are, and acknowledge them. Whereas to be aware of the river’s essential nature allows us to realize, *the river simply is*. It does not exist for you or I, it exists

for its own sake. Raising this question, how can we meet our human-centred needs, and balance these with our co-evolution with nature and the cosmos? Developing this way of knowing is the concern of transpersonal ecosophy.

Finally, summing up my views on psychedelics (and as a way of referring to my more recent work), the view I have sought to convey in this paper is that:

psychedelic experience provides us direct access to universal archetypal truths that transcend the boundaries of culture and the limitations of spacetime. Psychedelic experience allows us to encounter visionary mystical insights about the human condition, Gaia consciousness, and deep community and cosmic unity. Psychedelic experience is a fundamental awakening to self-realization (and Arne Naess talks about self-realization being an aspect of personal philosophy – which he called Ecosophy-T – within the deep ecology movement). Psychedelic experience is not the culmination of personal growth and transcendence; it is instead the beginning of the questioning process. Psychedelic experience is the root and ground from which our investigation of the big cosmological picture begins. Psychedelic experiences is the tree from which the fruit of myths and metaphors of consciousness grow. Eliminating psychedelic experience violates the open scientific inquiry of radical empiricism. Without psychedelic experience, religion ossifies into ritualistic symbolism without somatic significant understanding. Psychedelic experience is the very essence of transpersonal psychology, and [its source of wisdom] the primordial tradition. Recognizing this will require us to examine our personal and collective shadow and the reasons for why we are here (Schroll & Rothenberg, 2009: 43).

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