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Dr. Adrian Anderson

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Spiritual features of Nature-spirituality in ‘the ‘Dreaming’ of indigenous peoples, and in the faery-lore of old Europe: an holistic enquiry.

Dr. Adrian Anderson

In this essay I shall examine some elements of the spiritual beliefs in the nature-folklore of Europe and of indigenous peoples. The initial purpose of this survey is to show the presence of identical features in the underlying stratum of such ‘folklore’; features which predicate a spiritual aspect ‘behind’ the sense-perceptible natural world. The further purpose of this essay is to consider whether there may be a different explanation to the normal (reductionist) explanations of these wide-spread ‘spiritual’ features. That is, in this essay I shall attempt to ascertain whether these accounts of nature from widely diverse peoples containing such similar features, may have a cause other than reflections of societal influences, psychological similarities, cultural nomadic migrations, etc. As a preparation for this process, I shall consider some of the factors that impede understanding by modern people of such holistic Nature-perspectives.

It is known that in accounts of this kind from earlier European cultures, (referred to as European faery-lore, or nature folklore), the natural world is considered to be alive, to possess consciousness. However in this folklore and in “indigenous” folklore, the Earth is not considered to be alive simply in the rudimentary sense of vegetative growth and animal sentiency, but as an organism with a multiplicity of consciousness aspects. The fauna and flora, rocks, rivers and indeed the four “elements” of fire, air, water and earth, are all regarded as possessing a specific consciousness or spirituality. This consciousness is regarded as individuated, and consequently in all such material, there are many non-physical ‘beings’ associated with the natural world. In other words, the idea of a living “Earth mother” which today is viewed as quite ‘holistic’, is actually only a simplified expression of an earlier more complex view of the natural world. For in nature folklore, the Earth-Mother is viewed as the aggregate of a multitude of beings or nature-consciousnesses. Hence the ontological homogeneity underlying modern holistic ecological thought (for example in references to “the Earth mother”), contrasts to an astonishingly *heterogenous* quality, in earlier nature-spirituality.

But a multiplicity of Beings existing ‘behind’ the molecular substance of the environment (that is, beyond the usual perceptual capacities of people) is an alien concept for most modern Western worldviews. It is evident that indigenous peoples and early Europeans have a very different relationship to the natural world than do people of the industrialized, highly technological cultures. As Carol Sanchez writes, “Most Euro-American or Euro-Western peoples tend to separate themselves from “the natural world” and rank humans above animals, plants and minerals in hierarchical fashion, and so it is not easy for them to perceive or accept a *personal* relationship with what they describe as the “natural world”.¹ Indeed as the Berndts point out, in recent years even some Aborigines (usually those no longer living in their tribal community on the land) actively striving to gain acceptance of land rights, have adopted an abstract attitude to the natural world. They refer to the Earth as the “Earth Mother”, and no

longer as that remarkable ontologically differentiated yet single entity, the ‘Fertility Mothers’.ⁱⁱ

If it is difficult for contemporary indigenous persons, once they are cast out of the way of life in their tribal homeland, to relate to the subtle perspective of a multiplicity of nature consciousnesses, it must be much more difficult for modern Westerners to take the ‘dreaming’ of their own ancestors seriously. It is not surprising therefore that theories devised to come to terms with the non-physical or transcendental features of ‘the Dreaming’ keep carefully within this world, rather than explore some ‘other-worldly’ explanation. Reductionism is a well-established approach, being used in regard to the numerous nature deities of earlier religions. A multiplicity of non-physical beings remains an alien concept to contemporary thought. In the ‘Dreaming’ of Aboriginal and Amerindian peoples as well as in old European nature folklore, the multiplicity of consciousness and hence an inherent spiritual factor within or ‘behind’ the components of the natural world is a common theme.

A few scholars have striven to explain this phenomenon, but along reductionist lines. Perhaps the most prominent scholars who still have influence today, are: Emile Dürkheim, Adolph Bastian and also Leo Frobenius, who first developed the Cultural-Circle theory. Dürkheim argues that identical features in earlier or indigenous nature spirituality has a sociological explanation. He writes that it derives from the social and political dynamics within the societies of the respective tribe or nation. That is, anxieties about the natural environment, mingled with dominating features of the socio-political system find expression in imaginary nature-beings, etc.ⁱⁱⁱ Adolph Bastian argues that there are universal features in human psychological dynamics, and hence identical stories will be created anywhere on the globe, regarding water or fire or tree-spirits, etc.^{iv}

Frobenius argues that long ago a small number of tribal groups with virtually identical features in their nature-folklore, spread their world-view across large tracts of the Earth.^v Certainly, it is clear that in Europe extensive nomadic migratory activity occurred during the Middle Ages, and of course such activity also occurred millennia before that, in other parts of the world, such as Africa, Asia and the Americas. The anthropological (and psychological) explanations of the similarities in the myths that are found in the folklore of many different cultures are well-established.

Sociological reviews on this material, often taking their cue from the work of Durkheim, regard experiences of the Dreaming as unreal and imaginary. Central to Durkheim’s thesis is the viewpoint that all such material derives from the social organism of the tribe in question.^{vi} Thus any ‘divine-forces’ venerated by indigenous peoples “are in reality social forces”, because, as he concludes, virtually all ‘ideas’ of a transcendental entity (such as a nature-spirit) comes to the person from ‘without’, that is, from societal factors.^{vii}

However this essay is not concerned with myths or entertaining stories as such, but with another, less noticed aspect of nature-spirituality. Namely the existence of brief accounts, which do not have a story-line, and which give the impression of being a factual report. Closely related to these are the underlying assumptions found within a story or myth of an holistic kind, for which no justification appears necessary; it is simply assumed that “everyone knows” that. For example, many stories assume that all trees have an associated nature-being or individuated consciousness.

Certainly a story that is woven around the interaction of humans with a nature-spirit is usually culturally conditioned. However within such stories, with their different sociological elements,

there is also often this underlying assumption that predicates holistic aspects to nature. This raises the question whether there is objectively a quality associated with trees or rocks, etc, which is not physically present. In other words, is there an aspect to nature which is only accessible to those who perceive nature in a more holistic manner. What I mean by 'holistic manner' will be clarified later in this essay. Before considering the evidence for wide-spread identity of 'spiritual' features in nature which may derive from an inherent, but supra-physical quality within it, we shall consider the barriers to any such enquiry, as evidenced in the treatment of the Dreaming in modern times.

The uncertainty about the meaning of the word 'Dreaming' – the term coined for the holistic nature-experiencing of indigenous Australians – is a clear indication of the substantial barriers that exist in modern humanity regarding understanding of this topic. The perspective on the natural world given in 'the Dreaming' is especially confusing for modern people, as space and time become warped as it were. Furthermore, the ontological boundaries, well established in Cartesian materialism, become diffuse and even merge. An American writer, Tom Hayden, provides some help with the underlying nature of "the Dreaming"; he writes in reference to indigenous Amerindian peoples, that 'the Cherokee have a word, 'eloleh', which means land, religion, history, and culture, all at the same time, without dualisms.'^{viii} It is precisely the non-binary quality of the perspective of indigenous peoples, and therefore of the term 'Dreaming', that creates the difficulty in understanding it. The authors of *Finding a Way* have composed a very capable description of the Dreaming:

First, the Dreaming refers to the time at the very beginning of all things. Second, the Dreaming is hidden beneath the visible world around us. Third the Dreaming is a Power that affects all of life. Fourth, the Dreaming is both personal and communal. Fifth, the Dreaming is reflected in a special way in the natural world.'^{ix}

However even this excellent summary of the qualities of the "Dreaming" does not explain its inherent nature or how humans can enter into the Dreaming state. Later, I shall attempt to define more specifically the nature of the Dreaming. An example of the elusive nature of the Dreaming, and of the wide gap between modern colonial people and indigenous people is embodied in an incident from 1971. In that year a white tourist entered caves in Ayers Rock, sacred to the Aborigines. The Aboriginal elder to whom Ayers Rock itself was entrusted by the laws of indigenous Australians, wrote after learning of this that his, "...ancestors were ended, and ...the Dreaming is destroyed"^x. For modern people the drastic implications of such words are quite bewildering. The fact that here in Australia we descendants of the invading European settlers ignore (until recently) the sacred sites, and also our *own* ancestral myths, is an indication that we can not expect to readily grasp the more holistic nature perspective living in 'the Dreaming'.

For in European folklore, there is a very considerable quantity of richly suggestive accounts of nature that also predicate a spiritual aspect to the natural world. However for a long time these accounts have been relegated to 'children's business', to coin a phrase. The experiences underlying this material have been recorded since medieval and particularly Reformation times, and continuing on into the nineteenth century. It is also clear that this folklore existed in much earlier times. It consists of stories and briefer personal testimony, testifying to a perception of the Earth as a living being, and to a subtle interconnectedness of humankind with the natural world. Although the nature-spirituality of indigenous peoples is now being taken more seriously by the descendants of colonial westerners in various parts of the world, as a part of a specific multi-cultural policy, the 'Dreaming' of their own ancestors is neglected. Here in Australia, the law now offers (to some extent) protection of Aboriginal sacred sites

from the impact of technological ‘progress’. But the ‘dreaming’ of the earlier European peoples, and its implications with regard to the general ecological impact of industrial and technological activities is simply ignored.

Yet as I shall attempt to show, the neglected material of the European Dreaming, when carefully assessed, reveals the very same elements that exist in indigenous spirituality from quite different parts of the world. That is, in cultures which are sociologically not comparable, as their social structures and natural environment are totally different. This essay shall present evidence of this similarity of diverse European nature-folklore as well as that of indigenous Australian and (briefly) Amerindian peoples.

The collation of data undertaken by various scholars during the nineteenth century about the beliefs regarding the character and dynamics of the various ‘nature-beings’ of European folklore, provides invaluable source material for European and Scandinavian perspectives on the natural world.^{xi} This material contains a substantial amount of pure accounts, as distinct from stories. The mass of material gathered is evidence that there existed in Europe, despite church disapproval, a strong belief in a multiplicity of sacred forces and beings that subtly inter-weave with the natural world. This belief determined the attitude of these people to their ecology for many centuries. Before considering this material, it is important to consider further the barriers to the understanding with which we Westerners are faced, in regard to this theme.

The difficulty in accessing our own ancestors’ ‘Dreaming’.

There are substantial cultural barriers in Western and European societies to understanding the so-called ‘Dreaming’. A specific example of this is shown clearly in the misuse of Chief Seattle’s famous speech. The speech was made in 1856, as a response to the demands from the American government for the indigenous people to depart into ‘reservations’. This speech was appropriated by the American Southern Baptist church in 1970, and used as a basis for an emotive brochure designed to enhance ecological awareness in the USA. The church hired a scriptwriter, Ted Perry, to produce an ‘upbeat’ version of the speech. Perry added some florid environmental expressions, such as, “the water that moves in the brooks is not water but the blood of our ancestors. The rivers, between the tender arms of their banks carry our canoes where they will.” He also added various stirring ‘eco-slogans’, such as, “One portion of land is the same to him [white man] as the next, for he is a wanderer who comes in the night and borrows from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but his enemy, he kidnaps the earth from his children.”^{xii}

The result was in effect, a falsified version, with only slight resemblance to the original. The church failed to acknowledge that their famous printed text, entitled, *Chief Seattle’s Speech*, was a substantially altered version of the original. The ‘wanderer who comes in the night’ and steals his children’s ecological birthright, contains a resonance from the New Testament expression, ‘...who will come like a thief in the night.’^{xiii} Various other words that Perry added to the speech reflect a deep concern about environmental damage, in itself a laudable concern. It is most unlikely, however, that in the mid-nineteenth century the American landscape was so heavily industrialized that its impending destruction was an idea that evoked any resonance.

Another startling addition by Perry involved wholesale falsification of the response of the great Indian Chief to the attitude of domination, of God-given hegemony, adopted by the colonial powers to both the environment and the Amerindians. Careful research has ascertained that Seattle said in regard to this theme, approximately this:

‘...our God loves your people and hates mine. He puts his strong arm around the white man and leads him by the hand, he has abandoned his red children.... no, the white man’s God cannot love his red children or he would protect them.’^{xiv}

In Perry’s version, these words are deleted, and instead, warning that ecological damage could cause the white man to perish, the text preaches that, “...should he perish {from eco-damage}, the white man shall shine brightly, fired by the strength of the god who brought him to this land and for some special purpose *gave him dominion over* this land...the white man’s god *gave him dominion over* the beasts, the woods, *and the red man*, for some special purpose, but that destiny is a mystery to the red man...”^{xv} (Emphasis mine.)

It seems clear that this additional material is a justification of colonial appropriation, which implies the ultimate salvation of nominally Christian peoples, to the detriment of other people. Tom Hayden shows that the consequent exploitation of the natural world is very active in the American Christian Right. He quotes one of these people saying, “If the troubles from environmentalists cannot be solved in the jury box or at the ballot box, perhaps the cartridge box should be used.”^{xvi}

Not only is our modern mind-set remote from the dynamics of the Dreaming, but as is well-known, religious institutions in our culture have at times appropriated and distorted this material. An example of such behaviour by religious authorities in Europe can be found in regard to the ‘trolls’. These supposedly fierce, evil nature spirits of Norway, (which are also reported from Iceland, Finland and the Faeroe islands), are known to Christian children today through such tales as ‘The Billy Goats Gruff’. However, these were originally harmless nature-spirits or faeries to the Scandinavian people. The term ‘troll’ (or *Thusser*, in Norwegian) became categorized as evil and violent during late medieval times. This occurred as Christian churches struggled to win the loyalty of the Norwegians, to whom these beings were especially important and real.

A process of vilification has been clearly undertaken, for the original *Thusser* were described as quite normal nature-spirits of the ‘elf’ variety. It is said that they dwelt inside mysterious mounds, and earth-barrows with their herds of tiny animals and busied themselves with harmless agrarian activities. They were averse to sunlight, but this is a quality they have in common with many types of *Faeries*.^{xvii} As is now well-known, to the Church, beings as these were seen as competition, so their influence had to be countered.

A German story collected by Mannhardt further illustrates this process of vilifying the natural world. In this story it is related that a ‘fee’ woman, named Salome, after an evil woman in the Christian Scriptures, was permanently summoned away from her work as domestic maid to a tradesman, by a mysterious voice. Some years later as this man is travelling at midnight along a deep narrow gully in Pinzgau, he suddenly hears this voice cry out from the rocky cliffs, ‘Butcher, when you reach the long Unkener wall, call out into the deep cleft in the rocks, “Salome is dead!” This the butcher does, shortly before dawn, and from deep inside the hill there resounds a loud multi-voiced groan of pain and grief.’^{xviii} This appears to me to be an example of the Church associating nature-spirits with an evil figure (Salome, daughter of Herodias), and emphasizing their extinction or suffering in a subterranean realm. Another process has been unconsciously developed to dismiss the content of ancestral ‘dreaming’. It occurs when customs which were once important because they specifically affirmed the reality of nature-spirits, are down-graded to children’s entertainment.

A striking example of this is the house-kobold rite. It was generally accepted in many parts of Europe until the nineteenth century, that a particular nature-spirit, known as a Kobold, took up residence in one's home. However this only occurred as the relentless destruction of the European forests left little or no 'domicile' for the 'nature-spirits. It became customary to ensure that a certain small container was set aside as the place where one such Being dwelt. To ensure that children did not open the Kobold-box, thereby offending this Being, that remarkable device which we now term a '*Jack-in-the-box*' was invented! This box which, when opened caused a frightening effigy to spring up, was developed to frighten children from opening any other similar containers. The Jack-in-the-Box was formerly a serious lesson in the etiquette of living with inhabitants of the 'Middle Kingdom' as the Irish call the realm of faery. The Kobold was a kind of domestic 'genius-loci'; a nature-spirit who forms part of the Earth-Mother. This warning-device gradually became downgraded to a crude, (and indeed pedagogically ill-advised) children's 'toy', which no longer serves any purpose, once its original purpose was lost.^{xix}

There is one striking exception to the general attitude in ecclesiastical circles, of ignoring or censoring these myths. A remarkable treatise appeared in fifteenth century Scotland which attested to one clergyman's sympathetic attitude towards the Dreaming of the Scots. This work, by the Reverend Robert Kirk entitled 'The Secret Commonwealth', derives from interviews carried out by the author amongst his parishioners. Kirk fully accepts the existence of nature-spirits as a parallel race of Beings, "There is no more absurdity for a spirit to inform an Infantin Body of Air, than a Body composed of dull and drousie Earth; The best of Spirits having alwayes delighted more to appear into aerial, then into Terrestrial, Body's. They feed on quintessences, and Aethereal essences..."^{xx} (The grammar and format is exactly Kirk's). He declares that such a belief is not contrary to 'the Holy Scriptures', because various other non-human Beings are mentioned therein.^{xxi}

Common 'spiritual' features in accounts in the Nature-spirituality of the Dreaming of disparate cultures.

I shall now consider three common features that occur in the material under consideration; water-spirits and eroticism, stones as vessels for subtle energies, and lastly the "en-souling of trees, that is, the interconnectedness of trees with the life-force or soul of a human being. The consideration of eroticism and water is undertaken not because I wish to emphasize this subject, nor does it have any major role in the material under consideration, it is however a feature in the 'Dreaming' material which provides very clear examples of parallel features in different cultures.

A: Water-spirits and human eroticism in the Dreaming of widely separated peoples.

The most prominent references to gender-related matters in nature-spirituality occur in association with 'water-beings'. The collating of extensive collections of European stories and accounts concerning individuated nature-beings existing somehow 'behind' the natural world shows many clear and striking parallelisms. Water-spirits are regarded as occurring in both male and female gender, and indeed as having a powerful erotic quality. They are widely reported as having an exceptionally attractive (erotic) appearance.

Consider firstly the European Dreaming in this regard, where brief accounts of water-beings (or 'undines') was very widespread. There are different species of undines, depending upon the body of water that is their habitat. There are River-women, who are younger in appearance and beauty than Mer-maids of small stream and ponds, but more turbulent in predisposition than the serene Lake-undines.^{xxii} Mer-maids are reported throughout northern Europe, the U.K. and coastal Central Europe. Amongst mariners in earlier times, if it was rumoured that a

captain was on good terms with a Mer-man, “it was assumed that such a captain could safely bring his ship through a journey. Such a man commanded respect and could wield despotic powers.”^{xxiii} Inland areas of Europe, such as Prussia, also had this element in their Dreaming with respect of rivers. In the sixteenth century, church officials reported that priests of the indigenous religion actually dived into rivers, to converse with the “river-god” below.^{xxiv}

It is very widely reported that male humans who see an undine or water-sprite are often haunted by their unforgettable beauty. Indeed reports of sexual attraction between undines and humans (usually men) are also very common; furthermore, it is reported that male undines (‘River-men’) like to attract earthly women. The German feminine water-sprites called, ‘Fenetten’ are said to be of such beauty that any male seeing one, shall die within a year. In Russia and Romania, the same attitude prevails, namely that the undines (called Rusalky) are of exceptional erotic beauty, and that on moonlit nights they dance in their enchanted circle, attempting to lure men into it.^{xxv}

An especial instance of this dynamic expression of erotic attraction between humans and undines, showing just how real and existential this was to people then, is the Scandinavian ‘Skogsra’. Nancy Arrowsmith’s extensive research reveals – to our astonishment – that “many death certificates were issued during the seventeenth century, in which the cause of death was listed as ‘{sexual} involvement with a Skogsnurfva’.” It is clear however that the involvement did not necessarily mean full sexual relations, for death (or at least illness) was likely if a man was just ‘flirting’ with such a Being. The reports declare that most men die almost immediately if they are briefly intimate with such a Being, but “exceptional men linger on, gradually dying from melancholy and madness”.^{xxvi}

In Reformation Scotland, Kirk states that the highland parishioners declared that there are genders amongst water beings. He accepted also, on the basis of many sincere reports made to him by his parishioners, that there was an active erotic interaction between humans and these Fees, “For in our Highlands, as there be many fair Ladies of this aerial order which doe often tryst with Lascivious young men...”^{xxvii} Such a declaration from a Christian priest is remarkable, for it is based on his pastoral work. It is most unlikely that his parishioners would deliberately seek to deceive their priest, especially on a matter which would incriminate them as holding pagan beliefs. So this comment from Kirk is a remarkable affirmation of the Scottish belief that water sprites have gender, and that erotic interaction between humans and these beings was a regular experience.

Now at this point I should clarify that it is not my contention that these accounts of nature-beings are to be considered fully accurate reports, such as a scientific laboratory would issue. It is my contention however, that to insist on dismissing them as fantasy or convoluted reflections of societal dynamics, is prejudicial. It is my contention that when all the evidence is considered, (and in this essay only a small portion of such material is presented), it is equally valid to consider that these accounts may have an objective, even if perhaps distorted, non-physical basis to them. Just what that basis could be shall be considered later; here it is important to note only that such accounts may be subject to the well-known medieval lack of clarity in matters concerning the nature of existence. This lack of clarity occurred especially with regard to the boundaries between the physical and the transcendental. Hence an experience deriving from an inner perception, but experienced whilst retaining awareness of the general framework of the sense world, could become positioned fully in the sense-realm.

Considering further the accounts about water consciousnesses, one finds that in Brittany and the Pyrenees, water sprites, known as Korrigans and Lamignak, are regarded as guardians of

springs and fountains. They were seen holding secret rituals which imbue the spring water with healing powers. They appear by waterfalls at full moon in particular, and they comb their long soft blond hair, which shines with its own luminosity. Yet if ever seen by day they appear quite old. If a man sees one of these undines, he must marry her or die within three days.^{xxviii}

Now it is very significant that references to water-sprites in Australian Aboriginal nature-accounts and myths also place the same emphasis on the erotic interaction with humans, as in diverse European faery-lore. In a tale from the Murinbata tribe, it is told how a water sprite leaves her pond, and upon sensing a man in the vicinity, sets out to arrange an ‘accidental’ encounter with him, and she provocatively leads him on towards her. Soon, using her magical powers, she places herself up a bottle tree, just beyond his reach, from whence she erotically taunts him incessantly, adopting an erotic position.^{xxix}

In another story about a water sprite, from the Gunwinggu tribe, it is affirmed that the water-sprite is a sought-after partner by males, but that they do not make an appropriate partner. For their bodies are different from that of a human being, and also they have a kind of immortality.^{xxx} The Swedish myths also state that the first appearance of these beings is of great beauty, and of a sweet voice. But on closer inspection it is seen that their body is not fully human, and they live on for centuries. They also have claws instead of finger-nails, and it is reported that seen from behind, their backs have a kind of transparent hollow or emptiness.^{xxxi}

The mention of this additional feature is remarkable, as it serves no purpose to the story-line of a myth, nor provides any pragmatic substance to an account – indeed may weaken its reception because of its alienating incomprehensible quality. It consequently provides support for my contention that a form of *reporting*, rather than imaginative fantasy, is happening here. It is also obvious that there is here a close parallel between European and Aboriginal beliefs.

The Amerindian myths also refer to this erotic interaction between water sprites and humans, and contain imaginative stories of marriages between these attractive water sprites and Indian warriors. They tell that eventually, the water sprite has to leave the human world and return to the water. In one story from the Andirondack tribe, the marriage of a chieftain to a female water-being soon causes intra-tribal war, because of feelings of uncertainty and confusion that the non-human bride arouses amongst the people.^{xxxii}

What is to be understood as the cause of this association of eroticism and yearning with individuated water-consciousnesses, or water-sprites? Of course, one can conclude that eroticism and reproduction would be associated with water, because reproduction in humanity and mammals is associated with fluids. But I suggest that this is an unconscious projection of a materialistic mentality onto the phenomenon in question. To begin to understand the holistic view of the natural world, as presented in ‘the Dreaming’, a more open attitude is needed. For example, it is equally logical to theorize causatively in the reverse direction. Namely that there exists within water, when experienced on the level of the Dreaming consciousness, transcendental individuated consciousness factors, and when water on this level is sensed by people, these factors gives rise to an erotic dynamic. Furthermore, one may argue that this quality also tends to become operative when people in general are in a comfortable watery environment. This seems all the more so, as this phenomenon still arises spontaneously in modern life (or are people who *feel* stimulated by wet T-shirts, and hot tubs contests etc, really responding to their own imposition of *conceptually derived* conclusions about the fluidic factors in reproductive and gestation processes?) In any event, this explanation is just as viable

an explanation for the wide-spread accounts of attractive water-beings as those that declare the cause to be influences from environmental or societal qualities.

B: Crystals and rocks as ensouled and sacred in the Dreaming:

Accounts from diverse sources in old Europe, North America, and Aboriginal Australia, all include the view that stones and crystals can become imbued with an aspect of a living being that indirectly inspires reverence of the rock. In the Aboriginal Water-sprite story above, the taunted male, Nogamin, is changed by the Rainbow-Serpent into a Lotus-bird, he later jumped into the Fitzmaurice river. The place where he leapt into the water is today called Hiyerr. But an element of the soul-being of Nogamin, his ‘dreaming’, lives on; and it is now *identified with a large dangerous stone* near the river bank.^{xxxiii}

It is instructive to discover that Seattle’s original speech also included a reference to ancestral ‘dreaming rocks’. However the scriptwriter Ted Perry, in altering Chief Seattle’s words, deleted the reference to ‘Dreaming’ rocks. It was evidently too puzzling for him and he probably regarded it as too abstract for his audience. Further, even the authentic translations of Seattle’s speech (from his native Suquamish), whilst incorporating this reference, struggle to find an appropriate, meaningful clause.

These translations report Chief Seattle saying in this connection: “Even the dumb rocks...*thrill with memories* of past events connected with the fate of my people.” or, in a more carefully researched translation; “Even those unspeaking stones...*are loud with the events and memories* of my people...”^{xxxiv} These versions are still baffling to materialistic reductionism; an obvious conclusion would be that rocks are so long-lasting, they easily become a metaphor for the long history of a tribe. But the nuance here from Seattle, and in the other accounts following, is not that of museum archive, it is much more that of an active *resounding* or resonance. In effect, Seattle was saying; “*Even those unspeaking rocks...resonate with the events and memories of my people.*” It is then at least equally valid to theorize that the ‘Dreaming’ consciousness is aware that highly charged events in the life of a tribe could perhaps be ‘stored’ in one or other of the energy-fields permeating rocks, especially those with a crystalline structure.

The blatant act of deletion by Perry shows clearly how it is difficult for modern Westerners to relate to such holistic aspects of the Dreaming. Another instance of Amerindian myths in which stones are capable of being permeated with a life, is found in the Stone Giants. This is a breed of primordial nature-entities who are apparently composed of malleable stone.^{xxxv}

In European myths, likewise, there are references to special rocks that have the ‘dreaming’ of a person or nature-spirit, or indeed of the entire nation in them. In anthologies of Irish myths, this occurs quite often. There are various stories of how a rock, in which a giant had hidden its life, if found, can be seized and broken, thereby killing the giant himself. Another version concerns dangerous ‘Dreaming’ rocks, such as the haunted Black stone of Arddu, on Mt. Snowdon; any person sleeping near it risks becoming insane. A major Irish myth is a narration about the ‘Stone of Destiny’, a white or transparent rock that actually ‘carries’ within it, the Dreaming of the Irish people. This rock was implanted in the Earth by a Goddess, Brigit.^{xxxvi}

This concept of a national dreaming stone, a Stone of Destiny, is vividly preserved in Britain. It is a curious fact that every British monarch is crowned on a special throne, under which has been specifically placed a large rough stone, the Stone of Scone. It is a ‘stone of destiny’ of ancient Scottish origin; and it still exercised sufficient magnetism in 1950 on Scottish nationalists, to impel them to steal it from Westminster Abbey.^{xxxvii}

The veneration of stones is a persistent, age-old part of Irish spirituality. The Christian religion fought against this; for example already in 452CE at the Synod of Arles such activity was condemned.^{xxxviii} As late as the 18th century, there were various sites, usually on mountains or hilltops, in eastern Europe, where a large stone was worshipped.^{xxxix} On an isolated Irish island, Inniskea, as late as the mid-nineteenth century, a sacred stone and a sacred well were the only venerated objects in the religion of its 300 inhabitants. The stone was wrapped in two layers of cloth, and uncovered only for purposes of worship.^{xl}

It is highly likely that the same situation held sway in other remote Hebridean and Irish islands, where the influence of the church was weak. Even in Celtic lands where the churches have a strong presence, the sacred rock maintained its presence. In Ireland and Scotland, various churches until early this century, actually had these ‘pagan’ sacred stones placed on their own altars. These stones are connected to mysterious powers of the natural world, and were used, until this century, to precipitate changes of the weather to help sailors in distress, or to assist someone who is seeking to show a ‘sign’, in their fight against social injustice.^{xli} In all these episodes of activated or ‘en-souled’ rocks, the nuance is one of efficacious energy, not a passive long-term archive.

This Dreaming theme that ascribes a living quality to rocks managed to enter Christian hagiography, in the story of the Goslar shrine of the Virgin. An old legend says that this shrine, with its statue of Mary, is said to have grown from a pea that had been for a while in the shoe of St. Christopher. This pea had grown and eventually solidified into the rock.^{xlii} Perhaps this shrine was once a sacred site in the old Celtic Dreaming.

C: The connection between trees and humans in the ‘Dreaming’.

Another element common to the material of Aboriginal, Amerindian and European fairy-lore concerns the close inter-connectedness of humans to plants, usually specific trees. Chief Seattle testifies eloquently to this intimate living connection that Amerindian people felt to the natural world, “...every part of this earth is sacred to my people; every hillside, every valley, every clearing and wood, is holy in the memory and experience of my people...the earth is rich with the lives of our kin.” Indeed he asserts that this connection is maintained even by the dead, “these shores will still swarm with the invisible dead of my people; it is their mother.”^{xliii} By way of contrast, the lack of empathy which some white colonialists had for both the natural world and for the indigenous peoples of north America is aptly indicated by Hayden, quoting Bradford, governor of New Plymouth in the early 17th century, “hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men.” Nothing could save them “but the spirit of God and his grace.”^{xliv}

In Aboriginal accounts this same theme is found, as various Dreaming stories illustrate. A story fragmentarily preserved by a Tasmanian Aborigine, is remarkably supportive of my thesis. It tells of the nature-spirit indwelling a tree, and how an initiated elder attempted to obtain certain occult forces from it.^{xlv} Furthermore, importantly, since the accounts that are accessible to society in general are only the outer or public versions of the matter, it is obvious that the theme has much more significance and depth than the public stories indicate. A further example of this connection is revealed in the practice of a tribe in Queensland, who asserted that they could maintain contact with a travelling friend, by carving an effigy of him into a soft-wood tree, and taking notice of the health of the tree.^{xlvi} No doubt, many would dismiss this as superstitious, but is it not also valid to ask whether any form of research was ever made into this claim, prior to dismissing it?

Old European ‘Dreaming’ folklore abounds with material about a transcendental connection between people and trees. There is also a distinct species of nature-spirit that may be termed ‘a tree-spirit’, or tree-fairy. These Beings in effect are the overseer of each plant. A very common variety of plant nature-spirits are the ‘Moss People’, encountered in the fir-tree forests of Central Europe. They occur in both genders, but significantly, it is clear from the material, that only the feminine Moss Beings could communicate knowledge of the healing powers of plants to the healers. However by far the most revered of tree-spirits are those of the Elder-tree.^{xlvii} These beings exist in both genders, in accordance with the gender of the tree, the male elder-tree having a spirit somewhat stouter than his feminine counter-part.^{xlviii} Any form of harm to an elder-tree was regarded as liable to cause harm to one’s own child, or to the village as a whole. Indeed the belief prevalent in central Europe that the interconnectedness of trees and the community is entirely real and efficacious, is evidently ancient.

It is evident that trees were regarded as intimately interlinked to humans by some form of life-force. It was once common throughout Europe to plant a tree at the birth of a child, so that the life-forces would be inter-connected. The tree was then especially carefully looked after.^{xlix} One story from Reformation Switzerland, from ca. 1500 AD, tells how in one family, three trees were planted, one for each of the three children. The two trees of the girls, who became nuns, produced white flowers; the tree of the son produced red flowers, and he was killed in the wars against the Hussites.^l One sees here the parallel to this theme in the age-old Australian Dreaming.

But trees in Europe were also regarded as places where the dead took up residence, just as in the Aboriginal Dreaming. Trees could also become the embodiment of executed criminals, and hence such were to be avoided. A Renaissance tale from Germany reinforces this belief; it relates how a pastor ignored this belief, and walked over a dangerous spot where an assassination had occurred. A strange thistle grew there, that disappeared at mid-day. The pastor had his arm crippled, and his walking-stick turned to charcoal.^{li}

Across Europe, already in the Middle Ages, from the Baltic States, to southern Germany, local laws that are puzzling in their ferocity, were enacted to protect trees. Strikingly they did not seek to protect a tree from simply being felled, rather these laws sought to prevent the slow death of a tree, such as is caused by ring-barking. Anyone who peeled off the bark from a tree was liable to the death penalty.^{lii}

At this point it is appropriate to reflect on the fact that the reductionist and sociological explanation for accounts of living individuated consciousnesses within trees, would tend to be that plants have an obvious life with them, and thus they can become a metaphor of the growing human being. In contemporary times, through the work of ecologists bringing to our awareness just how closely interlinked our human survival is with that of trees, we could be tempted to say that the above law simply crudely expresses this holistic fact. However, that is just a small step towards the right way to approach the holistic perspective in the Dreaming. It is important to go further than this.

Further thinking about these Dreaming accounts (and stories) undermines reductionist conclusions, and leaves the above sympathetic but abstract conclusion behind, too. For example, the reader may have been shocked at the law that called for the death of anyone who ring-barked a tree. In fact, remarkably, the legislation stipulated the surgical removal of the solar plexus from a person who ring-barked a tree; this body part was then to be affixed to the damaged tree. (We note, with relief, that there is no record in fact, of the laws ever being carried out.)

Some reflection on this penalty and checking out physiological facts, suggests that the cruelty involved was not the intention at all, but rather, the intention was to attempt to heal the tree by application of a source of a life-energy. An holistic explanation for this remarkable fact would be that ring-barking was perceived as causing some sort of slow loss of life-force from the tree, and therefore from the local human community, as the life-energies of flora and humans were experienced as inter-connected. This explanation is reinforced by the fact that the solar plexus is understood in holistic medical circles to be a focal centre of life-forces in the human body. So, the practise of ring-barking trees, common in modern times, instead of a 'swift killing' by the axe, is another example of how far removed is our sense of interconnectedness with nature, as compared with that of our ancestors. Fortunately, our poets are an exception to this, for example, Dorothy McKellar intuitively writes, "The stark white ring-barked forests, all tragic to the moon..."^{liii}

The underlying implication of the wide-spread similarity of accounts of nature-spirituality: a spiritual interconnectedness producing ecological interdependence.

We have considered three examples of themes in the Dreaming of various cultures, namely the ancient Australian Aboriginal, the Medieval and Renaissance European (itself consisting of different societal groups) and indigenous Amerindian people. The first theme considered was gender amongst nature-spirits and erotic attraction between these beings and humans. It became clear that, despite the very substantial sociological differences between these groups just mentioned, their accounts of the water-beings were remarkably similar. These accounts evinced the same qualities, and could scarcely be differentiated from each other. What has become apparent from the above material is the universal existence across different cultures in Europe, of accounts reporting the significance of gender regarding the nature-sprite associated with water. These accounts derive from medieval French and German peasantry, the highlands of Reformation Scotland and from the Scandinavian tradespeople in the Renaissance era. But the universality becomes more emphasized when one finds precisely the same belief in these water-beings around the globe, in Australia and also in North America.

It is clear these countries and cultural eras not only have radically different sociological-political realities, they are also geographically very dissimilar. In terms of abundance or lack of water, and reliability of rainfall, etc, they are entirely different, invalidating the materialistic and abstract conclusions of Dürkheim. For example, a reliable source of water is indeed a major factor in the survival of Aborigines in the arid Outback, but it was not the case for Tasmanian Aborigines, let alone for people living in the fertile fields of Gaul. Similarly, there is no parallel between the coastal blizzards that buffet the Icelandic and Norwegian coasts, and the predictable rainfall of Scotland and of Germany. The North American landscape also presents a wide variety of Nature dynamics.

The second theme of the Dreaming that was surveyed in this essay concerned the possibility for rocks to become a vessel for something alive. This element can be either 'life-forces, or the 'soul' of a single living being, or possibly of an entire tribe. Here again one experiences that, in regard to the underlying dynamic, there is an astonishing parallel between ancient Aboriginal myth, the attitudes of Amerindians, British Celts of the 19th century, and peasants of medieval Brittany and Germany. Should any stories be woven around this common perception, they may well vary considerably, thus showing the differing societal origins, but the basic experiential perspective on the elements of natural world underlying them is identical.

The third example of a Dreaming reality that was explored, concerned the link between trees and the human soul. Again, a common report was encountered, namely that trees are en-souled with their own nature-spirit, or may become en-souled by deceased humans. There is also the very widespread attitude that there are various levels of sanctity of trees. Certain trees are regarded as having a spirit so sacred and powerful, that they are venerated. Another common theme is the link that can be forged between a human and a sapling, so that the destiny of the person is to some extent interconnected with that of the growing tree.

This is only a brief survey, but it is highly suggestive that further research would show that a true global universality exists in different cultures with regard to the spiritual dimension underlying the natural world. The cultures that have been considered here have vastly different sociological structures, they span different times in history and they are situated in very different geographical-environmental contexts. I find the Durkheimian conclusion an invalid materialistic solution, because in this the vastly different geographical landscapes and climates of the peoples are ignored. Their societal dynamics, based on or influenced by their environment cannot give rise to the same features in their nature-spirituality. The conclusion that “the causes of nature-religious phenomena is within the societies”^{liv} is not sustainable in light of the matters explored in this essay. In particular, Durkheim’s assertion that “the only source of life at which we can morally reanimate ourselves is that formed by the society of our fellow beings...”^{lv} seems a particularly prejudiced (and sterile) attitude to both the natural world and the Dreaming.^{lvi}

The “psychological uniformity of humanity” explanation of Bastian seems to me to be another abstract reductionist approach, in which the vastly different ‘inner landscapes’ of the varied cultures referred to above, are supposed to generate the same metaphors. (On this point, the same objection could be raised against the invoking of Carl Jung’s ‘collective archetypes’ theory here, especially since these accounts do not refer to primary motifs, such as survival, death, mother.)

The initial conclusion that I find plausible from these observations is that there must be a different explanation for the origin of these common features, to the various theories mentioned above. These accounts can be seen as straightforward reports based on perception of some form of transcendental realities that are interwoven with the physical world. This does not mean that the accounts necessarily constitute fully accurate representations of what was perceived, but rather what was perceived is a common experience shared by those with ‘the Dreaming’ consciousness. Hence they may be regarded as having an underlying objective factuality, even though a supra-sensible one (if I may be allowed to extend the meaning of ‘objective’).

There are in fact further reasons for positing an objective (but supra-sensible) basis to these brief accounts. For example, throughout the folklore of diverse European cultures regarding individuated water consciousness, water-spirits from fresh-water lakes are described as youthful and as playing on a string instrument, whereas oceanic undines are experienced as quite different in shape, and have the appearance of great age. However, this specific distinction between oceanic and fresh-water beings, which is linked directly to the type of water which they inhabit, is not found in accounts from coastal communities in countries *lacking distinct boundaries* between bodies of fresh and salt water. Scotland and Iceland for example, are in this category, having deep fjords that result in rivers with a mixture of salt-water and fresh-water. Accounts in the Dreaming from these lands about water beings lack the above distinction. To the materialistic mind, this may indicate that the ‘bards of the Dreaming’ of those lands did not find any stimulus to create this difference in their fantasy. But is it not

equally valid to argue that the bards of the fjord-lands did not experience any difference between their water-beings, in the realm of ‘the Dreaming’? Acceptance of an objectivity to these accounts is implied in the words of Deborah Bird Rose, “there are in the Dreaming of [some Koori tribes] categories of nature-beings that Westerners do not recognise...”^{lvii}

There is an element to the Dreaming, which I have touched on in this essay, and which seems to me to further strengthen my contention of an objective experiencing of a (‘spiritual’) reality as the key element of ‘the Dreaming’. This element concerns the very subtle concept of a deeply formative reciprocal interdependence existing between all the denizens of the natural world. This element has been touched on above, for example in the matter of the intertwining of trees and human life. This is expressed in the Aboriginal Dreaming consciousness, as described by an indigenous man from Arnhemland, “We see all things natural as part of us. All the things on earth we see *as part human*. This is told through the idea of Dreaming.”^{lviii} These are simple words, but they have the same enormous implications as the more specifically formulated teachings of acknowledged mystics in the Judaic-Christian traditions.

These mystics imply that the presence of an animal species has a direct impact on the origin of and maintenance of the consciousness dynamics in humankind. For example, in Jewish mystical legends, the inner nature of the Earth’s fauna is linked directly to the moral dynamics of humans, centred on the “Fall of Man”.^{lix} These legends tell that prior to the Fall animals were different, in particular they were not savage, and when humanity is spiritually re-born, the animals will be once again harmless. The great mystic rabbis whose deliberations are preserved in the Zohar were more concrete about a causative interdependence between animals and humans. They taught that animals and humans derive their earthly form and consciousness from the same general non-earthly ‘reservoir’. The animals seek to take on human form on Earth, but are thwarted in this by the reality of their inner dynamics, nevertheless an interweaving of forces between not-yet-born human and animals occurs. All this strongly implies a substantial interdependence within this super-sensible realm, which would then manifest below, on the Earth.^{lx}

In Christian Europe, philosophers and mystics of the German Romantic stream have experienced insights that affirm the above perspective of the interweaving of forces between animal species and humanity. For example, Johann W. Goethe, influenced by J. F. Herder, considered that humanity and the animals had a common archetypal (transcendental) point of origin, or spiritual matrix as it were. One consequence of this view is that all physiological forms in animal bodies must have their presence in the human body, albeit refined and metamorphosed by the quite separate human spirit. Indeed it was this conviction that drove Goethe on to discover that the primal animal bone, the intermaxillary bone, does exist in the human body; its existence in the human body was until then unknown.^{lxi}

Rudolf Steiner, the well-known Goethe expert and spiritual teacher, was specific about the interdependence in a spiritual sense, teaching that the existence of all animal species on the Earth has the effect of ensuring that the inner life of humanity remains essentially human. The existence of some animal species enables the presence in human consciousness of certain qualities essential to our human nature. He also taught that the reverse applies, namely certain animal species because of the time spent together in the above-mentioned ‘reservoir’, deflect inappropriate qualities away from the human life-wave.^{lxii}

In this connection, it is of significance that the attitude of antagonism towards a spiritual view of the natural world often occurs together with indifference towards environmental issues. This attitude clashes vehemently with the inherent holistic attitude of indigenous people, (and

of any Westerners in whom a sense of the living nexus of life is developing). This is clearly shown in the following quote from an American thinker on environmental issues,

“What if a spotted owl can’t adapt? Does the Earth really need that species so much that hardship to human beings is worth enduring in the process of saving it? . . . Why, we could even survive without any owls. So what if they are no longer around to kill the mice. We’ll just build more traps.”^{lxiii}

This attitude sees the value of the threatened animal species as entirely derived from its pragmatic functionality, from its consumption of rodents. It ignores any other functional value of this species that is perhaps still to be discovered. But, this viewpoint also vividly exhibits in another way its radical difference to that perspective which is the main originating and sustaining dynamic of ‘the Dreaming’. In ‘the Dreaming’ and in the mystical insights of great European thinkers, as shown above, there is awareness of the spiritual reality underlying each species, and hence its over-all significance. That is, a reality that the specific fauna (and flora) manifest through their existence, and which is continuously reciprocally interwoven with that of humanity. Reductionist attitudes, in their analysis of holistic nature-spirituality are as far-removed from the essential elements of ‘the Dreaming’, as the opinion expressed above regarding the spotted owl is removed from wholesome ecological awareness.

That the individuated consciousness elements (so-called nature-beings) are not experienced, or if experienced, are not allowed inclusion in the world-view of materialistic Western societies does not justify the conclusion that they are not real. Their existence may be realms other than the molecular physical, but this is not a reason to refuse ontological integrity to these elements. Enhanced perceptual capacities are not to be excluded as a possibility. It appears important that I mention here, that an unprejudiced research into the question of the presence of an enhanced perceptual faculty amongst the people of the Dreaming would almost certainly support my argument. It is necessary to research and restore to credibility accounts that are still languishing in anecdotal material or in anthropological reports (or even in New Age material).

For example, outback farmers have had numerous specific experiences of an Aboriginal station-hand insisting on leaving his work, so as to trek perhaps hundreds of miles to return to the tribe, to see his dying father – yet absolutely no form of communication had occurred between the elderly man (or his tribe) and the station hand. Another example is that of the Dogon people of Africa, who imparted to French anthropologists 50 years ago, some confidential but quite detailed knowledge from their religious rites, of a physically invisible star, (called *Sirius B*), which was only recently discovered by modern astronomers.^{lxiv} (Although some sceptics claim that the French anthropologists told the tribesmen about the stars.)

Returning to the contention that an objective spiritual element underlies the Dreaming, it is most unlikely that the Bastian (-Jungian) conclusion that these nature-beings are metaphors for natural processes and psychological dynamics is correct. The accounts are not isolated images corresponding to some prosaic anxiety or poetic yearning, they are an intrinsic part of a perception of a profound interlinking – both ecologically and spiritually – of the various life-forms on the planet. They have their origin in a direct sensing of a common origin of humanity and the natural world on the primordial Earth, and which is regarded as still prevailing in non-temporal spiritual realms.

Conclusions regarding the implications of an objective perception into subtle realities, resulting in common features of the Dreaming :

I conclude that individuated nature-beings as I have considered above, refer to realities, although their actual nature may not be entirely as represented in the accounts. It is also noteworthy that from perception of such realities, people of ‘the Dreaming’ achieve a more meaningful relationship with the natural world than is normally the case with modern Europeans and Westerners.

Further, the holistic perspective on the interconnectedness of humanity and animals within accounts from ‘the Dreaming’ is not entirely alien to European and Western humanity, it exists also in the neglected ‘mystical’ insights of such Romantic poets and philosophers, and is stirring again in contemporary representatives of the *Deep Ecology* movement. These mystics derive their insight from a form of higher consciousness, such as intuitive thinking, others could be regarded as clairvoyant.

Consequently, potent Dreaming experiences can be regarded as originating from the sensing of these transcendental realities and their significance for humanity. Naturally the content of such experiences are not assimilable into a reductionist worldview. However this kernel of objective experience does not constitute the entire content of ‘the Dreaming’; fantasies, anxieties and yearnings all play a role in the stories and myths of the Dreaming.

However, I conclude that the wide-spread and probably universal similarity of features in accounts from ‘the Dreaming’ that predicate a multi-dimensional, reciprocal interdependence of planetary life, indicate that earlier human beings, (or people who retain in today’s world this consciousness) share *an enhanced perceptual ability*. This enhanced perceptual horizon brings about an interface with the same subtle, non-molecular realities. In other words, this faculty of perception brings an interface with objective (even though transcendental) realities. I also conclude then that the reason it is difficult for modern thinkers to achieve the kind of inner rapport with nature that underlies “the Dreaming” derives from the fact that experiences from the Dreaming derive from perception of (or at least *sensing of*) the interweaving into the sense-world of forces and consciousnesses from a continuum that exists beyond the physical-molecular realm.

- ⁱ Carol Lee Sanchez, "Animal, vegetable and mineral", Ecofeminism and the Sacred, ed. Carol J. Adams (New York: Continuum, 1993) 211.
- ⁱⁱ Catherine H. and Ronald M. Berndt, The Speaking Land (Ringwood: Penguin, 1989) 17.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Durkheim The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1915)
- ^{iv} Klaus-Peter Koepping, , Adolf Bastian and the Psychic Unity of Mankind. (St. Lucia: UQ, 1940)
- ^v Leo Frobenius, Vom Kulturreich des Festlandes, (Berlin: Wegweiser Verlag, 1923)
- ^{vi} Durkheim 419.
- ^{vii} Emile Durkheim, The Rules of Sociological Method, (London: Macmillan, 1938) 4; and in W.S.F. Pickering, Durkheim on Religion, (London: Routledge, 1975) 94-5.
- ^{viii} Tom Hayden, The Lost Gospel of the Earth, (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1996) 103.
- ^{ix} Marie Crotty et. al., Finding a Way, (Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1989) 92.
- ^x These words of Tony Tjamiwa of the Pitjantjatjara tribe, are quoted by Jennifer Isaacs, Australian Dreaming, (Sydney: Lansdowne press, 1980) 40.
- ^{xi} Professor Wilhelm Mannhardt, Jacob Grimm, and James Frazer, and more recently British Folklorists such as Nancy Arrowsmith are leading names in this effort.
- ^{xii} Eli Gifford and R. Michael Cook, How can One Sell the Air? Chief Seattle's Vision, eds. (Summertown: The Book Publishing Co., 1992) 39.
- ^{xiii} This sentence occurs in 1Thess. 5. 2.
- ^{xiv} Gifford and Cook, How can One Sell 62.
- ^{xv} Gifford and Cook: How can One Sell 51.
- ^{xvi} Tom Hayden, The Lost Gospel 63. Hayden is quoting James Watt.
- ^{xvii} Nancy Arrowsmith, A Field Guide to the Little People, (London: Pan, 1977) 110.
- ^{xviii} Wilhelm Mannhardt, Antike Wald- und Feldkulte (Berlin: Gebrüder Bornträger, 1875) 149.
- ^{xix} Arrowsmith, Field Guide 136.
- ^{xx} Robert Kirk, (Rev.), 1591, The Secret Commonwealth, reprinted 1976, Edinburgh, edited by Stewart Sanderson, for the Folklore Society, p. 96.
- ^{xxi} Kirk, Secret Commonwealth 87.
- ^{xxii} Arrowsmith, Field Guide 98.
- ^{xxiii} Arrowsmith, 119.
- ^{xxiv} W. Mannhardt, quoting a Polish church Chronicle of 1582, in "Nature", Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics: Vol 2, Ed. J. Hastings, (Edinburgh: T. Clark, 1909), Vol. 9, 241.
- ^{xxv} Arrowsmith, 190
- ^{xxvi} Arrowsmith, 198.
- ^{xxvii} Kirk, Secret Commonwealth, 86.
- ^{xxviii} Arrowsmith, Field Guide, 220.
- ^{xxix} Roland Robinson, Aboriginal Myths and Legends (Melbourne: Sun, 1966) 49. Robinson is deeply sympathetic to the Aboriginal people, and dared to write that "...an Australian state Government had a policy of extermination of the Aborigines..." He also wrote about methods to use to ensure an accurate text; he used without alterations the Aboriginal person's translation (into English), "with their cadences, similes, imagery". xiii
- ^{xxx} Berndt, Speaking Land 154.
- ^{xxxi} Arrowsmith, Field Guide, 201.
- ^{xxxii} S. Baring-Gould, Curious Myths of The Middle Ages (London: Rivingtons, 1888) 504.
- ^{xxxiii} Robinson, Aboriginal Myths 50.
- ^{xxxiv} Chief Seattle's speech in, 1st : the version by Dr. Henry Smith, and 2nd : the version by Prof. William Arrowsmith, How Can One Sell The Air? 21, 75.
- ^{xxxv} Lewis Spence, The Myths of The North American Indians, (London: Harrap, 1914) 228, 255.
- ^{xxxvi} These themes re found in such anthologies as, Charles Squire, Celtic Myth and Legend", London: Gresham, no date; Ella Young, Celtic Wonder Tales, Edinburgh: Floris, 1985, T. Rolleston, Myths and Legends of the Celtic race, London: Harrap, 1949.
- ^{xxxvii} Douglas Hill, "Stones" in Man, Myth and Magic, (London: Purnell, 1971) vol. 7, 2707.
- ^{xxxviii} T. Rolleston, Myths and Legends of the Celtic race, (London: Harrap, 1949) 66.
- ^{xxxix} O. Schrader, "Aryan Religion", Hastings, Encyclopaedia of Religion: Vol 2, 36, 44.
- ^{xl} Charles Squire, Celtic Myth and Legend, (London: Gresham, no date) 405, 505.
- ^{xli} E. Sydney Hartland, "Stones", Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics Vol. 11, 867.
- ^{xlii} Toofie Lauder, Legends and Tales of the Harz Mountains, (London: Hodder, 1881) 210.
- ^{xliii} Arrowsmith, How Can One Sell The Air 75, 76.
- ^{xliv} Hayden, The Lost Gospel, 86.

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- ^{xlv} Robinson, Aboriginal Myths 107-8.
- ^{xlvi} Walter E. Roth, North Queensland Ethnography Bulletin, No. 5, (Brisbane, 1903) 27. Quoted in J. Frazer, The Golden Bough, Vol 11, (London: MacMillan, 1976) 160.
- ^{xlvii} Margaret Grieves in A Modern Herbal, (London: Harcourt, 1931) quotes the instance of British 19th century farm-workers refusing to burn some elder-tree branches, to avoid any further distress to its indwelling sprite. 271.
- ^{xlviii} Arrowsmith, Field Guide 181.
- ^{xlix} Frazer, Golden Bough, Vol. 11, 165.
- ⁱ Mannhardt, Wald- und Feldkulte, 40.
- ⁱⁱ Mannhardt 41.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Mannhardt, Wald- und Feldkulte 26. As late as 1720, it was emphasized in local statutes, that these laws were definitely to be carried out, if need be.
- ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Dorothy McKellar, from her poem, "My Country", North Ryde: Angus & Robertson, 1986
- ^{lv} Durkheim 418-425.
- ^{lv} Durkheim 424.
- ^{lvi} Durkheim's conclusion that the identification of the person with the natural world of their tribal lands just reveals that "indigenous people are mentally confused" (Primitive Classification 6). This indicates further the inability of the reductionist attitude to enter into the perspective that underlies the Dreaming. It is not surprising that his work has been described as having "serious methodological flaws", and as "highly prejudiced", (Rodney Needham in his Introduction to Durkheim's "Primitive Classification").
- ^{lvii} Deborah Bird Rose, "Exploring an Aboriginal Land Ethic" in Meanjin, 47, (Melbourne: Melb UP, 1988) 381.
- ^{lviii} W.H. Edwards, An Introduction to Aboriginal Societies, (Wentworth Falls: Social Science, 1990) 21.
- ^{lix} The Legends of the Jews, (Philadelphia, Jewish Public. Soc., 1968) Vol 5, 119-120
- ^{lx} The Zohar, Vol. 1, (Hertford: Soncino Press, 1970) 86
- ^{lxi} Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Fundamentals of the Science of Zoology 1832, (Goethes Werke, 14 vols, Hamburg:1956) vol 13, 219-250.
- ^{lxii} Rudolf Steiner, Welt, Erde und Mensch, (R. Steiner Verlag, Dornach 1974) Lect. 8.Aug.1908
- ^{lxiii} Tom Hayden, The Lost Gospel, 64. Hayden is quoting Ruth Limburgh.
- ^{lxiv} The anthropologists were Marcel Griaule and Germaine Dieterlen, reported by Francis Hitching, The World Atlas of Mysteries (London: Pan, 1978) 108.