CHAPTER FOUR
THE WORLD BEYOND THE PICTURE FRAME

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Hamlet, Act I Scene V.

It is venturesome to think that a coordination of words (philosophies are nothing more than that)
can resemble the universe very much.

Jorge Luis Borges: Labyrinths

In the previous chapter we discussed certain events that took place during the period centered about the
year 1600--events which turned out to be the opening guns in the Scientific Revolution. However, as a
description of the Human Experience peculiar to that time, our story remains incomplete, for it lacks a
vital ingredient. By way of analogy, consider a history of that same era, written a hundred years later,
during the 18th century. It would have been a chronicle of popes and kings, and their battles, with an
occasional genuflection to great literary works of the past, such as those of a Shakespeare or a Milton.
History, then, is a matter of taste, a tale about what someone considered to be important. And the power
structure of a civilization is always the principal patron of the historians, and therefore also the arbiter of
taste. Since such an arrangement is, figuratively speaking, somewhat anaerobic, it might be useful to
"challenge the dominant paradigm," thereby letting in some fresh air.

Included in the following pages, are three instances of human experience that are clearly discordant with
The Myth of Modern Civilization. There is no reason to believe that all of these testimonies were
necessarily falsehoods. But first, in order to understand the background for these stories, we need to
examine the events that took place in Italy as a result of the Protestant Reformation, which had begun in
the year 1517. It was not until the year 1545 that the Catholic Church, finally realizing the seriousness of
the Protestant challenge, convened a General Council in the city of Trento, in Northern Italy. The
Council of Trent, as it was called, lasted until 1563, and resulted in a poorly considered decision: namely
to circle the metaphoric wagons, and fight with every available resource. The Church's arsenal included
the Roman Inquisition, with its time-tested final argument: torture of heretics by means of
“waterboarding”, followed, whenever necessary, by burning at the stake. While conducting their
interrogations the inquisitors had been instructed to take careful notes of all the proceedings, in order to
ensure that no one would be executed by mistake, and that the entire sadistic procedure would be carried
out in a manner in accord with the very highest standards of professionalism. These records were duly
filed away in the archives, and subsequently forgotten, until around the year 1960 when some of them
were placed in the hands of the historian Carlo Ginzburg\(^1\). The stories should be read now, before going
any further into the chapter, for they are fascinating, and their implications are immense.

The Benandanti: What Were They Doing?

By their own testimony, at night the Benandanti (those who walk well) were traveling in a kind of spirit
world, doing battle with witches and goblins, and curing the sick--for the sake of their neighbors,
members of their community. This experience may have really been the product of deranged minds, but
remember: there were scores of them. So, is it really explaining anything to dismiss this phenomenon as a kind of folie à plusieurs?

**First Story:** It is March 21 1575 (Galileo was 9 years old). We are at the monastery of San Francesco di Cividale, in that mountainous region of Northern Italy known as Friuli, where Slavic, German and Latin cultures meet. It was at that time that the astonished inquisitors learned about the existence of a peasant named Paolo Gasparutto, who claimed that he could cure bewitched people; he also claimed that he roamed about at night with witches and goblins. In addition, he claimed to be “one of those who walk well”, I benandanti, and that at the four seasons of the year his troop of benandanti would go in spirit to do battle with the witches, for the purpose of securing the fertility of the fields.

So who were these, I benandanti? They were those who were born with a caul over their faces, who fell into a trance or a deep sleep on certain nights of the year. At such times they “journeyed,” and later they remembered—remembered traveling on the backs of cats or dogs, armed with fennel sticks against the witches, fighting for the fertility of the crops and the harvest.

The Church officials interrogated these peasants mercilessly, trying to bend their testimony until it agreed with categories with which they felt more doctrinally comfortable, (such as sorcery, Witches’ Sabbaths and copulations with Satan—the routine, day-to-day humdrum stuff of Christian diabolism), but all to no avail. Revelations of the kind supplied by Gasparutto multiplied, and for a hundred years the Inquisition exerted all its powers on the benandanti, to get the kind of confessions that sat conformably upon the convolutions of the ecclesiastical mind. However, many of the benandanti held out to the bitter end, and it is their testimony that has come down to us.

**Second Story:** In 1692 (Newton was 50 years old at the time, and his Principia had been already published), an eighty-year-old man named Thiess in Jürgensburg (in what is now Latvia), confessed to the judges interrogating him, that he was indeed a werewolf! Three times a year, at night, he and his fellow werewolves would fight, armed with iron whips, with the devil and with sorcerers. What was at stake? Again it was the fertility of the fields.

**Third Story:** At the end of the 14th century two women of Milan confessed to having experienced episodes of “night-flying” while in a state of ecstasy. It seems that they had been having periodic meetings with a certain mysterious lady, whom they called Donna Oriente, who was always surrounded by a troop of animal attendants. And again, in 1457, the learned bishop, Nicolas of Cusa, sermonized against two old women of Val di Fassa, who confessed to having been visited by una bona domina, whom they referred to by the name of Richella. They had touched her hands, which turned out to be covered with hair, and in turn she had stroked their cheeks with those hairy hands. To the bishop, they were merely witches, linked with The Evil One.

**How Can We Interpret These Stories?**

It would appear as though we are confronted with the collision of three disjointed World Views, probably arising from the invention of the phonetic alphabet--views to which we need to give the labels: Type One: The Scholars, those who had access to printed books; The world of Type One, that of Kepler, Galileo, and later of Newton, could not even have existed without the invention of the printing press.

Type Two: The Priests and Bishops, who tried to mold the testimony of the peasants to fit their own peculiar cosmology (i.e., the Devil, diabolical possession, the Devil’s Sabbath, etc.). The theology of the Roman Church, although purportedly a transmission of the inspirations of the early patriarchs, is still, as
we have pointed out, a corpus that had been originally set down by hand, *in writing*.

Type Three: The people of the non-literate world, who depended upon the existence of a living oral tradition. But in compensation for this lack, they remained more intuitive, and more in contact with the workings of the Unconscious Mind. The Type Three World was effectively a medieval one, at least half-pagan--even in Italy, the heartland of Roman Catholicism.

But the position we are taking in this book is this: We shall try to to be fair-minded, rigorously *empirical*. Thus we cannot dismiss a consistent body of testimony out of hand, solely on “rationalistic” grounds— you can’t prove it false, “by actual conjecture.” That would cause the discussion to degenerate into “Argument From Theory.” The criterion for a good argument is that it must be based on Observed Facts. Only these can be said to constitute a body of data. Arguments based only upon theory are as sand castles on the beach.

Two things are impressive here. The first is the fact that dozens of these *benandanti*, over a period of a century, confronted by the intimidating power of the Roman Inquisition, stuck to their story. This is also quite surprising, since it is well known to experts on “enhanced interrogation” that, when confronted with a threat of torture or death, any normal person will tell his/her tormenter whatever cock-and-bull story he wants to hear. The second thing concerns a certain thread, one that unites the three stories into a grander framework, one that is internally consistent, but also totally inexplicable in modern terms. I was so astonished that I couldn’t resist the temptation to tell you about it. So here is the question:

What was it that these three stories had in common? Answer: In all three cases the protagonists, in some unknown manner, *journeyed*. Not as you or I would travel, not in the flesh, that is, but rather during what you might call an out-of-body experience.

Also, (1) They fall into Altered States of Consciousness, (2) They “journey” to The Other Side, the Beyond, and (3) While in an altered state, they perform feats for the benefit of their community.

All of this connects to a very ancient practice: that of Shamanism, a practice that dates back at least to Upper Paleolithic times, some 40,000 years ago. Strangely, the practices of the Benandanti are remarkably similar to those of indigenous people in the world, whose lives have been documented tirelessly by ethnographers and anthropologists for the past two centuries and more. Further, shamanism still persists today in various nooks and crannies of the world; where it still displays considerable vitality. The question is: how on earth did these Italian peasants come to know about it? Had the tradition really come down them from Paleolithic times, by word of mouth? And why did Gasparutto's experience bear a strange resemblance to that of Thiess, in faraway Latvia? Was this perhaps an example of the kind of racial memory called the Collective Unconscious? Was Carl Jung really correct in intuiting the existence of the Collective Unconscious, most accessible to those who are in an Altered State?

And in the case of the peasant women of Val di Fassa, what is the significance of Richella, la Bona Donna, she of the hairy face and skin, surrounded by an entourage of animals? Once again we find that the thread leads into the distant past, into the same Upper Paleolithic era. In shamanic experience the Mistress/Master of the Animals is understood to be the personage with whom the shaman intercedes on the behalf of the tribe, in the hope of bringing about a plentiful supply of game. In Greek mythology this personage, the Mistress of the Animals is identified with the goddess Artemis, an immensely powerful pre-Olympian deity, a variation on the theme of The Great Goddess, symbolized by a she-bear who emerges from hibernation on the second day of February. In Roman mythology Artemis was "civilized"
to represent “The Chaste Diana”, the goddess of the hunt—a pallid substitute for the Greek Artemis, who was, of course, The Real Thing. Are we really supposed to believe that the women made up that story, one that, just by coincidence, happens to be in agreement with information discovered by mythologists and archaeologists during the past century?

A Brief Introduction To Shamanism.

Before Civilization, (i.e., before organized religion), there was shamanism, an essential element of tribal culture. Shamanism is not a formal belief system—not in the sense that the sects of Christianity constitute rigid belief systems. It has neither doctrines nor hierarchies. Rather, it is based upon experience; it is essentially empirical. Its essential points can be set down in a very few sentences. Here they are:

(1) The shaman is a person who has developed the power to "journey" from ordinary reality to shamanic reality, a form of reality accessible only to those in an altered state of consciousness.

(2) He/she does this for the good of the community. It is not a parlor trick.

(3) Upon returning from shamanic reality he/she brings back needed information, or returns with the power to cure sickness in one or more members of the community. As long as humans lived and hunted in groups, at least one of the members of the group would be required to fill the role of the shaman: to be able to find game and to cure illnesses. From this consideration it seems probable that the practice of shamanism is at least 40,000 years old.

(4) Related to this is the hypothesis that, in some sense, whatever is, is alive. This is called panpsychism. Central to this notion, is the fact that life is not merely a property of individuals; instead, it is a vast process, of which we are merely a tiny part. That is an extension of Gary Snyder's observation in Chapter One of this book.

Ethnologists and anthropologists have studied shamanic practices for over two centuries, although they usually worked from within the belief system of Modern Civilization. One of the most noteworthy, as well as sympathetic, of these investigators was Knut Rasmussen, who worked in the Arctic with the Inuit during the first third of the 20th century. Another researcher who did valuable work among the Australian aborigines was A. P. Elkin, whose book, Aboriginal Men Of High Degree, has become a classic. (Indeed, there are interesting similarities between the process by which an aboriginal Australian becomes a shaman and the modern process of Ph.D. candidature). An extensive bibliography on shamanism can be found in the book, Dreamtime and Inner Space, by Holger Kalweit. But it remained for a religious scholar, Mircea Eliade, to point out the curious fact that essential "core shamanism" is much the same, all the world over. Initially, Eliade's discovery was not received with much enthusiasm by the anthropological profession; for, in addition to the natural antipathy between the "splitters" and the "lumpers," Eliade was a religious scholar, and not a professional anthropologist. As nearly as I can tell, there seem to be two possible interpretations of the fact of shamanism's universality: either it is of such ancient provenance that it had its beginnings at a time when the entire human race lived in a small area of the world, or that, (much more likely), access to non-ordinary reality happens to be an innate human characteristic, just as musical ability is. The most recent research developments seem to support this point of view. It is this last alternative that makes shamanism, and its corollary: panpsychism, central to our program of exploration.


It goes almost without saying that no two humans have the same abilities, and the attainment of altered states is no exception. These aptitudes seem to follow the well-known normal distribution curve. Some individuals can attain such states at will, indicating that the wall between ordinary humdrum reality and
the altered state is, for them, a thin one. For other individuals (sometimes called "hard-heads"), the task is well-nigh impossible—I suspect that it is all a matter of neural connections. But average individuals seem able to attain altered states by means of various tools and methods, the most common of which is the drum, which is the trademark of the shaman. Steady, rapid drumming, at a rate of about three or four beats per second, continued for a period of 20 minutes, can produce a trance state in a large fraction of the population. Other effective procedures include rubbing the edges of Tibetan bowls, plucking bowstrings, staring at candle flames, chanting, dancing—to exhaustion. Of course, if more heroic methods are required, there are certain psychoactive substances that may be used, (all the while, of course, paying meticulous attention to the "set" and the “setting”).

**The Shamanic Cosmos: Really the Stuff Of Myth.**
Non-ordinary Reality, as experienced by the shaman, appears to have a kind of structure: its "cartography" comprises a Middle-World, (that of ordinary reality), a Lower-World, where the shaman could encounter a "power animal," and an Upper-World, where one might meet a "spirit guide." It is the shaman's duty to assist the members of his/her community; it is to this end that the shaman possesses his/her powers. We are not playing parlor games here. Since shamanism provides a world-view as well as a description of how the shaman is to function as an actor, then what we are studying is the stuff of Mythology—a Myth that far pre-dates history.

**Participating vs. Non-Participating Consciousness: A Practical Example.**
In the previous chapter we referred briefly to the concept of Participating Consciousness; it is here that I shall try to convince you of its usefulness. There is a conceit peculiar to the social sciences, that it is important to emulate the methods employed by the physicist or chemist, an attitude sometimes called "physics envy". A central feature of this program is the assumption that it is always desirable, or possible, to separate the experimenter from the object of his/her manipulations. Sometimes this experimental goal is referred to as the subject-object distinction, or as "objectivity;" but another term for it is "non-participation."¹² Thus the truly "scientific" anthropologist will try to treat the objects of his/her study as if they constituted some kind of bacterium viewed under a microscope. This practice, when upheld, has made social science writing the world’s standard for unremitting dullness. Fortunately, there have been some anthropologists who have disobeyed this commandment, and have eaten the forbidden fruit, committing the sin of "participation" with those whom they have studied.

One of the most famous of the transgressors was Frank Hamilton Cushing, who in the year 1879 was sent out by the Smithsonian Institution as a member of a group of ethnologists, to New Mexico, to study the Zuñi. With time Cushing came to love and respect the Zuñi; and as his understanding of them increased, his regard for the U.S. government decreased proportionately. Not only was Cushing inducted into the tribe, but he was also made War Chief and Bow Priest. And his fellow ethnologists? They all deserted him. Finally, when word of his activities reached Washington, Congressional pressure was subsequently applied to return Cushing to the humdrum world of the white man. One thing is certain, however. If he had remained faithful to the commands of scientific objectivity, he would never have learned as much about the Zuñi as he otherwise did. The only way to understand what it is like to
Be a Zuñi is actually to become one, to attain Participating Consciousness. In the following sections we discuss two instances in which Participating Consciousness was attained by scientific investigators, almost against their wills.

"To Understand Us You Have To Take Our Medicine": How An Anthropology Student Became A Shaman.

In the late 1950’s, Michael Harner, then a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley, lived among the Conibo Indians in the Ucayali Valley in the Peruvian Amazon. His research on their culture was going fairly well, but their responses to his questions about their spiritual beliefs were vague to the point of being evasive. Finally they told him that if he really wished to learn, he would have to take the shamans' sacred drink, a variant of ayahuasca, the "vine of the soul;" further, they warned him that the experience would probably be a frightening one. As a western-trained graduate student, his first instinct was to decline; but then he asked himself: "Do I really want to learn about these people, or not?" Whereupon he mustered up his courage and agreed, with some misgivings, to “take the medicine.”

It is impossible for me to do justice to Harner's experience in these pages; instead, it is necessary for you to read his own account, one that has by now become a classic. From that point on, Harner began a study of shamanism, and although he later held faculty positions at Columbia, Yale, Berkeley, and The New School for Social Research, his life's calling was to be a shaman! For more than 30 years, he and his associates have given workshops all over the world, and his CDs of drumming and other techniques are readily available.

Harner's study of shamanism convinced him that it is not necessary to use entheogens such as ayahuasca in order to attain the shamanic state of consciousness; there are other methods that can produce the same results. It was he who almost single-handedly created a renewed interest in techniques of shamanic drumming. But what seems to me to be the most striking result of Harner's research, is that it appears to be possible, even in the midst of urban civilization, for one to "journey," in what is apparently the same manner as our paleolithic ancestors, to break the bonds of ordinary reality, and apparently to transcend space and time. This is not a doctrine; it is an empirically verifiable observation (in most cases, and with practice). Therefore it cannot be rejected out of hand, merely because it happens to be inconsistent with the theories appearing in The Great Myth, (and therefore held to be a priori impossible). Moreover, it should be a source of consolation for us to be able to speculate that after the inevitable collapse of Modern Civilization, the survivors will return gratefully to the practice of shamanism.

Stanislav Grof, Transpersonal Pioneer.

In his teens Stanislav Grof had dreamed of a career as a creator of animated cartoons, but on the night of his high school graduation he happened to open a book given to him by a friend: it was Freud's famous: Introductory Lectures In Psychoanalysis. This event became a turning point in his life, for young Grof, fascinated, sat up all night reading it, and immediately resolved to become a Freudian psychoanalyst. In due time, he completed his medical studies and psychoanalytic training in Prague, and began work at a clinic there. However, doctrinal problems connected with the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia caused the doctors at his clinic to abandon the Freudian “talking cure” and to experiment instead with psychoactive substances. On one fateful day in the 1950’s a certain package arrived from Sandoz, Ltd., of Basel, Switzerland, containing ampoules of LSD-25, a semi-synthetic substance that had been discovered by the Chemist Albert Hofmann in 1943. At that time LSD had been termed a
"psychotomimetic" drug, meaning that its apparent function was to produce temporary psychosis. Therefore, the doctors at Grof's clinic began to take the drug themselves, to be able to "visit" psychotic states without becoming permanent residents: "temporary nut cases." In this way they hoped to gain a better understanding of their patients. For Grof, however, one dose was all that was necessary for convince him that, when administered in the proper clinical setting, LSD would be able do for the mind, (in his words), what the telescope has done for astronomy, and what the microscope has done for biology. Beginning in Czechoslovakia, and later in the United States, by which time his briefcase was bulging with 5,000 experimental protocols, Grof was able to verify his earlier discovery, and had used LSD in conjunction with psychotherapy to produce spectacular results with patients whose problems had previously been intractable. But a storm was already brewing.

The history of the use of LSD during the 50's and 60's is a fascinating one, which I shall summarize here. This compound had been of intense interest to the CIA, the U.S. army and other unsavory types, who experimented briefly with it, hoping that they could turn it to some useful purpose, such as "mind control." However, these efforts were abandoned when it was discovered that, instead of being the ultimate brain-washer, LSD functioned in quite the opposite way, de-conditioning those to whom it had been administered. (One of former my students described it as "the ultimate bull-shit detector"). In the early 60's at Harvard, Timothy Leary and his associates experimented extensively with LSD and other substances; and by a peculiar synergism, the use of entheogens became a kind of badge of honor for those who opposed this nation's imbecilic involvement in the Vietnam War. Members of Congress, fearing that their government was being effectively de-legitimized by an army of stoned youngsters, panicked, placing a ban on all the psychoactive substances whose names they could spell, designating them oxymoronically as "controlled substances." It should come as no surprise that psychotropic drugs, far from being "controlled," remained easily obtainable on the street, but the results upon those engaged in doing serious scientific research were nothing short of disastrous; for in this sector the ban was totally effective. It even became dangerous to one's career to have ever been associated with research with "psychedelics." The average workaday scientists is a kind of sheep, as we will learn later ion this book. Faced with the problem of the legal ban, Grof found that he could, with considerable effort, elicit the same altered states by means of a combination of hyperventilation, music and massage as he did using LSD; he called his method: Holotropic Breathwork™. The altered state thus obtained: The Holotropic State, (from the Greek: holos, meaning "whole") seems to have a close family resemblance to altered states obtained by the use of entheogens and by drumming, dancing, and other means. By way of contrast, Grof calls the un-blissed state (your “Right Mind”): The Hyletropic State, (from the Greek: hyle, meaning: "matter.")

Under the effects of LSD, or of Holotropic Breathwork, Grof's patients have apparently been able to gain access to psychological material that is, to say the least, paradoxical, at least when viewed by the rest of us when we are in the hyletropic state. The experiences encountered seem to transcend space and time. Grof breaks those experiences down into three categories. They are:

(1) Transcendence of the usual spatial barriers. Such experiences include merging with another person into a state that can be called "dual unity"; assuming the identity of another person; indentifying with the consciousness of an entire group of people. One can even seem to merge with the consciousness of the entire planet.

(2) The overcoming of temporal boundaries--the transcendence of linear time; apparently having experiences from past lives.

(3) Access to archetypal dimensions; deities and demons of various cultures.

According to Grof, on occasion, some of the experiencers of the holotropic state even return to the
Moreover, it has become obvious that human beings have a profound need for transpersonal experiences and for states in which they transcend their individual identities to feel their place in a larger whole that is timeless. This spiritual craving seems to be more basic and compelling than the sexual drive, and if it is not satisfied it can result in serious psychological disturbances.

It is readily apparent that the experiences described in the above paragraphs, (and in the references), are totally incompatible with the theories derived from the accepted mythology of Modern Civilization. An orthodox believer in the Myth would object on two grounds. First, there is the problem of incompatibility with "theory"—that it doesn't fit the Story Line. Second, a tradition (often a valuable one) has sprung up, which holds that no effect can be considered "real" unless it is readily repeatable, (by anybody) and can be verified under strict laboratory conditions, paying strict attention to "objectivity." It is an unspoken, (and unexamined), assumption among the orthodox that every "real" phenomenon in the universe will always conform to this condition. However, this assumption runs counter to the experience of most people.

In What Sense Can We Say That All This Is Real?

For the present I would like to sidestep this issue, until later. But a case can be made for the notion that reality is a kind of construct. I shall present two quotes touching on this question, both by eminent thinkers.

The first is by the distinguished French scholar Henry Corbin, who devoted a lifetime to the study of Islamic mysticism. In his book Mundus Imaginalis, he makes the following argument:

…it must be understood that the world into which [these visionaries] probed is perfectly real. Its reality is more irrefutable and more coherent than that of the empirical world where reality is perceived by the senses. Upon returning, the beholders of this world are perfectly aware of having been “elsewhere;” they are not mere schizophrenics. This world is hidden behind the very act of sense perception and has to be sought underneath its apparent objective certainty. For this reason we definitely cannot qualify it as being imaginary in the current sense of the word, i.e., unreal or non-existent. [The imaginal] world...is ontologically as real as the world of the senses and that of the intellect.... We must be careful not to confuse it with the imagination identified by so-called modern man with “fantasy.”

The second author is the great psychologist and philosopher William James, who wrote:

"...our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different. We may go through life without suspecting their existence; but apply the requisite stimulus, and at a touch they are there in all their completeness, definite types of mentality which probably somewhere have their field of application and adaptation. No account of
The universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded. How to regard them is the question— for they are so discontinuous with ordinary consciousness. Yet they may determine attitudes though they cannot furnish formulas, and open a region though they fail to give a map. At any rate they forbid a premature closing of our accounts with reality."


In Book X of The Republic, Socrates states his position that the work of poets and dramatists, and of painters too, appeals to the baser, more emotional parts of our minds. He goes on to say that the arts have a morally corrupting effect even on the best sorts of people. When we watch a play, pity and sympathy arouse strong feelings in us, causing us to be swept away by our emotions, and lose our self-control. Socrates believed, (if we can believe Plato), that moral guidance can come only from the kind of knowledge reached by reason. In a sense, The Republic represents the first of the Utopias, an attempt to create the ideal State, (an authoritarian one). The point is that Plato seems to have recognized that there was no place in his rational State for individual epiphanies or for ecstasy. Foregoing these experiences seems to be an "initiation fee" to gain entrance to this ephemeral thing called Civilization. Perhaps this is the key to the riddle: Why do people shrink from the possibility of re-enchanting the world? Is it because of the danger of finding empty shelves at the supermarket?

Notes to Chapter Four:
2 Caul: the inner fetal membrane of higher vertebrates, esp. when covering the head at birth, (Merriam-Webster). Traditionally there is something uncanny about this. It is an item of folk-wisdom, that people born with caulns have "second-sight", i.e., they are psychic. Journeying is a word that describes a central feature of shamanism. See Harner, Michael, The Way Of The Shaman, 2nd ed. 1990.
3 Val di Fassa is located in the mountains of Northern Italy, the foothills of the Alps. In colloquial Italian, Una bona domina means: “a good lady”. Her hands, covered with hair, call to mind the fact that the Greek goddess Artemis appeared in the form of a bear.
4 Before the work of Ginzburg, the principal modern historians who had concerned themselves with what has been regarded as witchcraft, have usually been people like Hugh Trevor-Roper and Keith Thomas. These gentlemen managed to avert their attention from the reality of what these people experienced, cautiously confining themselves to the treatments accorded the suspected witches. The reason given for this curious omission was that, for them, the witches were obviously psychotic, and that it made no sense to try to enter their mental universe. For the rationalist mind the hidden world of the indigenous peoples lies beyond a locked door. Nocturnal journeying? Surely my ancestors would never do a thing like that!
5 Master/Mistress of the Animals, a deity of the Hunter-Gatherers. An example is Pan, a figure of great antiquity, with horns upon his head, and cloven hooves, playing his pipes. It is the animals who are listening to him. Carlo Ginzburg Ecstasies, p.131.
6 There is a certain cave, on the island of Crete, where The Virgin is worshipped, on the second of February. Legend has it that she entered the cave and encountered a she-bear who turned her to stone. Here we have a clear reference to Artemis = Mary = The Mother Goddess. In America it is Ground Hog Day, a bastardization of the real thing.
8 The word shaman means “one who knows” in the language of the Tungus people, who live just west of Lake Baikal, in Siberia. The standard theoretical treatment of the subject is Shamanism, Archaic


12 Initially Freud employed hypnosis in his practice, but he replaced hypnosis with "free association," because the former technique prevented him from attaining what he considered to be the requisite impersonal distance with his patients. He wouldn't even shake hands with them.

13 Zuñi: Selected Writings of Frank Hamilton Cushing. Univ. of Nebraska Pr. 1971.


15 en-theo-gen [en within + theos god or experience of god + gen producer] a soul-revealing psychoactive substance, plant or chemical, at times when used spiritually.


17 So much for the myth of the heroic scientist. The main concern seems to be for one’s career. Is science, as a human practice, a form of religion? I think so!

18 The word holotropic, of Greek origin = holos + trepein, literally turning toward the whole. The word hyletropic = hyle + trepein, literally turning toward material things.