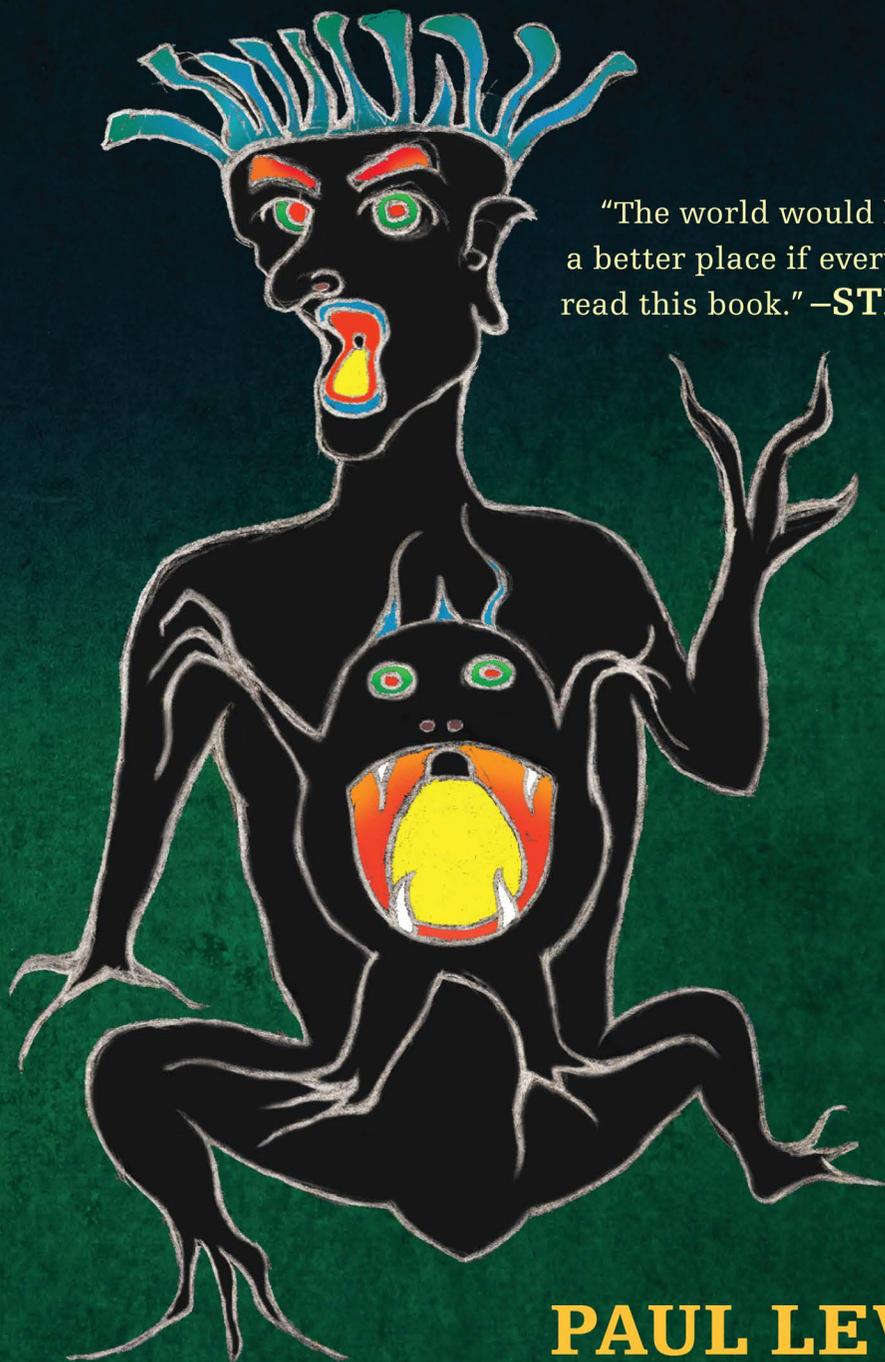


Dispelling Wetiko

Breaking the Curse of Evil

"The world would be
a better place if everyone
read this book." —**STING**



PAUL LEVY

“This book brilliantly exposes how the very roots of the madness that is threatening life on earth are ultimately to be found within our own psyche. I love that Paul is taking seriously the profound implications of what it means that all of us are living in a mass, shared dream. His startlingly clear premise challenges me to reflect upon both the world and myself in radically mind-altering ways. Something important is coming through his imagination-filled musings; his visionary insight into the intrinsic genius of our species feels inspired by a truly creative, compassionate, and enlivening spirit. I always look forward to reading Paul’s work; it stimulates me to greater heights of lucidity, disturbs me enough to awaken me out of my complacency, and encourages me to fly on the wings of the creative imagination. The world would be a better place if everyone read this book. His vision is a royal gift for all of us. It makes me want to sing. Bravo!”

—Sting

“Paul Levy has broadened his hard-won personal insights into a trenchant diagnosis of the mass-mind psychosis afflicting our Western (and indeed now global) civilization. I honor Paul’s courage and discernment in taking on this most elusive and treacherous of topics and showing the steps one can take to move toward liberation. *Dispelling Wetiko* deserves to be widely read and studied.”

—Ralph Metzner, PhD, professor emeritus at the California
Institute of Integral Studies and author of *The Unfolding Self*

“I very much recommend Paul Levy’s writings. Synthesizing a deep understanding of Jungian psychology and spirituality, his work brilliantly illuminates the dreamlike nature of reality.”

—Dr. Arny Mindell, founder of process-oriented psychology
and author of *The Shaman’s Body*

“The world is suffering from the globalization of selfishness, materialism, and militarism, and Paul Levy, in his magnum opus, *Dispelling Wetiko*, identifies their roots in a cancer of the soul.... An insightful and provocative manifesto on how to combat this global epidemic before it is too late.”

—Rabbi Michael Lerner, editor of *Tikkun* magazine, chair of the
Interfaith Network of Spiritual Progressives, and author of
The Left Hand of God

“As a people, we seem to be seriously impaired. It is as if we have suffered a culture-wide stroke that has damaged the higher centers that control our ability to reason and act in rational ways. What will see us through? What will help us wake up from this slow suicide? Paul Levy’s *Dispelling Wetiko* is a valuable step in the right direction. This desperately needed book not only sounds an alarm, but also points to a solution.”

—Larry Dossey, MD, author of *The One Mind* and executive editor of *Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing*

“In these dire straits, many extraordinary people—in all walks of life, speaking in different tones and voices—envision the nondual experience of the nature of mind. Paul Levy is one of them. [He] evokes a clear and scintillating vision, resolving much of the incongruity of our existence.”

—Keith Dowman, author of *Natural Perfection: Longchenpa’s Radical Dzogchen*

“Paul Levy hits the archetypal nail on the head when he identifies debt pushers, consumption pushers, and GOD (gold, oil, and drug) pushers as the cannibalistic offenders in today’s society.... I can’t express how brilliant I find this book.”

—Iona Miller, coauthor of *The Modern Alchemist: A Guide to Personal Transformation*

“This rich and fascinating book is full of original insights that challenge us to see the human predicament in a new way.”

—Timothy Freke, author of *The Jesus Mysteries* and *The Mystery Experience*

“Paul Levy’s provocative and insightful book *Dispelling Wetiko* shines a light on the darkness and exposes evil as an illusion—one that nonetheless impacts our reality. It is particularly important in these evolutionary times that those who see themselves as ‘bringers of the light’ understand the heart of darkness as well.... Kudos to Paul Levy for taking on this topic.”

—Steve Bhaerman, coauthor of *Spontaneous Evolution*

Dispelling Wetiko

Breaking the Curse of Evil



PAUL LEVY

Foreword by Catherine Austin Fitts



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I dedicate this book to the memory of American Indian scholar and activist Jack D. Forbes, author of *Columbus and Other Cannibals* (a book flooding light on wetiko disease), who passed away shortly before this publication saw the light of day. I'd like to think of this book as part of his living legacy.

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have been able to dream up this book into materialization in the first place. Truly “conspiring to co-inspire” each other, these groups—circles of people who are helping each other to wake up in the dream together—are like a board of directors inside of my own psyche who keep me in line and help me whenever I need it. This book is a true group effort, something that would have been impossible for me to do on my own.

Finally, I offer an atemporal note of thanks to C. G. Jung, whose work has served as a great inspiration in understanding my own internal process; I don't know if I would have made it to where I am today without discovering his work.

CONTENTS

Foreword, by Catherine Austin Fitts xiii

Introduction: Close Encounters of the Wetiko Kind xvii

Part One: Dreaming of Wetiko 1

1. The Greatest Epidemic Sickness Known to Humanity 3

Creating the Container 3

Which Name Shall We Use? 7

A Disease of Civilization 11

Art, the Daemonic, and Wetiko 14

2. Understanding Wetiko 21

What Is Wetiko? 21

The Reality of the Psyche 25

The Divine Creative Imagination 28

So Again, What Is Wetiko? 31

The Native American Myth of Wetiko 33

Judeo-Christian Roots of Wetiko 36

Gnosis of the Divine 39

Four-Valued Logic 40

3. Under a Collective Spell 45

Collective Psychosis 45

The War on Consciousness 53

The Spell of Wetiko 56

The Archetypal Realm 60

4. Dreams of the Psyche 65

Bewitched by Our Own Projections 65

The Origin of Wetiko Is the Psyche 68

We Are Such Stuff as Dreams Are Made On 72

Symbols 79

Part Two: The Shadow of Wetiko 83

5. The Shadow and Its Projections 85

The Shadow 86

Shadow Projection 88

Mutual Shadow Projection 93

Withdrawing Shadow Projections 97

The Tension of the Opposites 101

6. Vampires, Parasites, and Aliens 105

A Parasite of a Different Order 105

Alien Intrusion 108

Vampires and Werewolves 111

7. Psycho Analysis 119

Trauma 119

Personal Pathology 126

A Frankenstein Monster Come to Life 132

8. Evil 139

What Is Evil? 139

Recognizing Evil 146

Self-Destruction 149

ME Disease 152

Reflecting upon Evil 156

Part Three: Meta-Dreaming 161

9. A Wetiko Cult(ure) of Madness 163

Our Culture's Madness Is Shocking 163

Interconnected Roles in a Nonlocal Field 167

10. Stepping Out of Separation 171

Not Personalizing Ourselves 171

Coming Full Circle 174

Come Together 175

Contents

- 11. Archetypal Psychohistory 181**
 - The Unconscious Is Coming 181
 - The Archetype of the Apocalypse 185
 - Self-Reflection 190

Part Four: Wetiko in Action 197

- 12. Wetiko Tactics 199**
 - Thinking 200
 - The Wound 202
 - Our Looking Away Is Wetiko 207
 - Discernment 209
 - The Curse of Pessimism 212
 - The Curse of Over-Optimism 214
 - Self-Negating Statements 216
 - Resistance 218
 - Spiritually Informed Political Activism 220
 - New Age 222

- 13. Vampire Squid Economics: A Case Study in Full-Blown
Wetiko Disease 227**

Part Five: Freedom from Wetiko 243

- 14. Wetiko No More 245**
 - Wetiko-Free Psyche 245
 - Freeing Ourselves from Wetiko 252
 - Our True Nature 254

- 15. Let's Spread the Word 261**
 - Finding the Name 262
 - The Idea of a Cure 267

Afterword: All You Have to Do to See Is Open Your Eyes
and Look 269

Appendix: Wetiko-Dispelling Communities 291

Contents

Glossary	297
Select Bibliography	321
Notes	323
About the Author	341
About the Art	343

FOREWORD

In 1997, a strategic planning group at the CIA made a visit to my company in Washington, DC. They brought with them a woman whose job and title were classified. I was not allowed to know them. Upon listening to my presentation on how to strengthen the American economy by transforming our investment model, she looked at me and said, “You know what your problem is? You don’t understand where evil comes from.”

My search to understand evil and its transformation is what attracted me to Paul Levy’s invaluable work.

The question of where evil comes from and how it transmits through our society like a contagious virus is profoundly important. Our economic problems are symptoms of our governance, which is, in turn, a symptom of a problem we have with evil. If we want to address our economic problems, we have to deal with the root problem—the ascendancy of evil and its institutionalized use of invisible weaponry and forces, including financial systems.

Paul Levy’s book, *Dispelling Wetiko: Breaking the Curse of Evil*, is an exploration of our inhumanity and how we participate in it. Paul calls the collective psychosis under which we labor “wetiko,” a Cree term that refers to a diabolically wicked person or spirit who terrorizes others. He leads us through the manifestation of wetiko in our culture, our media, our economy, and, most important, ourselves.

Solving a problem requires that we take responsibility for it. “This is my problem. I will study it. I will master it. I will take responsibility for it. And I will act to do that which I can do.”

Taking responsibility is not something that is encouraged. We are encouraged to be victims. We are encouraged to blame “them.” In doing so, we give away our power. We reject the opportunity to take responsibility, to identify our complicity in the process, and, by changing how we feel and act, to reinvent our world individually and collectively.

In the summer of 2000, I asked a group of 100 people at a conference of spiritually committed people who would push a red button if it would

Foreword

immediately stop all hard narcotics trafficking in their neighborhood, city, state, and country, thus offending the people who controlled an estimated \$500 billion to \$1 trillion a year in global money laundering and the accumulated capital therein. Out of 100 people, 99 said they would not push such red button. When surveyed, they said they did not want their mutual funds to go down if the U.S. financial system suddenly stopped attracting such capital. They did not want their government checks jeopardized or their taxes raised because of resulting problems financing the federal government deficit. They preferred, instead, for adults to actively attempt to addict their neighbors' children and engage them in illegal activities in a criminal, genocidal process.

Our financial profiteering and complicity are not limited to aristocrats and the elites who do their bidding. Our financial dependency on and participation in unsustainable economics in the form of suppressed knowledge and technology, covert force, organized crime, and global warfare are broad, ingrained, and deep.

Whatever is occurring in our world under highly centralized decision making, it takes millions of people to implement it. This means we are all involved.

In helping us understand and face the lies that weave through our lives, Paul Levy's work leads us to our extraordinary opportunity. We hold within our spirits, our thoughts, and our actions the power to transform our individual participation and, by so doing, our collective situation.

It is a rare philosopher and spiritual leader who can help us to look into the mirror of our collective participation and denial. Yet Paul Levy accomplishes this and more. He helps us find a way to explore the most intimate connections between our spiritual and material lives and the wider psychic storm and power lines in which we struggle. He makes a way through our madness, our "spiritual starvation," to invoke our imagination to literally "change our mind."

As I read *Dispelling Wetiko*, I often hear in my mind a favorite passage from the New Testament:

Foreword

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

—Ephesians 6:12

As you read *Dispelling Wetiko*, you will be challenged. You will savor moments of “Aha!” When you have finished, you will find that something has shifted. There will be fewer spiritual calluses between your imagination and your daily life. You will see a way forward that you had not seen before. You will feel less isolated, more hopeful. You will never quite look at the world in exactly the same way again.

—Catherine Austin Fitts
Hickory Valley, Tennessee
May 30, 2011

Catherine Austin Fitts is the publisher of The Solari Report and a managing member of Sea Lane Advisory, LLC, and of Solari Investment Advisory Services, LLC. She is a former managing director and member of the board of Wall Street investment bank Dillon, Read & Co. Inc., a former Assistant Secretary of Housing, and a former president of the Hamilton Securities Group, Inc.



Pencil drawing by Paul Levy, *Self-Portrait after Being Introduced to Wetiko*, 9¼" x 13¼", 1979

INTRODUCTION

Close Encounters of the Wetiko Kind

I've been dreaming about this book since my first book, *The Madness of George W. Bush: A Reflection of our Collective Psychosis*, came out in 2006.¹ I've been wanting to elaborate and deepen my inquiry and articulation of the psychological disease that I wrote about in that book, but without having to reference or think about George W. Bush (what a relief!).

There is a psychospiritual disease of the soul that originates within ourselves and that has the potential either to destroy our species or to wake us up, depending on whether or not we recognize what it is revealing to us. In *Dispelling Wetiko: Breaking the Curse of Evil*, I pay homage to the way Native American traditions have long been tracking the very same psychic² virus that I point to. Indigenous people's articulation of the disease inspires all of us to track and bring into focus this elusive, **non-local** parasite of the mind. (Terms that are in boldface are explained in the Glossary.) By combining the Native tradition's expression of this disease of the soul with my own articulation of this malady, based on personal experience, both our visions come into sharper clarity and focus. I look forward to many others adding their insights to the mix, so as to deepen our understanding and flesh out our course of action in response to this psychic plague even more clearly.

Writing this book has helped me stay sane in a world gone mad. To quote the maverick psychiatrist R. D. Laing, "The condition of alienation, of being asleep, of being unconscious, of being out of one's mind, is the condition of the normal man ... normal men have killed perhaps 100,000,000 of their fellow normal men in the last fifty years."³ Our species is clearly in the middle of a mass psychic epidemic,⁴ which I call "malignant egophrenia" and Native Americans call "wetiko."

Whichever name we use, we are in the midst of a collective psychosis of titanic proportions, and one of its most stunning features is that very few people are even talking about it. Does that seem as crazy to you as it does to me? Our madness has weirdly become normalized, to the point where we don't even notice it. This book is an effort to shine a revealing light on both the madness and the source of the madness, which is ourselves.

To place this book in its proper context: I'm writing not as a scholar, but rather as someone who has had a deeply personal and wounding experience with reference to what I am writing about. I only have the author-ity to write about this vampiric disease of the soul so intimately because I have, due to the designs of fate and/or karma, become intimately familiar with it in my own life. This wound has introduced me to a healing energy in myself, as if I am a "wounded healer in training," a role we all have the potential to play.

Unexpectedly in the course of events in my life, I was introduced to the spirit of wetiko and forced to struggle with it, like Jacob wrestling with the angel of God at the crossing of the river Jabbok. Had I not prevented it, this overpowering transpersonal energy would have killed me. In wrestling with this **daemonic** energy, I was preventing a murder—my own. Each of us in our own way must pass through some variation of Jacob's archetypal struggle with daemonic energy. I feel as if I am coming out of the closet when I write that I have had "close encounters of the wetiko kind," which entailed direct confrontations with all that the word "evil" attempts to name. As observed by C. G. Jung, the great Doctor of the Soul: "It is quite within the bounds of possibility for a man to recognize the relative evil of his nature, but it is a rare and shattering experience for him to gaze into the face of absolute evil."⁵ My experiences have been truly shattering (please see the Afterword). Living encounters with the psychic wetiko virus have disfigured, re-formed, and changed me. As a result, I am no longer who I was, while at the same time never being more myself. This book, in which I share the insights I have gained from this ordeal, is the crystallization of this ongoing process.

A Nonlocal “Protection Racket”

My personal story⁶ would be unimportant in itself, except that it serves as the outer garment which reveals the underlying *archetypal*, structural dynamics that set the stage upon which these events got dreamed up in my life in the first place (see **archetype** and **the dreaming-up process** in the Glossary). Through the wounding, trauma, and abuse that I suffered at the nonlocal hands of this malevolent entity, which literally almost killed me, an archetypal process was revealing itself through my very individual situation, which, though unique to me, was at the same time the deeper process happening in all of our lives. What was most eye-opening for me was that when I began connecting the dots and saw the internal pattern that was playing out, it became obvious that my life—just like everyone else’s—is a particularized microcosm, a personalized iteration of a collective macrocosmic fractal. It was as if my personal situation with its individual intra/interpersonal dramas was contained in and an expression of a deeper cosmic process that was enfolded throughout the underlying field.

I began to recognize that the **diabolical** energy that was nonlocally playing out throughout the entire field of consciousness was informing the field in such a way as to hide itself. Uncannily, at the very moment when the abuse was about to be illumined, something seemingly unrelated would happen, often out of nowhere: what is called an “edge phenomenon,” that would serve as a distraction, to divert attention from what was on the verge of being exposed. At the same time, in the very process of being veiled, a deeper process was revealing itself for those who had eyes to see. It felt like I had woken up to find myself in a sci-fi movie—as if a higher-dimensional intelligence were orchestrating and nonlocally configuring not only people’s reactions, perceptions, and behavior, but the natural world itself, so as to protect the figure of the abuser, thus keeping the darkness from being illumined. I was beginning to realize that there is a deeper order inherent in this nonlocal “protection racket” that is arranging and configuring the field so as to hide the abuser, while simultaneously expressing and revealing itself.⁷

Instead of focusing on isolated objects and events, we can expand our fixed perspective and allow the deeper process (often taking the form of a mythic narrative of some sort) that is animating events to reveal itself. Instead of superimposing our limiting ideas and beliefs onto the waking dream, we can allow life to show its dreamlike nature to us. Once I began to notice the deeper pattern that was emerging, it became clear that people routinely got hooked through their unconscious blind spots and acted as unwitting conduits and agents of obfuscation through which the nonlocal disease could replicate itself. Everyone, to the extent we are not fully awakened, is unwittingly protecting the abuser in their own way, as well as protecting themselves. At the same time, all of us, when seen together, are being informed by and are potentially revealing a deeper pattern of unconscious behavior that is always operating in the shadows of the human psyche. We all instinctively assume certain poses and postures relative to each other, like aspects of an underlying, fluidly shape-shifting process that is emerging through our energetic interchanges. Our transactions are an externalized reflection of the same **shadow** dynamics taking place within and between the different parts of our own psyche. From the dreaming point of view—which sees the seemingly outer objective world as a dream that is speaking in symbols which reflect something within the subject (ourselves)—the dynamic of “protecting the abuser” is an expression of the aspect of ourselves that is hiding from the light and resisting the growth of consciousness. This is the complicit part of us that participates in our own abuse. It is a reflection of the aspect of ourselves that keeps us in the dark about what we are doing to ourselves. This book is meant to help blow the cover off of this nonlocal protection racket.

Hidden in the evil of wetiko is its own medicine. Encoded in the darkness is the revelation of the light. Seeing darkness is a form of illumination. As Jung reminds us, we become enlightened by making the darkness conscious. Protecting the abuser, though seemingly in the service of the powers of darkness, is, paradoxically, at the same time potentially revealing the darkness, and hence ultimately an expression of the light. It is as if the light needs the darkness in order to reveal itself, for not only is the darkness revealed through the light, but the light is revealing

itself through the darkness. Seeing how the field nonlocally protects the abuser is a doorway through which we are introduced to the underlying unified and unifying field of consciousness where light and darkness are both expressions of a single nondual sentient presence. Seeing the fieldlike aspect of protecting the abuser is to see the field in its nonlocal glory, which is to be in a glorified—that is, more lucid—state ourselves.

Seeing the field in its nonlinear and nonlocal display magically empowers us with the visionary tools we need in order to navigate safely through to the other side of our experience, from a world of seemingly meaningless, random, separate material events to a world in which life is infused with meaning and we are fully rooted in our seamless connectedness with the biosphere, with each other, and within ourselves. Seeing the field—a place where we are all interconnected—is the portal through which we plug into the living plenum, the infinite reservoir of zero-point energy that fills all of the space in the universe. This is the place of leverage, our point of power where we can cooperatively help each other to step into the dream and put our lucidity⁸ together as one, so as to intervene and creatively transform the waking dream in a way that changes everything.

Dreaming of Dracula

A few of my nighttime dreams come to mind as examples of chilling encounters with the wetiko energy. In the first dream, I am hanging out with Dracula in his apartment. His true identity as an evil vampire with malevolent intentions is “cloaked” by his charisma and charm. We are very friendly with each other. I notice, however, that his eyes are beginning to glow in the dark in a “spooky” way. When I see the luminous, radiant light emanating from his eyes, I spontaneously begin making animal noises, as nature’s creatures do when confronted with an unfamiliar, dangerous otherworldly energy. I begin barking, grunting, squealing, and squawking. Dracula is not pleased that I have noticed his out-of-this-world, preternatural radiance. He didn’t know his supernatural nature was showing, and it is clear that he didn’t want me to see through his

disguise of ordinariness. In the dream, as if coming to my senses and snapping out of a spell, I realize that I am in extreme danger and that I have to leave. *Immediately.* I wake up.

Fairy tales and mythologies the world over symbolically represent, in various forms, humanity's encounter with evil. If a person's psychological/spiritual development isn't sufficiently evolved, they might need to take flight and avoid the evil demon, lest they get overwhelmed by the monster's power and be destroyed. In the dream it felt like I would have been way over my head, totally out of my league, if I had chosen to stay and have it out with Dracula. It was all I could do to escape and get myself out of the precarious and soul-threatening situation in which I found myself. It is interesting that it wasn't my mind, but my intuitive, bodily, animal instincts that initially sensed the danger I was in.

Vampires, and vampiric entities like wetiko, don't like it when their covert, psychological operations are seen. Just like Dracula in my dream, the last thing the vampiric entity of wetiko wants is for us to be "on to it." Because it gets its power from operating covertly in the shadows and out of sight, seeing a demon takes away its seeming autonomy and omnipotence. For when we see the nonlocal, transpersonal nature of the vampire, not only do we take away its power over us, but it also can no longer see us. By seeing "it," we render ourselves invisible to the vampire, who cannot self-reflectively speculate upon the mirrored reflection of itself which we are holding up to it.

The vampiric wetiko bug is a most elusive creature that is very hard to nail down. Because of my close encounters, I've always wanted to write something about vampires that would map my experience in a way that was helpful for others. In the introduction to my first book, I tell a dream I had where I was seeing Dracula and kept on trying to point him out to the other people in the dream, but no one else could see him. That dream has continued to incarnate and transform itself as time unfolds, yet it has been doing so in real waking life. This book is an outing, an unmasking, of the vampire in the field of our human world, and I feel that over time, as my creative fluency deepens, more and more people are seeing what I am pointing at. It is as if in writing this book I am actually enacting my

Introduction

dream, and am changing the ending, as if doing living **active imagination**. How the waking dream unfolds from here on is truly up to us.

I've been creating new articulations, such as these very words, to get across and share with others what I am seeing. The purpose of this book is to flood light on the insidious workings of this malevolent, vampiric figure that operates under the cover of darkness within the human psyche. As I've been progressively illuminating this malevolent entity out in the world, as well as within myself, it has become apparent that something deeper is revealing itself to me in and through the process. My personal encounter with wetiko has taught me something about the nature of



Pencil drawing by Paul Levy, *Padmasambhava*, 17" x 25½", 1992

evil—both human and supra-human—that I evidently could not have learned any other way. In coming to terms with evil, I’ve had to see my own stake in it. In seeing my own complicity in the darkness that is playing out in my life, I’ve had to confront my own capacity for evil. This has forced me to reckon with my own conscience, as well as to open my heart.

A Fight to the Death

In another dream that felt so real that it didn’t feel like a dream at all, I am lying in bed next to Dracula, who this time I clearly recognize as a very dangerous vampire. Unlike the previous dreams, he is not trying to disguise himself at all. We both know what he wants. He’s salivating, simply thirsting for me. We both know that he’s not allowed to “have” me unless I somehow let him. It feels like we are in a battle of wills and of minds, as if my very soul is at stake. Similar to the archetypal myth of Jacob wrestling with the angel, I know I just have to make it to sunrise and then I will be okay. It feels like it is going to be a long and difficult night; the sun can’t come up soon enough. Then, as if remembering something, I have an idea: I start chanting the mantra of Padmasambhava,⁹ who is the deity I invoke, pray to, and honor in my daily Buddhist practice. Padmasambhava’s mantra is OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUNG (I was doing the Tibetan pronunciation OM AH HUNG BEDZAR GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG in the dream). These twelve syllables are considered to be fully “blessed” by Padmasambhava himself, the emanation of his wisdom mind in the form of sound. Padmasambhava, considered the Buddha of this very age, is my guru, teacher, ally, and protector, my celestial guiding spirit and all-around cosmic superhero. Ultimately, Padmasambhava is my own true nature, my intrinsic wholeness, the part of me that’s always connected to what Jung calls the Self, defined as the wholeness and totality of our being. Symbolically speaking, Padmasambhava is the supreme exorcist and alchemist; the greater the negativity, the greater his power of transmutation. By “calling in” the archetypal figure of the exorcist, I am simultaneously “calling out” the devil. I am trembling and quaking in fear as I begin to chant Padmasambhava’s twelve-syllable mantra out loud in

spoken word, waking up my girlfriend sleeping next to me, by the sound of my voice. (She then got to listen to the rest of the dream's soundtrack in real time. It was interesting for me to hear upon awakening how the dream sounded from the perspective of someone outside the dream; she reflected that I sounded absolutely terrified.) It's always interesting to me when I have a dream in which the two seemingly separate worlds intersect: the dream world and the seemingly "real" world.

As I chant the sacred syllables, my words are quivering with unbridled terror. Continuing to shake, I keep on repeating the mantra, the sound of which Dracula seems to absolutely hate. The vibration of the sound greatly affects him, as if hearing the mantra is painful for him. Like kryptonite to Superman, the very energetic presence of the mantra appears to be divesting him of his occult-like superpowers. Saying the twelve syllables is like holding up a crucifix or pouring holy water on the vampire, in that it repulses and repels him. Invoking Padmasambhava is tantamount to connecting with my intrinsic wholeness, the very state in which I'm protected from the deadly vampire. It is as if the vampire has revulsion and disgust for me when I am connected with my true nature, for then it has no power over me.

And then, just like that, the mantra transforms. I spontaneously begin chanting OM MANI PADMA HUNG (I was doing the Tibetan pronunciation OM MANI PEME HOONG in the dream)¹⁰—the six-syllable mantra of compassion—the archetypal quality of compassion embodied in the form of sound. As I continue chanting the six syllables, my fear begins to dissipate, my shaking lessens, and I feel more empowered. My attention shifts from solely focusing on the seemingly external figure of Dracula to connecting with my own heart. Slowly stepping out of the fear of being possessed by the evil vampire, I more and more experience being self-possessed, in possession of my self. Other people are now around, and the sense is that we are all taking part in a ritual preparing for Dracula's demise. At one point, Dracula's mouth opens incredibly wide like a lion yawning, and I instinctively thrust something into his mouth to block it from shutting. One of the people around Dracula is a very attractive woman, who for a moment catches my eye as well as my attention. I quickly bring myself

back to chanting the six syllables, however, since I realize that she might be a nonlocal emanation of Dracula himself, meant to distract me from my task. I continue chanting the six syllables, which appear to be ever so slowly pulling the plug from Dracula, who looks truly down for the count. It reminds me of the Wicked Witch of the West melting in the movie *The Wizard of Oz*. Before my operation is fully accomplished, however, I wake up. I look forward to seeing what happens as I actively imagine and dream this dream to completion in my waking dream, which, at least in my imagination, is what this book is about.

In the dream, the figure of Dracula was the materialization of the vampiric wetiko pathogen in personified form. The incarnation of the bug of wetiko in full drag, Dracula was at the same time the *revelation* of this pathology in full-bodied form. Being informed by wetiko disease, the Dracula figure was encoded with information; he himself was a cipher of information (in need of being de-ciphered). This is to say that through Dracula's appearance in my bed, something was being shown to me. The dream was a reflection of a process happening deep within the psyche—my personal psyche as well as the collective psyche—in which I was struggling with my own inner vampire, as well as the archetypal figure of the vampire itself that exists in potential throughout the whole field. I was literally being forced to come to terms with evil. Or else.

In the first part of the dream, I needed to relate and come to terms with the relative, dualistic level of reality, a realm where good and evil very definitely exist. In the figure of Padmasambhava, I am invoking the supreme exorcist to alchemically transmute and subdue these dark, destructive forces. Unlike the first dream, in this dream it wouldn't have been right for me to run away; it was clear that I needed to have it out with the vampire. I was at the place of initiation; my situation couldn't be postponed. The evil figure couldn't be wished or visualized out of existence. We were in a fight to the death. If I had tried to prematurely cultivate compassion at this early point in the dream, it would have been a "spiritual bypass" (something I see many well-intentioned spiritual practitioners doing), a strategy to evade responsibly dealing with the evil that was right in front of me. This prefabricated compassion, what some call "idiot compassion,"

would not have had the all-embracing quality of genuine compassion, but rather, it would have had an underlying, fear-based agenda—“Let me send this monster some compassion so that he will go away.” I imagine if I had done this in the dream, Dracula would have mocked me for my transparent, superficial pretense of being a good spiritual practitioner. To not avoid the confrontation with the very evil that I was “in bed with,” I was forced to look at my own complicity in evil. There was no getting around this. Going through and into my fear of confronting the very thing I’m afraid of—my own fear and darkness—and not letting it stop me was a portal which allowed me to enter a more expansive and grace-filled realm. It’s interesting to note that the very presence of evil in my dream was related to my becoming lucid. I wonder how the same process is operative in our shared waking dream.

The six syllables are an expression of a lucid compassion which knows no separation. Once I began chanting OM MANI PADMA HUNG, my “lucidity”—the awareness that I was dreaming—more and more kicked in. As my lucidity stabilized, I began to recognize that there was no external vampire, that the whole experience was taking place inside of my own mind. There was no Dracula separate from myself. As if I were going through an initiation, this dream was helping me to realize the figure of Dracula in myself—a part within all of us, in potential, that can be like a vampire, energetically speaking. Seeing myself in the mirror of the vampire is what this seemingly external dream figure came to show me.

Instead of staying stuck and being fixated on Dracula—something seemingly outside of myself that I am afraid of—the point of reference within myself, through which I relate to who I am, had shifted as the dream unfolded. Instead of having my attention drawn outside of myself, I became in touch with and connected to myself. Over the course of the dream, the whole *focus* of my attention had changed; in the language of Carlos Castaneda, author of books on Yaqui shamanism, my “assemblage point,” which can be thought of as the locus within myself through which I organize my perceptions of the world, had shifted. Snapping out of inhabiting a dream in which I existed as a separate self who was vulnerable and needed protection, I stepped into a more expansive dream as

Introduction

I stepped through and out of my fear. At a certain point in the dream I entered the safety of the open heart of compassion, the ultimate refuge and protection.

I first became intimately acquainted and connected with the mantra of compassion when I spontaneously began chanting it the very first time I became lucid in a dream many years ago; or rather, it was as if the mantra began chanting me. Chanting OM MANI PADMA HUNG is what I do in my dreams when I know I'm dreaming. When I recognize the dreamlike nature of the situation I am in, I concurrently recognize that all beings in the dream are "dream characters," embodied, reflective aspects of myself. And what better thing to do upon recognizing this than to send all the different parts of myself compassion? Lucidity and compassion simultaneously co-arise, which is to say that the natural, effortless, energetic expression of recognizing the dreamlike nature of reality is compassion. Chanting the mantra of compassion is an expression of lucidity while simultaneously being a prompt and reminder of lucidity, what I call a "lucidity stimulator." What this means is simple: the way to deepen our lucidity is to cultivate compassion. OM MANI PADMA HUNG. These very words, or anything for that matter, can be seen as a lucidity stimulator, reminders and expressions of the dreamlike nature of this very moment. Getting to the heart of the matter, cultivating such fierce compassion that we're even willing to confront our deepest fears is the very act that puts a stake through the heart of the archetypal figure of the vampire.

Let us begin our investigation and get down to business. We all have a stake in the vampiric business of wetiko. Let's use it to our advantage.

OM MANI PADMA HUNG

Part One

Dreaming of Wetiko

Jung was fond of making an analogy between the formation of symbols in the unconscious and the solidification of crystals in a saturated solution. For example, if we dissolve sugar in a solution of water, the solution will eventually reach a saturation point. If a single grain of sugar is then added to the solution, a crystalline structure will spontaneously appear in the solution. Any moment of self-reflection could be the very grain of sugar, so to speak, that initiates this process. This is true not only individually, but collectively as a species as well. Any one of us recognizing the dream-like nature of our situation, owning our shadow, doing our inner (and outer) work, and waking up to our true nature might be the very act, the very grain of sugar that initiates a change in the entire universe.

—From my book *The Madness of George W. Bush*

Maybe this very moment is the moment.

1

The Greatest Epidemic Sickness Known to Humanity

Creating the Container

In the book *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, indigenous author Jack D. Forbes lucidly explores a psychological disease that has been informing human self-destructive behavior that Native American people have known about for years. After reading his book, it was clear to me that he was describing the same psychospiritual disease of the soul that I wrote about in *The Madness of George W. Bush*. I introduce the idea that from the dawn of human history our species has fallen prey to a collective psychosis which I call malignant egophrenia. Speaking about this very same psychic epidemic, Forbes writes, “For several thousands of years human beings have suffered from a plague, a disease worse than leprosy, a sickness worse than malaria, a malady much more terrible than small-pox.”¹ Indigenous people have been tracking the same “psychic virus” for many centuries, calling it “wetiko” in Cree (*windigo* in Ojibwa, *wintiko* in Powhatan), a term that refers to a diabolically wicked person or spirit who terrorizes others by means of evil acts.² Professor Forbes, who was one of the founders of the Native American movement during the early ’60s, says, “Tragically, the history of the world for the past 2,000 years is, in great part, the story of the epidemiology of the wetiko disease.”³ Wetiko/malignant egophrenia is a “psychosis” in the true sense of the

DREAMING OF WETIKO

word, a “sickness of the soul or spirit.” Though calling it by different names, Forbes and I are both pointing to the same illness of the psyche, soul, and spirit that has been at the root of humanity’s inhumanity to itself. There is no possibility of awakening from our collective nightmare without first becoming aware of what it is that is keeping us asleep.

As if performing a magic ritual, in exploring the entity of wetiko/malignant egophrenia, we first have to invoke its spirit and enter into relationship with it. Wetiko/malignant egophrenia needs to be contemplated “religiously,”⁴ not in the dogmatic sense, but in the true meaning of the word, that is, carefully considering, with a sense of awe and reverence a living and dynamic agency that is conceived of and experienced as a numinous power greater than our own ego. We must contemplate and engage wetiko/malignant egophrenia as objectively as we are able, *as if* it exists outside of ourselves, lest we get too “mixed up” with the object of our contemplation. Due to its unique psychic origin, the epidemiology of wetiko/malignant egophrenia is different from that of any other disease. An intrinsic challenge to our investigation of the wetiko/malignant egophrenia virus is that it is incarnating in the very psyche which itself is the means of our investigation. We therefore need to examine the disease from a perspective that is as free as possible from assumptions created by the very disease being studied. If we are not aware of the frame of reference through which we are examining the wetiko/malignant egophrenia virus, our investigation will be tainted by the disease, obscuring the clear vision needed to start the healing process. Studying how wetiko/malignant egophrenia disease manifests in others, as well as in the “other” part of ourselves, will help us to *see* it more objectively. Seeing this psychological disease manifesting in the world is the looking glass through which we can potentially recognize this same illness as it arises subjectively within our own minds.

After evoking an entity like wetiko/malignant egophrenia, in order to study it as objectively as possible, we have to hermetically seal it within an “alchemical container” (see **hermetic vessel** in the Glossary). This ensures that its mercurial spirit doesn’t vaporize back into the invisibility of the unconscious, where it could once again act itself out through us. Though

Jung wasn't familiar with either of the names "wetiko" or "malignant egophrenia," from his voluminous writings it is clear that he was very much tuned into this archetypal psychospiritual pathology of the soul. He was continually pointing at wetiko/malignant egophrenia when he would write about "the germ" of psychological evil. He emphasized the importance of developing a "container" (a word which, revealingly, has multiple meanings: to include, hold together, have capacity for, control, restrain and limit) in which to catch such troublesome and malevolent spirits. Jung writes, "Therefore, if anything is wrong, take it out of its place and put it in the vessel that is between your neighbor and yourself... For love of mankind, create a vessel into which you can catch all that damned poison. For it must be somewhere—it is always somewhere—and not to catch it, to say it doesn't exist, gives the best chance to any germ."⁵ Wetiko/malignant egophrenia is an elusive spirit that is challenging to pin down and say it is "this" or "that." One of the first steps in studying wetiko/malignant egophrenia is to locate it, so that it can be "contained" and its qualities observed. This kind of effort, while likely to be successful to some degree, is sure to be confounded, in that there will always be aspects of wetiko/malignant egophrenia that are neither locatable nor containable. Though wetiko/malignant egophrenia is ontologically real, its **nonlocal** nature makes it nearly impossible to find in its entirety. The best we can do is to find local traces of its nonlocal, multidimensional field of operations. Being nonlocal, wetiko/malignant egophrenia is atemporal, which is to say it exists in a dimension outside of time, although its effects manifest in ways that can be clearly discerned within time itself. Adding to the complications, wetiko/malignant egophrenia exists in a place outside of place, a place that is not contained in a place, a placeless place located who-knows-where. Wetiko/malignant egophrenia has its own unique topography, existing in a world whose coordinates cannot be plotted in astronomical space and time or situated on our maps. This land of no-where where wetiko/malignant egophrenia exists is a place that is not in the geography of our three-dimensional world. Realizing this, the question "Where?" loses its meaning, at least in the terms of our sensory experience. Being nowhere in particular, wetiko/malignant egophrenia is

DREAMING OF WETIKO

everywhere in potential—even, or particularly, within ourselves, as it is of the nature of a state rather than a place. As if in a dream where the inner is the outer, we can recognize that the wetiko/malignant egophrenia virus that we have been tracking “out there,” outside of ourselves, is a reflection of and co-related to the same process within ourselves. But this insight ultimately brings us to the contemplation of who is the self that wetiko/malignant egophrenia is within, and where is this self to be found?

Though the place where wetiko/malignant egophrenia exists is impossible to locate, at the same time, it is critical that we attempt to delineate its properties. Unlike a physical virus, the wetiko/malignant egophrenia bug cannot be isolated materially, but its characteristic signature can be detected and seen in the peculiar operations of a psyche that is under its spell. To not recognize the existence of the wetiko/malignant egophrenia germ—“to say it doesn’t exist”—allows the psychic infection to act itself out unrestrained. Being “always somewhere” is to be nonlocal, which means that it is always around. In calling forth the wetiko/malignant egophrenia spirit, we are simultaneously creating, through our inquiry itself, the container in which we can study this bug so as to understand what in fact we are dealing with, to see how it operates in the world, in others, and subjectively, within ourselves. In order to come full circle in our contemplative exercise/exorcise, we have to homeopathically take our contemplation back within ourselves. Just like in the use of immunization and allergy treatments, a small amount of the pathogen or allergen is given to stimulate the immune response. As if giving ourselves a psychic vaccination, we inoculate ourselves from the disease by taking it into ourselves, for, as the healing art of homeopathy has realized, that which causes a symptom can also cure it. This process connects us with the mythological figures of the wounded healer or divine healer (such as Asklepios, Chiron, and Christ⁶), who have to suffer through the sickness that they are able to cure.

This archetypal journey we are about to embark upon in our contemplation necessitates a shamanic descent into the darkness of our own depths. It is only by going through and making the darkness conscious that we arrive at the light. This book is a reflection of this very dynamic,

for we start off by making a descent into the unconscious, only to come out the other side, into the light of consciousness itself. Encoded in the darkness of wetiko/malignant egophrenia is a revelation, something that is most important for us to know.

Which Name Shall We Use?

I gave myself creative license (a credential which is on file in the office of the divine creative imagination) to make up the name malignant egophrenia. It was not an easy name to come up with. One night two friends and I were hanging out and contemplating this nonlocal psychospiritual disease of the soul that we had all been tracking in our lives. I was writing the first chapter of *The Madness of George W. Bush* at the time, and we were trying to figure out what we could call this virulent madness that Bush was acting out on the world stage. We all knew a number of people in our lives who were embodying the essence of the same archetypal disease that George W. Bush was possessed by, and all of these people on the surface looked totally different in the way they were acting out this malady. We realized that this disease of the soul had an infinite multiplicity of forms in which it played itself out, but nonetheless it was the same underlying pathology. It was as if there was an “archetypal invariant” displaying itself in numberless variations out in the world. In this particular form of madness the healthy parts of the person’s psyche have been co-opted by the pathological aspect, which drafts them into its service. We kept coming up with various names, sometimes even different combinations of words, but none of them felt right. In the moment when we came up with the name malignant egophrenia, we all knew that we had found the right name. Malignant egophrenia is a more Western and modernized name for what indigenous people called wetiko. A modern idiom for wetiko, “malignant egophrenia” is “wetiko” translated into the English language.

Most of the Native American literature I’ve found on the topic talks about the mythic dimension of wetiko in the sense that the wetiko monster is a sort of supernatural boogeyman who lives in the forest and who can eat or possess people; of course, this can be read symbolically to

DREAMING OF WETIKO

represent a psychological potential within ourselves. I very much appreciate Jack Forbes's work, which translates the ancient indigenous mythology into a more psychological form, showing how it plays itself out in the modern world. In this book, I've unfolded and amplified the indigenous idea of wetiko, as well as Forbes's conception of it as a psychological disease, based on my own living experience. Hopefully, in doing so, I've fleshed out the deeper psychospiritual underpinnings of the myth, while at the same time attempting to honor the indigenous tradition and translate its wisdom into a modern idiom.

Giving myself creative license once again (for this certification does not have an expiration date), we quickly realized that malignant egophrenia could be shortened to ME disease, which sounded like and suggested what it meant. The name "ME disease" is pointing to the very essence of what the problem is, that is, the grasping on to an imagined "me," a sense of an independent egoic self, which doesn't exist in the way we think it does. This clinging on to a false sense of self, this self-contraction around a false identity, is itself both the source of and the expression of wetiko/malignant egophrenia—hence ME disease. If someone said to me, "What gives you the right to name things?" I would respond by asking what doesn't give me the right to create names to help articulate my experience. Naming is an intrinsic magical power that we all have, whether we know it or not. If this person then judges or condemns me for using my God-given power to name my experience, I would point out that they are suffering from what I call "Creativity Suppression Syndrome," which is the name I apply to people who feel compelled to put down other people and try to stop them from expressing themselves creatively.

As if unwrapping and decoding a hidden spiritual treasure that had occurred to us with the force of a revelation, my friends and I realized that "ME disease" could also stand for something else—Mad Emperor disease, which is what happens when a person in a position of power falls prey to, becomes seduced by, addicted and attached to power. Coincidentally, all three of us had a Mad Emperor figure in our field. We all knew a certain person who was so taken over by ME disease that he was convinced that he was the Emperor of China. I'm not making this up or exaggerating

in the slightest. Completely out of his mind, as his madness progressed, he didn't just think that he was the Emperor of China, but had recently upgraded himself to being the emperor of the entire universe (see **inflation** in the Glossary). He was possessed by his unconscious in such a way that he was a full-blown wetiko/malignant egophreniac on steroids, an amplified, exaggerated caricature of the very madness in which we were so deeply interested. It was as if he were a living, breathing symbol, the revelation in human form of a primordial archetypal form of insanity that exists in potential in the depth of the collective psyche. It couldn't have been more crystal clear that we had found the name for the madness that he was suffering from: Mad Emperor disease. No one could have convinced us otherwise.

Continuing to give ourselves even more creative license (a license that we are happy to share with anyone), my friends and I then realized that ME disease had a secret name—Middle East disease—as the madness that is being acted out on a daily basis in the Middle East is an acute outbreak in concentrated form of the very essence of this nonlocal disease. It is as if this formless, higher-dimensional disease of the soul that pervades the entire body politic is crystallizing itself in the Middle East, where it is literally as well as symbolically revealing itself through its localized inflammation for all who have eyes to see. This is similar to when a person is infected with the germs of a disease, they are dispersed all throughout the body until they concentrate upon the organ in which the disease will manifest. It is as if the world-body's psychic infection has broken out in fully visible form in the Middle East, which actually gives us an incredible opportunity to study it so as to understand how to cure it. Once my friends and I realized these deeper layers of multidimensional meanings, each pointing at a different aspect of the disease, we felt that we had found the right name indeed.

It makes no difference whether we use wetiko (its mantric name), malignant egophrenia (its outer name), ME disease (its shortened, essentialized name), Mad Emperor disease (its inner name), or Middle East disease (its secret name). Each has a different vibration, meaning, and association. Active, living speech is a gesture, a vocal gesticulation

DREAMING OF WETIKO

mirroring how the world itself can be seen to be of the nature of an utterance. Wetiko to me “sounds” like a mantra, in that it is not a known, Western word associated with a literal, conceptual meaning in the same way that English words are. Mantras operate on the level of sound vibration, in that they carry a phonemic, sensual level of affective meaning which is not translatable into conceptual definitions, speaking to and resonating with a nonverbal part of our being. Mantras contain a magical power regarding the essence of what they are representing in the form of sound. Like a mantric word of power, the name wetiko feels like it is evoking and simultaneously dispelling so as to liberate what it is naming. The name wetiko also feels like it has the power imbued into it by the many Native American people over the centuries who have uttered, contemplated, and used it. It feels to me that by reciting the name wetiko over a long period of time, indigenous people have invested a psychic energy into the word, which feels empowered with their energy. It feels as if this psychic energy that is encoded and impregnated in the word wetiko is a numinous power that we can access when we pronounce or contemplate the word, or so I imagine.

The term “malignant egophrenia,” on the other hand, sounds like what it is pointing at. It joins together the conceptual meaning of “bad,” (the prefix *mal-* means something negative or bad; the word “malignant” refers to something bad that is growing and spreading like a cancer), “ego” (associating to misidentifying who we truly are and connoting a sense of self-importance) and “the mind” (*phrenia* means “of the mind”—as in “schizophrenia”). This name evokes an image of what a “mal-ego” looks like, how it deviates our mind, and how it can spread like a contagion in the greater field. As if I were doing dreamwork and making associations, it makes me want to play with the word and spell it “mal(e)go,” which immediately suggests the negative patriarchy, an archetype (see **archetype of the negative father** in the Glossary) which is very related to malignant egophrenia. It is interesting how all of these interconnected associative links constellate around this name. ME disease brings to mind that no one is exempt, that this disease is about ME! “Mad Emperor disease” and “Middle East disease” evoke their own distinct images. We have freedom

to use whichever name easily rolls off of our tongue. The psychic winds that help us to create language pass through our inner channels differently, informing how we language our experience in our own unique way. We can choose whatever name evokes the image, meaning, or energy we want to call forth, as each of the various names is illuminating a different facet of whatever it is we call it. We can even invent our own name, as long as it helps us to dis-spell the curse of not knowing the name. From this point forward, I am choosing to use the mantric name of the disease—that is, *wetiko*—for a number of reasons: to introduce this indigenous word into the popular vernacular, as well as to honor the indigenous traditions that have created this word, in addition to wanting to access the power inherent in its mantric energy, and finally, because it “sounds” right.

A Disease of Civilization

In order for our minds to comprehend something, there must be an appropriately structured neural structure called a “frame” that makes it possible to contextualize, make proper sense of, and mentally “see” the thing. Our understanding of the world is frame dependent: frames are the accessories with which we think. Frames are the cognitive, conceptual structures that enable us to put together, amplify, and activate ideas. When a truth is unseen it is because it is both unframed and unnamed; frames and names go together. A major reason why *wetiko* remains incomprehensible to us is that, in addition to not knowing its name, we are operating out of frames that render it invisible and unknowable. *Wetiko* is a semantic disorder that functions by deviating the very process by which we attribute meaning to our experience; it is therefore important to establish a proper frame in order to see it.

In framing our situation, it is important to recognize that one mode through which *wetiko* operates on our mind is through the activity of framing itself. Improper frames can be one of the most pernicious factors distorting our mind’s capacity to see reality clearly. In light of the very principle of framing, understanding frames requires a frame to be created so as to be able to appreciate the importance of framing. Words and

DREAMING OF WETIKO

language are elements of, defined by, and understood relative to frames. Without a word activating a frame, there is not a way for the mind to grasp the concept/reality to which the word is referring. This book is an effort to name and construct a conceptual frame around the complex idea of wetiko. Bringing forth the name(s) associated with this syndrome activates the conceptual frame to which it is linked; the combination of the frame and name acts as a net or container which “catches” wetiko.

It is not a coincidence that the development of wetiko corresponds to the rise of what Europeans choose to call civilization. The unsustainable nature of industrial civilization is based on, and increasingly requires, violence to maintain itself. Genuine civilization, in essence, means not killing people. In a famous witticism, when an English journalist asked Gandhi what he thought of Western civilization, he responded, “I think it would be a good idea.” Modern civilization, though outwardly highly developed, is inwardly very primitive and preadolescent, an institutionalized form of barbarism in modern drag. It makes sense that Native peoples would know about malignant egophrenia, as they were oppressed by civilization yet weren’t, at least initially, under the “curse” of modern civilization. Being under the sway of modern civilization can feel as if something foreign to our nature is being imposed upon us, as if we are living in an occupied land. Modern civilization suffers from the overly one-sided dominance of the rational, intellectual mind, a one-sidedness that seemingly disconnects us from nature, from empathy, and from ourselves. Due to its disassociation from the whole, wetiko is a disturber of the peace of humanity and the natural world, a sickness which spawns aggression and is capable of inciting violence among living beings. The wetiko virus is the root cause of the inhumanity in human nature, or shall we say, our seemingly inhuman nature. Wetiko represents and inspires the worst a human being can do to another human being, and ultimately, to ourselves. This psychic virus, a “bug” in “the system,” informs and animates the madness of so-called civilization, which, in a self-perpetuating feedback loop, feeds the madness within ourselves.

Forbes continues, “This disease, this wetiko (cannibal) psychosis, is the greatest epidemic sickness known to man.”⁷ “Cannibalism” symbolically

has to do with feasting on another's soul. We, as a species, are in the midst of a massive psychic epidemic, a virulent collective psychosis that has been brewing in the cauldron of humanity's psyche from the beginning of time. Like a fractal, wetiko operates on multiple dimensions simultaneously—intra-personally (within individuals), inter-personally (among ourselves), collectively (as a species), as well as trans-personally (in a realm beyond our personal selves). Those afflicted with wetiko consume, like a cannibal, the life force of others—human and nonhuman—for private purpose or profit, and do so without giving back something from their own lives. One example that symbolizes our self-destructive, collective madness is the oil companies' destruction of the Amazon rainforest, the lungs of our planet. This is a full-bodied revelation showing us what we are doing to ourselves. Another example that both literally and symbolically illustrates the wetiko complex in action is the Monsanto Company's genetically engineering terminator seeds that do not reproduce a second generation, thus forcing farmers to buy new seeds from Monsanto for each year's new crop. This makes survival impossible for many poor farmers, triggering a wave of suicides among them, while Monsanto grows richer from the process.

In essence, genuine predators, “full-blown” wetikos (which can be an individual person or the “person” of a corporation), are not in touch with their own humanity and therefore can't see the humanity in others. Instead, they relate to others either as potential prey or as a threat to their dominance. As if they are a different breed who is a more animal-like predator than ordinary human being, those who are fully taken over by the wetiko psychosis consume others' lives, physically, emotionally, psychically, and metaphysically, beyond just the material body and physical possessions to the level of meaning itself. Wetikos are the “anti-artists” of our culture, embodying the opposite of what creative artists do. Unlike an artist who creates life-enhancing meaning that enriches the world without robbing others, a wetiko takes and consumes without giving anything back, continually impoverishing the planet, draining it of its resources. These anti-artists are also averse to the open-ended freedom of true artistic, creative expression, which they fear because it threatens their wetiko-driven world.

Art, the Daemonic, and Wetiko

Many of us can't fathom the level of evil to which full-blown wetikos have fallen prey and of which they are capable. They have a distinct advantage if we don't recognize their predator-like nature. We can't possibly meet their challenge unless we clearly discern what we are up against. As the old adage counsels us, it is important to "know your enemy." The depth of depravity being acted out is so dark, however, that it induces in many a tendency to pretend that it isn't really happening. When evil, for example, is being enacted by our own government, by those who are supposed to have our best interests in mind and are entrusted with our protection, it is intolerable to realize that atrocities are being perpetrated in our name; thus, the evidence has to be internally denied. This works to the wetikos' advantage, as it allows them to continue to act out evil in a manner which is denied by and incomprehensible to us. Their evil is so off the radar of our accepted system of morality that it is practically beyond the ability of our legal system to redress. Our lack of imagination for the evil existing in potential in humanity is a direct reflection of a lack of intimacy with our own potential for evil, which further serves to enable the malevolence of wetiko to have nearly free rein in our world. We can't afford to have a concept of evil that is too small. This is why Jung counseled us to develop an "imagination for evil,"⁸ because being able to imagine the scope of evil that human beings can fall prey to, become instruments for, and act out empowers us to see the evil more clearly, as it appears both in the world and within ourselves, and thereby deal with it more effectively. Evil devastates any possibility of an intellectual response; the tools of the rational intellect are as helpless in coping with the after-effects of evil as it was in preventing it. In our psychic blindness we are complicit in the spreading of the evil of the wetiko psychosis, a systematic evil whose depth and depravity is beyond the capacity of words to fully describe. Evil ruptures and paralyzes the ability to language our experience, creating a seemingly unbridgeable gap between language and the event it is supposed to describe. Finding ourselves confronted with that place of no words, we are forced to simultaneously discover and create

a new language, a language which is universal and transcends language itself, a language known as art.

Being that wetikos are the anti-artists of our time, it can help us to understand and deal with the plague of wetiko by stepping into and seeing it in contrast to its antithesis, the archetypal figure of the artist. When I use the term “artist,” I am not using it in a traditional, limited way of meaning someone who is solely painting, drawing, or using some other particularized medium; this is too circumscribed and flatland of a conception of what an artist is. When I use the term “artist” I am alluding to the fact that we are all creative, multidimensional visionary artists and dreamers whose canvas is life itself. Art is not just an activity that results in products but, rather, is a way of being and mediating experience. The very act of verbally or nonverbally language-ing our experience, of giving creative shape and form to what is happening both inside and outside of ourselves is itself the process through which we, as artists, deepen our realization of what we are trying to express. The fact that our realization of what we are expressing deepens through the act of creatively expressing it is the litmus test which certifies our act of creation to be worthy of the name “art.” In creating a new form of communication, the work of art is both an expression of a more expanded consciousness, as well as being its initiator. Art attains its greatest numinosity and ability to affect others when the creator of the work of art is re-creating themselves and being transformed in and through the act of creating the work of art. The artwork then becomes a living testament to, encoded with, and a carrier of this experience of transformation, as if the work of art unlocks the door through which this transformation becomes activated in and transferred to others in an act of living transmission. The artist’s creative endeavors are timeless artifacts, which act like transducers of the semantic, symbolic power encoded in the human psyche. Contagious in its effects, art can “virally” spread via the unconscious of our species in a way which liberates and unleashes the latent, creative energy lying dormant in the unconscious of humanity, which has the power to effect real change in the world. Ultimately speaking, the real purpose of art

DREAMING OF WETIKO

is not merely to momentarily express ourselves so as to make us feel better, but to awaken us and make us free.

Like all of us, the artist suffers from the spirit of the age. The creative artist, like a shaman and magician, however, is able to be in-formed by and constructively channel, transmute, and out-picture the seemingly obscuring daemonic energies of wetiko in a symbolic form that takes away wetiko's spell-binding power over themselves, while at the same time helping to nonlocally dispel the collective enchantment pervading the entire field of consciousness. Discovering novel, creative, and ever-evolving articulations of language to express experience is a "spell-casting" activity, in that it serves to dispel the veil of illusion which limited forms of language can cast which seemingly obstructs us from the true richness of our own experience. Creatively expressing what is moving us is the very act which liberates us from the compulsion of having to unconsciously re-create these energies (self)-destructively in a way that continually retraumatizes both ourselves and the world around us. In the figure of the artist, the creative spirit realizes itself through us, while at the same time we, as artists, reciprocally realize ourselves through *it*.

Not merely a personal energy, wetiko is transpersonal in nature, having a **daemonic** agency, arising out of the archetypal realm of the collective unconscious itself. A power of nature, the daemonic is not an objectively existing metaphysical entity in the Christian sense, but rather, is an archetypal function of human experience, a psychic as well as an existential reality in which we all participate. The daemonic is the urge in every being to affirm itself, assert itself, and perpetuate itself; it is the voice of the generative process within an individual. To quote the noted psychologist Rollo May, the daemonic is "any natural function which has the power to take over the whole person [or group/nation] ... the daemonic can be either creative or destructive [i.e., 'demonic'] and is normally both. When this power goes awry, and one element usurps control over the entire personality, we have 'daemon possession' the traditional name through history for psychosis."⁹⁹ [Please note: comments in brackets are the author's.] According to May, violence "is the daemonic gone awry. It is 'daemon possession' in its starkest form. Our age is one of

transition, in which the normal channels for utilizing the daemonic are denied; and such ages tend to be times when the daemonic is expressed in its most destructive form.”¹⁰ Being an archetypal energy that can take over and possess a person or a species, the daemonic announces itself by drafting people into its service, enlisting human beings as instruments of its full-bodied revelation of itself. People so possessed will be compelled to unconsciously act out so as to give shape and living form to this archetypal, daemonic energy in the third dimension. The daemonic draws power when it is not consciously re-presented in form. Not to recognize and creatively express the daemonic itself turns out to serve the demonic, unwittingly making us accomplices in the dark side of its life-destroying aspect. What remains unsaid in us is forever angling to come into view; it seeks its art. Seemingly inspired by higher powers, the artist is at the same time driven by powers from below that are arising out of the unconscious.

The daemonic is a quantum phenomenon, in that it contains both the light and dark aspects of our being encoded within it in a superposed state, which is to say that hidden within the daemonic are the creative seeds of its own positive transformation and transfiguration. Both constructive and destructive forces are present in the daemonic simultaneously, and either energy can potentially gain the upper hand and manifest, depending upon how an observing consciousness interacts with it. If the daemonic is not honored and treated *religiously*, however, it constellates negatively and turns truly “demonic,” in the destructive sense of the word. The daemonic is made up of inchoate creativity not yet “made real” or actualized by the ego. Hidden in the daemonic is our inner voice, our guiding spirit, our angel, and our genius, what is referred to as our “daemon.” Encoded within the daemonic is our creative potency, which if distorted, misused, or unexpressed becomes self- and other-destructive. Developing a healthy and strong ego is crucially important in entering into relationship with and creatively expressing the daemonic energies within us. Unrealized creativity is one of the most destructive things in the human psyche. The creative artist is able to express, mediate, alchemically transmute, and humanize the daemonic into a communicable form

DREAMING OF WETIKO

that is beneficial for others, thus performing an invaluable and necessary service for human society.

Human beings are the conduits through which the timeless creative process that underlies and informs the human psyche as well as the world at large becomes expressed and actualized in linear time. Like living oracles, artists are mouthpieces for the time in which they live. Like psychic scribes, they are able to inwardly tune in so as to outwardly express and explicate the contemporary social context, the emerging zeitgeist, the implicate spirit of the age, while simultaneously giving shape to the deeper archetypal, timeless, and unconscious process which informs all ages. In creatively translating the daemonic energies being touched inside of themselves into a communicable language, the artist taps into forms, vibrations, and realizations that exist in the formless, atemporal realm—a dimension existing “outside of time”—as if they are discovering spiritually liberating treasures that are waiting to be formulated and brought forth when the time is ripe. Touching a chord deep in the unconscious soul of humanity, these mind-expanding memetic thought-forms (see **memes** in the Glossary), once expressed and released into the field, can virally spread rapidly with worldwide transformative and redeeming power. They exist in latent form in the shared collective unconscious of humanity, waiting to be activated and revealed so as to offer their gifts.

In becoming intermediaries through which the divine creativity expresses itself and is made real in time, artists are participating in a re-creation of the eternal play of creation itself. Like alchemists, creative artists are liberating the creative spirit of the cosmos, an act they could only accomplish with the “blessing” of the very creative spirit which they serve. Alchemists of the soul, creative artists are channels for the universe to autopoietically re-create itself in a uniquely evolutionary way. As the alchemists realized, humanity is indispensable for the completion of creation, which is to say that we ourselves are the second creators of the world. The archetypal figure of the artist is the alchemical transformer of wetiko and the healer of the world. This figure exists within all of us in potential, waiting to creatively express and realize itself so as to become active in creating a new world. Everyone is an alchemist who strives to give

form to the unconscious. The wetiko epidemic that has been emerging into our world-system from time immemorial will be truly known only when we evolve the radically new artistic forms that the gravity, magnitude, and majesty of our subject requires.

Mythologically speaking, the figure of the “would-be hero,” which is all of us in potential, is always inhabited by a daemon. Having a daemon like wetiko taking up residence inside of us is the very thing that potentially “makes” us a hero. The Buddhist word for hero is “bodhisattva,” a being in the process of awakening (who among us is not potentially “a being in the process of awakening”?). Our heroic fight against the paralyzing grip of the daemon is initiatory, in that it calls forth our latent brilliance and creative powers. In coming to terms and wrestling with our daemon, which is to say ourselves, we create ourselves anew. With wetiko as our object of contemplation, we situate and create ourselves relative to it; it is our relation and we, its “offspring.” As artists wrestle with their demons, they are able to symbolize their experience in the form of their art. Having it out with the daemonic, like Jacob wrestling with the seemingly dark angel of God, artists are able to extract a blessing from the encounter, which imbues their work with a numinosity that can potentially influence (and “inflow” into) others who are receptive. It takes genuine courage to do battle with these internal daemonic forces and wrest from them the mythic “treasure hard to attain,” which is none other than our soul-filled selves. As we become accomplished practitioners of our art, we are increasingly able to alchemically transmute on the spot the potential destructiveness of the demonic into stimulators of our own creative lucidity. We have then given birth to our daemon in the form of our guiding spirit. Or rather, in that moment our daemon gives birth to us.

2

Understanding Wetiko

What Is Wetiko?

“What is wetiko?” is indeed a question worthy of our deepest consideration; as we will discover, it is not a simple question to answer. The inquiry itself can potentially inspire more questions, confusion, and uncertainty. We might do well to recall Rumi’s counsel to “sell certainty and buy bewilderment” as we seek to understand the multidimensional trickster that is wetiko. Wetiko is elusive and mercurial, for whatever we say wetiko is, it isn’t, in that it is always more, less, and other than what we are able to say it is in language. This is to say that wetiko doesn’t easily lend itself to language nor to words. In using language to describe a factor such as wetiko, we run up against the limits imposed by the logic and grammar built into the language we are using. The English language, relying on nouns (separate things) interacting, does not coincide with the actuality of the underlying process informing our world. Interestingly, the Algonquian language, which gave birth to the word “wetiko,” is more verb and process oriented. The more we develop intellectual concepts, and the more abstract our thinking becomes, the more we run the risk of having our language become dissociated from the fundamental ground of Being. A language composed of living words that discloses reality can only develop and organically emerge from intimate, direct experience of the reality of the Logos, which is the ground of language itself. The nonlocal

DREAMING OF WETIKO

wetiko factor is a transcendental concept which cannot be adequately expressed in terms of language or our Western philosophical views, which are contained within categories of space and time. Every language carries and is the embodiment of a prevailing worldview, along with a built-in assumption that it is not restricting our worldview in any way, but simply describing “reality.” Given the inherent limiting and distorting factor of the English language, the best we can do is to use this very same language to point out, clarify, and deconstruct this problem with language to the best of the language’s ability to do so. In addition, we can create new words to more accurately language our experience. Truly “unspeakable” in words, in that wetiko is impossible to “capture” in the limited medium of language, it can also inspire truly unspeakable acts of evil to be perpetrated that are beyond the scope of language to convey. Certain violations of the social contract are too terrible to utter aloud: this is the meaning of the word unspeakable.

Wetiko needs to be approached imaginatively, which is to say we must be “full of imagination” to understand and begin to get a handle on it. To quote philosopher and visionary Buckminster Fuller, if we are not full of imagination, we are “not very sane.” In describing wetiko, we are in a circumstance that is similar, I imagine, to that of the ancient alchemists, who in contemplating an indescribable divine mystery, did not really know, at least with their conceptual minds, what they were writing about. Not knowing what they were trying to articulate, the unconscious itself was simultaneously living through the alchemists as it revealed itself to them, which is the same situation we find ourselves in as we attempt to illuminate wetiko. In trying to articulate what wetiko is, I feel the way I imagine the ancient alchemists used to feel when they would try to describe their **God-image**, Mercurius, the multisided, trickster-like deity who was the object of their veneration. Mercurius, whom the alchemists never tired of drawing attention to as being a “psychic phenomenon,” has, like wetiko, material and spiritual aspects, such that to describe it in terms of one or the other was to misrepresent the nature of this entity whose being embraces multiple categories which are usually conceived of as being mutually exclusive. A conjunction of opposites, Mercurius¹

contained and combined elements of both God and the devil in one being.

Speaking of the devil, supposedly his greatest ruse is to convince us that he doesn't exist. Or, on the other hand, is the suggestion that the devil does exist, implicit in the previous statement, a deception of the devil (who is, after all, considered "the deceiver"), and as such, is a disguised form in which the wily devil has insinuated himself not only into our conversation, but into the world at large? It is important to shed light on this murky area: an evil, archetypal figure like the devil doesn't exist in the way we have been imagining he does if we have been imagining that he exists objectively, as something independent from ourselves. The very imagination that we are using to try and get a handle on this figure is the very same faculty through which this seeming entity operates and takes on the appearance of existence. Herein lies a portrait of one aspect of why our task of illuminating wetiko is so challenging and so full of paradoxical conundrums.

Similarly, wetiko cannot be said to exist separate from our own selves. The devilish wetiko virus, like a vampire, if left to its own devices, not only has no power but would die, as it is only able to exist if there is someone seemingly outside of itself on whom it can feast. It requires the self/other dichotomy in order to take root and flourish. A vampire has no intrinsic, independent, substantial existence in its own right; it only exists in relation to us. The pathogenic, vampiric mind-parasite called wetiko is nothing in itself—not being able to exist from its own side—yet it has a "virtual reality" such that it can potentially destroy our species. This is literally true! The fact that something that only exists as a function of ourselves can destroy us is pointing at the incredibly vast, invisible, yet mostly untapped power that is inherent within our being. As Jung reminds us, "only that which can destroy itself is truly alive."² To be capable of the conscious pursuit and creation of the highest values renders us at the same time capable of the greatest destruction. Ultimately speaking, in wetiko disease we are not being infected by a physical, objectively existing virus outside of ourselves, but rather, being psychogenetic, the origin and genesis of the wetiko psychosis is entirely within us. The fact that a

DREAMING OF WETIKO

vampire is not reflected by a mirror can also mean that what we need to see is that there's nothing, no-thing to see, other than ourselves. The fact that wetiko is the expression of something inside of us means that the cure for wetiko is within us as well. The critical issue is finding this cure within us and then putting it into effect.

Wetiko is nonperceptible and irrepresentable in itself, in that it can't be directly seen, solidified, or fully defined. Since it doesn't accord to the usual logic of thought, wetiko can't be completely articulated without introducing paradoxes and seeming contradictions. Many of its manifold aspects are not consistent with each other. Wetiko is irrepresentable because it lacks a specific content, in the sense that, just like the archetypes of the collective unconscious, it is nothing but a range of potentialities. Wetiko seeks situations to fill itself out in embodied form, drawing the stuff of experience into its empty form, representing itself in the facts of experience rather than representing facts. The sensory data of the world are selected and exploited by wetiko so as to give shape and form to itself and thereby reveal its underlying structure. Wetiko becomes experience-able only through the shaping of the stuff of experience. We are only able to know it as it reveals itself to us by continuously contemplating its multidimensional expressions. Just as we approach an overwhelming trauma by studying its symptoms, we come to know wetiko by contemplating its reflections and tracking its footprints in the third dimension, as well as by the traces it leaves in the inner psychic landscape of our minds. This is similar to how we can't directly see an archetype, but through the archetype's effects we can infer its nature and qualities. Another example is in physics, where the smallest subatomic particle can't be directly seen but can be inferred by its effects, through which we can build up a model of its nature and qualities.

As we begin our contemplation of wetiko, it is important for us to become acquainted with the peculiar nature of the beast with which we are dealing. Strictly speaking, the wetiko virus doesn't exist as a "thing" in the third dimension the way a biological virus does. In our Western, scientific, materialistic culture we have an absurd prejudice that something is real only if it exists in physical, quantifiable terms, while the indisputable

fact is that the only form of existence we have immediate knowledge of is psychic. Wetiko can't be objectified, and said to be "this" or "that," as it is a nonobjectifiable phenomenon that is embedded in, operates via, and potentially alters the way we see. Wetiko acts as both a filter through which and a mirror in which we see ourselves. Wetiko is "ineffable," in that it transcends both of the extremes of existence and nonexistence. From the absolute point of view, the wetiko virus doesn't actually exist as a substantial entity. If we think wetiko is real, however, we have seemingly made it real, and fallen under its spell, simply by thinking so. And yet, if we decide wetiko doesn't exist, and that we shouldn't give it our attention, this stance is a form of ignore-ance which only ensures wetiko's continued reign over our psyche. This shows us that wetiko, though ultimately having no substantial existence, is more than merely just an "appearance" conjured up by the way we are viewing it, while at the same time it is a "no-thing" that is precisely a display of how we are viewing it.

So if we think wetiko actually exists, we are under its thrall. And if we think it doesn't exist, we are under its thrall. What gives? The fact that we find ourselves in such a conundrum when we contemplate wetiko is itself providing us with a source of potentially useful information about wetiko and its underlying logic. As an added bonus, this paradox is showing us something about its—and our—nature.

The Reality of the Psyche

Wetiko has its origin in the imagining and image-making psyche. This is not to say, however, that wetiko is "all in the mind," that it is merely our imagination and projection and hence "unreal." This would be to conclude that if we don't pay attention to wetiko, it doesn't exist, which is clearly and simply not true. Our naiveté about the virulent nature of wetiko could then be compared to the situation of people in the vicinity of patients stricken with cholera who remained unconscious of and didn't recognize the contagiousness of the disease. To think there is no such thing as cholera is the best means to cause a world epidemic. Wetiko abides in a higher-dimensional space beyond simply being our projection.

DREAMING OF WETIKO

Though from the absolute point of view wetiko can be said to not have any real existence, from the relative point of view wetiko and its effects need to be most seriously taken into account and dealt with. The absolute and relative dimensions of reality, though separate on one level, interpenetrate so fully that they are not to be thought of as separate, but as an indivisible unity. Reciprocally co-arising together, neither one should be marginalized. Wetiko is real as much as we, who are relative beings, are real.

Wetiko doesn't objectively exist, and yet, at the same time, it is not merely our projection or imagination. Instead of an either/or universe, where phenomena like wetiko are either real or unreal, there is an area in between in which it is both/and—both real and unreal at the same time. The psyche itself does not trouble itself with our limiting Aristotelian categories of existence such as whether wetiko is real or not; from its point of view, everything that has an effect and “works” on it is real enough. Wetiko behaves *as if* it exists, and that is good enough for the psyche; the psyche can take it from there and produce real effects. The effects of wetiko are so real that it molds the psyche, “casting” it in a form that we can only imagine. Wetiko is as real as we—as a psychic entity—are real.

Wetiko is a twilight phenomenon in that it bridges the two worlds of what is real and unreal, of existence and nonexistence. Wetiko is a living symbol pointing beyond itself, an emanation of something divined but not yet fully realized. Wetiko has a kind of existence that is not imaginary but “imaginal,” which is an in-between or intermediate domain between two other realms, such as existence and nonexistence, sharing in the attributes of both sides but being the same as neither. Fully endowed with its own type of reality, an imaginal reality is both the same as and different from each of the two sides that define it. A prototypical example of an imaginal reality is an image in a mirror, which acts as a bridge or isthmus between the object reflected and the mirror, partaking of the qualities of both the object it is reflecting and the mirror. On the one hand, it is indivisible from the mirror while at the same time being different from it. Nor can the image in the mirror be separated from the object it is reflecting, while, at the same time, it is not identical with it.

The fact that the imaginal realm is not simply mere imagination, and hence is not unreal, is related to one of Jung's greatest discoveries, what he calls the "reality of the psyche." By the phrase "reality of the psyche," Jung means that the psyche exists in its own right, has its own category of existence per se, in its own open-ended sphere of seemingly unlimited influence. The psyche's order of reality is, ontologically speaking, no less real than what we call physical reality. The psyche is a phenomenal world in itself, which can be neither reduced to the brain nor elevated to metaphysics. Though psychic contents aren't quantifiable, don't occupy space, and don't have a physical mass, they have a living reality all their own. It was Jung's opinion that the idea of the reality of the psyche is the most important achievement of modern psychology, even though most people don't even know about this profound discovery. Many people have been conditioned, on the other hand, to devalue the psyche, thinking of the contents of the psyche as mere nothings, empty fabrications. To realize the "reality" of the psyche is to recognize that, quite to the contrary, its contents have a living existence that greatly affects us in ways we can only imagine. By saying the psyche is "real," Jung is pointing out that the psyche informs our experience of ourselves and the universe in the most fundamental of ways. It is through the medium of the psyche that we give shape to both ourselves and the world around us. It is the source of all that makes us human, as well as being the doorway through which we interface with a part of us that's transhuman, in that it introduces us to a part that's greater than ourselves.

In a Copernican revolution of the mind which turns our Western, scientific, materialistic perspective on its head, from the point of view of the reality of the psyche, we might as well say that it is *physical existence* that is merely an inference, since we know of matter only insofar as we perceive psychic images. From the point of view of the "other side"—the psyche—our unconscious existence is the real one, while the physical world is like an illusion or apparitional reality created for the purpose of the psyche to express itself and integrate its unconscious aspects. We are so willing to offer our opinions about the psyche, but are not so open to reflect upon what the psyche thinks about us. From

the perspective of the psyche as imbued with living reality, the material world is experienced as being like a dream that continues to seem like reality as long as we are in it. Interestingly, this is the point of view of Eastern wisdom traditions when they refer to the physical world as being an unreal illusion or *maya*. The Sanskrit word *maya* refers to the source of illusion as well as the divine play of the creative spirit. What would happen, I find myself imagining, if more people investigated and more fully realized—not intellectually, but experientially—the living reality of the psyche? What would it bring to light? Since recognizing the psychic nature of reality simultaneously affects both the psyche and our experience of “reality,” how would the psyche, and the world, reflect back this realization? Because there are no absolute boundaries between an individual’s psyche and any other part of creation, none of us are separate from the cosmic creative principle itself; in fact, we *are* that principle incarnated in human form.

The Divine Creative Imagination

The wetiko bug originates and operates within the realm of the psyche; the moment we recognize the reality of the psyche is when we begin to engage with wetiko in a way that may potentially lead somewhere. When we realize that the psyche has a reality all its own, we enter into the dimension of experience where our imagination and experience of ourselves and our world intersect, interpenetrate, and mutually influence each other in a conscious and consciousness-generating way. Paradoxically, wetiko simultaneously obscures us from, while potentially introducing us to, the reality and potency of the sacred creative imagination. If we lose contact with the living reality of the imagination within ourselves that is connected to something greater than and beyond ourselves, we become truly disoriented. We then become easy prey for the wetiko bug, which literally in-forms our lack of imagination so as to feed itself. If we don’t use our gift of imagination, other people will use it for us. We then find ourselves unable to imagine a world other than one informed by wetiko. The most decisive and telling question for humanity is, to put it simply,

“Are we related to something infinite, something beyond our limited ego ... or not?”

It is as if humanity is an experiment of the divine imagination, endowed with a faculty corresponding to the divine power that produced it. There is an interface between the world-creating imagination of God and our personal imagination in which the two partake of each other. The human psyche is the organ through which we imagine God while God simultaneously imagines Itself into incarnation through our imagination. It is as if God has put on the flesh, crept under our skin, and empowered our creative imagination to materialize itself as our experience of ourselves and our world. How we view the role of imagination influences how we in fact imagine, as well as how we respond to the demands of the imagination. In alchemy, the concept of imagination is perhaps the most important key to the understanding of the *magnum opus*, or “great work.” For the alchemists, the imagination is the divine body in every person, a refined, rarefied “subtle body” that is not humanly constructed but divinely implanted in us from a source beyond ourselves.³ When the alchemists talk about the “imaginative faculty of the soul,” they are giving a clear indication of the secret essence of the alchemical art. The imaginative faculty of the soul is not merely a human attribute, but a divine activity of the soul in which the human imagination participates and bears witness. The human imagination is enveloped in and suffused with—and is a reflective iteration of—the unconditioned divine creative imagination, the imagination that is imagining/dreaming/creating the whole universe in this very moment. The imagination that the alchemists were interested in was the world-creating imagination of God, the imagination where what is imagined affects what is happening in our world in a way that can only be imagined and is beyond imagination at the same time. Through the alchemical art of *imaginatio*, the soul is empowered to become an instrument for the divine imagination in such a way that can literally change the world.

Our creative imagination is truly divine, in that it literally affects the suprasensory blueprint underlying this seemingly mundane and solid material world. Our divine creative imagination is the part of us through

DREAMING OF WETIKO

which God imagines this world into materialization. This waking dream we are living in, however, being of a more dense vibration than a night dream, is more solidified, more crystallized into materialized form, and hence “slower” in the way it is a function of our creative imagination. Due to the seeming solidity of this waking dream, the effects of the creative imagination on the way our universe actually gets dreamed up are visible only with much more subtle, refined, and rarefied vision. Our physical universe very convincingly appears to have the continuity of being something that seems solid and objectively existing, but we shouldn’t be fooled or entranced by the seeming concreteness of the universe’s dreamlike display.

It is important to differentiate the alchemists’ notion of imagination, which is a creative activity originating out of and expressing the wholeness of the Self, from mere fantasy, which is a repetitive and self-soothing activity of the ego whose fundamental purpose is to avoid relationship with life. It is the alchemists’ version of imagination that Einstein was referring to when he is reported to have said, “Imagination is more important than knowledge.” Language itself is a tool of the imagination, which is to say that, one way or another, imagination becomes embodied in and through language, while at the same time, language takes on form through imagination. Wetiko can potentially cripple our sacred imagination and turn it against ourselves in a way which serves its agenda. Disabling our divinely inspired creative imagination, the wetiko bug can support magical thinking and mere fantasy, which further serves our escaping from dealing with the reality of life, ourselves, and the wetiko bug itself. In wounding the imagination, which is our inborn visionary power, wetiko is preventing our species from evolving its narrative and myth-making faculties. Wetiko can even make us think that we can’t affect reality with our thoughts, imagination, and visionary capacities. Inquiring into how wetiko impacts upon our imagination, however, shows how encoded within the apparent problem is a revelation containing in hidden form the seeming problem’s own resolution. This will be a recurring theme as we inquire into the nature of wetiko.

An example: For those of us who experience ourselves as not having

much of an imagination, it is as if we are imagining that we don't have much of an imagination. Our imagination of not having an imagination is itself the most far-out (in the sense of being far off the mark) imagination of our divine imagination. Imagining we don't have much of an imagination, just like within a dream, we will draw all the evidence to ourselves to confirm the seemingly objective truth of our viewpoint, which only further entrenches us in our conviction of not having a good imagination. Our lack of imagination reveals the potency of our imagination, however, for it is secretly revealing how we literally create our experience of ourselves through our imagination. If we lack imagination, our creative imagination, instead of serving our fulfillment, is then perversely being used against us in crippling ways that dramatically reduce our human potential. Our only "problem" is a lack of imagination. Our lack of imagination is itself imaginary, however, as our thinking that there's a problem is merely a product of our imagination. Being ultimately the revelation of our imagination itself, our lack of imagination is a problem that asks to be approached imaginatively, which is to say that hidden in our very problem—our lack of imagination—is its own resolution and healing. Imagine that!

So Again, What Is Wetiko?

Wetiko is a mysterious "no-substance" which is empty of independent, inherent existence, inseparable from consciousness itself, yet it physically displays itself and "fleshes out" its immaterial, transcendental nature in, through, and as the seemingly embodied, substantial forms of our universe. Though the subtle body of wetiko is not located in the third dimension of space or time, literally existing in another dimension, it is able to affect our ordinary lives by mysteriously interpenetrating into our three-dimensional world. Not consisting of mere matter, the wetiko virus somehow has the ability to materialize itself through the physical universe. To the extent that we don't realize that what is the matter with matter is our own imagination, so to speak, we become bewitched by the reality-creating function of our imagination. The subtle body of

DREAMING OF WETIKO

wetiko incarnates itself in and through matter, which is the place of its appearance, but its physical manifestation mysteriously does not contain its substance. This is similar to how a mirror is merely the place of the appearance of the image it reflects, but the substance, the thing-in-itself which the image represents, doesn't reside in the mirror. The revelations of wetiko through the forms of the world are both itself and other than itself at the same time, in the same way that the reflections in the mirror are inseparable from the mirror but are themselves not the mirror.

In actual fact, wetiko is an illusory disease, in that the idea that the disease actually exists in a real, concrete way is itself a symptom of and a delusion induced by the disease. The notion that we have discovered a disease and are going to cure it is a delusional construct that is itself a symptom of the disease. Wetiko disease makes us think it's a problem that needs to be cured (which is so convincing because from one point of view this is true), and yet, seeking the cure for wetiko can be an expression of the disease. This seeming double-bind reveals the limitations of the disease/cure paradigm to adequately illumine the essential nature of wetiko. To be in this paradigm is still to be under the thrall of the two-valued logic—where things are either true or false—of a wetikoized mind. It is impossible to grasp wetiko with our conceptual, cognitive, and rational mind. There is no way out of wetiko within the mind, as the mind is the “play”-ground of wetiko, for it is through the vehicle of the conceptual mind that wetiko wreaks its most destructive havoc upon the human and natural world. To operate and solely subscribe to the two-valued logic of the conventional mind is to be trapped in “the Matrix” (a word related to both “mother” and “matter”) of wetiko. And yet, the nonbinding and ungraspable nature of wetiko is symbolically reflecting back to us the part of ourselves that is not able to be bound, which is to say wetiko is secretly revealing to us our intrinsic freedom.

To be able to deal with—and become free from—wetiko is to literally have an expansion of consciousness and step “out of our minds,” which is not to be crazy, but rather, to find ourselves “inside of our minds,” that is, to realize that being in this world is to be in, and surrounded by, the nonlocalized psyche. This realization is equivalent to being within a

dream and to realize that we are dreaming, which is to realize that the boundary between the inner and the outer has dissolved. To become lucid and realize that we are dreaming while within a dream is to recognize that the seemingly outer landscape which the moment before seemed so solid, real, and external to ourselves is actually an unmediated expression of a process going on deep within ourselves. Strangely enough, this realization is inspired by wetiko, which is to say that we might not have had this shift of identity and expansion of consciousness without wetiko prodding us to wake up.

Here we touch another recurring theme: is wetiko simply evil, or is it a disguised form of the divine that is literally helping us awaken? The more we understand wetiko, the more we gain insight into how wetiko, just like the alchemists' Mercurius, contains both of these opposites cojoined in a superposed state—a true conjunction of opposites.

Thus a very different framework of understanding is required—demanded by wetiko itself—when it comes to dealing with wetiko. In a sense, contemplating and writing a book about wetiko, referring to it as a disease, virus, parasite, vampire, etc., is an act that itself is potentially spreading the disease if people reading the book don't have a more refined, rarefied, nuanced, and sophisticated way of understanding what is being pointed at. Wetiko has the most disturbing characteristic of usurping even the most well-intentioned attempts to illumine it, so as to serve its diabolical agenda. Wetiko incubates and grows stronger in the shadowy realms of our psyche; it thrives in direct proportion to which it is not clearly seen or truly understood. Wetiko cannot be understood by the mind, however, and yet it is by seeing how wetiko operates through our mind that we begin to understand wetiko.

The Native American Myth of Wetiko

What is the origin of wetiko? “When, how and where did wetiko start in our world?” seems like a reasonable point of departure for our contemplation. Does wetiko have a creation myth? Many Native American traditions talk about the “mental” nature of creation, as if the universe is a thought

DREAMING OF WETIKO

or a conception in the mind of its creator. Interestingly, the word “conception” refers to both origination and cogitation. In their cosmology, the universe is created through a thought process similar to imagination and dreaming. Native American cosmology, like Eastern traditions such as Buddhism and Hinduism, regard the universe as a dream of the creator, a dream in which all the dream characters dream, too.

In Native American tradition, the wetiko monster is regarded as a legendary, mythic being of supernatural powers, a creature of the Algonquian⁴ imagination, while at the same time, when read symbolically, it can represent a living psychic reality having relevance for all of us. Native American mythologies portray the mythical figure of wetiko as a cannibalistic spirit who embodies greed and excess and can possess human beings. The wetiko was once a human being, but because of its gluttony and selfishness it was transformed into a predatory monster. In indigenous mythology, indulgent, self-destructive habits are thought to be inspired by the wetiko virus. In the Native American’s usage of the term, those who have become wetikos are individuals who have “lost their wits,” which connotes not only being out of their (right) mind, but also not knowing what they are (“unwittingly”) doing. To not know what they are acting out implies that they have been taken over by something other than themselves, which is acting itself out through them. It is as if their self has become corrupted such that they are “no longer themselves.” The mythology surrounding the figure of wetiko can be read as an expression of the phenomenon of a powerful, transhuman spirit that can take possession of people’s body and mind. Commenting on how in wetiko psychosis a spirit agency exerts influence over other beings by inhabiting their bodies or otherwise determining their thoughts and behavior, anthropologist Robert Brightman writes, “Some kind of spirit gets into them up there in the Northwest Territories and they go crazy.”⁵

The wetiko myth thus serves as a teaching to encourage moderation, self-control, and cooperation among members of the Native American community. The Ojibwa word for wetiko, *windigo* (or *weendigo*), seems to have been derived from *ween dagoh*, which means “solely for self,” or from *weenin n’d’igooh*, which means “excess.” According to Native American

lore, the wetiko monster can only prey on human beings who, like itself, have indulged in excess. This is to say that human beings' propensity for excess makes them vulnerable to becoming possessed by and transformed into a wetiko, illustrating the lesson that evil preys and thrives upon excess. Etymologically, the word "excess" is one of the meanings related to the word "evil." Evil turns in upon itself, continually feeding and impregnating itself as it endlessly expands its own compulsive appetites. The earliest known use in the English language of a variant form of *wetiko* was recorded by a trader, James Isham, who traded at York Factory on the west coast of Hudson's Bay and who wrote an account of the Cree Indians' beliefs. The word appears in a vocabulary of Indian and English words. It simply reads, "the Devil . . . Whit te co."⁶ Likewise, trader David Thompson wrote, "The word *Weetigo* [wetiko] is one of the names of the Evil Spirit."⁷ Emphasizing its predatory aspect, Thompson comments that "Wee tee go [wetiko] is the evil spirit that devours humankind."⁸ In Native American legends, no one emerges unscathed from even the slightest encounter with wetiko.

Native Americans often portrayed the wetiko as having a frigid, icy heart, devoid of mercy. The living heart is the seat of feelings of love, of the tender-heartedness of compassion, of empathy, of feelings in general, and of human relatedness. The organ of the heart becoming frozen and hardened as ice can be read symbolically as representing the state of inner rigidity and deadness that afflicts those suffering from wetiko disease. Like a werewolf, the wetiko is oftentimes portrayed as a shape-shifter who can even appear disguised as a good spirit.⁹ In the indigenous legends, whenever the wetiko ate another person, it would grow larger in proportion to the meal it had just eaten, so that it could never be full or satisfied. This image of gorging itself while at the same time being emaciated from starvation symbolizes never being able to fill the insatiable void at the center of the wetiko's being and, therefore, always craving more. A similar condition is represented in Buddhism by the figure of the "hungry ghost," who, with its pinhole mouth, constricted neck, and huge, unfilled stomach can never satisfy its insatiable cravings. These images portray a pathologically perverse state into which any human being can potentially fall.

DREAMING OF WETIKO

The wetiko mythology emerged out of the long, cold, dark winters during which food became increasingly scarce, resulting in the possible danger of famine and starvation. Symbolically, this is to say that situations of profound lack and resource scarcity gave birth to the idea of wetiko. Interestingly, some of the wetiko complex's main images—eating, consuming, devouring, cannibalizing—represent a number of different processes at the same time: getting nourishment, receiving communion with what is being ingested, as well as dominating and destroying that which is being assimilated.

In Native American mythology, a wetiko cannot be killed by ordinary means, and certainly not by ordinary people. Thus, people entrained in the mind-set of consensus reality don't stand a chance against this formidable and uncanny energy. In the mythic context, a wetiko cannot be killed by anything short of a "silver bullet" or a magical ritual performed by an accomplished shaman. This can be read symbolically to mean that the wetiko phenomenon operates through the daemonic, archetypal, and magical levels of the psyche, and can only be dealt with through similar channels.

Judeo-Christian Roots of Wetiko

In the biblical lore that has influenced Judeo-Christian civilization, the story of Adam and Eve's banishment from the Garden of Eden certainly seems like the timeless archetypal moment of wetiko entering into the human realm, as spoken in the language of mythology. Eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge—knowledge of good and evil, that is—resulted in "the Fall" of our species. This "sin" was inspired by the snake—but if we see the snake as a disguised form of God, since God created all and everything, then the process of discriminating between good and evil was a necessary step for humanity. Other mythologies that seem to refer to wetiko talk about some alien, and alienating, influence that came down from the sky (or up from the underworld) and corrupted our originally pure human nature. Still other legends talk about an "error" being implanted within us that deviated the programming of our minds, or

even compromised our DNA. In any case, it certainly seems “as if” deep in the past, thousands of years ago, our species suffered some sort of incredible trauma that created an aberration in our development and evolution. And yet, when the whole picture is contemplated, this seeming mistake is potentially catalyzing our species to evolve in ways that might not have occurred otherwise.

In our prevailing Christian culture’s myth of the Incarnation of God, it is the darker figure of Judas, the one who betrayed Christ, who set the cosmic forces in motion that were crucial for the redemption of humanity. In this divinely choreographed drama, Satan returns in person, so to speak, entering into Judas so as to initiate the dynamic that would lead to the Crucifixion. This brings up a question: is evil a factor that obscures the unfoldment of the cosmic drama, or is it a necessary *ingredient* in the mystery of divine Incarnation? Wetiko demands that we take a closer look at the role that evil plays in our cosmos. Jung goes so far as to call Satan “the godfather of man as a spiritual being,”¹⁰ by which he means that the figure of Satan can potentially activate in humankind a process of spiritual awakening that would have been impossible without his intervention. The truth would not have the same value to humanity without contrast to the lies and deception of “the deceiver,” from which we must learn to discriminate the truth. The human will becomes conscious through its collision with opposition, coming up against an adversarial will. (One of the meanings of the Hebrew word for Satan is “the adversary.”) So a potentially positive aspect of this adversarial, evil-seeming figure is that it is the catalyst for and creator of individual consciousness. By opposing God, Jung continues, “Lucifer was perhaps the one who best understood the divine will struggling to create a world and who carried out that will most faithfully. For, by rebelling against God, he became the active and activating principle of a creation which set up, in opposition to God, a counter-will of its own. Because God willed this, we are told in Genesis 3 that he gave humanity the power to will otherwise.”¹¹ Allowing a counter-will to his own opens up a new freedom in the depth of God’s being, as well as our own. In any case, when contemplated from this meta-perspective, if we were somehow able to magically exterminate all

evil in the world today, we would be amputating an essential part of the deity itself. Commenting on the mysterious role that evil plays in the cosmic drama, Jung writes, “Satan, who, with good reason, later on received the name of ‘Lucifer’ [the morning star, the bringer of the light], knew how to make more frequent and better use of omniscience than did his father.”¹² It was this evil figure who had the initiative to create the seeming “problems” in God’s creation that omniscience knew to be necessary and indeed indispensable for the unfolding and completion of the divine drama of Incarnation. Our mind naturally boggles at the idea that both good and evil are contained in God. (Isa. 45:7: “I form the light and create darkness. I make peace and create evil.”) We should be careful, however, not to pare down God’s omnipotence to the level of our human opinions.

To quote Paul Ricoeur, author of *The Symbolism of Evil*, “In the historical experience of man, every individual finds evil *already there*; nobody begins it absolutely. If Adam is not the first man, in the naively temporal sense of the word, but the typical man, he can symbolize both the experience of the ‘beginning’ of humanity with each individual and the experience of the ‘succession’ of men. Evil is part of the interhuman relationship, like language, tools, institutions; it is transmitted; it is tradition, and not only something that happens. There is thus an anteriority of evil to itself; as if evil were that which always precedes itself, that which each man continues while beginning it, but beginning it in his turn. That is why, in the Garden of Eden, the serpent is already there; he is the other side of that which begins.”¹³ Ricoeur is pointing to the a priori, primordial, and beginningless nature of evil, a nature which is part of our nature, as it is transmitted through humanity over multiple generations.

Other creation myths talk about our dilemma existing from beginningless time, which is suggesting that to look for the origin of wetiko at a point back in historical time is both unanswerable and irrelevant. Phenomenologically speaking, the fact is that wetiko is potentially generated and re-created anew each and every moment, including this one. Since only the present moment truly exists, the cause of wetiko lies in the present, since it only exists in the Now. It is not a “hangover” from the past, a *caput mortuum* (an alchemical term meaning a residue left over after the

distillation of a substance), It is only in the today, not in our yesterdays, that wetiko can be found and “cured.”

Gnosis of the Divine

To “know” and understand wetiko, we have to know and understand ourselves. God has slipped the most terrible weapons of mass destruction into our hands, endowing us with the power to destroy ourselves en masse and empty out the apocalyptic vials of wrath on the entire planet. Because we have been granted an almost Godlike power, we can no longer remain blind and unconscious. The deadly and potentially death-creating situation we find ourselves in demands that we come to know something of the Divine within ourselves. In Jung’s words, we must achieve “gnosis of the Divine” in order to survive. Wetiko is potentially the prompt and catalyst for our achieving this inner knowing, without which our process of awakening would be only partial and incomplete.

The greatest protection is when we’re in touch with “reality,” that is, with our true nature, which is outside of the conditioned limitations of space and time. When we’re in touch with our true selves, wetiko can’t affect or touch us, because we realize that it has no substantive, independent existence. This is to say that the best way to deal with the evil of wetiko is to be in touch with our inherent wholeness, what Jung calls the Self, which acts as a sacred amulet or talisman, shielding and protecting us from evil’s pernicious effects. The divinely sponsored wholeness within ourselves is the “weak point” of the evil one. The way to “defeat” evil is to not to try and destroy it (for then, in playing evil’s game, we have already lost), but rather, to find the invulnerable place within ourselves where evil is unable to vanquish us—this is to truly “win” our battle with evil. It is worth noting that we wouldn’t have accessed this place within us, the true “pearl of great price” (one of our true nature’s many names), without the evil of wetiko.

Some years ago, an esteemed Tibetan lama in America gave an empowerment/blessing ceremony for a practice that dispels curses and spells. He made the point that this empowerment would not dispel the curse, as this

DREAMING OF WETIKO

presumption invested the curse with a seeming reality that was unwarranted. Rather, he clarified that this blessing would help to dispel our *belief* that we were under a curse, which itself was the disguised and cloaked form of the curse and the hidden means through which it afflicts us.

A real “cure” for wetiko involves a radical phase shift in consciousness out of the limited and limiting two-valued logic of the conventional mind into a more expanded and expansive logical framework. In other words, the cure for wetiko is an expansion of consciousness in which we awaken into a higher-dimensional space of not just our being, but Being itself. This is to step out of any reference point, and to simultaneously step into the ground of our being, which is truly groundless. This is to discover that there is no place to take refuge, except in the true nature of our being. Taking refuge in the impermanent physical forms of the world is, ultimately speaking, like taking refuge on shifting sand. Only what is truly ourselves has the power to heal. In a very real sense we do not cure wetiko—wetiko cures us of our wrong attitude. Our quest to comprehend the nature of wetiko activates this very self-curative process. Our illness is nature’s attempt to heal us and to raise us up to an entirely new level of wholeness.

Four-Valued Logic

The apparent paradoxical nature of wetiko cannot be resolved within the framework of the standard Aristotelian, two-valued logic which is basic to Western analytical thought, where things are either true or false, or either exist or don’t exist. This paradox is itself a direct function or artifact of the intrinsic limitations built into the nature of a mutually exclusive, binary, two-valued logic. Having a definite utility, two-valued logic works by contrast, giving attributes to things and making distinctions, thereby limiting them; something is “this” only by defining it as not “that.” Our very language itself, in categorizing things and ideas, conditions us into a dualistic, two-valued logical way of thinking. The axiomatic set through which we view the world and its logic conditions our minds. To get insight into the nonordinary reality of wetiko, we have

to introduce a higher form of logic in order to wrap our minds around what we are dealing with.

The solution to such apparent paradoxes as wetiko lies outside our conventional way of thinking; its re-resolution lies outside the box. An example: something as basic and universal as the wave/particle paradox of light requires an expanded logic to be addressed. It is well known that under the conditions of various experimental arrangements, light displays either wavelike or particle-like properties. But what, then, is the essential nature of light? This question is not amenable to the usual two-valued logic, and may be better addressed by what is known as four-valued logic,¹⁴ a type of logic that is foreign to and outside of Western thought. Two-valued logic is based on the law of the excluded middle, in which things are either (1) true or (2) false. By contrast, four-valued logic includes the middle and the ends surrounding it, so that things are (1) true, (2) false, (3) both true and false, or (4) neither true nor false.

It is impossible to use exclusively two-valued logic to show the full range of possibilities in any given situation. The alternatives offered by four-valued logic, however, represent all the possible standpoints from which every problem can be viewed. Four-valued logic covers the range of any idea we could possibly have about something. Four-valued logic lies between the polarities created by the two-valued logic of duality. Four valued logic is the logic of interdependence, unlimited wholeness, and the unity of all things. Overcoming the arbitrary confines of the rational mind, four-valued logic deconstructs the conditioned mind into its natural state of seeing holistically. It literally changes the awareness of the mind to allow for a new and expanded understanding of reality, allowing the mind to transcend its own grip on and grasping of reality and thought. Truly subversive, four-valued logic undermines our ability to hold on to any fixed position whatsoever. By rejecting any one view as well as all views, four-valued logic is in essence rejecting the competence of standard Aristotelian reason to comprehend the fundamental nature of reality, a reality which ultimately transcends thought. Expanding the dimensionality of logical thought, four-valued logic describes and is an expression of a nonconceptual system of thought that leads beyond

DREAMING OF WETIKO

thought itself, engendering an intuitive awareness of the timeless existence of the underlying nonlocal field that pervades everything.

Quantum physics points out that our seemingly objective universe is more like a dream than we ever imagined. The dreamlike nature of our universe is articulated in a modern scientific context through what is called the Observer Effect, which points out that, just like within a dream, in the act of observing we affect and evoke the very universe that we are observing. It therefore makes no sense to talk about an apparently objectively existing world separate from an observer such as ourselves, or an independent observer such as ourselves separate from the world observed. Just as in a dream, the observer is the observed; we live in a participatory universe. Returning to our example, the true nature of light is not accommodated by either a wave or a particle, because the way light manifests depends upon how it is observed (“dreamed up”). Speaking of the wavelike quality of light, for example, four-valued logic would assert that light is a wave (which under certain conditions it is), light is not a wave (which under other conditions is true), light is therefore *both* a wave and not a wave, and light is neither a wave nor not a wave. This truly encompasses all possibilities. Likewise, wetiko exists, it doesn’t exist, it both exists and doesn’t exist, and it neither exists nor doesn’t exist. To be able to see through this more holistic view of the world is to be in an expanded state of consciousness in which we are not creating or investing in an unnecessary state of duality.

Both light and wetiko are inscribed in and expressions of the same underlying unified field. Like wetiko, light is not an object that solely exists in space and time. Its photonic aspect exists in three-dimensional space and time, but another aspect of light does not. Four-valued logic gives us a greater range of possibilities with which to grasp the reality of certain phenomena such as the nature of light, and four-valued logic will assist us in getting a handle on the nature of wetiko. A spiritual path in itself, four-valued logic is a mind-expanding and mind-freeing path to spaciousness and compassion.

Another example of four-valued logic is the Schrödinger’s cat paradox, a famous thought experiment in quantum physics which showed

that the universe can't be said to exist in a particular form until there is an observer to experience it. The key to this paradox is what is referred to as the principle of "superposition," which states that until we look and collapse the infinitude of the wave function, the universe is actually in all possible states simultaneously. This is to say that in Schrödinger's experiment, the cat is both alive and dead at the same time until it is observed. On the level of the conventional mind and ordinary reality, this is obviously false and nonsensical, but it shows the limits of Aristotelian logic, which is to say that this paradox is not consistent with two-valued logic. Just as with the light paradox, using four-valued logic we can say that the cat is neither alive nor not alive at the same time; this is the real meaning of the superposition of states in the quantum mechanical wave function. To say that Schrödinger's cat is neither alive nor not alive is a statement that can potentially dissolve the conventional strictures of the conceptual mind so as to reveal naked awareness itself, the basic essence of unconditioned mind. We are unable to conceptually understand four-valued logic, however, with a mind that has been conditioned to think with two-valued logic. Four-valued logic points to and introduces us to a direct experience of reality beyond the straitjacketing conditioning of two-valued logic. Seeing the world through four-valued logic gives us greater degrees of freedom of choice, in that it actively empowers our free will.

Four-valued logic sheds light on who we are. For example, on one hand we are a body existing in space and time. But on another hand, we are clearly not just a body. As a bodily organism, we are finite, mortal, and subject to suffering, but at the same time, we are not a body but a consciousness, living in a multidimensional universe. We are part of a consciousness outside space/time, participating in a higher-dimensional, nonlocal universe. We are both a body and not a body. And we are neither a body nor not a body. Four-valued logic illumines how we are able to be both a self and not a self, both separated as bodies and not separated in consciousness. Four-valued logic, the logic that wetiko demands in order to be understood, introduces us to who we actually are beyond the constraining limitations of the mind/body dualism.

DREAMING OF WETIKO

As we deepen our contemplation of wetiko, it is becoming clear that wetiko is the source of the darkest evil, while at the same time potentially freeing our mind, curing us of our wrong attitude, expanding our consciousness, shifting our identity, helping us to achieve gnosis of the divine, and potentially waking us up. Can we therefore still say that wetiko is evil? Four-valued logic would assert: wetiko is evil, it is not evil, it is both evil and not evil, and it is neither evil nor not evil. In other words, wetiko is not only the archetype of evil, but understanding wetiko also means gaining insight into the deeper place that evil plays in the cosmic plan of creation, salvation, redemption, and incarnation of the Divine.

Though one of the channels that wetiko manifests is through individuals, ultimately speaking, wetiko can't be said to exist in individuals separately from the surrounding field, for the simple reason that individuals, as separate, discrete entities isolated from the surrounding field, don't exist in and of themselves. Unable to be seen or understood from the fixed viewpoint of the separate self, wetiko is a relational phenomenon, in that wetiko happens in the space between us (as well as the space between "parts" of ourselves), as we relate to each other, ourselves, and the world at large. It is as if wetiko "places" the unconscious between self and other. There is no wetiko disease that only exists in one individual. Being imaginal, wetiko does not exist as an isolated, objective entity separate from our subjective awareness. The subtle body of wetiko is an (im)materialization of the interactive field between us. Wetiko exists in the "in-between" place in which we are all inseparably interconnected and, in the deepest sense, don't exist as isolated entities. We are not the passive victims of the wetiko psychosis. Wetiko is something that we are potentially participating in and are actively co-creating with each other in each and every moment. Wetiko is a dreaming phenomenon, in that we are all dreaming up the wetiko epidemic together.

3

Under a Collective Spell

Collective Psychosis

The wetiko collective psychosis is a field phenomenon and needs to be contemplated as such. The field itself is not a separately existing thing but a dynamically evolving living process in which we are all participating, simultaneously creating and being created by. The field has to do with relations per se, rather than the seemingly separate entities doing the relating. Instead of relating to any part of the field as an isolated entity, it's important to contemplate the entire interdependent field as the "medium" through which wetiko (as well as everything else, for that matter) is articulating itself. The underlying field can only be perceived and felt when we step out of our habitual viewpoint of imagining that we exist as a fixed reference point, a center of volitional action, a "time-bound ego," and connect with our timeless, and nonlocal being, which ironically, can only be found in the present moment. This is to say that the doorway to seeing the field, and therefore wetiko, is to fully enter the present moment. The psychic epidemic known as wetiko needs to *not* be viewed through the lens of the fragmented and fragmenting separate self, which by its nature objectifies individual people, who are mistakenly thought to exist in isolation from the field, from each other, and from ourselves. To view a person as an object existing separately from the field is to fall under a diabolical illusion. Individuals are embedded in, pervaded by, and

DREAMING OF WETIKO

contained within the greater field—family system, society, and planetary culture—and are expressions of this multifaceted field. To begin to see wetiko disease, we need to cultivate a more holistic vision that recognizes the existence of a single interdependently co-arising field that pervades all manifest existence.

We are all collectively dreaming up the field while at the same time reciprocally being dreamed up by it, what Buddhism calls “dependent co-arising” (*paticca samuppada*—also translated as “interdependent co-origination”). Dependent co-arising is what the Buddha woke up to under the Bodhi tree. It is the aspect of Buddha’s impossible-to-describe-in-words enlightenment that can be expressed in conceptual terms. Dependent co-arising is not something created by Buddhas, but rather, is something that is continually re-discovered. It is the very condition of empirical reality. Dependent co-arising is not a final affirmation about reality, as it doesn’t seek to define a reality external to the observer, but rather, is a way of seeing that focuses on the process of how our experience of the world and ourselves arises. When asked by what authority he spoke, the Buddha would always cite the law of dependent co-arising; not any supernatural entity ruling our world, but the dynamics at work within our world. The Buddha said, “He who sees the Dharma [the truth, the way things are, the path, the law] sees dependent co-arising, and he who sees dependent co-arising sees the Dharma.” Dependent co-arising is not a belief or a theory to which one assents, but an insight that one is invited to experience and encouraged to win. Pointing to our interdependence with the entire universe, dependent co-arising illumines how we do not exist as discrete entities separate from the universe, but rather, in relation to other parts of the universe, which themselves don’t exist as isolated entities, but relationally as well. This insight reveals that there is no fixed, substantially existing, self-established entity or reference point anywhere. To top everything off, the emptiness that dependent co-arising is an expression of is itself empty of an inherent nature, which leaves us nowhere to stand except in the truth of who we have discovered ourselves to be. Dependent co-arising is considered to be a milestone in human thought; its ever-deepening realization is one of the greatest and furthest-reaching cognitive revolutions of our time.

Whenever the contents of the collective unconscious become activated, they have an unsettling effect on the conscious mind of everyone. When this psychic dynamic is not consciously metabolized, not just within an individual but collectively, the mental state of the people as a whole might well be compared to a psychosis. Jung never tired of warning that the greatest danger that threatens humanity is the possibility that millions of us can fall into our unconscious together and reinforce each other's blind spots, feeding a contagious collective psychosis in which we unwittingly become complicit in supporting the insanity of endless wars; this is unfortunately an exact description of what is currently happening. Let's look at how we are using our energy: we are literally investing our resources into developing engines of mass destruction so as to keep ourselves safe and protect ourselves. In the process, we are destroying each other, ourselves, and the biosphere—the life support system of life on earth—that we depend upon for our very survival. We are literally feeding and supporting our own genocide. Our greatest resource, our own mind, is continually being polluted and corrupted by the massive propaganda engines of wetiko that have become incorporated within our wetiko-saturated culture and internalized within our own minds. What modern-day humanity is confronted with, to quote the Trappist monk and social activist Thomas Merton, is “a crisis of sanity first of all. The problems of the nations are the problems of mentally deranged people, but magnified a thousand times because they have the full-straight-faced approbation of a schizoid society, schizoid national structures, schizoid military and business complexes.”¹ In his own language, Merton was describing and attempting to illuminate wetiko.

The part of us that is colluding in the creation of a collective psychosis like wetiko is the part of us that is mad, for why else would we be doing this? To the extent we're not fully awake, we each have a part of us that's mad, which gets acted out in our life. How can we not have a part of us that's mad, living in a world gone mad, a world that is not separate from but rather a reflection of ourselves? The part of us that thinks we don't have a mad part is itself our mad part. It is only by confronting what is insane and inhuman in ourselves, however, that we become truly human.

DREAMING OF WETIKO

Facing our inhumanity gives us the possibility of disempowering it, but not disowning it. It is crucial to face how we have been deceived and deviated by wetiko, for if we cannot see how we have been set off course, we can't orient ourselves to find our true path. Seeing how we've been led astray is a form of illumination. Social historian Riane Eisler writes in her book *Sacred Pleasure*, "To realize that which cannot be lost, it is necessary to understand what really has been lost." To see how wetiko operates with our cooperation is to gain critical insight into the elusive workings of our own mind.

We are currently in the midst of the greatest epidemic sickness known to humanity. Like a fish in water who doesn't recognize water because it is everywhere, both outside and within the fish itself, many of us don't realize the collective insanity in our midst, as our madness is so pervasive that it has become normalized. We have become conditioned to accept as normal the fact that we are in an endless war, and innumerable of our brothers and sisters all over the planet are impoverished and dying of starvation every day. It is important to realize that in a psychic epidemic, the majority of people can appear entirely "normal." The fact that the underlying psychic roots of the collective psychosis are not even part of our planetary dialogue is itself a telling expression of the depth of the unconsciousness induced by this psychic epidemic. That the mental health community, which should be concerned with psychic hygiene (both personal and collective), is not even addressing the issue of a rampant collective psychosis is a clear indication that the mental health community is itself embedded in and hence infected with the very psychic epidemic it should be studying. By not recognizing the nature of wetiko disease, the mental health community has become its unwitting agents, helping the disease to propagate. What clearer sign do we need of a psychic epidemic than when our mental health system itself, whose job it is to study, monitor, and deal with such phenomena, not only doesn't recognize that there is a collective psychosis running rampant in our society, but is itself infected with it? Ultimately speaking, it's not a question of integrating wetiko disease into the existing diagnostic manual, but rather, of radically expanding, up-leveling, and

re-visioning our understanding of the nature of both health and illness relative to each other.

Our collective madness has become transparent to us, as we see and interpret the world through it, rendering our madness invisible, thereby unwittingly colluding with the collective psychosis while it wreaks incredible death and destruction on our planet. Being “trans-parent,” our madness is beyond its mere appearance, which is to say, “beyond being apparent,” that is, not visible. Our collective psychosis is invisible to us, as it manifests itself both in the very way we are looking and in the unspoken ways we have been conditioned to *not* perceive. Due to its cloak of invisibility, we don’t see our madness, a psychic blindness which renders us complicit in the creation of our own madness. This complicity is potentially empowering news, however, since it also signals that we are indeed co-creators of our own reality, and not helpless victims.

Wetiko psychosis is highly contagious, spreading through the channel of our shared unconsciousness. Its vectors of infection and propagation do not travel like a physical pathogen, however. This fluidly moving, nomadically wandering bug reciprocally reinforces and feeds off and into each of our unconscious blind spots, which is how it nonlocally propagates itself throughout the field. In wetiko there is a code or logic which affects/infects awareness in a way analogous to how the DNA in a virus passes into and infects a cell. Forbes concludes that “the wetiko disease, the sickness of exploitation, has been spreading as a contagion for the past several thousand years. And as a contagion unchecked by most vaccines, it tends to become worse rather than better with time. More and more people catch it, in more and more places, and they become the true teachers of the young.”² Wetiko culture gets taught both at home and in “the academy,” where people become certified in the ways of its world, and are thus accredited and empowered to spread its corrupting ways on ever grander scales with ever vaster and more devastating consequences. Frighteningly, the wetiko psychosis is becoming ever more institutionalized and incorporated into our corporate culture and its way of thinking.

People who are channeling the vibratory frequency of wetiko align with each other through psychic resonance to reinforce their unspoken

DREAMING OF WETIKO

shared agreement so as to uphold their deranged view of reality. Once an unconscious content takes possession of certain individuals, it irresistibly draws them together by mutual attraction and knits them into groups tied together by their shared madness that can easily swell into an avalanche of insanity. A psychic epidemic is a closed system, which is to say that it is insular and not open to any new information or informing influences from the outside world which contradict its fixed, limited, and limiting perspective. In a co-dependent, self-perpetuating feedback loop, any reflection that is offered from others, rather than being reflected upon, utilized, and integrated in a way that supports the growth and evolution of the system, is perversely misinterpreted to support the agreed-upon delusion binding the collective psychosis together. Anyone challenging this shared reality is seen as a threat and demonized. An impenetrable field, like a protective bubble, is collectively conjured up around their shared psychosis that literally resists consciousness and perpetuates the spell-like trance of those in its thrall. There is no talking rationally, using logic or facts, with someone under the spell of the psychic epidemic, as their ability to reason and to use discernment has been disabled and distorted in service to the psychic pathogen which they carry. When a group of people are in agreement about anything, whether it is true or not, their alignment with each other exerts a contagious, magnetic field of force which can sway the unaware and attract them into itself. We are on guard, even paranoid, regarding contagious diseases of the body, but we are woefully asleep and unconcerned about, and hence more susceptible to, catching the more dangerous collective diseases of the mind, which are reaching pandemic proportions in our world today.

People taken over by the wetiko virus usually don't suspect a thing about how they have been "conned," or more accurately, how they have conned themselves. The wetiko culture offers no incentive for them to self-reflectingly speculate upon their increasingly depraved condition; on the contrary, the nonlocal field configures itself to enable, further cultivate, and deepen their psychosis. When someone is a full-blown, unrecognized wetiko, the field around them torques so as to protect, collude with, and feed into their psychosis in a way that entrances those around

them. Similar to how an octopus squirts ink in order to hide, a psychic field gets conjured up around full-blown wetikos which obfuscates their malfeasance. Once under the wetiko spell, people lose the capacity to recognize the wetiko pathology in others. In a situation of “group narcissism,” wetikos at different stages of the disease assume particular postures and roles relative to each other that protect and shield themselves from their own insanity and darkness. They feed and reinforce each other’s narcissism because it enhances their own.

The greater the gap between the conscious and the unconscious, the greater the chance of falling under a collective psychosis such as wetiko. The less the permeability, and hence communication and dialogue between the conscious ego and the informing influence of the wisdom of the unconscious, that is, the greater the dissociation between the two, the greater the probability of being infected with the leprosy of collective thinking. In a full-blown psychic epidemic, the conscious and the unconscious actually trade places, which is to say the unconscious steps into the driver’s seat, which should be occupied by consciousness. People or groups who have fallen asleep and are under the thrall of the psychic epidemic are then “unconsciously” dreaming, that is, acting out their unconscious in fully embodied form, in contrast to being awake. The type of person ripe for falling prey to the wetiko infection is usually one whose strings are pulled and manipulated by others, who follows a life path dictated by others and is unaccustomed to think for themselves. Not in touch with their inner guidance, they project authority outside of themselves and become very suggestible to the agreed-upon consensus opinion of the dominant pack. When we give away our power, there is always someone bearing the authority of “the State” who is more than happy to accept our offering, feeding the insatiable will-to-power of the shadow, which becomes collectively mobilized.

Masses are veritable breeding grounds for psychic epidemics. Though using individuals as its instruments, evil needs the unconscious masses for its genesis and proliferation on the world stage. In a collective psychosis, people literally stop thinking for themselves and let others think for them, like sheep (or “sheeple”) who just follow wherever they are being led, even

DREAMING OF WETIKO

if it's off the nearest cliff. Losing touch with their own discernment and ability for critical thinking, the "mass man" becomes part of the mindless herd and falls prey to "group-think," whose members co-dependently enable each other to uphold their shared version of the wetiko world. Once the office of "perception management," largely through the corporate mainstream media, convinces a critical mass of people of a particular viewpoint, there is a consensus or agreement that is reached among the masses as to what is objectively true. The agreed-upon version of reality takes on a weight and momentum of its own and thereby becomes the established dogma of what is collectively imagined to be really happening. Like a religious truth, it is irrationally believed like an act of faith by its card-carrying members, even if overwhelming evidence points to the contrary. Anyone who doesn't buy into the arbitrarily established story is marginalized and demonized, and called either crazy, a conspiracy theorist, or even a terrorist ("You're either with us or you're with the enemy"). Such a group consensus about the nature of reality gets increasingly hard to sustain as time passes, however, as, like a house of cards ready to collapse at any moment, its vision of the world is based on the fundamental error of not being true. Strangely enough, people under the collective enchantment of wetiko become fanatically attached to supporting an agenda that oftentimes is diametrically opposed to serving their own best interests. This is an outer behavioral reflection of the inner state of being under the sway of the self-destructive wetiko parasite.

Speaking about the rapidly spreading wetiko contagion, Forbes writes, "It is spread by the wetikos themselves as they recruit or corrupt others. It is spread today by history books, television, military training programs, police training programs, comic books, pornographic magazines, films, right-wing movements, fanatics of various kinds, high-pressure missionary groups, and numerous governments."³ All of the mainstream, culturally sanctioned, corporatized institutions are in the business of indoctrination, telling us what to think and not think, as well as how to think. Our mind is continually being massaged into shape by the prevailing culture, our true face lifted as our spiritual pockets are picked. Our civilization has become the mouthpiece for the propaganda organ of the

disease, entrancing us to “buy” into its viewpoint as we are bled to death of what really counts. The culture (sic) that in-forms and forms around wetiko illness is itself a channel of its transmission and growth. If we sign on the dotted line and subscribe to its viewpoint, its life-denying culture will gradually subsume us into itself, enlisting us as its agents who unwittingly do *its* bidding. This is how the ever-expanding, self-generating psychic empire of collective psychosis works, as it increasingly takes over and approaches “full-employment.”

The War on Consciousness

We are truly in a war. It is not the war we imagine we are in, which is the way our true adversaries want it. It is ultimately and actually not a foreign war against a foreign enemy. It is a war on consciousness, a war on our own minds. The global war on terror that is being fought around the world is an embodied reflection in the material world of a deeper, more fundamental war that is going on in the realm of consciousness itself. People taken over by wetiko are the human instruments for the transpersonal “spirit of evil” to colonize and terrorize the world. In wetiko disease, we unwittingly become drafted into being foot soldiers in the war not *on*, but *of* and *for*, terror. The wetiko parasite feeds on and harvests the emotions of fear and terror. Terror is the essence of its insidious “ill-usory ill-logic.” In wetiko disease, the psyche takes the terror that haunts it from within, and in its attempt to master it, is unwittingly taken over by it, thus becoming an instrument of terror in the world. We have then become the very thing we most feared, as we psychologically terrorize ourselves, as well as terrorizing the world at large. Wetiko is the bug which feeds the experience of terror within our mind and out in the world, fueling one of its more prominent manifestations in our world today: the “Global War on Terror,” which is truly a war on our consciousness.

People taken over by wetiko might be petty tyrants at home or at work but still count among the impoverished and oppressed, wielding no real power in the world at large. What Forbes refers to as “Big Wetikos,” however, are full-blown wetikos who have climbed the wetiko ladder,

DREAMING OF WETIKO

jumped through the wetiko hoops, and risen in the wetiko ranks so as to find themselves occupying positions of power where they can influence and control events in our world so as to rig and game the system to their own advantage and to the detriment of everyone else. The Big Wetikos who control the levers of power, be they the super-wealthy CEOs of corporations, bank presidents, or leaders of nation-states, are particularly dangerous, because they frame and define the terms of our dialogue by choosing the metaphors which dominate the agreed-upon historical narrative. Managing our perceptions through the propaganda engines of the mainstream corporate media which they control, Big Wetikos in positions of power craft the limits and parameters of our conversation and debate.

Wetiko is an ideological virus whose means of replication and propagation is through altering the syntax of our ideas. Wetiko deviates our mental syntax, the rules of how we form language, thereby distorting our semantics, the meaning we place on our experience of ourselves and the world. Wetiko is a semantic disorder, altering the core axioms and interpretive schemas through which the psyche maps its self-created meaning onto its inner and outer experience. Shaping even the meaning we place on meaning itself, the wetiko bug makes it appear that meaning objectively inheres in the outside world rather than realizing that we ourselves are the generators of meaning. The wetiko virus influences how we “spell” our words and conjure up our experience. The thought-forms and beliefs that express and represent wetiko act as an intrinsic, built-in control system, defining the limits of what we imagine our possibilities are, as individuals, nations, and a species. Wetikoism supports and perpetuates whatever prevailing myths, stories, dogmas, and (un)holy books reinforce its nefarious, evolution-inhibiting, and explicitly self-serving agenda. (Though seemingly self-serving, it is ultimately self- and other-destroying.) Books and other forms of information which don’t support wetikos’ warped version of the way things are, are “burned” *metaphorically* (or in some cases, *literally*—the U.S. government actually burned the books of the great healer and radical psychiatrist Wilhelm Reich, who, in describing what he called “the emotional plague,” was in his own way pointing at the evils of the wetiko virus).

When the wetiko virus takes over a system, whether it be a person's psyche, a group of people, or a nation, it institutionalizes its own "perception management" system in order to limit, manipulate, and control its subjects' viewpoint so as to maintain the wetikoized ideology. The corporate mainstream media, the "wetiko-media" (media that is animated, inspired, informed, and employed by wetiko), is the propaganda organ of the wetiko virus in the United States. The wetiko-media mesmerizes people by reciting simple, repetitive, hypnotic phrases—the "party line." Our leaders are in essence the talking figureheads and mouthpieces for the wetiko-media's marketing campaign of distortion and falsehood bombarded into our psyches on a daily basis. These slogans, repeated again and again, are burned into the receptive subconscious mind with the permanence of an image engraved on a photographic negative. People's minds then become programmed and "branded" with the desired ideological virus together with its reality framework. The sacred "Logos"—the Word—has been usurped and perverted to become the corporate "logo." The media's talking points, catchphrases, and buzzwords are their incantations which capture the attention of our minds. These magic words act as opiates to the fearful masses. Some of humanity's most horrific acts have been committed under the spell of certain magic words or phrases. This is the power of the Word. How do we make a word? We "spell" it. If we consent to the government-inspired, agreed-upon consensus reality, we are literally subscribing to the collective trance. Consensus reality is itself nothing other than a collective spell of massive proportions. People who uncritically see the world through the lens of the consensus reality have no idea that they are under a spell, which is the very dynamic that ensures the strength and perpetuation of the spell.

Some of us haven't developed sufficient psychic immunity to be able to ward off the toxic effects of the covert, fear-based psychological warfare waged by the powers-that-be. People who are not fully in touch with themselves and therefore haven't developed their own center of independent thought, self-reflective awareness, and ability to discriminate are highly suggestible to being manipulated, be it by wetiko-inspired forces outside in the world or within their own psyche, to take on a viewpoint

other than their own. People's ability to discern truth from fiction has been crippled and rendered inoperative by the wetiko-media's pattern of routinely taking liberties with the truth. Government propaganda has inverted the perception of what is actually happening: lies are presented as truth, and up is portrayed as down in a truly Orwellian universe of confounding doublespeak.

An expression of the success of our government's psy-ops against us is the fact that there's so little awareness of the powers-that-be's assault on our minds that it's hardly even a part of our national dialogue. The insidiousness of the covert manipulation of our minds is even found in the very term "Global War on Terror." The Global War on Terror is a crazy-making, self-contradictory statement, as we can never stop terror with a war—on the contrary, wars induce terror! This term carries with it a false and self-negating premise that, if accepted, we have already given away our power and lost the game (as if the person flipping the coin tells us, "Heads I win, tails you lose"). If we leave this underlying assumption unquestioned, we unwittingly allow the powers-that-be to frame the agenda on their terms. We have then already fallen under their spell without knowing it, as our capacity to think and respond creatively is undermined. Our inability to creatively respond to the war on our consciousness is an expression of being immobilized in fear as if frozen in trauma. The war on terror is really a war on our psyche. It is ultimately about control—control of our minds, which is a reflection of the covert and subversive operations of wetiko.

The Spell of Wetiko

If our world were a dream or fairy tale, we could say there is a curse or a spell that has befallen our land. Wetikos "charm" people, disarming and entrancing them, so that people will trust them and give away their power to them. The Big Wetikos' most effective weapon is sustaining a climate of fear and intimidation. They "hook" people through their unconscious blind spots and by playing with their fears, which is how they are able to control and manipulate others. Like a black magician, the powers that

control the wetiko-media prey on and feed off our hopes, needs, and fears so as to drain us of our power and co-dependently entangle us in their web of deceit. By inducing a primitive emotion such as fear, wetikos depotentiate the linear and logical part of the brain, and speak directly to the reptilian-dominated right part of the brain, which is preverbal and has to do with our primal animal survival instincts. Mass psychology then becomes the order of the day, as our species, animated by fear—which the Big Wetikos are only too happy to cultivate—reverts to the primitive psychology of the herd. Collective amnesia ensues, continually fed by a self-generating web of endless denial and refusal to see, as the manufactured consent is re-created anew and repeatedly reinforced every moment. Our programmed refusal to see reality, our own ignorance, is the chief door in our lives through which the evil of wetiko enters. Once entranced, just like members of a cult, people give their power away and become passive and subservient, incapable of discerning what is real from what is made up. Propaganda is capable of making people believe both everything and nothing at the same time, as political theorist Hannah Arendt has observed.⁴

Once the wetiko-media “captivates” our attention, it captures a part of our self-reflective, discriminative awareness, thereby restricting the range of our conscious awareness, which is the signature of a master hypnotist. Once the attention of the masses becomes entranced, the corporate/government media can then play with our minds by feeding us a fabricated version of reality that directly serves the Big Wetikos’ interests. The wetiko-media, because it dominates the way the majority of us receive our information, exerts a field of force that attracts the congregation of true believers, like iron filings aligning themselves around a magnet, conformed into the desired viewpoint. This unholy trinity of corporate/government/media, a.k.a. “the corporatocracy,” can create an obsessive fixation on certain superficial, sensationalized events that “seize” the collective imagination, thereby rendering it inoperative for dealing with more important events or for engaging in its higher potentials.

If we become too fascinated by, absorbed in, or reactive to the current play of the body politic as it performs in the national and world theater, it

DREAMING OF WETIKO

is as if we have fallen for a magician's deception. We can then potentially become distracted and take our attention away from the deeper process employing our ruling class. Like a magician or evil wizard, the people behind the scenes create smokescreens to divert the public's attention from what they are really doing. This is an outer reflection of how the wetiko bug, once it takes over an individual's psyche, works its (black) magic of deception. If we fall under the spell being cast, we then marginalize, don't engage with, and don't notice the underlying corruption which those in overt positions of power are both an expression of and a smoke-screen for. By not engaging with the real power lines which underlie what is manifesting in our world, we give away our power to effect real change. We become "spellbound" by the outer manifest forms of the universe.

Once the wetiko-media sufficiently fascinate us and "catch" our attention, we then become "fastened," held fast to a particular viewpoint, which limits the fluidity and mobility of our consciousness, and takes away our internal freedom, as if we have fallen under a spell. Etymologically, the word "fascinate" is related to the words "enchantment" and "bewitchment." When a group of people (or a nation) falls into mass psychology together, this collective fascination is a form of mass possession or madness whose underlying psychological dynamic breeds fasc-ism. If we fall under the spell of the wetiko-media, we are then colluding with the forces of wetiko as we enable each other to enact an unconscious, unspoken, collective decision to abrogate our power to creatively and consciously invent our world.

When we fall prey to the denial that is endemic to a society riddled by wetiko, we hold contradictory viewpoints simultaneously, while splitting off from the underlying contradiction, which is a self-induced, trancelike, dissociated state, in which we have fixated our attention, restricted our own awareness, and desensitized and hypnotized ourselves. This complex array of mental maneuvers involves both conscious and unconscious elements. In his 1949 novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, George Orwell called this mind-splitting activity "doublethink": "to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing both ... to forget whatever it is necessary to forget, then to draw

it back into the memory again at the moment when it was needed, and then promptly to forget it again, and above all to apply the same process to the process itself ... consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then once again to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed.”⁵ This is a very apt description of the covert, autohypnotic operations taking place within a wetikoized mind. Once we have fallen prey to doublethink, we have then taken in and internalized within ourselves the psychological operations needed to exist within a culture of wetiko, resulting in a chronic and unavoidable state of cognitive dissonance within our own minds.

The wetiko bug influences and ingeniously manages our perceptions by stealth and subterfuge so as to obfuscate and hide itself from being seen. Wetiko bedazzles, bewitches, and bedevils consciousness in such a way that we become blind to our underlying, assumed viewpoint. Like a higher-dimensional, alien form of psychic foliage, the wetiko germ implants its seeds into, germinates, and takes root within our mind, thereby distracting and deviating us from our true vocation, calling, and spiritual path. The alien and alienating effect of the wetiko virus, the very thing we need to see, is disguised by the way we think, perceive, frame, and give meaning to our experience. When someone becomes a full, card-carrying member of the cult of wetiko, it is as if their mind has been colonized by the virus in such a way that they don't have the slightest clue about their own pathological condition. Wetikos don't experience themselves as needing help; for them other people are always the problem. They usually don't mind their disease, or even recognize it, because it is all they know. The disease sees to it that they feel normal and do not notice anything odd about their condition. In addition, their leaders and the very society they live in encourage them in it and actively guide them toward more full-blown stages of the illness under the guise of advancing their careers. They become so enmeshed and entangled in a world governed by wetiko that they neither have an appreciation of their disorder nor do they realize how truly sick they are.

It can be hard to recognize someone afflicted with wetiko, for when someone is a carrier of wetiko, the person can seem completely normal,

DREAMING OF WETIKO

even more normal than so-called normal people. Wetikos can present a more convincing picture of virtue than virtue presents of itself, in the same way that a wax rosebud or a plastic peach seems more perfect to the eye than the imperfect original from which it was modeled. It is not uncommon for full-blown wetikos to be pronounced perfectly “sane” by our psychiatric system (which is a striking expression that our mental health system itself is suffering from wetiko). The majority of wetikos are not in asylums, but are freely running around out in the world, oftentimes established in positions of great power to influence events. They can appear to have a thoughtful, reassuring, reasonable, and even-keeled demeanor. They can be quite charming, frequently having the seductive confidence of someone who is fanatically identified, like the typical fundamentalist, with only one side of an inherently two-sided polarity. Falling victim to one’s own deception can have a mesmerizing effect on others, as wetikos appear so sure of what they are saying that they are able to project this conviction to others. Nothing has such a convincing effect as a lie one believes oneself, or an evil deed or intention whose righteousness one regards as self-evident. Only someone who is gripped by an archetypal power greater than their own ego has a gripping and suggestive effect on others. A wetiko’s talent for hypnotizing others is proportional to the extent that they themselves are hypnotized. Because only a convinced person is immediately convincing, through the effects of psychic contagion they exercise a great influence on their contemporaries.

The Archetypal Realm

Wetiko disease is not an expression of the personal unconscious, though it expresses itself through individuals in unique ways; rather, it is a sickness of the soul that is an expression of a disturbance in the collective unconscious itself. Full-blown wetikos have fallen into, been taken over by, and been seized by the archetypal realm of the collective unconscious, a more powerful energy that is acting itself out through them. When an archetype common to all people comes to life, it has a power that fascinates people from within, as it is the power of the collective unconscious which is

activated. When an archetype is activated, it gets us below the belt and not in our mind. It is our sympathetic nervous system that is gripped, so that rational logic and facts have little effect. When an archetype within us is mobilized, it affects us like a narcotic, having a peculiar hypnotic effect which renders us unconscious. The image of Dorothy and her friends falling asleep in the poppy field as they approach the Emerald City in the movie *The Wizard of Oz* symbolically expresses this archetypal situation of falling under a spell as we approach the sacred archetypal dimension.

When an unconscious content is activated and an archetype constellated, a person will be infused with the radiation of that awakened archetype. Typically, at first the person identifies with the archetype and steps into and plays out a mythic, archetypal role. The activated archetype transfigures the person from within so as to suit its purposes, seizing hold of the person's consciousness and compelling them to act as the archetype wills. The power of the archetype is not controlled by us; we find ourselves at its mercy to an unsuspected degree. Psychologically speaking, when we are possessed by an archetype, it is as if an "entity" has taken us over and we are no longer there. We literally have no idea of our situation. When any of us become seized and unconsciously possessed by the archetypal dimension, we momentarily forfeit our humanity and develop a compelling charisma, which can have a gripping or enchanting effect on others. A person can then take on archetypal dimensions and exercise corresponding, almost superhuman effects. The potentialities of the archetype, for both good and evil alike, are like an amplifier that transcends our human capacities many times over. We can appropriate its power only by identifying with the daemon and allowing ourselves to become possessed by it as it acts itself out through us. Paradoxically, in being taken over and possessed by an archetype, we have become like an empty shell, a juxtaposition of subhuman/infantile/regressed and superhuman/inflated qualities at the same time. Everything that exceeds a certain human size evokes equally inhuman, fascist, and totalitarian powers in humanity's unconscious. The part of the wetiko that is bewitched evokes the corresponding suggestible and bedeviled part of others' psyches and hooks it, spellbinding it and entraining it into its archetypal spin. People taken

DREAMING OF WETIKO

over by wetiko become the magnets around which and the portal through which the spell of wetiko becomes cast in the surrounding environment. Conflated with and inflated by the hypnotically fascinating psychic force field of the archetype, people so possessed become amplifiers for the archetype to transmit and nonlocally extend and incarnate itself throughout the field of consciousness. A collective possession can result which can rapidly escalate into a psychic epidemic, as is evidenced throughout history, and as we see in today's world.

It is perfectly possible, psychologically speaking, for the unconscious aspect of an archetype to take total possession of an individual. People so seized by an archetype can then be said to embody the archetype in human form. They become the instruments through which the formless archetype clothes itself in form, becomes visible, and incarnates itself in the third dimension. They can then be said to be the revelation of the archetype—a potential treasure chest of information for those seeking to understand this type of psychosocial phenomenon. Seen as a symbol in our shared waking dream, Christ can be said to be the “Incarnation” of the Word made flesh, that is, the conscious incarnation of the positive aspect of the archetype of the Self, embodying our wholeness (holiness) in living flesh and blood. Similarly, when someone is *unconsciously* taken over by wetiko, they can be said to be embodying, incarnating, and revealing the complete and polar opposite, or photographic “negative,” of this Self-image (and hence can be said to be an image for the anti-Self, as well as instrument for the “anti-Christ,” i.e., evil). Psychologically speaking, whereas Christ was consciously channeling the positive aspect of the archetype of the Self, which was enriching to the world at large, someone possessed by wetiko is unconsciously channeling the negative aspect of the archetype, which is always destructive for those within their sphere of influence.

When the archetypal dimension is constellated to such a degree, and someone, or a group of people, is unconsciously taken over by and hence channeling and incarnating the negative aspect of the archetype, the surrounding field will synchronistically reflect back and initially support this identification with the archetype (but only up to a point, beyond which

always leads to self-destruction). This is similar to the situation in a family system where abuse is being enacted: the system will (arche)typically configure itself to “protect the abuser.” Being nonlocal, the archetype is an arranger of psychic forces, both inside our brains and outside, in the world at large. When someone becomes possessed by an archetype, the archetype fulfills itself not only psychically in the individual, but outside the individual, in the surrounding environment as well. This state of being taken over by and incarnating the archetype in fully human form is just like in a dream, where the inner process expresses itself synchronistically through the medium of the outside world, as the boundary between inner and outer has dissolved.

When someone is gifted in the art of touching the archetypal, they can play on the souls of people like the strings of a piano. Connecting with the archetypal is like plucking a higher-dimensional chord of our being, which immediately activates a resonance in the collective unconscious in whoever hears it. Just as the pendulum with the strongest swing entrains all the other pendulums into its swing, the person who is channeling the living power of the deeper, archetypal force can potentially entrain and entrance others. This power can be used for the highest good—helping people to awaken—or it can be used for the deepest evil so as to manipulate, disempower, and enslave other people. Being archetypal, this energy is fundamentally neither good nor bad, but can potentially manifest either way, depending upon our *intent*. Being unconsciously identified with an archetype is extremely dangerous, in that it is at the root of both individual and collective psychoses. Our tendency to unknowingly fall into the grip of an archetype is animating much of what is being acted out in the world theater, which is to say that the origin of world events lies hidden within the unconscious of humanity.

4

Dreams of the Psyche

Bewitched by Our Own Projections

Wetiko/malignant egophrenia is a result of pathological narcissism (see **malignant narcissism** in the Glossary), of the separate, egoic self spinning out of control, going wild, and running amok. “Running amok” is related to the ancient Scandinavian “Berserkers,” the precursor to the modern phrase “going berserk.” Believed to have become possessed by the spirit of wild animals, the Berserkers would lose all human reason and go into frenzies in which they would unleash unrestrained aggression, rage, and fury. Jung used the German word *Ergriffenheit*, the state of being gripped with emotion, in connection with being seized and possessed by a more powerful archetypal energy. When we become taken over by the daemonic energy of wetiko, we are then compelled, as if taken over by a whirlwind, to act out its destruction in the world.

Bewitched by the intrinsic projective tendencies of their own mind, as if standing on their head and living in an upside-down world, full-blown wetikos are unconsciously doing the very thing they are reacting to and accusing other people of doing. While projecting the shadow onto others, for example, they will accuse others of projecting the shadow onto them. To use an extreme but prototypical example, it is like someone screaming that you’re killing them as they kill you. If their insanity is reflected back to them, they think it is the mirror that is insane. Suffering from a form of

DREAMING OF WETIKO

psychic blindness that believes itself to be sightedness, full-blown wetikos project out their own unconscious blindness and imagine that others, instead of themselves, are the ones who are blind. The wetiko bug fancies itself to be the healing antibody, and ironically relates to the genuinely wholesome parts of the greater body politic, which are in fact the actual antibodies, as cancerous tumors to be exterminated. When the disease is at a sufficiently developed stage, the very sight of goodness is the very experience that activates their desire to do evil.

Wetikos subscribe to a world where true is false and facts make no difference, a world based on a convoluted, flawless illogic, a logic of the nonsensical, a truly deadly logic that is a counterlogic to the Logos. With their flawed reasoning, wetikos will use fallacious deduction to arrive at unwarranted conclusions and will subconsciously select data which invariably lead to chronic avoidance of the crux of the matter. Split in two, they become schizoid, dissociated from themselves, with one hand not knowing what the other is doing, duality having seemingly established itself as the reigning logic at the core of their being. Wetiko fractures the connection between the outside world and our inner experience of ourselves, splitting our perception of the world and our place in it. Governed by the insane, self-perpetuating wetiko-logic of fear and paranoia, those taken over by the disease fear that if they don't attack and rule over others, they are in danger of being attacked and ruled over themselves. No guilty afterthoughts can enter their psyche, because the terror that rules them constrains them to follow a logic antithetical to conscience.

It is important to remember that the evil we see in full-blown wetikos is a reflection of our own evil; if we don't recognize this, we will just be projecting our shadow onto them. We are then guilty of the very same thing (shadow projecting) we are essentially reacting to and of which we are accusing them.

Someone fully taken over by the wetiko bug is like a kitten endlessly reacting to her reflection in a mirror, thinking it is another kitten separate from and other than herself, as she becomes conditioned by her own energy. Wetikos react to their own projections in the world as if they objectively exist and are other than themselves, delusionally thinking

that they have nothing to do with creating that to which they are reacting (see **Aparticipatory Delusional Syndrome—ADS**—in the Glossary). This activity of endlessly reacting to their own energy is a crazy-making activity, as over time this tends to generate insane behavior, both out in the world and within themselves. Full-blown wetikos are suffering from a very peculiar form of psychic AIDS, an autoimmune disease of the psyche that is getting collectively acted out, writ large on the world stage as more people fall under its sway. In autoimmune deficiency syndrome, the immune system of the organism perversely attacks the very life it is trying to protect. In trying to live, it destroys life, ultimately destroying even itself. Bewitched by its projections, the autoimmune system of the wetikoized psyche falls under its own self-created illusion and, in its state of confusion and trauma, is tricked into creating the very problem it is trying to resolve. In ADS, the immune system of the psyche, in its attempts at protecting itself against attacks, attacks projected aspects of itself which appear to be “other,” invariably leading to its own self-destruction. Similarly, humans are destroying the biosphere, the global immune system of the planet upon which we all depend for our very survival. If the planet were seen as an organism, and people seen as cells in the greater organism of the planet, it would be as if these cells had become cancerous or parasitic, and had turned on themselves, destroying the very organism of which they themselves were a part. Traumatized, our species appears to be enacting a mass ritual suicide on a global scale.

Having mesmerized themselves, wetikos have, ultimately speaking, become their own victim. Running like a tape that loops back into itself in endless iterations, their self-hypnosis is dedicated to forever forestalling the gnawing anxiety of confronting and dealing with the insanity of what they are doing, both to themselves and others. Like the subject of a master hypnotist, their attention becomes attenuated, narrowed, and constricted to their limited and particularized viewpoint. After a certain point, wetiko disease becomes so completely internalized that the afflicted person, as if compulsively repeating their initial moment of trauma, moment by moment re-creates their own psychosis without any external stimulus at all. Unconsciously identified with the aggressor, they become their own

DREAMING OF WETIKO

perpetrator, police state, and control system. Their own intrinsic genius of co-creating life has been turned against themselves in the most demonic of ways. The most depraved part of this process is that, ultimately speaking, it involves the assent of their own free will, which is to say that no one else but themselves is ultimately responsible for the perverse nature of the situation they have fallen into. There is no objectively existing entity outside themselves who can steal their soul; the dreamed-up phenomenon of wetiko tricks them into giving it away themselves. The culture of wetiko corrupts, such that its card-carrying members willingly subscribe to their enslaved condition. A process that started out coercively transforms its victims into being implicated in and actively choosing their own enslavement. Their pathological inner state informs their actions in the outer world, which becomes the channel through which their inner landscape plays itself out and takes on embodied form. They create scorched earths as outer correlates to their inner ravaged landscape.

The Origin of Wetiko Is the Psyche

The underlying source of what is playing out on the world stage is the unconscious **psyche** of humanity. Because of its obviousness, however, this fact goes unnoticed by most people. Just as a fish doesn't see water, we tend to not see the primary role the psyche plays in our world because it is the psyche through which we see the world in the first place. The psyche is simultaneously the object and subject of its own investigation. In observing the psyche, the observer is truly the observed; as we get deeper insight into our psyche, we uncover previously unknown and hidden parts of ourselves. The psyche is the essence of humanity, its greatest instrument, an indefinable, multidimensional creative entity of enormous scope, subtlety, and power that eludes all attempts to explain it, including this one. The psyche becomes impossible to fully describe because there is nothing, including the process of describing it, that is not "it" in action. When we use the word "psyche" we are alluding to the densest darkness and mystery it is possible to imagine. We know as little about what the psyche is as we know what life is. The psyche is a substanceless

substance, a true mystery filled with a living reality that, being weightless, is impossible to pin down. As such, to say the origin of wetiko lies in the psyche tells us very little other than pointing us in the right direction. Our culture tends to ignore and marginalize the psyche and its effects as if it doesn't exist. Modern behaviorist psychology reduces psychological happenings to secretions of the glands or activities of the brain, thereby achieving the dubious distinction of a "psychology without the psyche."

It is becoming more and more evident that the greatest danger which threatens humanity comes from the psyche. Jung writes, "The world today hangs by a thin thread, and that thread is the psyche of man."¹ If we don't understand the psychic roots of our current world crisis, we are doomed to unconsciously repeat it and continually re-create endless destruction, as if we are having a recurring dream. Like an iteration of the same underlying fractal, the psychic forces that animated the totalitarian psychosis which engendered two world wars are still actively at work creating wars in our current day and age. Just as a dream supplies all the evidence we need to confirm the seemingly objective truth of the viewpoint we are holding within it, once the sociopolitical insanity plays itself out in the form of war, we have all the proof we need that the conflict is outside of ourselves. It is then nearly impossible to convince anyone that the source of the conflict lies within the psyche of every individual. The psyche becomes exteriorized, as an internal psychic conflict then takes place by way of projection outside in the world in living flesh and blood. Most people don't realize that wars are themselves full-bodied expressions of inner psychic processes being played out in the world theater. People prefer the most preposterous political, social, and economic theories, rather than recognizing that most wars are unmitigated psychic disasters. The events in our world are a thin skin wrapped around the enormous cosmos of psyche, which is to say that the material world is the illusory fringe both revealing and veiling the true reality, which is the underlying psyche that is informing what is happening in our world.

Jung states that "the world powers that rule over humanity, for good or ill, are unconscious psychic factors.... We are steeped in a world that was created by our own psyche."² This brings to mind various passages

DREAMING OF WETIKO

in the Bible about “powers and principalities” that rule over humanity, which is the metaphysically equivalent expression of our psychological situation. Whether we call it a demon or an unconscious psychic factor, “the force” that rules over us is created by and an expression of our own psyche. “The powers of the psyche” are so unimaginably vast that, in Jung’s opinion, they “are far mightier than all the Great Powers of the earth.”³ Hidden within the psyche, like a treasure in encoded form waiting to be discovered, is an incalculable meta-nuclear power which, as history shows, can transform entire civilizations in unforeseeable ways. The future will be decided primarily by the changes that take place in the psyche of humanity, which is truly the world’s pivot. The smallest alteration in the psychic factor can have extraordinary worldwide effects. The investigation of the deeper levels of the psyche brings to light much that we, on the surface, can only dream about.

What is currently playing out in the collective body politic is a process that has been gestating in the depths of the human psyche over millennia. The psyche is the underlying matrix, the infinite emptiness that is overflowing full, the maternal womb out of which civilization—and its destroyer, war—are born. There has been a preparatory process going on within the human psyche over the history of our species that has unleashed the very forces that are at work today in the world. The collective unconscious contains in potential the great collective events of the time; it is the cauldron in which history prepares itself. World events are being cooked up in the crucible of the collective unconscious of humanity into living experiences. The psyche, pregnant with open-ended possibilities, is the very cipher in which the history of humanity is being written. We are the potential spiritual midwives for this process. All great movements of humanity have been born from psychical origins.

Unaware of the role that our psyche plays in the co-creation of our universe, we of necessity **dream up** or create our world in such a way as to remind us of the profound importance of the psyche. This is analogous to how, in a night dream, we dream up our unconscious into manifestation in, as, and through the dream so as to reveal itself to us and help us

to awaken. The dream—whether we are speaking of the night dream or our shared waking dream—is an expression of our unconscious while simultaneously being the very thing we need to awaken. And just like in a night dream, if we don't get the message that our dreamlike universe is revealing to us, we can expect to have endless reiterations and recurrences of the same waking nightmare, often with escalating intensity, until we get the message.

Jung points out that “the totalitarian psychosis with its frightful consequences and the intolerable disturbance of human relationships is forcing us to pay attention to the psyche and our abysmal unconsciousness of it. Never before has mankind as a whole experienced the numen of the psychological factor on so vast a scale.”⁴ Jung is articulating that the psyche, in its full-blown numinosity, is manifesting in, as, and through our world crisis as if the psyche is a higher power. Just like the unconscious compensates a one-sidedness through the dreams it sends our way, the totalitarian psychosis that is playing out in the world today is the very compensatory form through which the psyche is trying to get our attention about the psyche's profound importance. The totalitarian psychosis running rampant throughout the world today is the psyche's way of revealing to us that we are forgetting the crucial role it plays in creating our experience. Marginalizing our own authorship and authority, we then dream up totalitarian forces to limit our freedom and create our experience for us.

Ours is an extremely dangerous time. Paradoxically, both the origin and the potential resolution of our world crisis are to be found within the psyche. It is high time for us to pay attention to the psyche's role in human affairs. The veil is being lifted, and the integral role the human psyche plays in co-creating our world is being shown to us in bold relief through events unfolding in our world. Our collective psychosis itself is revealing to us the crucial role the psyche plays in informing and creating world events. Recognizing the psychic origin of what is playing out on the world stage is the very realization that the deeper, underlying psychic process is revealing to us. We are simply asked to recognize what is being revealed.

We Are Such Stuff as Dreams Are Made On

In the mid-twentieth century, some early Christian texts were found in a cave near Nag Hammadi, Egypt. In these texts it says, for example, “Thus they [humans] were ignorant of the Father, he being the one whom they did not see ... there were many illusions at work ... and (there were) empty fictions, as if they were sunk in sleep and found themselves in disturbing dreams.... Such is the way of those who have cast ignorance aside from them like sleep ... but they leave them behind like a dream in the night.... This is the way each one has acted, as though asleep at the time when he was ignorant. And this is the way he has [come to knowledge], as if he had awakened.”⁵ The discovery of these hidden texts was like an uncovering of a hidden spiritual treasure whose time had come to enter this three-dimensional world. Like spiritual alarm clocks, their message is, to put it simply, “You are dreaming. Wake up.” These treasures are not merely pointing out the dreamlike nature of our situation, but are themselves a manifestation of the dream at which they are pointing. Clues and reminders of the dreamlike nature of the universe always seem to be discovered at exactly the right moment in time—right in the “nick” (which literally means “groove”) of time—exactly when they are needed. As if coming to our aid, these spiritual treasures, just like when the unconscious compensates a one-sidedness by sending us dreams, compensate our unconsciousness by sending us messages to wake us up. Hidden treasures such as the Nag Hammadi texts are like a time-release spiritual multivitamin secreted by this waking dream of ours just when this particular nutrient of the psyche is needed.

The Gnostics—the ones who “know”—portrayed the state of humanity as being similar to being asleep and dreaming and not knowing they were dreaming or even asleep. Not only that, but in its somnambulistic state, humanity actually thinks it’s awake. Being asleep is no mere metaphor, not a mythological idea, a mere episode in a narrative, but is a fundamental feature of existence in our world. Being asleep is an existential reality which by its nature requires and calls forth the entire enterprise of redemption. Humanity isn’t just asleep; it loves its sleep,

and has abandoned itself to sleep. This ignorance is not a neutral, passive state, not merely an absence of knowledge, but is a counter-reaction to knowledge, actively induced and maintained so as to prevent the arising of knowledge of humanity's true origin and situation. As if conceiving of the wetiko virus, the Gnostics thought of humanity's unconsciousness as a veritable infection transmitted from the poisonous effects of darkness. The Gnostics realized that there is a seemingly nefarious energy working through unconscious humanity that is counteracting the operation of awakening and resisting the light of consciousness, as if the very existence of this energy depended upon humanity staying asleep. To the extent humanity had fallen asleep, they had become numb and unable to feel into the truth of their situation. The Gnostics saw sleeping humanity as being intoxicated, being drunken on the "wine of ignorance," and is in need of becoming sober on knowledge. Humanity is being called to come back to themselves, to affirm what is essentially their own, to have insight into who they are and to know themselves. In former times, these qualities of unconscious humanity—being asleep, numb and intoxicated were ascribed to the state of the dead in the underworld. From this point of view, this very world is the underworld, and is itself the realm of the dead, that is, of those who have to be raised to life again. When Jesus brings Lazarus back to life, he says, "Our friend Lazurus sleepeth, but I go that I may awaken him out of sleep." (John 11:11 KJV) The dead Lazarus is a stand-in for sleeping humanity that is in need of awakening.

Recognizing the psychic nature of our experience is analogous to awakening to the dreamlike nature of our universe. To say that this world is dreamlike is not to be saying that this world is "just" a dream, and is therefore a meaningless illusion. The physical nature of the universe is dreamlike in that it can be compared to a rainbow, which, just like a dream, is an impermanent appearance that is empty of any substantial, inherent existence from its own side. When we see a rainbow, we each see our own rainbow; we are not seeing the same rainbow, which is to say that there is no "objectively" existing rainbow separate from the seeing of it. A rainbow can't be said to exist independently of a consciousness that is observing it; the same is true of this dreamlike universe.⁶ To think

DREAMING OF WETIKO

that there is an objective universe is to be imagining that the universe is “not-I.” When we recognize the psychic origin of events in the world, we discover that the psyche is not solely within our skulls but rather, just like a dream, we are within the psyche. As with a dream, the core “inner” process of the psyche is revealing itself, literally as well as symbolically, in, as, and through events in the “outside” world. Trying to separate the inner from the outer or the psyche from matter is to deny the concrete existence of the soul. It is as if the inner reality envelops the outer, visible reality, and the task of resuscitating the soul involves cultivating the respiration between the two. We don’t recognize this synchronistic correspondence between the inner and the outer, not because it is hard to see, but because it is so overt that we don’t notice what is staring us in the face. This correlation between what is happening inside ourselves and what is happening in the outside world is “transparent.” This is to say, it is not hidden, as it’s fully apparent, while at the same time being invisible, like a see-through medium that we are not able to register. This synchronistic correlation between the inner and the outer is veiling itself in the obviousness of its very revelation. We are simply being asked to recognize what is being revealed.

As if having taken root in our three-dimensional world, the psyche is inseparable from and expresses itself in, as, and through the whole materialized universe, while at the same time, being a “no-thing,” it is other than and transcendent to its forms. It is as if the psyche extends its tentacles out into the world and arranges, configures, and organizes it so that the world becomes the very medium through which the psyche is revealing itself. Being nonlocal, the psyche is “located” both within our heads (i.e., in the subjective domain of mind) and synchronistically out in the world at the same time, as time and space become relativized within the all-embracing realm of the psyche. The nonlocal psyche is not bound by either the rules of three-dimensional space and time or by the laws of man. Because of the psyche’s nonlocality, it is as if there is only one world, where psyche and matter are the same thing. Trying to separate psyche from matter is as impossible as trying to separate the north and south poles of a magnet by cutting the magnet in half; the process itself

generates a new north and south pole for each of the resulting halves. For psyche and matter to be inseparably united is just like being in a dream, where the apparent “matter” of the dream is a direct, unmediated reflection of the psyche that is dreaming.

A Buddhist teaching that is an equation or formulation for how we co-create reality with our dreamlike universe is “As a thing is viewed, so it appears,”⁷ which can be essentialized as “As Viewed, So Appears.” The phrase “As Viewed, So Appears” is pointing at, while simultaneously being an expression of, the dreamlike nature of our waking reality, in the sense that, just like a dream, what we are perceiving is a projection and reflection of the mind that is looking. Projections change the world into the replica of our own unknown face. By connecting the dots on the inkblot of our waking dream, we are superimposing or mapping a meaning pattern (projecting, i.e., dreaming) onto the screen of our experience. Being that the seemingly outer dreamscape, like an inkblot or Rorschach test, is nothing other than our own projection, our own reflection, it has no choice but to spontaneously shape-shift, and in no time whatsoever (faster than the twinkling of an eye), reflect back our interpretation. As an example of how the world and its experiences are a function of the meaning we impart to it, I’d like to share the following anecdote, which took place years ago, when I didn’t have much money. One day, I found a brand-new bottle of contact lens solution in the bathroom closet the day after I had just bought one in the store. I remember thinking, “If only I had found this contact lens solution yesterday, I could’ve saved the money I had spent.” I started feeling depressed. And then I realized that I could just as easily interpret the exact same experience in an empowering, instead of a disempowering, way. I could interpret finding the extra contact lens solution as evidence that I was living in an abundant universe where my possessions had started to magically multiply. Instead of having one bottle of contact lens solution, in reality I now had two. Why was I depressed about this? It was clear to me at that moment how direct and instantaneous a link there is between how we frame or interpret our reality and how we experience life.

DREAMING OF WETIKO

The universe mirrors back to us our point of view in such a way as to confirm our perspective in a self-validating feedback loop. The meaning appears to be inherent in the outer inkblot, whereas in reality, the origin of the meaning is our own mind. “As Viewed, So Appears” is as all-pervasive and universal a law in the realm of consciousness as gravity is in the physical dimension.⁸ “As Viewed, So Appears” is such a profound articulation of how we create our dreamlike reality that if we think “As Viewed, So Appears” is *not* true, the entire universe will shape-shift and reflect back to us that “As Viewed, So Appears” appears to be *not* true, which will unfortunately serve as a rationale for the unaware to write off its validity. This apparent negation is paradoxically the strongest affirmation of “As Viewed, So Appears,” however, as it demonstrates its all-encompassing profundity. We are like magicians, enchanted by our own creation.

Periods of disturbance and distress in our world are a manifestation of and catalyst for a corresponding self-regulating and healing archetype in the collective unconscious of humanity to draw to itself and self-organize everything it needs to synchronistically render itself visible and operative in the world of form. Synchronicities occur at times of deep archetypal excitation in the field, which is to say that in moments of crisis, transition, creative tension, and dynamic intensity, the boundary between the worlds can become transparent, so that synchronistic events can more easily manifest. What makes the phenomenon of synchronicity so baffling is our culturally unquestioned assumption of and ingrained belief in the sovereign power of linear causality. Not derivable from any known antecedents, synchronicities are acausal creative acts, springing from the continuous re-creation and re-presentation in time of an archetypal pattern that exists outside of time. They are the eternal presence-ing of the one creative act, revelations of the act of creation itself. For there is, indeed, only one Creation, but instead of being an event that occurred once in the distant past, it recurs perpetually, from instant to instant. The archetypal, synchronistic realm vaporizes illusory boundaries—revealing spirit—and builds bridges which mediate and connect the inner and the outer, the conscious and the unconscious, and dreaming and waking. Synchronicities do not happen objectively, outside of ourselves, but are phenomena

that we are co-creating and actively participating in—which is the very fact that synchronicities themselves are revealing to us.

Recognizing the mysterious, synchronistic correlation between what is occurring in the world and what is happening within our own minds empowers us to become dynamic transformative agents in our world. As soon as we realize that the world is steeped in our projections, our relationship to our world begins to change radically, and we no longer unconsciously react to our projections as they appear in the world, imagining them to exist objectively, as separate from ourselves. By consciously recognizing ourselves in the world, we become enabled to work and play with our projections in a way that serves us, instead of allowing our projections to play with our minds.

It is when we view the outer physical world as distinct from our psyche that we risk exposure to that inner sickness of the soul, *wetiko*; for one of *wetiko*'s unique ploys is to take advantage of the fact that there is no actual boundary between the inner and the outer, between dreaming and waking, and ultimately, between self and other. *Wetiko* can easily trick and deceive us by materializing itself in, as, and through the medium of the outside world, which we assume is distinct from our psyche. Appearing external to ourselves, *wetiko* utilizes the seemingly outside world as the canvas for its full-bodied revelation of itself. *Wetiko* doesn't acknowledge or abide by the spurious subject-object dichotomy, acting itself out free from these constraints. *Wetiko* nonlocally informs, gives shape to, and configures events in the world so as to synchronistically express itself; thus, events in the outer world symbolically express an inner psychological situation, just as in a dream.

Wetiko can only be “seen” when we snap out of our literal way of interpreting our experience and start seeing with symbolically informed awareness. At the same time, *wetiko* itself can become the impetus for expanding our consciousness and recognizing that the world is an oracle, a living primordial revelation of itself that continuously unfolds, speaking symbolically, in the language of dreams. Without *wetiko*, we wouldn't have had this realization, which is to say that *wetiko* is a potential blessing in the very convincing disguise of a curse.

DREAMING OF WETIKO

Realizing the dreamlike nature of reality collapses the boundary between spirit and matter, as matter has become “spiritualized” (blessed) and spirit has become “materialized” (incarnate). The *magnum opus* of alchemy involves freeing the spirit that is considered to be imprisoned in matter. This is analogous to freeing the part of ourselves embedded and trapped in the mind of dogma, of materialism, and of viewing things literally (as “nothing but”), instead of metaphorically and symbolically. This is to step out of linear-mindedness into the realization that the universe is an interactive, acausal feedback loop—truly a work in progress.

We live inside a world that, like a dream, is an interactive mirror inseparable from our own inner being. This is not a passive or static mirroring, but a participatory and actional realization, in the sense that what is being reflected by the waking dreamscape is a process that is being enacted in an interactive way both outside and inside ourselves at the same time. A reflection of a condition deep within ourselves, wetiko is an unmediated, direct manifestation of the dreamlike nature of the universe, which is the very realization that wetiko is showing us. Recognizing the dreamlike nature of our situation creates a living antibody made out of awareness itself that is custom-designed to neutralize the psychic pathogen of wetiko. This is to say that encoded within the deadly pathology of wetiko is an insight and revelation containing its own cure. Its own self-revelation, wetiko disease provides its own psychic medicine, but in order to receive its healing “benefits” we have to recognize and deeply understand this miracle in psychospiritual health care.

How amazing—the very thing that is potentially destroying us is at the same time waking us up! A potential catalyst for our evolution as a species, we are all co-creating and dreaming wetiko up together. Wetiko is a truly quantum phenomenon, in that it is the deadliest poison and the most healing medicine co-joined in one superposed state. Will wetiko kill us? Or will it awaken us? Everything depends upon our recognizing what it is revealing to us. The prognosis for wetiko/malignant egophrenia depends upon how we dream it.

Symbols

The symbolic dimension of this waking dream of ours is an expression of the interplay between the dreamer (us) and the dreamscape (the seemingly external world). The dreamer and the dream are not separate, but indivisible, interrelated, and interactive parts of a greater unified field. The dreamer and the dreamscape mutually reflect and affect each other simultaneously in a synchronistic, cybernetic feedback loop, reciprocally informing one another and thus co-arising together. The symbolic script of our universe is truly a revelation that is being mutually dreamed up by all of us, in and as the present moment. Crystallizing and emerging out of this interplay between us and the universe arises a symbol, and the symbol is in the form of the universe. This symbol is like a bridge, coming in the form of the very events in our world that precipitate out of this interplay.

One of the words for enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism is *mahamudra*, which, in addition to translating as the “great attitude,” also translates as the “great symbol.” The universe is itself a primordial revelation that is speaking in the language of symbols, a living symbolic scripture, the literal and symbolic book of life. The whole of creation is a cosmic text thirsting for interpretation, a living embodiment of the Word, manifesting the various names of God. Realizing that all things speak inspires us to develop a hermeneutics reflecting back our realization that the sacred Word is becoming materialized. Just as God’s Word spoke the world into existence according to the Book of Genesis, now it is through the Word that the cosmos can be released from the curse of literal matter, quantitative space, and historical, linear time. If the world is not seen as the symbol of itself that it is, like prose that is written in stone, we demythologize the sacred dimension of the world, and the world then solidifies as mute, immutable, faceless, forever collapsing into seemingly concretized objectivity. Hermeneutics, the practice of interpreting texts, has as its task the transfiguration of the world by means of unveiling the Word in all things. The word “hermeneutics” is related to and derived from the Greek god Hermes, also known as Mercury, who is a relative of wetiko. Symbolically speaking, Hermes/Mercury is the god of interpretation and

DREAMING OF WETIKO

language, among many other things. This is to say that wetiko is a phenomenon that is related to how we language and interpret our experience. Transmuting the world into symbols by definition transcends the distinction between the inner and outer, between the subject and object, between dreaming and waking, between spirit and matter, and between self and other. By interiorizing the cosmos, we have found our true home as well as ourselves.

Because of the extremely therapeutic and healing benefit of symbolic awareness, Jung spent his entire life fighting for the reactivation of symbolic thinking. If we view events in our world materialistically, literally, we will be flesh, but if we think symbolically, it is as if we become spirit. Psychologically speaking, to view our world symbolically canalizes the libido into a spiritual form. Symbols are different from signs, which have a literal and unambiguous meaning that can be expressed in words (for example: “One Way, Do Not Enter”). Symbols, on the other hand, are an expression of and point to something beyond themselves, both reflecting and effecting the very mystery of which they are an emanation. Symbols are neither abstract nor concrete, neither rational nor irrational, neither real nor unreal, but always both. It warrants our highest attention that Christ himself apparently wants us to view the divine drama that played out through him symbolically. For example, in the Apocryphal Acts of John, Jesus appeared during the crucifixion in a vision to John, who had fled to the Mount of Olives, and instructed him to view the crucifixion symbolically, which is why John writes, “. . . holding fast this one thing in myself, that the Lord contrived all things symbolically and by a dispensation toward men, for their conversion and salvation.”⁹ Seeing symbolically is a mode of apprehension which takes place in the faculty and under the tutelage of the creative imagination, in which the literal sensory data of this world are alchemically transmuted and resurrected into living symbols filled with the power to transform.

The symbols arising in this waking dream of ours are neither “objective” nor separate from ourselves, as if they come from “out there.” Just as we are all participating in co-dreaming the wetiko epidemic together, the symbolic dimension of reality is something we are not passively watching

but actively creating. The hidden, intimate interplay between ourselves and our universe expresses and articulates itself as the symbolic dimension of reality. The symbols precipitating out of this interplay are the very language through which our consciousness communicates with itself. Wetiko itself is such a living symbol. The symbolic dimension of reality is “self-secret,” paradoxically revealing itself in its own veiling of itself, adumbrating itself in a variety of images which indicate its true nature for all who have eyes to see. Christ’s “kingdom of heaven” is the symbolic dimension. The symbolic dimension is visible for all who open the eyes of their creative imagination, which is why Christ says in the Gospel of Thomas, in the recently discovered Nag Hammadi texts, “The kingdom of the father is spread out upon the earth, and men do not see it.”¹⁰ This “not seeing” is a form of psychic blindness known as wetiko.

It requires a higher faculty of consciousness to recognize that our universe is in the form of a living, breathing symbol, and this higher-dimensional organ of perception is our divine creative imagination. Our divine creative imagination is the suprasensory organ that transubstantiates the mundane empirical data of this world into its real but hidden form as symbolic epiphany, allowing the universe to fulfill its revelatory and theophanic function. On the one hand, a wooden cross, when seen literally, is an instrument of torture; on the other hand, it is a sacred symbol that transforms us. To the literal eye, Moses saw a brush fire on Mount Sinai. Transmuted into a symbol, it was a burning bush through which he experienced God. No one could convince him otherwise, as he was a changed man from the experience. Was it all his imagination? Is everything our imagination in the same way?

Part Two

The Shadow of Wetiko

5

The Shadow and Its Projections

The origin of wetiko disease is to be discovered within the psyche. The wetiko pathogen originally manifests as a disturbance in the field of the collective unconscious of humanity itself, creating the psychic ley lines upon which world events are erected and energized. Because of the psychic nature of wetiko, it serves us to understand the psychological underpinnings of the virus, that is, how it affects our day-to-day relationships and lives. We begin to “see” the bug when we are able to get in focus and recognize its psychological signature in both ourselves and others. The fact that the source of the wetiko germ is within the psyche means that the cure for this disease lies hidden within the psyche as well.

Wetiko psychosis is at the very root of humanity’s inhumanity to itself in all its various forms. As a species, we need to step into and participate in our own spiritual and psychological evolution, which means that we must focus our attention on and contemplate this most important topic before this virulent madness destroys us. Up until this point in our history we have been too easily distracted by the ruses of the wetiko bug itself. The disease itself is now demanding that we pay attention to it, or it will kill us. Its cure is the most pressing and fundamental issue facing us today. Author and environmental activist Derrick Jensen writes in his foreword to Forbes’s book about wetiko psychosis, “*Columbus and Other Cannibals* is, I think, the most important book ever written on one of the most important topics ever faced by human beings: why is the dominant culture so excruciatingly, relentlessly, insanely, genocidally,

ecocidally, suicidally destructive?”¹ A civilization usually doesn’t die from being invaded from the outside, but unless it creates culture which nourishes the evolution of the creative spirit, a civilization invariably commits suicide. As if possessed, our civilization is, trancelike, sleepwalking in a death march toward its own demise. The most pressing and inevitable question of our time is not just “Why?” but more urgently, “How can we stop this out-of-control, self-destructive, hell-bent part of ourselves?” Speaking of present-day man, Jung asks when we shall “in all seriousness seek ways and means to exorcise him from possession and unconsciousness, and make this the most vital task of civilization.”² When, in other words, shall we make our most vital task “waking up”?

The Shadow

The “problem” of the evil of wetiko is intimately bound up with the problem of **the shadow**, both personal and archetypal. The shadow, a term coined by Jung, is a living part of the personality. We all have a shadow, as everything substantial casts a shadow; it is what makes us human. The figure of the devil is a variant of the shadow archetype, that is, the dangerous aspect of the unrecognized dark half of the personality that represents and embodies the potentially evil powers of the unconscious. One of the inner meanings of the name Satan is the “shadow of the Lord.” The Anti-Christ corresponds to the shadow of the self, the darker half of the human totality. Lucifer, the highest of the fallen angels and the bringer of light, chooses the shadow by which to reveal himself. The very name Lucifer reminds us of his luminous origin as well as his abysmal darkness, thus recalling the bipolar character of all symbols. The shadow follows after, is inseparable from, and co-arises with the light. Psychologically speaking, the shadow is typically conceived of as the underdeveloped, undesirable, and inferior parts of our personality, the aspects of ourselves which we repress the most; it is the part of ourselves we are least proud of and want to hide from others. It is the “other” in ourselves; in terms of family systems, it is likened to a darker brother. If we consciously identify ourselves as being a good,

kind, spiritual person, for example, then imagine the polar opposite of this perspective—this is what comprises the contents and informs the point of view of the shadow side of our psyche. The less the shadow is embodied in an individual's conscious life, and the more one-sidedly the person identifies with a bright persona, the darker and more destructive the shadow becomes. Unless we are “working on our shadow” by making consistent efforts to become conscious of it, we typically relate to it by classifying it as not-self and reflexively projecting it outside ourselves onto others. Shadows are intimately related to light, in that shadows only manifest when there is light; the deeper and darker the shadow, the more powerful is the light that is casting the shadow. It is an archetypal, universal idea that the highest value is to be found in the lowest, that the blessing is to be found in the curse, and that wisdom is to be found in ignorance. Paradoxically, the inner light of our soul is discovered in the shadowy parts of the psyche that we deny, dis-own and marginalize. In alchemy, the mystery of the self is to be found in those parts of ourselves of which we are ashamed, have revulsion for, and turn away from in disgust. The secret and basis of the entire alchemical opus is referred to as the **prima materia**, which has to be found before the work can begin. The elusive, unique, and enigmatic prima materia is the chaos, darkness, and raw material out of which the “gold,” the awakened mind, is born. The aspects of ourselves of which we think the least, despise the most and reject are the very parts which contain the precious jewel.

Meeting ourselves, who we really are, always involves a meeting with our shadow. Coming to terms with the shadow is so important that Jung says, “The future of mankind very much depends upon the recognition of the shadow.”³ To deny the shadow is to unwittingly feed it and become possessed by, and thus an instrument of, its potentially destructive aspects. The inevitable result of not discovering, embracing, and integrating the shadow is, on the personal level, to be compulsively driven to never-ending interpersonal conflicts, and on the collective level, to be driven to create and perpetually be involved in endless wars. The only struggle genuinely worthwhile is with the power-drive of the shadow within ourselves.

One of the main opportunities for wetiko to become empowered

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

within us is when we are unconscious of our shadow. People who are split off from and unaware of their shadow, who think they are too wonderful and have an overly positive image of themselves, will unwittingly be taken over by and act out their shadow in the world. The extent to which we are unconscious of our shadow is the extent to which we are unaware of our potential to unwittingly enact our unconscious in ways which could be hurtful. The evil of which we are unconscious in ourselves will be secreted and insinuated into the surroundings and there it will work its discordant effects.

Shadow Projection

Psychologically speaking, “shadow projection,” that is, the projection of evil, is at the very root of wetiko disease. Shadow projection is itself the unmediated expression, revelation, and playing out of the shadow. Shadow projection is a process in which, without conscious awareness of what we are doing, we split off from and project out our own darkness onto others. It is an outer reflection of the initial process within ourselves of our be-night-ed effort to exterminate our own darkness. Shadow projection is our misguided attempt at a “final solution” to the problem of the evil within ourselves, and it actually deprives us of our capacity to deal with evil. Projecting the shadow opens up the door and invites in the vampiric entity of wetiko to make itself at home in the most intimate spaces of our psyche. It is through the dynamic of shadow projection that the wetiko bug digs in and entrenches itself within our psyches, where it is then able to commandeer the executive function of the psyche for its own ends. When we project the shadow, we unwittingly become a conduit for evil to possess us from behind, beneath our conscious awareness, and to act itself out through us. Projecting the shadow, while seeming to deliver us from the specter of evil haunting us within ourselves, is the primal act which generates the very evil that we are attempting to avoid in the first place. In a nefarious form of the repetition compulsion, the only way to prevent a return of the projections is through their continued projection. Wetikos need an enemy and will even create new ones to ensure that they

don't have to look at the evil within their own hearts. Putting evil outside of ourselves, however, is the primary sign of its presence working within. We have already committed the evil act when we leave our evil for other people to carry. Jung simply refers to shadow projection as both "basic evil" and "the lie," which by association is related to the symbolic figure of the devil, whose meanings include "the accuser" as well as "the liar." Shadow projection is truly of the devil, being a project(ion) of the devil, who sinisterly lurks behind the projection and guides it in deceptive ways that divide us against ourselves, keeping us truly in the dark. We can't project, however, what we don't already have within ourselves.

In the act of shadow projecting, we perpetrate violence (psychic and/or physical) not only on ourselves, but also on the "other" who is the receptacle for our shadow projection. Paradoxically, the recipient of our projections embodies our own weakness, while simultaneously representing the malevolent other. Though neither physical nor quantifiable, projections are palpable things with a subtle body all their own that affect their recipients. At the heart of the occult arts of witchcraft and black magic, shadow projections can negatively burden the recipients, even making them physically sick, as well as insinuating into the atmosphere and evoking out of the recipient the very qualities being projected upon them. When someone throws negative projections onto others, it is as if they are darting poisonous projectiles into them. In shadow projection, we split off from and try to get rid of a part of ourselves, which is a self-mutilation that is actually an act of violence simultaneously against both self and other. We then react violently when we encounter an embodied reflection of our shadow in the outer world, wanting to destroy it, as it reminds us of something dark within ourselves that we'd rather have nothing to do with. This act of external violence is an outer dramatization of our inner process of doing violence to a part of ourselves changing channels and expressing itself in, as, and through the external world. The darkness inside of us is trying to get rid of the darkness in the outside world, as if the darkness is trying to get rid of itself, which is the very act that generates, and is generated by, the darkness in the first place.

Trying to kill our shadow as it appears in the outer world is itself the

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

embodied reflection of our original *inner* act of splitting off from, projecting outward, and trying to destroy the dark part of ourselves that we despise, which is the impulse at the root of shadow projection in the first place. In other words, our present-moment “inner” activity of projecting the shadow outside of ourselves is being dreamed up and played out in the seemingly “external” world with “real world” consequences. The outer world is the canvas upon which our inner process embodies and incarnates itself. We are literally acting out en masse on the world stage our inner process of disassociating from, projecting out, and trying to destroy our own darkness. The inner psychological process of shadow projection is spilling outside of the boundaries of our skull (i.e., our inner life) and is manifesting and revealing itself in the outer world through collective world events. Just as in a dream, our inner psychological process is projected outside of ourselves, and both literally and symbolically dreamed up into materialization in the seemingly outer world.

How can we possibly see straight and benefit the world if we don't see our own darkness? When we shadow-project, we hypnotize ourselves into believing that our shadow exists outside of ourselves. Originating in the depths of the archetypal psyche, shadow projection is typically imbued with and carried by religious, archetypal energies. In its extreme form, the enemy is seen as the devil, the principle of objective evil in incarnate form, while we identify ourselves as the heroic agent of God, the principle of divine goodness and justice. This polarization is an expression of the extreme split and dissociation between the psychic opposites within the one projecting. Like a narcotic, shadow projection produces only an apparent relief, however. In reality, our shadow can't be cast off from ourselves, because it ultimately belongs to us. Even when we project the shadow outside of ourselves, we are still unconsciously fascinated by, fastened together with, and linked to it, as if an elastic connection exists between the cast-off shadow and ourselves. Becoming fascinated by our externalized shadow as it appears projected out and dreamed up in the world serves to distract and protect us from dealing with the evil within ourselves. Projecting the shadow onto an “enemy” conjures up and empowers the enemy, as our projection carries the fear we involuntarily

and secretly feel for our own evil over to the other side, considerably increasing the formidableness of its threat. The dreamlike nature of this world is such that if we project out our own darkness, the world will shape-shift to provide convincing evidence that the evil actually does exist in concrete and verifiably real form outside of ourselves, which serves to confirm to us our delusion in a never-ending, self-generating feedback loop with no exit strategy.

In shadow projection, we attempt to master and experience power over the internal condition that originally proclaimed to us our powerlessness not by becoming conscious, but rather by unconsciously identifying with, becoming, and then acting out the power to externally destroy. This is a state in which thanatos, the death instinct, has become eroticized. Unconsciously identified with and possessed by the death force, we self-righteously use destruction for the gratification of our unfulfilled power urges and sadistic drives. Unconsciously acting out unbound power in an orgasmic, blissful, massive discharge of inner frustrated destructiveness freed from all restraint is our perverse way of defending against the internal breakthrough of feelings of abject helplessness. Our acting out in this way is to void all inner tensions, as well as our attempt to attain the complete reversal of our inner condition. Evacuating and relocating our inner darkness outside of ourselves by demonizing the “other” seemingly protects us from feeling our vulnerability and pain. Our inner anxiety about our existential “power to be” attempts to resolve itself in the power to act free from restraint. Unconsciously acting out like this is an unmediated expression of our disempowered inner condition; it neither surmounts the need for compulsive repetition nor heals our trauma, however, but rather it preserves and cements our trauma even further. Wetikos’ *modus operandi*, their “M.O.,” becomes to root out and kill everything that feels tender, vulnerable, and alive within themselves, thus systematically murdering anything and everything within them that could possibly melt or produce a crack in the ice that encases their heart.

Unconscious feelings of guilt are one of the major causes of shadow projection, as well as its result. Unwilling and unable to consciously experience their sense of guilt and remorse of conscience, full-blown wetikos

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

are afraid of being exposed, of being found out, which is an outer reflection of the terror that the wetiko parasite within us feels at potentially being illumined. A misguided attempt at absolving ourselves of our guilt, when we shadow-project we secretly feed an unconscious sense of guilt, because we inwardly know we are not in our integrity. This sense of guilt itself is the very feeling from which we split off and from which we try to hide. Our guilt does not allow us to consciously feel our guilt, which in a vicious cycle is what we secretly feel guilty over. Unable to consciously experience our guilt animates more shadow projection, which further fuels the wetiko pathogen in a continually self-regenerating feedback loop. To the extent that we aren't able to consciously experience our guilt, we become caught in an infinitely perpetuating double-bind in which we project out our guilt and darkness, which just perpetuates the very thing we feel guilty about, ad infinitum. To the extent that we are unwilling and/or unable to consciously experience our feelings of guilt, we are guilty of unconsciously enacting something to feel guilty about. Like Shakespeare's Macbeth, in order to live with this guilt we are compelled to repeat the very thing about which we feel guilty, increasing its scope each time, as if this would magically undo the original error. This process continues until we are no longer troubled by it consciously, which is to say the guilt is then sealed away in the crypt of our deepest unconscious and we have become psychically deadened to feeling. Atrocities may now be condoned, even celebrated, which would normally horrify the human heart un-anesthetized by the wetiko pathogen. Deep down in the depths of our unconscious, however, we feel guilty about what we are doing, as we are "missing the mark" so completely that it is the very hallmark of the idea of "sin." Consciously feeling their guilt is the last thing someone afflicted with wetiko would want, because to feel their guilt is to initiate a process of self-unraveling.

To quote Jung, "Increasing psychological insight hinders the projection of the shadow, and this gain in knowledge logically leads to the problem of the union of the opposites. One realizes, first of all, that one cannot project one's shadow on to others, and next that there is no advantage in insisting on their guilt, as it is so much more important to know and

possess one's own, because it is part of one's own self and a necessary factor without which nothing in this sublunary world can be realized."⁴ The part of us that consciously experiences and witnesses our guilt is the guilt-free (innocent) part of us. When we consciously experience our "feelings" of guilt in a real, "full-bodied way" (compared to an "intellectual" way, in which we only experience the "idea" of our guilt), the underlying guilt, as if released from being stuck in a frozen block of ice, begins to melt, move, and transform. Interestingly, consciously feeling our guilt and remorse of conscience, the very feelings that someone stricken with *wetiko* is unable to feel, is the very inoculation from the germ. Fully experiencing one of the opposites, our feelings of guilt, constellates its opposite, as we become introduced to the part of us that has always existed in primordial purity. This innocent part of us has simply been temporarily hidden by our unwillingness to experience our own evil and corresponding guilt. To the extent that we're not awake, we are all complicit in what is being dreamed up in our world, which is to say we all share a collective guilt. Paradoxically, the tragic fate of consciously experiencing our guilt, shame and sin, and thereby experiencing a genuinely remorseful conscience, introduces us to the part of ourselves that is innocent. We have to feel our guilt as our possession before we can offer it; we can't surrender if there's nothing to let go of. Jung writes, "One can miss not only one's happiness, but also one's final guilt, without which a man will never reach his wholeness."⁵

Mutual Shadow Projection

When we are not owning and taking responsibility for our shadow, we will dream someone up outside of ourselves to live out our shadow for us. Shadow projection doesn't happen in a void—the universe simultaneously calls forth the projection. When someone is unconscious of their shadow, they will literally attract others' shadow projections onto themselves, as if they have become, in Jung's words, "psychic flypaper." Their unconsciousness of their shadow ensures that they will unconsciously act it out, which offers a "hook" on which others can "hang" their shadow projection. The recipient's hook perfectly draws out the other's

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

unconscious shadow projection, which has a potentiality for becoming conscious, and hence uses the indirect and circuitous method of projection onto an outer object so as to express itself in some way.

When there is mutual shadow projection between individuals, groups or nations, each side has an unconscious investment in the other playing out the projected evil so as to prove their own self-righteous innocence, a vicious cycle which engenders even more indignation at the other's indisputable evil, ad infinitum. This dynamic binds them together, becomes self-reinforcing, giving both parties clear justification to feel like victims, thereby continually feeding the diabolical polarization in the field. The wetiko bug, which covertly inspired the conflict in the first place, is then able to gorge itself on the polarization, as it strengthens itself on the very divisiveness and discord that it generates. Mutual, reciprocal shadow projection is a cardinal symptom of collective madness while, at the same time, being the very act which generates the collective madness of which it is a manifestation. When mutual shadow projection happens en masse, it is as if the archetype of evil becomes activated in such a way that it emits its toxic radioactivity underground, through the shared unconscious of the collective. This evil infiltrates and progressively fractures the psychosocial matrix of humanity, eventually manifesting itself collectively as conflicts, oppression, waves of criminality, war and destructive psychic epidemics.

These two roles—the “projector” of the shadow and “recipient” of the shadow projection—are interdependently co-joined, not existing in isolation from each other, but rather, in intimate and inextricably entangled co-relation to each other. Both roles reciprocally co-arise together, interdependently conditioning, implying, evoking and mirroring each other. Etymologically, the word “mirror” means the “holder of the shadow.” Jung's close collaborator, Marie-Louise von Franz, has pointed out that *Spiegel*, German for “mirror,” is cognate with the Latin word *speculum*, and goes back to Old High German *scukar*, “shadow-holder,” from *skuwo*, “shadow,” and *kar*, “vessel.”⁶ Mirrors don't lie, they show us not our persona, but our true face. The violence that is being perpetrated between these two polarized agencies couldn't happen without their mutual

cooperative antagonism. They are secretly tied in a timeless embrace, each role unable to exist without the other, for they are inseparably interconnected. They go together so deeply as to not be two isolated roles joined together; rather, they are indivisibly one and comprise a greater whole system. These two roles, projector of the shadow and recipient of the shadow projection, are parts of one and the same process, like two sides of the same coin, informed by, contained in, and united in a deeper unified and unifying field. A deeper archetypal process is revealing itself to us as it becomes visible through their interplay. Mutual shadow projection graphically illustrates how the shadow plays itself out and incarnates itself via our relationships, whether with other people or the world at large. This process reveals to us how the shadow of wetiko works, keeping itself employed through the ultimately spurious “self and other” dichotomy. Mutual shadow projection is also showing us, if we have eyes to see, how we dream up, while at the same time are dreamed up by, the universe (see **the dreaming-up process** in the Glossary). This process is critically important to understand if we are to find the way out of the insidious and entangling trap laid by wetiko.

In mutual shadow projection, each side needs an adversary who embodies the shadow so as to justify their compulsion to project the shadow outside of themselves, and vice versa. The projector of the shadow and the recipient of the shadow projection are simultaneously playing both roles, as the projector of the shadow is the recipient/embodyment of the other’s shadow projection, and vice versa. Mutual shadow projection becomes an insidious self-generating and self-fulfilling feedback loop, as the more we project the shadow onto someone, the more they embody the shadow we are projecting, and the more they embody the shadow, the more we feel justified in projecting the shadow onto them, ad infinitum and vice versa. Once we fall under the subtly blinding spell of projection, we not only don’t know we’re projecting, but are convinced that we are clearly seeing the other for who they truly are. It is this dual conviction of our innocence combined with the presumption of the objectivity of what we are seeing that seals the spell and makes it so hard to see through and snap out of. Both parties, the projector of the shadow and the recipient

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

of the projection, unwittingly coordinate themselves and behave in such a way as to provide convincing evidence to each other that makes it appear that their shadow projections are objectively true. Because of the self-entrancing nature of shadow projection, both parties become fixed in their belief that the other really has the attributes that they are ascribing to them. Once we convincingly experience the evil outside of ourselves, we have all the evidence we need to further strengthen our conviction that this is objectively true, which only strengthens the shadow projection.

The people, groups, or nations we project the shadow onto simultaneously embody and play out the very shadow we are projecting, and it is impossible to tell which came first or caused what—their manifesting the shadow, or our projecting it. In a circular, synchronic cybernetic feedback loop, our adversaries are concurrently pulling the shadow projection out of us by embodying the shadow, while we are evoking out of them the very shadow we are projecting. This acausal and nonlinear process is beginningless in time, with no first cause. The process of projection happens at the speed of light, and since it is well known in physics that time stops at the speed of light, this is to say that this process happens in no time. It is an atemporal process that exists outside of time, that is then experienced by the observer as if it is manifesting in time. All parties are reciprocally evoking (dreaming up) and being evoked by (dreamed up by) each other in a self-generating, synchronistic feedback loop (the aforementioned “dependent co-arising” of Buddhism, see page 46). Once the reciprocally co-arising nature of the situation is seen, the argument of who “started” it reveals itself to be beside the point. A much more relevant question is: who is going to have the integrity and courage to step out of the vicious cycle and stop the endlessly self-perpetuating violence? As far as any individual is concerned, the responsibility to break this cycle is always our own, as it is only our own self over which we ever really have any control.

It is important to differentiate mutual shadow projection from the fairly rare and exceptional situation where one party is projecting the shadow onto an “other” and the recipient doesn’t respond in kind. When we are the receptacle of projections, it almost always induces

counterprojections on our part (analogous to the transference/counter-transference dynamics in analysis). If the recipient of the projection is able to bring to consciousness the “hook” within themselves that has attracted the projection, and metabolizes the counterprojection that has gotten activated within them, then they aren’t compulsively driven to take part in the dance of mutual shadow projection. Not getting hooked by the shadow projection thrown their way (which is to not “buy into it” and secretly agree with the projection), they are then potentially in the role of “healer” if they can allow themselves to be the screen for the other’s projection without reacting in kind. This can create the space for something other than the reciprocally self-reinforcing black hole–like vortex of violence and hall-of-mirrors madness of mutual shadow projection to occur.

It should also be noted that when someone is projecting the shadow onto us, there is almost always a grain of truth in the projection. It therefore serves our process of individuation to find the hook within ourselves that has attracted the projection. It is important to note that in rare instances a rope is just a rope and not a snake, however, in that it is simply the other person’s projection and instead of seeing an unconscious part of us, they are truly unconscious—and dreaming—themselves.

Withdrawing Shadow Projections

There is a danger, however, in the process of attempting to recognize, own, and withdraw our shadow projections. Until integrated and made conscious, the shadow, by definition, is always trying to obfuscate and conceal itself. Even the part of us that wants to integrate the shadow so that we can be free of it might itself be an aspect of the shadow, as the shadow can usurp even our most well-intentioned efforts to serve its nefarious agenda.

The shadow itself is not “bad,” it is a mere “shadow” with no substance. It is our turning away from and avoiding our shadow which is the very act that is both created by and creating the darkness from which we are turning away. In making the shadow conscious we must be very careful

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

that the unconscious does not play yet another trick on us and prevent a real confrontation with the shadow. We might see the darkness in ourselves for a moment, but the next moment convince ourselves that it is not so bad after all. Or we might be seduced to wallow and indulge in our self-pity, remorse, and melancholy over seeing unbecoming parts of ourselves. This dishonesty, this refusal to see, ensures that there will be no real confrontation with the shadow. Yet if there were an actual coming to terms with the darker parts of ourselves, then with increasing consciousness the good and the positive features would come to light too. In the process of embracing and integrating the shadow, so much darkness can come to light that our inner being eventually becomes permeated with light, and consciousness necessarily gains in scope and intensity. If we don't deal with our shadow, which entails confronting our own capacity for evil, we cannot be responsible for its manifestations within ourselves, which at the same time unknowingly incapacitates us from truly claiming the good that lies within us as well.

As paradoxical as it sounds, when we are compassionately mirroring back someone's shadow, we are actually introducing them to their light. Being in genuine relationship with others can help us to cultivate our soul and genuinely see our shadow. For example, when we feel that our unconscious shadow is seen by our intimate partner, we know that we have been seen with our hand in the cookie jar of our own unconscious, and this fact affects us. Having our unconscious being seen by someone outside of ourselves is very different than when we are alone and momentarily see and subjectively experience our own shadow, which can quickly turn into a mere intellectual insight and "idea" of our shadow. Inwardly registering that our shadow is seen "objectively" by someone outside of ourselves activates a deeper process within our psyche of seeing our own darkness, as if the other person seeing our shadow is a reflection, a projection in the outside world of the part of us that's beginning to see our own darkness within ourselves.

The shadow is a tight passage, a narrow doorway, whose painful constriction none of us are spared who want to know ourselves. A benefit of recognizing and withdrawing our shadow projections is that this act

empowers us to more directly and effectively deal with the evil that is manifesting in the outer world. When we recognize the shadow within ourselves, we become more immune to moral decay and psychic infections such as *wetiko*. If we learn to deal with our own shadow, we have truly done something real and of significant benefit for the whole world. We have then succeeded in shouldering at least an infinitesimal part of the gigantic, unsolved problems of our day. Whenever we deal with the darkness within ourselves, our realization nonlocally registers throughout the entire field of consciousness, which changes everything. Paradoxically, shadow projection is both a severing from a part of ourselves while simultaneously being the very way in which we become conscious of and potentially assimilate the part of ourselves from which we are dissociating; how things turn out depends upon if we recognize what is being revealed.

When we recognize that we are projecting the shadow onto someone, not only do we realize that they are a mirror reflecting the darker part of ourselves, but encoded in this insight is the even deeper realization that they are not just a two-dimensional mirrored reflection—the flat, silvered surface of our mind, so to speak—but truly our “dream character,” a part of ourselves appearing to us in the (dis)guise of “an (embodied) other.” As if in a dream, they are a nonlocal emanation of this darker part of ourselves that we have split off from, projected outside of ourselves, and literally dreamed up into full-bodied incarnation so as to potentially recognize. Integrating this “other” part of ourselves into our own self-image is to literally have an expansion of identity, as we no longer identify ourselves as a skin-encapsulated ego that is separate, isolated, and alien from the world outside of us. Interestingly, in the Apocryphal Acts of John, Christ says, “A mirror am I to thee that perceivest me.”⁷ To recognize that the world is a mirror of ourselves is to have an expansion of consciousness and an enlargement of our identity. Perceiving Christ in and through the mirror of the world is, in a very real sense, to be “knowing” Christ, which is to have genuine “gnosis.” As Jung points out, when Christ says he is a mirror, on the one hand, his function is to reflect back our subjective consciousness, making it visible to us. On the other hand,

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

as a mirror, Christ does not merely reflect back the empirical person, but reveals our transcendental wholeness.

Ultimately speaking, shadow projection is potentially revealing to us that we are secretly tied to, interdependently connected with, and ultimately not separate from our own worst adversaries. The paradox of shadow projection is that on the one hand it is divisive and creates separation and conflict, but on the other hand it is revealing to us how we are secretly united with our enemies, and hence can potentially be the very way in which we learn that we all are on the same side. Let's not shadow-project onto shadow projecting. On the one hand, it is a healing and whole-ing process to withdraw our shadow projections. From another point of view, however, since there seems to be such a strong energy that is animating shadow projections in the first place, there is real value and merit in exaggerating and amplifying our shadow projections within a safe, ritualized container so as to really see, unfold, creatively express, and potentially liberate what is underlying the projections. Shadow projection, the psychological process which is fundamentally an act of imagination, is at the root of war, while simultaneously being the very medium through which we potentially can realize the wholeness within ourselves and our oneness with each other. Encoded in the process of shadow projection is a potential blessing; hidden in the pathology is its own medicine. How utterly paradoxical—once again we see that the root of all of the destruction in our world is itself the very thing that can wake us up. How things turn out all depends upon our recognizing what is being revealed to us, which is to say that how events in our world play out is a function of how we dream it.

Paradoxically, in descending into the depths of the unconscious in order to deal with the *prima materia* of the shadow, we are simultaneously on the path of ascending to the truly real, as we become introduced to the higher-dimensional light worlds of spirit. Going inward is going upward in consciousness, dimensionally speaking. It is an archetypal, shamanic idea that we have to descend into the unconscious, making a *nekyia*, a night sea journey, into the perilous depths of our own darkness so that we can discover the “pearl of great price.” The initial alchemical

stage is the nigredo, the blackness of death, the darkness darker than dark. The nigredo involves a genuine encounter with the leadlike saturnine aspect of the shadow, which contains the spirit of depression, a downward movement into the depths of the psyche that is felt as melancholia. This is a state that needs to *not* be medicated out of existence, however, but is actually the seed for the coagulation of the future birth of the living opus.

The Tension of the Opposites

Acknowledging the psychological reality of evil, bringing this evil to consciousness, and integrating our shadow are all crucial steps along the way to our wholeness. The process of recognizing and withdrawing our shadow projections, however, opens and propels us into an even deeper process of spiritual transformation. When we are involved in the process of integrating the shadow, we become a problem to ourselves, in that other people are no longer the problem—we are. This brings to mind the famous line from the *Pogo* comic strip, “We have met the enemy and he is us.”

Instead of identifying with one side of a two-sided polarity and splitting off from and projecting our darker side outside of ourselves onto others, in dealing with the shadow that belongs to us, we are truly carrying “the cross” we were meant to bear. When we withdraw our shadow projections from the outside world that we have cast onto “others,” we get in touch with the “other” within ourselves. The bitterest foe, a legion of enemies out in the world, does not equal our worst adversary, the “other” within us who dwells in our own heart. Judas incarnating as one of Christ’s intimate disciples is symbolically expressing this same deeper, archetypal truth: our true enemy is not a distant enemy, but an intimate enemy, an enemy within our own inner circle. The seemingly outer enemy is actually an embodied reflection of the adversary within ourselves.

Recognizing and owning the shadow is not an intellectual activity, but a suffering and “passion” which involve the participation of our whole being. When we are bearing and dealing with our own shadow, we are holding the psychic “tension of the opposites” that the cross symbolically

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

represents. To hold the tension of the opposites is to be able to embrace and contain both the dark and light aspects of our true nature simultaneously, without dissociating and projecting the shadow outside of ourselves. To consciously hold this tension is truly a crucifixion for the ego, a genuine “passion play” which activates a deeper process within the core of our being, constellating life in its deepest sense and thereby bringing forth its mysterious and latent powers. This is the deeper symbolic meaning of why holding up a crucifix to a vampire takes away its power, as the cross is a living symbol of holding the tension of opposites which Christ himself suffered. (It should be noted that whenever I refer to Christ, I am not talking metaphysically, but am contemplating Christ as a symbol.) To be holding the tension of the opposites is to be genuinely “imitating Christ,” as to be holding this creative tension without splitting off from our darkness is to be increasingly living our lives as fully and authentically as Christ lived his. No longer intentionally straining after imitation, this is a living experience of the deeper psychic reality represented by the sacred legend.

Holding the tension of the opposites is radically different from when we split off from and project outside ourselves one of the opposites so as to get temporary relief from our ordeal, which always results in developing a symptom, a dis-ease in the core of our being. Bearing the tension of the opposites can energize a thrust forward, potentially propelling us over our edge into a place beyond ourselves. Out of this creative tension can emerge what Jung calls a “reconciling symbol,” also known as the “transcendent function,” a spontaneous manifestation of the spirit whose function is transcendence. The figure of Christ (who unites the heterogeneous nature of God and humanity in one being) on the cross is an example of such a symbol precipitating into and out of the universe itself. His cross is a living symbol in that it represents both the state of being a vessel filled with divine conflict, while at the same time resolving this conflict as it unites the opposites in a greater totality. This transcendent function helps us to overcome our lower nature while at the same time revealing, transcending, and uniting the opposites within ourselves in a more complete totality. We experience this as grace, as an unveiling of

our true nature and an expansion of consciousness. This realization is not something we could have thought of by ourselves, but occurs to us with the force of a revelation, as if it comes from something beyond and transcendent to our limited selves. It should be noted that this experience of “grace” does not rid us of the shadow, which is part of our human inheritance, but prevents us from being dominated and overtaken by it.

Seen as a dream, the Christ event was an inner, archetypal process that was playing out within the collective unconscious of humanity that literally got dreamed into materialization as its own self-revelation. Seen as a dreaming process that is playing out in the collective psyche of our species, it makes no difference whether the Christ event actually historically happened or not. The Christ-image is a genuine symbol that has arisen in and out of the human psyche which speaks to, is an expression of, and transforms the imagination itself. It never would have had the powerful effect it did on so many people over two millennia if it weren't a symbol that touched something alive in people's psyche. To say Christ is a symbol in no way devalues him or detracts from his divinity. On the contrary, to say that the Christ event is symbolic is to affirm that it points to something greater than itself, that it is an actual portal into a deeper dimension of our being. To say that Christ is a symbol is, alchemically speaking, the highest praise.

Seeing Christ symbolically means to view him as representing something that was, and is, going on deep within the collective unconscious of humanity. The French scholar Georges Berguer writes, “Jesus had incarnated in his death and resurrection an inner experience that had existed potentially for centuries in the human soul, but that had never passed beyond the sphere of the dream [i.e., beyond the realm of the unconscious]. He translated into life the secular dream of the peoples.”⁸ Seen psychologically, the fact that an inner psychic process had become externalized and dreamed up into the world (be it the physical or imaginal world) is an expression that a projection is in the process of being withdrawn, being interiorized, and becoming conscious (for those who recognize what is being revealed). Instead of being blindly, instinctively, unconsciously *acted* out, in the Christ event this archetypal process is

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

being humanized and voluntarily—and consciously—*lived* out. Christ willingly went to his death; he could have evaded it, but he declined. In a self-sacrifice, he laid down and offered his own life; no one took it from him. Love for others, rather than compulsion, leads him to the cross. Pilate, Herod, and the rest are but dream characters sent by “Central Casting” to play their necessary roles, merely instruments of a divine purpose. Interestingly, it is only by allowing himself to be completely bound by darker forces on the cross does Christ actualize true freedom. Only by not resisting evil, by allowing himself to be taken by darker forces, while still being in touch with who he was—his true, divine nature—was Christ able to possess the forces that possessed him. We can do the same when we connect with the Self that Christ represents. Paradoxically, by seemingly binding us, evil can potentially enliven the part of us that is truly free.

6

Vampires, Parasites, and Aliens

A Parasite of a Different Order

When people are infected by the wetiko virus, they are the host for the wetiko parasite, which is like a psychic tapeworm, a parasite of the mind. The microbe of wetiko can also be likened to an amoeba, in that it is not hard-edged, has no fixed form, and is continually shape-shifting. Just the way certain computer viruses or malware infect a computer and program it to self-destruct, mind-viruses like wetiko program the human biocomputer to think, believe, and behave in ways that result in our self-destruction. People so afflicted, strangely enough, cling to the very thing that is torturing and destroying them. To quote a line attributed to the writer William S. Burroughs, “Every man has inside himself a parasitic being who is acting not at all to his advantage.” The wetiko bug is a “kleptoparasite,” a form of parasitism that thrives via theft. To the extent we are unconsciously possessed by the spirit of wetiko, it is as if a psychic parasite has taken over our brain and tricked us, its host, into thinking we are feeding and empowering ourselves while we are actually nourishing the parasite. Wetiko is a virulent, psychic pathogen that insinuates thought-forms into our mind which, when unconsciously enacted, feed it, and thus it ultimately kills its host. It doesn’t want to kill us too quickly, however, for to successfully implement its agenda of reproducing and propagating itself throughout the field, it must let the host live long enough to spread

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

the virus. If the host dies too soon, the bug would be prematurely evicted and would suffer the inconvenience of having to find a new residence. Parasites far outnumber all other species on our planet. They are key players in both the ecological and evolutionary processes in our world. Parasitism is one of the most common forms of relationship in nature, so we should not be surprised to find human parasites.

Like a cancer of the mind that metastasizes, in wetiko disease a pathological part of the psyche co-opts and subsumes all of the healthy parts of the psyche into itself so as to serve its pathology. To quote Jung, “an unknown ‘something’ has taken possession of a smaller or greater portion of the psyche and asserts its hateful and harmful existence undeterred by all our insight, reason, and energy, thereby proclaiming the power of the unconscious over the conscious mind, the sovereign power of possession.”¹ Jung means something different than the Catholic Church, however, when he uses the word “possession.” Instead of the Church’s meaning of the word, which denotes extremely rare cases of being taken over by a supposedly objectively existing metaphysical entity such as the devil, Jung is using the word in a much wider sense. For him, possession is a frequently occurring psychic phenomenon in which certain psychic contents, the **complexes**, take control over the total personality in place of the ego, at least temporarily, to such a degree that the free will of the ego is suspended. The personality then self-organizes an outer display of coherence around this pathogenic core, which masks the inner dysfunction, making it hard to recognize. In a psychic coup d’état, the wetiko bug can usurp and displace the person, who becomes its puppet and marionette. Once the parasite becomes sufficiently entrenched within the psyche, the prime directive coordinating a person’s behavior comes from the disease, as it is now the one calling the shots. Like a parasite, the wetiko virus can take over the will of an animal more evolved than itself, enlisting that creature into serving its nefarious agenda.

In the current edition of the DSM-IV-TR, the American Psychiatric Association’s *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, “possession” has been introduced as a mental disorder among the dissociative disorders (in Appendix B: Criteria Sets and Axes for Further Study). This

proposed disorder, called “Dissociative Trance Disorder,” manifests in either trance or possession states whose chief feature is its involuntariness. This parallels a similar diagnostic category in the *ICD-10 Classification of Mental and Behavioral Disorders*, which the World Health Organization published in 1992. In Henri Ellenberger’s classic history of psychiatry, *The Discovery of the Unconscious*, possession is said to be experienced as “a kind of intrapsychic parasitism: just as a tapeworm can live in the body, so can a parasitic spirit live in the soul.”²

Just as someone infected with the rabies virus will resist drinking water, which would flush out the infection, someone taken over by the wetiko parasite will have nothing to do with anything that will help them get rid of the disease. Wetikos are phobic toward the light of truth, which they avoid like the plague. To quote philosopher, mystic, and social activist Simone Weil, “Another effect of affliction is, little by little, to make the soul its accomplice, by injecting a poison of inertia into it.... This complicity impedes all the efforts he might make to improve his lot.... It is as though affliction had established itself in him like a parasite and were directing him to suit its own purposes.”³ In advanced stages, this process takes over the individual so completely that we could rightfully say the person is no longer there; they are just an empty shell carrying the disease. In a sense there is just the disease, operating through what appears to be a human being. The person becomes fully identified with their mask, their persona, but it is as if there is no one behind the mask. To quote Jung, “the person in question becomes a mere automaton. Such a person is actually no longer there.”⁴ It is as if their soul has become hijacked by a deeper, archetypal force, replaced with a pale imitation of themselves, a true “alter” personality, and, to the extent they have been taken over, they don’t even realize it. As wetiko takes over its victims, it works through them psychologically, clouding their judgment, disabling their discernment, making it harder for them to see reality, but, ultimately, it still leaves them with the responsibility for their actions.

In an outer embodied reflection of the process of wetiko that happens within an individual’s psyche, it is as if virulent parasites are insinuating and entrenching themselves into the hallowed halls of power in our

government and are consuming and destroying it from within. Many of us Americans are still under the illusion that we live in a functioning democracy and imagine that we are free citizens of a country based on liberty, without suspecting that we increasingly inhabit a police state in which the powers-that-be rule with an iron fist hidden in a velvet glove. To quote eminent theologian and 9/11 truth activist David Ray Griffin, “Demonic power is now firmly lodged in the United States, especially in its government, its corporate heads, the ‘defense’ industries, its plutocratic class more generally, and its ideologies.”⁵⁵ The corruption that has infected our body politic is like a deadly virus that is exploiting weaknesses in our political immune system so as to feed and spread its pathology.

The U.S. government’s lying and criminality is so pervasive that we have become desensitized to its corruption, which is how this elephant-sized evil is able to make itself at home in our national living room. Our government’s evil has become so “normalized” that we are like people who regularly watch TV and become numb to the violence continually being portrayed: we have become anesthetized to the horror of what our government is doing right in front of our eyes day after day. We’ve learned—or, shall we say, become “programmed”—to accept the fact that our politicians are lying, for as the propaganda informs us, “All governments lie.” This process of desensitization to the evil playing out in our world is an externalized, collective iteration of how the same wetiko-inspired dynamic works to become a virtually invisible, yet toxic fixture within our psyches at an individual level.

Alien Intrusion

Speaking in his own language about the predation of the wetiko virus, the Yaqui Indian spiritual teacher Don Juan, of the Carlos Castaneda books, mentions that the ancient Mexican shamans called this “the topic of topics.”⁶⁶ Don Juan explains, “We have a companion for life.... We have a predator that came from the depths of the cosmos and took over the rule of our lives. Human beings are its prisoners. The predator is our lord and master.”⁶⁷

This sounds just like the state of affairs being pointed at in the Bible when, for example, the Gospel of John refers to the devil as “the ruler of this world” (14:30; 16:11); the Gospel of Luke has the devil say that “the kingdoms of the world are under his control” (4:5–6); the First Epistle of John says that “the whole world lies under the power of the evil one” (5:19); and Paul speaks of Satan as “the god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4). The Gnostic Gospel of Philip, talking about the root of evil that lies within all of us, makes the similar point that unless this evil is recognized: “It masters us. We are its slaves. It takes us captive” (II, 3, 83.5–30).

Speaking about the evil predator, Don Juan continues, “It has rendered us docile, helpless. If we want to protest, it suppresses our protest. If we want to act independently, it demands that we don’t do so.”⁸ It is striking how Don Juan’s description of the effects of this predator is being enacted in our increasingly militarized society, as our freedoms and liberties get taken away step by step. It is as if an inner, invisible state of affairs existing as a yet unrealized archetypal pattern deep within the soul of humanity is revealing itself by materializing in, as, and through the outside world.

To quote Don Juan, “Indeed we are held prisoner! This was an *energetic fact* for the sorcerers of ancient Mexico.”⁹ Most of us can relate to this “*energetic fact*,” that there is “something” within us that stops us from expressing our true creative genius and attaining our full potential. These predators are “time-bandits,” consuming the precious hours of our lives, as if we are wage-slaves “doing time” on a prison-planet. Deepening his description of these predators, Don Juan elaborates, “They took over because we are food for them ... we are their sustenance. Just as we rear chickens in chicken coops, *gallineros*, the predators rear us in human coops, *humaneros*.”¹⁰ The wetiko virus particularly flourishes in overpopulated cities, where people are “cooped up.” As history shows us again and again, when we buy into group-think and are enlisted as members of the herd, we become like cattle who are being raised by our leading psychopaths to be used in the service of their sinister agenda.

Don Juan continues, “The predators give us their mind, which becomes our mind.”¹¹ It is as if these predators are in competition with us for a “share” of our own mind. The predator shape-shifts and assumes

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

our form, and if we are unaware of its masquerade, we will identify with its invasive thought-forms and act them out as if they were our own. We will mistakenly believe that we are acting on our own impulses, with our best interests in mind. This predator, Don Juan asserts, “fears that any moment its maneuver is going to be uncovered and food is going to be denied.”¹² The wetiko predator has an inner necessity, a brute compulsion born of terror, as it continually has to feed itself so as to postpone its ever-approaching death. Don Juan continues, “Through the mind, which, after all, is their mind, the predators inject into the lives of human beings whatever is convenient for them [the predators].”¹³ Cloaking itself in our form, this predator gets under our skin and “puts us on” as a disguise, fooling us to “buy” into its false version of who we are. (Interestingly, from the Christian point of view, the true believer is saved only by “putting on” Christ.) This is why the shortened name of malignant egophrenia is “ME disease,” referring to a distortion of our identity, that is, our sense of me-ness. Instead of being in our power and serving ourselves, we “unwittingly” (which means to be “out of our wits,” that is, not in our “right” mind) become the servant of the predator. Instead of being a sovereign being who creates with our own thoughts, we will then be created by them, as the predator literally thinks in our place. It is as if the predator is sitting in our seat. We truly need to (re)occupy ourselves.

Interestingly, such disparate thinkers as Jung and the ethnobotanist Terence McKenna hypothesized that the ET/UFO phenomenon might actually be an expression of the psychic fact that we have become so split off from our true self that we can only begin to experience it in the projected form of an “alien other.” Are the seeming appearances of ET/UFOs in the outer world simply an embodied reflection of this inner psychic process, as if an archetypal process deep within the human psyche is being dreamed up into materializing itself through our universe in order to show us something about ourselves?

Speaking of the predator’s scheme, Don Juan says that “it proposes something, it agrees with its own proposition, and it makes you believe that you’ve done something of worth.”¹⁴ It is as if there is an alien “other,” an extraterrestrial metaphysical entity which is subliminally intruding its

mind into ours in such a way that we identify with its point of view and disconnect from our own. Don Juan refers to this situation as a “foreign installation,” as if some alien race has set up a space station inside of our minds. This is exactly what the Gnostics are pointing at when they talk about alien predators or mind parasites called “Archons” who infiltrate and subvert the workings of our mind.¹⁵ To the extent that we are not conscious of this alien takeover of our psyche, we become drafted into the predator’s sinister agenda, unwittingly becoming its slaves. This state of inner psychological warfare is mirrored by the sinister psy-ops being instituted by the powers-that-be in the outside world on our own minds. The disease feeds on our unawareness of it. Our task is to discern the predator’s mind within ourselves and refuse to be its food.

Vampires and Werewolves

Stories, legends, and mythologies describing various monsters, zombies, vampires, and werewolves are actually expressing and pointing at the various manifestations of wetiko disease. Forbes writes, “The wetiko psychosis is a sickness of the spirit that takes people down an ugly path with no heart... After all, the wetiko disease turns such people into werewolves and vampires, creatures of the European’s nightmare world, and creatures of the wetiko’s reality.”¹⁶ The wetiko psychosis takes people down, period. Werewolves and vampires are shape-shifting creatures, symbolic representations of the horrific potential within all of us to be taken over by the archetypal shadow and to act it out, regressing to an archaic level of the psyche and becoming like a predatory animal or nonhuman creature. When these not-yet-humanized psychic energies break through into consciousness and are not mediated through consciousness, Jung writes, “they sweep everything before them like a torrent and turn men into creatures for whom the word ‘beast’ is still too good a name.”¹⁷

Vampires, considered to be the darkest creature of evil’s arsenal, have haunted humanity’s imagination for ages, as they are representatives of a living process that exists deep within the human psyche. A vampire is not a human figure, but a soulless creature, a being who has lost its soul;

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

or if it hasn't lost its soul, its soul has been "damned," which is a soul that is lost. Either way, there's something missing. Isolated from the world, it has lost any connection with the part of itself that is related to everything else; from its point of view, the world exists simply for its use. Although it has lost connection with its heart and soul, a vampire hasn't lost its mind (though in one sense it has), as vampires often have clever and incisive intellects that cloak their pathology, making their disease hard to see. This is reminiscent of the way people in a deep state of trauma can have brilliant minds at the same time, a gift that can hide the extent of their trauma, making their malady hard to recognize. The sharpness of the vampire's mind, instead of being devoted to gaining insight into their malady and healing from it, however, is used for the "passing on" and propagation of their dark art. Vampires can manifest enormous intelligence, as if they have gained knowledge through many lifetimes.

One of the undead, a vampire is death taking living human form. The wetiko virus is ultimately not a living life-form, but rather a living form of death. People so afflicted are spiritually dead who believe themselves to be alive. Wetiko, like a virus, is "dead" matter; it is only in a living creature that viruses acquire a "quasi-life." Members of the living dead, vampires are neither truly alive nor truly dead. Like a full-fledged vampire, full-blown wetikos have forfeited their humanity, becoming a conduit for the impersonal, transpersonal, and depersonalizing wetiko virus to incarnate through them. They are a living portal, an opening in the three-dimensional fabric of space/time through which this contagious, virulent higher-dimensional virus can spread itself throughout the field, both locally and nonlocally.

Lacking a sense of soul, wetikos are efficient machines, dedicated to preserving and serving "the state," which is itself a creature of the wetikos who have seized control of its power apparatus. A full-fledged wetiko has become a robotic automaton, conditioned to react to certain stimuli like a reflex. They have become part of "the machine," with no spontaneity, creativity, originality, or free thinking programmed in. Dehumanized, wetikos have lost touch with any sense of aesthetics, of appreciating the inherent beauty of life, and have become "an-aesthetic,"

that is, anesthetized and numb to what it is to be a human being. The spiritual teacher G. I. Gurdjieff described the dehumanizing effects of wetiko in his own words:

... when we compare humanity with a man we quite clearly see a growth of personality at the cost of essence, that is, a growth of the artificial, the unreal, and what is foreign, at the cost of the natural, the real, and what is one's own.

Together with this, we see a growth of automatism.

Contemporary culture requires automatons.... One thing alone is certain, that man's slavery grows and increases. Man is becoming a willing slave. He no longer needs chains. He begins to grow fond of his slavery, to be proud of it. And this is the most terrible thing that can happen to a man.¹⁸

An outer reflection of the perverse inner state of feeding the wetiko pathogen, people willingly, of their own free will, as if suffering from the Stockholm syndrome, invest in and support their own limitation and imprisonment in the greater body politic of the world. Emissaries of an authoritarian, militarized, patriarchal planetary "culture," the wetiko bug breeds fascism, and terror. To quote Wilhelm Reich, "Fascism is the vampire leeches to the body of the living, the impulse to murder given free rein."¹⁹ Fascism is the outer, collective political expression of an individual's ravaged inner landscape that has been crippled and suppressed by the authoritarian civilization of the machine.

As with vampires, in full-blown wetikos there is nobody home, which is one of the reasons why, symbolically speaking, vampires have no reflection in a mirror (which is supposed to reflect back images of the human soul). Full-blown wetikos are empty to the core, so there is nothing to reflect. Inwardly there is just an infinite void, a sponge that can never be saturated, a devouring black hole that is feeding on the universe. Their atrophied soul has been emptied out like a piece of wood hollowed out by psychic termites. Full-blown wetikos are so compulsively possessed by and identical with the unconscious in its destructive, consciousness-negating form that they are not able to see or self-reflectively think about

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

themselves, which Hannah Arendt claims is one of the primary characteristics of evil. Unable to self-reflect, they cannot access within themselves the faculty of the psyche from which such activity derives. One of the reasons we can't see a vampire's reflection in a mirror, however, is that our own inner, unconscious vampire obscures the reflection, which is to say that the unacknowledged specter of our own shadow gets in the way.

A vampire casts no shadow. In order to cast a shadow, there has to be a source of light. In a vampire there is no light, only infinite darkness. Not being a living being, a vampire has no inherent reality, no substance. Only a thing of substantial existence can produce a shadow. Vampires can't cast a shadow, however, because they are the very embodiment of and identical with the archetypal shadow. A shadow casts no shadow of itself, as the shadow itself has no substance. There are benefits that accrue to the vampire because of its ability to not cast a shadow—it is then easier for the vampire to hide its true identity, move in the hidden shadows, become invisible, and prey on people. Not casting a shadow, the vampire, a shape-shifter who is a master of camouflage and disguise, is able to easily seduce and entice the unaware, as sugar-coated vampires entrap us through our unconscious shadow and blind spots.

The loss and disowning of our own shadow can thus lead to vampirism. The vampire archetype gets activated within us when we turn our backs on our own darkness, rendering our shadow invisible to ourselves. We can't see vampires because we have chosen not to see those aspects of ourselves that are most like the vampire. Our reluctance to see our own vampiric qualities blinds us to the vampiric energies in others.

In addition to the weak and defenseless, vampires seek out people who are on the verge of a quantum, evolutionary leap in consciousness, but have not yet fully integrated their realizations and come out the other side. These individuals are in an energetically sensitive and "charged" condition, and their openness and vulnerability invites the vampiric entities to help themselves and gorge on the light of their prey's expanding awareness. Paradoxically, though thriving on the absence of light, vampires can be said to be "light-eaters," as they draw and consume the light belonging to others into the cavernous black hole of their congenial

emptiness. Economically speaking, vampires want to corner the market on energy, on light, so as to centralize their power and control. Unable to generate the light-energy source themselves, they need to steal and use the reserves of the beings harnessed in thrall to them. The emerging positive and healthy elements in the other person are either co-opted, neutralized, or corrupted. Once their victim is cornered, the vampire literally wants to keep their captives under lock and key. Paradoxically, vampiric wetikos try to destroy others' light, as it reminds them of what they've killed in themselves, while simultaneously trying to appropriate the light for themselves. Wetikos see their job as "arresting" the creative expressions of love, because genuine love threatens their reign of terror. Their hatred of the light which they at the same time so desperately crave is an expression of the intrinsic self-loathing of this figure, a self-hatred from which they must continually flee so as to avoid sight of themselves.

The strategy of these predators is to distract us so as to keep our attention directed outward, thereby stopping us from finding the light within ourselves, which would "kill" the vampires. If we hold up a mirror and reflect back the insanity being exhibited by those stricken by the wetiko psychosis, we run the very real risk of being accused of being the ones who are crazy. If we do manage to connect with the light within ourselves and try to share it with others, these nonlocal vampiric entities (what I have in previous writings called "nonlocal demons," or NLD for short), not bound by the three-dimensional laws of space and time, will try, via their "connections" to the nonlocal field, to stop us by influencing other people to turn against us. This process can destroy us, or, if we have the meta-awareness to see what is happening and are able to skillfully navigate our way through, can serve to further strengthen our intention, deepen our connection with the light of lucidity, hone our skill of creatively transmitting our realizations, and cultivate more open-hearted compassion. It is as if these psychic, nonlocal vampires are guardians of the threshold of evolution.

Just like vampires, full-blown wetikos have a thirst for the very thing they lack—the mystical essence of life—that is, the "blood" of our soul. In "consuming" other human beings, wetiko disease is a feeding thing,

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

a psychic eating disorder in which the stricken psyche consumes other psyches, as well as, ultimately, itself. Wetikos are what are called “psychophagic,” that is, soul-eaters. Savaged by the ferocity of their unending hunger, full-blown wetikos, like the hungry ghosts of Buddhist cosmology, have become possessed by an insatiable craving that can never be filled. Attempting to secure a self that by its very nature is never able to be secured, its appetites can never be quenched, in the same way that an illusion can never be satisfied. Wetikos are not in touch with the human sense of when “enough is enough.” They never stop, as animals instinctively do when bloated. This vampiric feeding is an unholy parody, a satanic reflection, of the self-renewal of life.

At the collective level, this perverse inner process is mirrored by the consumer society in which we live, a culture that continually fans the flames of never-ending desires, conditioning us to always want *more*. As if starving, we are in an endless feeding frenzy, trying to fill a bottomless void. This process of rabid, obsessive-compulsive consumption is a reflection of a deep, inner shared sense of spiritual starvation. The entity of the global economic system itself is a living symbol of out-of-control wetiko disease “in business.”

This energy of indiscriminate desire that wants to eat up and always wants more is symbolized by the hungry, ravenous wolf; the phrase “wolfing down one’s food” comes to mind. The wolf, though in its negative aspect is dangerously destructive, representing the principle of evil in its purest form, also has a very positive aspect. The Greek word for wolf is *lykos*, which is akin to the Latin *lux*, which means light (German: *Licht*). In spite of being a nocturnal animal, the wolf is also a creature of the light, and is a highly intelligent animal. Yet, as revealed in fairy tales, it is when the wolf is taken over by greed that it loses its cunning reflection, which invariably leads to its downfall.

Jung felt that this wolflike energy is a drivenness even more primitive than power or sex; it is the desire to have and get everything. People who are taken over by the wolf energy are completely driven, as if the wolf is riding them; it is not really that *they* want it—it wants it. Their “it” (notice the similarity to Freud’s “Id,” which in his original German

actually is the term for “the it,” *das Es*) is never satisfied. When amplified, this figure wants to eat the whole world. Interestingly, the mythic figure of a werewolf or wolfman—another symbol for wetiko—illustrates this transformation of being taken over, being possessed by, and becoming this wolflike hunger whose only thought is to satisfy itself.

Once we are bitten by a werewolf, this wolflike energy can get into our system and take us over just like a virus takes over a living organism. Viruses like wetiko are all about copying themselves. A virus can't replicate itself, however; it has to use some other vehicle as its means of reproducing itself. Viruses need us to be their birthing chamber. To the extent we are not aware of their ploy, these higher-dimensional spirit parasites put us on, wearing us like their three-dimensional space suits. These psychic vampires are compelled to replicate themselves through us so that we can then pass on and transmit the bug to others. Once we have completed the choice that weds us to an antithetical way of being, our depraved inner state becomes our occupation, in the sense that we now have no inner freedom of choice, but rather are compelled by an inner necessity to spread the contagion. The Gnostics even used the image of being bitten by a mad dog in order to describe the process of being infected by the Sons of Darkness. In advanced stages of rabies, like a rabid animal the victim will be taken over by the irresistible urge to bite other creatures so as to pass on the virus. People taken over by the rabies virus are a living, frothing symbol of what the wolflike psychic virus known as wetiko does in its full-blown virulent stage.

In a vampiric lineage, the wetiko virus's self-propagation is accomplished through the medium of the “family system” (be it our family of origin or the human family), as the legacy of abuse (be it physical, sexual, political, emotional, psychological, or spiritual) gets passed down, both individually and collectively, and transmitted over generations, continually incarnating itself through the living. It is through the traumatic shattering of our wholeness that wetiko passes its fractured logic and distorted code into the body/mind of another. As if under a curse, our species has been suffering from a collective, inherited form of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). Remaking their victims in their own image, the wetikos'

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

victims join the legion of the damned, themselves becoming holders of an unholy lineage. This curse will continue until we intervene in the spreading of this vampiric mind-parasite, and stop the chain of never-ending abuse.

7

Psycho Analysis

Trauma

Being multidimensional, wetiko demands to be contemplated from as many different angles as we can imagine, for no single way of studying wetiko is adequate to understanding it. This is because wetiko has so many diverse ways of operating and has such a wide array of channels through which it can interfere with the healthy, coherent functioning of individual and collective human dynamics. One of the primary categories of wetiko's myriad forms of manifestation is that of trauma; in fact, wetiko is a living form of the soul-deadening process of trauma. Our species is suffering from a form of collective trauma, as we are not only destroying ourselves, but, like a person who has a learning disability that makes them seem practically uneducable, we insist on repeating our self-destructive behavior throughout history on ever-grander scales on the world stage. One of the most important and dangerous features of the traumatizing aspect of wetiko is that it disables our capacity for self-knowledge, that is, our ability to know ourselves and to acquire moral insight into our actions, while at the same time leaving intact and even augmenting our capacity for developing technological powers which can be used for killing and mass destruction on a previously undreamed-of scale. Understanding the nature of trauma, therefore, helps us to deepen our insights into the nature of wetiko and be able to lessen its potentially lethal impact on the world at large.

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

Trauma happens when we suffer an overwhelming event which we cannot assimilate into our being in the typical way; it is too off the radar to register in awareness through the previously established channels. Trauma is a form of psychological damage rooted in a kind of vital, visceral shock to the organism in which we feel our very being itself is at issue. Trauma is by definition that which cannot be signified. In a sense, that's all we can say about it. When traumatized, we oftentimes aren't able to eloquently articulate what our experience is, because trauma fragments, disassociates, and disconnects us from our own perceptions. Trauma incapacitates our ability to language our experience, as it involves a radical and sudden departure from all human norms of experience within which language is created and used. In trauma, people typically alternate between feeling numb and compulsively reliving the traumatic event in some form. When traumatized, our attempts to heal from our trauma tend to be dysfunctional and are the very actions which animate in ourselves, extend to others, and thereby tragically re-create the very trauma we are trying to heal from, in what becomes a diabolically self-perpetuating negative feedback loop that is truly crazy-making for everyone involved. When we are in trauma, we unconsciously act out the unhealed wound in literal and disguised form, both within ourselves and out in the world, traumatizing and terrorizing others around us as we, in our attempt to resolve our trauma, simultaneously retraumatize ourselves. When we are unconsciously acting out our trauma, we are not in the driver's seat, but rather are being compulsively driven by the overpowering daemonic force encoded within the trauma. Trauma not only animates the separate self; the separate self itself *is* the primary trauma.

Trauma is a unique phenomenon all its own, as if it is an entity in and of itself. Trauma is a normal, healthy response to an insane and intolerable situation. If, for example, we put too much pressure on a bone and the bone breaks, the bone is not pathological, it simply was subject to more force than it was designed to sustain. Paradoxically, trauma is a form of disease which is an expression of basic sanity. "Shock" is our healthy response to experiencing an event that is overwhelming and awful. To the extent that we lose our connection with the ever-flowing novelty

and majesty of our own life-force and creative imagination, we forget our fluid nature, becoming stunned into immobilization, alienated from and a trauma to ourselves. In order for the traumatized soul to break free from the spell that binds and transfixes it, the imaginative faculty of the soul, which has been unconsciously literalized into compulsive behavior, must be mirrored back to it imaginatively, in as many imaginative ways as can be imagined. Psychologically speaking, the compulsive actions of a traumatized soul are a frantic attempt at postponing the inevitable return of the repressed. Trauma is an experience that is incessantly fled and always returns. Intrinsic to trauma is the double-bind of having to deny what cannot be forgotten. When we are traumatized, part of our creative life-force becomes frozen back in time, stuck in the shock of the traumatizing event, etched into our flesh and bone. This traumatizing moment, seemingly cast in stone as if it is locked back in time, until liberated, is always informing the present moment, which is to say it is in disguised form accessible right now.

The shamanic archetype potentially becomes catalyzed within us by a severe trauma, setting into motion a process that demands we go in search of the lost, dissociated parts of ourselves, the parts of ourselves that have “split” (which has the double meaning of “left” as well as “dissociated”). Healing from trauma always involves some form of a shamanic journey “back in time” in the present moment such that time collapses and we can reexperience, relive, and release the traumatizing event so as to have a “corrective experience.” A shamanic journey involves joining two moments in time, the present and the past, so that in the present moment we recollect and retrieve the split-off part of our soul that is trapped back in time and had become unavailable to us due to the traumatizing event. Having a corrective experience involves releasing and discharging the energy that is bound up in and animating the compulsive re-creation and acting out of the trauma. Once freed, our life-force, instead of feeding our life-deadening, compulsive patterns, becomes available for living creatively without obstruction, freely flowing once again.

One of the unique things about trauma is that in the process of integrating and healing from trauma, we are compelled to unconsciously act

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

out the role of the abuser. To the extent we haven't dealt with our own trauma, we split off from and internalize the abuser, while unconsciously identifying with its original aggression (in the process called "identification with the aggressor"). Instead of opening to the pain we feel, we shut down by finding ways to deliver ourselves from our vulnerability, fashioning ourselves in the image of those who have the power to hurt. This aggression either gets turned inward, in a masochistic way toward ourselves, or outward, in a sadistic way onto others. To dissociate from and be unconsciously identified with the sadistic aggressor who perpetrated the original trauma is to become possessed by this figure, to be lethally compelled to repetitively act out its violence in a terrorizing, malevolent, and life-destroying way out in the world or within ourselves. Trauma polarizes consciousness into opposites; split in two, we become simultaneously perpetrator and victim. In trauma, we are potentially on the road to integrating these two figures within ourselves, depending on whether or not we bring consciousness to what we are unconsciously acting out.

When a healthy psyche is confronted with the unavoidable traumas of life, it digests and metabolizes the trauma over time. The trauma is sculpted into images, symbols, thoughts, and words so that it may be creatively expressed, invested with meaning, and consciously experienced, so as to discharge the deadening effects of the trauma. When a mind is under the rule of wetiko, however, a stunning reversal occurs, as if a psychic evolutionary regression takes place—each moment gets deconstructed back into the template of the original trauma, which remains unprocessed and unprocessable. To quote psychoanalyst Michael Eigen, "Raw, everlasting catastrophe takes the place where a psyche might have been. The psyche (what there is of it) becomes a 'catastrophe machine,' grinding any bits of possible experiencing into horrific nothingness."¹

In the repetition compulsion intrinsic to trauma, Freud recognized not merely a personal but a daemonic force at work. Whatever we do more than once becomes a ritual, a religion; all numbers greater than one are an attempt to incorporate the first time. Our inability to entertain the traumatizing event as a fictional, malleable, creative work in progress solidifies it into a religion. Seized by something greater than ourselves,

we are possessed by our compulsion to re-create our trauma, as our species performs a holy liturgy en masse on the world stage, structuring and ritualizing our experience as a way of potentially transforming it; everything depending, of course, on whether we become aware of what is being revealed to us through our unconscious enactments. The compulsion to repeat the trauma intensifies as the contents underlying the trauma move closer to consciousness. When unconscious contents get closer to potentially becoming conscious, they become translucent, in that they are simultaneously visible in one form while invisible in another, as if the traumatized parts of ourselves exists in two worlds simultaneously. On the one hand, the repetition compulsion serves to defend the ego from the threat of the anxiety of the ever-impending unresolved trauma surfacing into conscious awareness, as if the repetition is a shield against remembering the original traumatic experience. On the other hand, it is just as true that the compulsive repetition of the traumatizing event—returning to the scene of the crime, so to speak—is actually the psyche’s attempt to potentially “liquefy” (in the sense of transforming it from a concretized, stuck, solid state to one that is more “fluid”) and “liquidate” (in the sense of breaking up) the trauma complex so as to expand and liberate consciousness. Seen in this light, the psychic momentum built through numberless repetitions serves not the forgetting but potentially the re-member-ing of disparate psychic contents that must be given form through conscious experience. Repetition sets the ground for (re)cognition through the creation of a web of interlocking associative linkages and connective psychic tissues which serve as the prerequisite for the remembering, catching, and releasing of the disturbing unconscious complex into consciousness. Through the compulsive re-creation of the trauma, a context may coagulate that creates a field consisting of a sufficient inventory of comparable, analogous events such that the trauma can be absorbed and psychically digested. The traumatic event can then be relativized, particularized, and more fully experienced.

As in homeopathy, in which “like cures like,” in the repetition compulsion we re-traumatize ourselves in order to heal our trauma. By regenerating and sustaining the trauma, we recover access to those existential

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

choices we made when our being was initially assaulted, but now with the possibility of authoring a newly expanded edition in our souls. For if and when, within the retraumatizing moment, we find a new way to feel, respond, and hold ourselves, we literally create a new way to be. The healing of trauma involves restoring to the soul its capacity for experiencing events. It is as if the compulsion to repeat, so symptomatic of both the traumatized soul and those struggling with relapses in the process of addiction, is a disguised form of the agonizing process of birthing a new insight and revelation into consciousness. Thus, the experience of repetition, a symptom of the disease of trauma while at the same time integral to the process of its resolution, is orchestrated not simply by the ego or the fragmented traumatized complex, but also by the Self, the guiding and integrating function of our whole being. This is why people in trauma not only compulsively repeat the trauma but, to put it another way, and another way, attempt to tell it again and again, as the traumatized imagination works and reworks its metaphors until the event that has pierced it so deeply can be viewed in a way that serves its healing. How things turn out depends upon our having developed a strong enough sense of self to not simply get absorbed in the acting out of the trauma such that we continually retraumatize ourselves, but are able to recognize what is being revealed through our compulsive, repetitive behaviors. We are then able to release and relate to the whole process in new and creative ways that facilitate healing and resolution.

The compulsive fascination that the evil of the archetypal shadow exerts indicates that the representing by acting out the destructive aspect of the archetypal shadow which is animating the underlying trauma is a possible access to these lost levels of the soul. It is as if one of the essential functions of the archetypal shadow is to lead us back to our buried potentials. Trauma, like wetiko, is truly a quantum phenomenon, in that encoded within it is both its pathology and its cure in one superposed state. By their very nature, traumas are individual and individuating, forcing us to re-create ourselves anew. When our development is thwarted by trauma, mutation begins; turned back upon ourselves, we are forced to fertilize ourselves in an act of symbolic incest, which Jung interpreted

as a sign of the drive for wholeness. The individuation process of the traumatized soul is a deviation or transmutation into something entirely new. Trauma propels us to not only create a new personal and collective mythology, but demands we connect more deeply with our mythologizing, dreaming, and imaginative powers themselves. Trauma is not a noun or a thing, but rather a verb, in that it is a dynamic process which has a timeless dimension that also unfolds itself over time. Unresolved trauma is “self”-employed, as it employs itself by attempting to work itself out over the course of time, its spirit being passed down transgenerationally, through multiple generations.

Full-blown wetikos are soul murderers who have severed all the bonds of relatedness to others, as well as to themselves, that must be sustained in order to keep their hearts open to experience so as to remain empathically connected to life. Because they continually re-create the ongoing process of killing their own souls, they are reflexively compelled to do this unto others; for what the soul does to itself, it can't help but to do to others. In a perverse inversion of the golden rule, instead of treating others how they would like to be treated, wetikos do unto others what was done unto them. This is similar to how when we are traumatized, we compulsively give shape to our trauma by terrorizing and trying to kill in others what has been seemingly killed in ourselves. In a strange delusion occasioned by the cruelty of terror, we imagine that we are no longer a weak victim but are in fact one of the truly strong who has triumphed over the forces that once had power over us; yet in doing so, we tragically remain a slave to these very forces. Unconsciously acting out our unhealed trauma via our relationships in the world is the ritual memorializing of the scene of the original terror and trauma which haunt the psyche, but with the roles reversed. When we act out our unhealed abuse and trauma upon someone, we induce in our victim the experience we had when we were traumatized, as if we are attempting to reduce them to the feeling which we are no longer able to feel ourselves. Full-blown wetikos dream up others to experience what it is like to be the part of themselves which they have denied and from which they have split off, and are thus not able to consciously experience—the part of themselves that has been

traumatized, abused, and/or vampirized. This is one of the reasons why recipients of abuse typically, against all logical reason, feel guilty about being the victims of the abuse—they are being dreamed up to feel the very feelings of guilt that the abuser is unable to consciously feel. What we don't remember, we act out upon others, as the "other" in ourselves acts itself out through our unconscious. The carrier of wetiko is simply a living link in a timeless vampiric lineage of trauma and abuse. In playing this out, wetikos are transmitting and transferring their own depraved state of inner deadness onto others in a perverse, misguided, and maladaptive form of trying to deal with their own suffering.

Personal Pathology

A physician must study a disease in order to heal it. Similarly, it is impossible to overestimate the importance of understanding the psychopathology of wetiko in the modern world. Wetiko is a growing phenomenon which has already greatly impacted all of our lives and is going to continue to affect us, both individually and collectively, in ever greater ways until we get a handle on this modern-day biblical plague. Unable to decide whether to use the word "sociopath" or "psychopath" to describe a full-blown wetiko, I've combined the two to make up the word "psychosociopath," which "sounds" right. Robert Hare, an authority on criminal psychology, writes, "The fact is, compared with other major clinical disorders, little systematic research has been devoted to psychopathy, even though it is responsible for far more social distress and disruption than all other psychiatric disorders combined."² Psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, and ADHD are disabling to the individual and can be controlled by medication to one extent or another. The wetiko psycho-pathogen, on the other hand, is not disabling to the individual so afflicted unless certain other factors are present. Not even recognized as a disorder, wetiko cannot currently be medicated nor controlled by the very system which is itself infected with the disease. It is extremely helpful and of the utmost necessity to understand how the wetiko pathogen manifests in the individual who is under its thrall. People

taken over by wetiko are potential goldmines of information,³ as they are revealing to us what the pathology looks like in human form as it wreaks havoc in the inner landscape of their psyches and in their lives, as well as in the lives of those with whom they are connected.

Arrogance—*hubris*, as the Greeks called it—is one of the key traits that characterize and is the signature of being under the spell of wetiko. In being full-blown, wetikos are arrogantly puffed up with their own self-importance, that is, **inflated**. Unwitting instruments for evil, wetikos are arrogantly, ignorantly, and self-righteously convinced they are in possession of the truth and working for the highest good. It is as if they are unable to know that what they are doing is evil, unable to register their actions as anything other than good. The philosopher Nietzsche was, in his own words, describing an aspect of the pathology of wetiko when he came up with the term the “pale criminal.”⁴ The pale criminal is an archetypal figure of the collective unconscious who symbolically represents the quintessence of the evil in humanity. The pale criminal is so disconnected from himself and has so fallen into the denial of self-deception that he has no idea that the “murder” he is getting away with is actually evil. This figure is so disjointed inwardly that he has no context with any preceding event, in a sense forgetting what he’s done because he has no continuity with himself. Only a person who is present in his inner life can look back, reflect, and remember his acts, and thereby feel remorse for his wrongdoings and consciously feel his guilt. Pale criminals will actually create “explosions” in the outside world as distractions so as to protect themselves from inwardly “imploding” at the sight of themselves. Nietzsche referred to this figure as a “pale criminal” because if this person were to self-reflect and look in the mirror, their breath would be taken away at seeing who they had become; they would become “pale” at the sight of themselves.

The words of the Buddha in the *Maharatnakuta Sutra* declare: “Lying is the origin of all evils.” Lying is one of the key strands in the epidemiology of wetikoism. Wetikos suffer from what is called *pseudologia phantastica*, a form of hysteria characterized by a talent for believing their own lies. Ultimately deceiving themselves as they believe in the

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

propaganda of their own lies, full-blown wetikos become alien and strangers to themselves. R. D. Laing writes that our species, due to an almost unlimited capacity for self-deception, have “tricked ourselves out of our own minds.”⁵ In a Faustian pact with the devil, they have sold their soul to the highest bidder, having allowed themselves to be manipulated by “darker forces” so as to continually feed their own *narcissism*, all the while hiding from themselves the depravity of what they are doing. These seemingly external darker forces are an expression of the shadow deep within themselves from which they have become estranged. Wetikos continually have to invest their life force in lying to themselves, while at the same time fooling themselves into believing that they are not doing so, a classic version of doublethink. Suffering from amnesia, they have forgotten what it is to remember, and to seal the deal, they have forgotten that they have forgotten. The result is that they split their mind in two. Falling into denial, yet denying that they are in denial, becomes a process that they are invested in at all costs, lest it blow their denial. Anything that threatens their perverse state of affairs must be destroyed. They can seem confident and self-assured, but in reality they are covering deep insecurities and fears through an inflated self-image. Intense feelings of revenge, fury, and out-of-control rage manifest when their fear is exposed and their narcissism threatened. This rage is not just a defense against their vulnerability and wound, but comes from a perverse desire to sadistically punish those whom they perceive as the cause of their rage. Hiding from their own lie, they are in essence hiding from themselves, which is pure madness.

Wetikos can psychopathically (and thus toxically) mimic the human personality perfectly. If it serves their agenda, they can be convincing beyond belief, making themselves out to be normal, caring, politically correct human beings. They can endlessly talk about taking responsibility, but they never genuinely face up to and become accountable for their actions. They are unable to genuinely mourn, being only concerned with themselves. They will feign grief, however, just as they will try to appear compassionate, if it is politically expedient to do so and, hence, to their advantage, as they are master manipulators. They are unable, however,

to grasp emotionally the meaning implicit in the thoughts and feelings they are exhibiting. They lack insight into how they differ from others, for they do not differ from others as they see others. They are intuitively gifted at sensing what other people want them to give, as well as being skillful at pretending love and devotion, as if they are imitating a person. Impersonating themselves, their existence is a true parody of life. They can't distinguish between their mimicked (pseudo) responses of love, remorse, etc., and the genuinely felt responses of a healthy person.

Full-blown wetikos are emotionally stunted, as their feelings are confined to the primitive, archaic emotions of anger, frustration, numbness, and rage. Suffering from a deep disorder of feeling in which they cannot allow themselves to consciously *feel*, they choose to think one way in order to avoid feeling another. They typically swing between numbness and rage. Fixed in their own limited, myopic point of view, they have no capacity to see themselves as others see them. Their proclamations to the contrary, they have neither empathy nor compassion. Unable to see the world through others' point of view, only through their own, is what Hannah Arendt considers to be a primary characteristic of what she called the "banality of evil" in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Wetikos don't relate to others as autonomous, independent beings, but rather as disposable pawns to be used for their own selfish ends, inanimate things to be manipulated for their own narcissistic benefit. They take delight in "putting one over on people" and getting away with something. Contemptuous of moral or human restraints, they relate to others as objects, rather than as subjects with their own intrinsic value and valid viewpoints. It is this denial of the humanity of the other that lies at the heart of the mystery of evil. To quote theologian and philosopher Abraham J. Heschel, "The opposite of humanity is brutality... Brutality is often due to a failure of imagination.⁶... Man turned beast becomes his opposite, a species *sui generis*. The opposite of the human is not the animal, but the demonic."⁷ In full-blown wetikos there is a perverse enjoyment of domination over another person(s), which involves a process of dehumanization, of transforming a person into an object, a "thing," in which the other's freedom is taken away; this process is the very essence of the

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

sadistic drive. Their sadism is a way of transforming their feelings of powerlessness and impotence into a delusional experience of omnipotence.

Paradoxically, at the same time that full-blown wetikos experience themselves as separate from others, who are experienced as objects, they dwell in a state of “unconscious fusion” with others. This is a form of trance which is ultimately an expression of a lack of differentiation and individuation within themselves. The state of a full-blown wetiko is extremely paradoxical: being the incarnation of the archetype of narcissism itself, on the one hand they treat others as separate objects who exist only for their own use, while, at the same time, they unconsciously experience other people as extensions of themselves. In the very act of relating to others as separate, they are enacting in the outer world their own inner state of fragmentation. By acting out and treating others so brutally, they are giving shape and form to what they are doing to themselves within the landscape of their own soul. Compulsively acting out their unconscious, they are reacting to and conditioned by their own projections of the world. At the same time that they are relating to others as objects separate from themselves, they are, at a deeper level, unconsciously identified with the other. It is as if the other represents what they have split off from within themselves. In their behavior they are literally and symbolically acting out and revealing to us what they are doing to themselves.

Because they have lost connection to their own souls, they cannot hear the pleas of others nor see their souls, as they are lacking in the element of eros, the principle of relatedness. Their hearts are like stones, beyond any appeal, from others or within themselves. They refuse to see the suffering their actions are causing others, as this would injure their inflated, narcissistic, overly positive self-image, which protects them from consciously feeling their own pain, shame, and guilt. In the process by which they make a basic choice to shut down that which opens them up to others, and feeling empowered to the extent they are able to pull this off, their shame and guilt has been inwardly transformed into what should be called by its right name—self-hatred.

One of the channels that the wetiko bug operates through us is our personal *will*, particularly as an instrument for gaining worldly power.

Full-blown wetikos, particularly Big Wetikos in positions of great power, feel compelled to forcefully use the vastly creative multidimensional power of the human will as a tool for exerting power over others, and as a means of holding on to and preserving the power they have already secured for themselves, as well as for increasing the empire of their power without limit. Intoxicated by their insatiable attraction to power, such wetikos are extremely averse to yielding to others unless doing so is itself another hidden or disguised power play. Rather than allowing their will to be creatively subsumed and cooperatively interwoven into a vaster and more comprehensive universal network of co-creative intelligence—which would require the cultivation of their ability to release control over their will through developing the capacity for surrender, trust, and letting go—they become hardened, fixed, and chronically attached to their stance of self-willfulness. They have fallen into a chronic state of obsessive-compulsive willfulness, an unyielding and self-serving stance that disables the motility and flexibility of their volitional faculties, the fluidity of which is crucial in order to maintain a dynamic will attuned to and capable of co-creatively interacting with the greater will of the universe as a living dynamic whole-system. Such an imbalanced use of the will in only one direction—that of securing power and control over others without concern for or attunement to that which serves the highest collective good—I would like to name “volitional dystrophy.” Only being able to use our will for control and domination of others is a disabling limitation, just as it would be severely disabling to only be able to close our hand and clench our fist, without ever being able to open our hand, unclench our fist, and receive something from others. Falling into the evil of wetiko entails being swept away by one-sidedness, by only one single pattern of behavior.

Full-blown wetikos are psycho-sociopaths who are not constrained in their actions in the same way that they know that most people are. All force, in the last analysis, is based on the power to kill and to turn the other into a corpse. The person may not be killed but only taught a lesson, made an example of, deprived of their freedom, or cruelly humiliated. Behind each of these actions stands a capacity and sadistic “willingness to kill”

(whether psychically or physically) so as to protect their psychic territory, power, and self-serving delusions. This makes people so afflicted particularly dangerous, as they will do *whatever it takes*, literally stopping at nothing to hold on to whatever position of power they find themselves in.

In social animals there is an intrinsic mechanism that limits aggression. For example, the display of submission expressed by baring the throat when attacked by a stronger opponent will result in the termination of the attack. This “violence inhibition mechanism” (VIM) is typically activated by nonverbal cues and communications of distress, pain, or suffering. Having a VIM is a prerequisite for the development of morality and for the continued evolution of human consciousness. The wetiko virus disables the VIM within people, thus arresting and taking captive their morality and literally incapacitating their ability to evolve.

A Frankenstein Monster Come to Life

The shape-shifting wetiko bug is the aping shadow of God, as well as ourselves, as it has the most disagreeable quality of appearing in our own guise. When we are taken over by the wetiko spirit, it assumes our seeming form, taking both our guise and our gaze, which we absorb into, identify with, and believe to be who we are. Bamboozled and hoodwinked by the slick “salesmanship” of this imposter and copycat of ourselves, we “buy” into its version of who we are. We then mime ourselves, becoming a master copy, a duplicate of our original and true selves. The spirit of wetiko impersonates us, fooling even ourselves, as it cloaks itself in our form. This mercurial spirit puts us on as a disguise, appearing as ourselves, or at least who we mistakenly imagine ourselves to be. In his book *Psychology and Alchemy*, Jung refers to this spirit by the name Antimimos, which he describes as “the imitator and evil principle.”⁸ The word Antimimos refers to a type of deception that can be thought of as “countermimicry.” Referred to as the *antimimon pneuma* in the Apocryphon of John (Apoc. John III, 36:17), this counterfeiting, “anti-miming” spirit imitates something but with the intention to make the copy, the fake version, serve a purpose counter to that of the original thing or idea. This spirit inspires

the devil himself to imitate an angel of light. The antimimon spirit is a maleficent force which tries to seduce us so as to lead us astray; it effects an inversion of value, transforming truth to falsehood and falsehood to truth, leading us to forgetfulness.

When we are taken over by the wetiko spirit is when we can subjectively experience ourselves as being most ourselves, while ironically it is in actuality when we are most estranged from ourselves. At one and the same time we disconnect from and lose ourselves while falling under an illusion and identifying with who we're not. This is a state of dissociation and fusion simultaneously, as the parts of the psyche that have split off from consciousness overwhelm and take over the psyche. Gurdjieff said that we lie to ourselves constantly about who we are. But if we observe carefully, "You will see that you are different from what you think you are. You will see that you are two. One that is not, but takes the place and plays the role of the other [the real you].... Learn to look until you have observed the difference between your two natures, until you have seen the lies, the deception in yourself. When you have seen your two natures, that day, in you, the truth will be born."

Instead of living from and out of an awareness of the psyche, full-blown wetikos continually avoid awareness of the psyche, a habitual pattern which becomes their internal compass and continual default, their M.O. Taking refuge not "in" but "from" themselves, wetikos are continually fleeing from themselves, endlessly circling around in the hamster wheel of samsara. Their energy is invested in fueling their own, and others', deception, a process which leaves them remote from themselves. Their will becomes dedicated to hiding from the truth of what they are doing, a truth which endlessly pursues them, as they continually avoid relationship with themselves. Wetikos become wedded to the full-time occupation of keeping one step ahead of themselves, a process which, once it gains a certain momentum, attains a seeming autonomy that is self-generating. As this inner process progresses, it gains a sovereignty over their psyche, as if a self-created Frankenstein monster has come to life in the flesh. This is reminiscent of the legendary resurrected tiger which devours the magician who restored it to life out of its skeletal bones. The wetikos have then

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

created their own sci-fi nightmare, with themselves in the starring role. Once created, a mind-virus like wetiko, just like the Frankenstein monster, gains a seeming life of its own, independent of its creator. It then holds its creator in its thrall, who is unable to escape from the out-of-control hell of their own making. Our everyday figures of speech reflect this seemingly out-of-the-ordinary situation when we ask of someone who's not acting like their usual self, "What's gotten into you?"

"Autonomous complexes," a term coined by Jung, are the psychologically equivalent term for what indigenous people would call "demons," e.g., wetiko. To condescendingly think that we, as modern-day enlightened people, are too sophisticated to believe in something as primitive as demons is to not realize their psychological reality. These unconscious complexes alter our experience of ourselves. The psychic conditions which breed demons are as actively at work as ever. The demons have not disappeared but have merely changed their name and taken on another form—they have become unconscious psychic forces. Though we have dismissed the idea of demons on the altar of our rationality, to quote Jung, "Man himself has taken over their role without knowing it and does the devilish work of destruction with far more effective tools than the spirits did. In the olden days men were brutal, now they are dehumanized and possessed to a degree that even the blackest Middle Ages did not know."¹⁰ We, as "modern" people, to the extent we are acting out our unconscious, are as much "plagued" by possession as people in the Middle Ages. However, the weaponry we have at our fingertips is orders of magnitude more technologically advanced than in the past, sufficient to utterly destroy ourselves.

Autonomous complexes are parts of the psyche which have split off due to shock, trauma, or breach of our boundaries, and have developed a seemingly autonomous life and apparently independent will of their own. The demonic energy of a split-off, autonomous complex manifests *as if* it has an intentionality, *as if* it seeks us out, *as if* it were maliciously set against us. An autonomous complex behaves like an animated foreign body within our consciousness. A split-off, autonomous complex leads a life of its own in the subterranean levels of the psyche, and is prone to

instantly projecting itself whenever it is constellated in any way—that is, whenever attracted by something analogous to itself in the outside world. The complex can usually be suppressed with an effort of will, but not argued out of existence, and at the first suitable opportunity it reappears in its original strength. Due to its lack of association with the conscious ego, an autonomous complex is archetypically not open to being influenced, educated, or corrected by “reality.” An intruder from the unconscious and a disturber of the peace, an autonomous complex behaves like a goblin that is always eluding both our gaze and our grasp. The more we attribute seemingly external qualities to the autonomous complex, the further away we are getting from the psychological source of our experience. Not realizing that we are chasing a projection, we try to grasp the ungraspable as it eludes us like an ever-receding rainbow. Unreflected upon, however, these demons wreak havoc upon everyone within their sphere of influence, emitting the psychic equivalent of depleted uranium into the surrounding environment.

At a certain point, the autonomous quality of the complex gains enough momentum to emancipate itself from the wholeness of the psyche and become its own end. As it takes over and becomes more and more in charge of a person, a split-off complex such as wetiko incorporates a seemingly autonomous regime within the greater body politic of the psyche. As if an invisible coup has taken place within the psyche, an autonomous complex like wetiko commandeers and colonizes the psyche. When we are taken over by an autonomous complex, it is as if we, as natural rulers of our own psychic landscape, have been deposed, and are living under a “foreign occupation,” no longer masters in our own home. Once it gains a sufficient sovereignty, an autonomous complex forms something like a “shadow government” of the ego, in that the complex *dictates* to the ego. Once again, just as within a dream, we see the inner landscape of the wetikozed psyche being mirrored in the outer world through the shadow government that has taken over our seeming democracy. Both within our psyche and in our alleged democracy, we are allowed our seeming freedom, so long as it doesn’t threaten the sovereignty and dominance of the ruling power.

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

Over time, just as when we become taken over by compulsive addictive behavior, the conscious mind loses its power of leadership. Imperceptibly, we become the led, as an unconscious and impersonal process gradually takes control of the psyche. Thus, without noticing it, the conscious personality starts being pushed about like a figure on a chessboard by an invisible player, as if we are actually being led and manipulated like puppets. In the words of the poet W. H. Auden, “We are lived by powers we pretend to understand.”¹¹ We do not notice when we are governed by an autonomous complex; we put all of our skills, talents, gifts, and cunning at the service of our unconscious master, thereby heightening its power a millionfold. Falling into self-deception, the conscious mind succumbs to the illusion that it is deciding, that it is in control. When we are under wetiko’s spell, we are like little kids sitting in the passenger seat of the family automobile, pretending that we are steering the car with our toy dashboard steering wheel. To the extent we are taken over by wetiko, we are complicit in supporting the dark overlords who master over us, both within our psyche and in the outside world. We fool ourselves, imagining, for example, that we live in a free country, in a functioning democracy that is governed by the rule of law, a delusion which feeds into the collective psychosis in the field as well as the madness within ourselves. Being nonlocal, this inner psychological situation can manifest, and is manifesting, both within our psyche and out in the world at the same time. Just like a dream.

A split-off, autonomous complex is, potentially, like a “vampiric virus,” in that it is fundamentally “dead” matter; it is only in a living being that it acquires a quasi-life. A dissociated autonomous complex becomes “entombed” in the dungeons of the unconscious, which only serves to give it more power. Just as a vampire revitalizes itself by sucking our life force, when we unconsciously identify with an activated autonomous complex, we are literally animating and enlivening the undead. Complicit in our own victimization, we then unwittingly give away our freedom, power, and life force in the process. Like cancer cells ravaging the body, disassociated autonomous complexes are “splinter psyches” that become overly swollen with psychic energy, and then will propagate and metastasize

themselves within the psyche, consuming, devouring, and cannibalizing its healthy aspects. Drawing and attracting all of the wholesome parts of the psyche into itself, an autonomous complex can potentially warp and destroy the psyche of the person, nation, or species so afflicted, nonlocally infecting and spreading by psychic contagion its malaise to the surrounding field in the process. Paradoxically, autonomous complexes like the demon of wetiko only are real when they are not recognized as real.

Speaking of someone possessed by the wetiko virus, Forbes writes, “such a person cannot be authentic. Such a person is not merely a pimp, he is also a ghost, as it were, a mere imitation of a person. His life is an imitation of life.” But the life of such pimps “is less than that of a wild (free) animal who is, after all always authentic.”¹² Being ghostlike, full-blown wetikos cannot truly own or possess something, as they are not even in possession of themselves; all they are able to do is to grasp again and consume some more. Wetikos become unreal to themselves, a simulation of themselves. As if describing full-blown wetikos, the late psychiatrist R. D. Laing asserted that the ultimate destruction that can be done to human beings is to destroy their capacity to have their own experience. In order for wetikos to “divide and conquer,” they first have to divide people internally, to split them psychically. Different parts of the person taken over by wetiko become compartmentalized, neither connected to each other nor to the whole. This process of inner fragmentation serves to hide from the wetikos what they are doing to themselves, as they become their own never-ending “cover-up.” This psychological dynamic is kept in place by how painful it is to behold and contemplate the modes of avoidance they have so desperately constructed to protect themselves from what they do not want to know. And yet, painful though it may be, it is only in the clear seeing of what they are doing to themselves that is there any possibility of becoming free from this malignant malady.

8

Evil

What Is Evil?

Due to the horrific events playing out on the world stage, I find myself unable to avoid the topic of “evil,” which is a subject that demands our deepest reflection. Some of my readers have objected to my use of the term evil, because it triggers something in them which makes them feel uncomfortable, and sometimes even makes them stop reading. I find myself wondering, is there something being revealed to us when, for example, people are triggered by the mere mention of the word evil. There is an intrinsic problem with illuminating evil, however, as articulating the nature of evil can actually invoke it in the field. This is to say that even mentioning the word “evil” can constellate that very quality in the reader, as well as in myself. In coming to terms with evil, we have to take within ourselves a minute homeopathic dose, or we will not know whereof we speak. There is simply no getting around this, for to attempt to keep evil outside of ourselves is itself the play of evil. It then becomes a question of how do we relate to the very darkness within us which has been evoked? Do we react in fear, in which case the seeming evil has power over us? Or do we turn the light of consciousness onto the part of ourselves that is the source of the darkness, reflecting upon the very darkness which has been called forth within us? Reflective minds can be greatly enriched, however, and intellectual horizons considerably enlarged by the realization of the

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

immense power of evil. Our sense of morality and humility is deepened, heightened, and strengthened when we realize that any of us are capable of potentially becoming evil's instruments, unwittingly or not.

In writing about evil, I am talking from personal experience; I have not assumed the comfortable and safe posture of an intellectual, scholar, or academic sitting in an ivory tower, contemplating wetiko as an abstract idea, something outside of myself. On the contrary, in writing this book, I couldn't stay separate from what I was writing about, in that the act of holding wetiko as an object of my contemplation activated within me the subjective experience of the very thing I was writing about. I've literally had to evoke and self-reflectively speculate upon how the wetiko virus operates within myself again and again so as to intimately experience from the inside what I am writing about. Writing this book has truly been an "inside job," in that it's all about ME. In authoring this inquiry, I feel like I "caught" wetiko, in the dual sense that it "infected" me, in a shamanistic manner,¹ while at the same time I "captured" it within the container of my contemplation; and, like Jacob wrestling with the dark angel, I wouldn't let go till I received its blessing. My experience was like going from safely being in the comfortable confines of my home where I was contemplating a picture of an African jungle, and then realizing that I was in the very scene, surrounded by wild animals. In writing about wetiko, it felt as if I was writing about a living entity that knew I was writing about it, or at least I imagine. I could feel how it didn't want to be seen, which gave me the feeling of being in a genuine encounter, a having it out, a coming to terms with a power greater than myself—in Jung's oft-used term, an *Auseinandersetzung*,² a confrontation between ego-consciousness and contents of the unconscious. Thankfully, this process of objectifying and articulating the disintegrating effects of wetiko have had a deeply integrating effect upon me. Writing this book has been a key part of my own creative journey of healing.

Much that proves to be abysmally evil doesn't necessarily come from people's wickedness; it stems from their ignorance and unconsciousness.³ When I talk about the evil of wetiko, however, I am not talking about a personal level of evil, but rather a transpersonal dimension of evil whose

origin is beyond the merely personal. This archetypal, nonlocal evil is enfolded throughout the entire field and uses individual human beings as its instruments of incarnation. This is a holographic universe in the sense that, just like a hologram, every minute, microcosmic part of the universe—ourselves, for instance—contains, reflects, and expresses the macrocosmic whole. This is analogous to the way a dream fragment potentially contains encoded within it our whole process. Seeing how wetiko manifests in any one of us gives us deeper insight into how this nonlocal bug works en masse in the world at large.

The transpersonal evil of wetiko can be considered that tendency which—whether in ourselves or others—inhibits personal growth, destroys or limits innate potentialities, curtails freedom, fragments or disintegrates the personality, diminishes the quality of interpersonal relationships, and creates divisiveness in the whole human family. It limits and blocks our ability to love, to grow, to evolve. The heart of evil strives always and everywhere to annihilate, to turn all being to nothing. In the creation-drama, evil was, so to speak, the reverse, the other, of the act of creation; it is that which opposes the divine creativity of the universe. Evil is anti-life; it is life turning against itself. Evil diminishes the fullness of life; “live” reversed: “evil.” Evil is something a soul does to itself and, as a result, can’t resist doing to others. Evil is the desire to destroy people in their soul as a means of evacuating one’s inner condition outside of oneself while feeling righteous and justified in doing so. It is the use of power to destroy the spiritual growth of others for the purpose of defending and preserving the integrity of one’s own sick self.

One situation that nourishes the germ of evil, and in Jung’s opinion is one of the worst sins, occurs when we have the possibility of becoming conscious of an unconscious content that is emerging into consciousness, and we choose not to, remaining artificially, unnecessarily, and willfully unconscious. Repressed individuation feeds evil, as does unexpressed or repressed creativity, which transforms the potentially helpful voice of the daemon into a destructive demon. If we don’t honor the creative light within us, instead of the daemon’s being a guide and healer of the soul, its spirit will mislead and delude us, transforming into a diabolical seducer.

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

Instead of bringing light, the spirit of unrealized creativity turns satanic, as it becomes the Father of Lies whose voice in our time, amplified by mainstream corporate media, revels in orgies of propaganda and leads untold millions to ruin. Those with un-lived creativeness try to destroy other people's creativity, just as those with un-lived possibilities of consciousness try to stop other people's efforts toward consciousness; what the soul does to itself it can't help but do to others.

When I talk about evil, I am talking about the psychological reality of evil, whose effects are all around us. I am not making a theological statement having to do with the metaphysical reality of evil, as I am not qualified to do so. Evil is, psychologically speaking, terribly real. Today as never before it is important that we not overlook the danger of the potential evil lurking within us. One must be positively blind to not see the colossal role that evil plays in the modern world. To quote Jung, "Only an infantile person can pretend that evil is not at work everywhere, and the more unconscious he is, the more the devil drives him."⁴ Evil today has become a visible Great Power. Its effects do not diminish in the slightest by being hushed up as a nonreality. Evil is not something that, ostrich-like, we can just turn our back on or a blind eye toward. Our denial of evil is itself a manifestation of the very evil we are denying, while at the same time, our denial engenders the very evil of which our denial is an expression. Disowned and unacknowledged evil becomes inhuman, monstrous, and sadistic. We must learn how to handle evil, since it certainly appears as if it is here to stay. We are clearly being asked—make that demanded—by the universe to come to terms with evil; our very survival as a species depends upon it.

Wetiko *is* the archetype of evil manifesting and revealing itself through our species. Experiencing archetypal evil is truly shattering, but it can so shake us up that it can potentially help us to become filled with inspiration. Being archetypal in nature, wetiko stands for a persistent force of evil that doesn't take up limited residence in any one person, but rather incarnates through anyone who has ever enacted any form of evil. Who among us can say we have been free of this affliction? We might enact evil in our day-to-day lives in much more subtle, invisible, well-intentioned

and inoffensive ways than full-blown Big Wetikos, but we are still iterations of the same fractal. Being transpersonal in nature, the evil of wetiko has manifested through various human beings in different ways over the centuries. Being multidimensional, there are a wide variety of domains, contexts, and configurations through which wetiko plays itself out. Wetiko moves each of us differently, making itself visible in a multiplicity of ways, as its agency has many different flavors, faces, and representatives. Wetiko never looks the same, and yet, in its essence, it remains the same wetiko bug in myriad (dis)guises and costumes.

Evil is like a pathogen that enters a system, be it an individual, nation-state, or world-system, and exploits that system, knocking it off balance. Such disturbances can transform something wholesome, such as the drive to reproduce, into something evil—the drive to rape. Etymologically, one of the meanings of the word “evil” has to do with “transgressing boundaries.” Full-fledged wetikos are rapists of the human soul. The word “rape,” etymologically speaking, is derived from words that mean to overwhelm, to enrapture, to invade, to usurp, to pillage, and to steal, all characteristics of someone possessed by the wetiko virus. Evil compels one-sidedness, and can inspire people to become fanatically attached to and fixed in their viewpoint. The philosopher Bertrand Russell writes, “Most of the greatest evils that man has inflicted upon man have come through people feeling quite certain about something which, in fact, was false.”⁵

Being “unclean,” it is as if an unholy or evil spirit, a spirit of destruction, has taken up residence and lodged itself in the beings of those taken over by wetiko. They are unwittingly being used as instruments, as covert operatives of this darker, unclean spirit to proliferate itself in the wider field. Secret agents of the disease, wetikos’ secret is self-secret, in that it is secret even to themselves. As is true for any of us when taken over by something other than ourselves, carriers of wetiko don’t realize how possessed they are at any given moment. The experience of being taken over by something more powerful than ourselves always happens in our blind spot.

To say that full-blown wetikos *are* evil is not quite accurate, however, as it is to conflate the personal dimension with the archetypal, attributing to a person contents that belong to the collective unconscious. Though

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

evil does have a personal dimension, archetypal evil is a transpersonal energy that is beyond and of a higher dimension than the merely personal. It is important to clearly distinguish: when someone is possessed by wetiko, they are an instrument for evil, which is very different than “being” evil themselves. They are simply deluded human beings, who due to ignorance, unconsciousness, greed, etc., have allowed themselves to be used by darker forces to incarnate their power-hungry agenda. From the more holistic view of the field, they are getting dreamed up to pick up and play out a very unpopular role in a deeper, mythic, archetypal drama. If we concretize someone as being evil, we are shadow-projecting and unwittingly becoming instruments of the very evil we are reacting against. We don’t want to solidify anyone’s open-ended, multidimensional hologram, so to speak. Who we are, when we get right down to it, can be likened to the wave function in physics pulsating in and out of the void every nanosecond with infinite potentiality, re-created and re-creating itself anew each moment. How the wave function “collapses” into particularized form, as modern physics points out, depends upon how it is observed, or dreamed up. Like a dream, our universe is not written in stone in a solid state, but is very fluid, a work in progress. To solidify anyone, or the universe in general, is to ultimately concretize ourselves.

Evil can take many forms—political, social, economic, militaristic, and psychological. Predation can lurk under many guises and high-sounding names, such as patriotism, public welfare, national security, spreading democracy, free trade, and protecting our way of life. Evil oftentimes hides under idealisms, under “isms” in general. These “isms,” what Jung refers to as the “viruses of our day,” are simply thought-forms used by wetikos to justify their rape, criminality, murder, and other forms of evil. Wrapping their cause in the mantle of goodness allows Big Wetikos, who are in fact full-fledged predators, to sleep at night, seemingly guilt-free. In a form of self-entrancement, they have so thoroughly convinced themselves of the rightness of their actions as well as their claims to virtue that they rarely, if ever, have ethical qualms about what they are doing. It is the deluded sense of *meaning*—such as invading a country to “spread democracy”—that these pale criminals place on the violent acts they are committing

which allows them to justify, at least in their own minds, their murderous actions. Where the evil of wetiko is endemic, there tends to be an ethical, developmental arrest, both in individuals and throughout the society.

Alchemy is an expression of the fact that light is hidden in darkness, that the deepest blessings are found in the distressing dark shadows of the human psyche. Jung recognized that whenever evil appeared in an individual person's process, some deeper good almost always came out of the experience that would not have emerged without the manifestation of evil. Could the same thing be true on a collective scale? Might there be a parallel? Just as in a single individual, the emergence of darkness calls forth a hidden light, does the manifestation of a more collective darkness call forth a helpful light in the psychic life of a people? Is the dark shadow befalling our planet the harbinger of a great light? Just as evening gives birth to morning, from the darkness potentially arises a new light, which is the "morning star" (who is Lucifer, the "light-bringer"). As the Chinese yin/yang symbol illustrates, encoded in one of the opposites is the seed of the other, which is to say that hidden in the darkness is a speck of light. The evil that is incarnating in our world simultaneously beckons and potentially actualizes an expansion of consciousness, all depending upon our recognition of what is being revealed. It is as if hidden in the darkness is a spark of light that has descended into its depths, and when recognized in the darkness, this light returns to its source. Everything depends upon whether we are able to draw upon—that is, to evoke and to access—this "helpful light" of consciousness that is called forth by the darkness. If we are able to connect with this emerging light of consciousness and recognize what is being revealed by and through the darkness, we can creatively mediate, transmute, and express these darker, destructive powers in the service of all that lives. Might not our consciousness expand less rapidly without the emergence of evil and our struggles with it? Mythologically speaking, the evil spirit is hidden in the roots of the self, as if evil is the secret principle concealed within and spurring on the dynamic of individuation. In Goethe's masterpiece *Faust*, Faust asks Mephistopheles (who represents the devil) who he is, and Mephistopheles replies that he is the "part of that force which would do evil, yet forever works the good." In

our coming to terms with evil, evil seems to be playing a key role in the divine mystery of the Incarnation through humanity. Jung writes, “We assiduously avoid investigating whether in this very power of evil God might not have placed some special purpose which it is most important for us to know.”⁶ It is said that the horrified perception of evil has supposedly led to at least as many conversions as the experience of the good.

Recognizing Evil

In the Gnostic *Dialogue of the Savior*, it says, “Whoever does not know the root of evil is no stranger to it.”⁷ Wetiko forces upon us the evolutionary responsibility to become intimately related to and come to terms with the evil within our own hearts. The art of alchemy was an attempt at a symbolic *integration of evil*, locating the divine drama of redemption in humanity itself. This involved a process of coming to terms with the unconscious, which always becomes a necessity when we are confronted with its primal darkness. There is no escape from the world, the flesh, and the devil; they can only be truly renounced by being faced and overcome. The less evil is recognized, the more dangerous it is. To the extent we have not rooted out the wetiko bug within ourselves we are complicit in the co-creation of the evil playing out in the world. The Gnostic text *The Gospel of Philip* says,

So long as the root of wickedness is hidden, it is strong. But when it is recognized, it is dissolved. When it is revealed, it perishes.... As for ourselves, let us each dig down after the root of evil which is within each of us, and produces its fruit in our hearts. It masters us. We are its slaves. It takes us captive, to make us do what we do not want, and what we do want, we do not do. It is powerful because we have not recognized it.⁸

The source of the demons lies within us. As compared to existing “by virtue” of something, demons can only live by the “lack of virtue” of our own obscured and unexamined minds. The above Gnostic quote brings to mind Paul’s famous passage from the New Testament, “That which I

would do, I do not, and that which I would not do, I do” (Romans 7:15), a clear and simple expression of our human proclivity for being taken over by a daemonic power greater and seemingly other than ourselves and acting out evil if there ever was one. The unilluminated and unrecognized autonomous complex of wetiko diabolically compels us to act contrary to our best intentions, as any of us who’ve struggled with any form of addiction knows from our own humbling experience. Being possessed by demons is a problem as old as humanity.

In Buddhism, Mara, known as the “Evil One,” is a symbol for the quintessence of evil. Mara, like the wetiko virus, is the upholder of false views and always and everywhere tries to prevent knowledge of enlightenment from being communicated to others. Those who threaten to break out of Mara’s realm are those against whom his greatest efforts are put forth, similar to the way the wetiko virus shadows forth its worst outbursts as we get closer to being free from it. The seeing and knowing of Mara’s presence and activities are a major element of Buddha’s enlightenment. Once he attained enlightenment, the Buddha always recognized the moment that Mara appeared; to recognize Mara is to immediately defeat him, as if deflating a balloon. This is why Mara exclaims with the utmost dismay and despair, “The Exalted One knows me!” (The Exalted One is the Buddha, the one who has awakened to the dreamlike nature.) Ignorance and darkness are two of the main qualities associated with Mara, who is also referred to as the “Dark One.” It is emphasized in the Buddha’s teachings that it was ignorance and darkness that were dispelled at the moment of enlightenment. Common to both ignorance and darkness is their capacity to “blind” humanity. Ignorance, darkness, and blindness—as well as “craving,” or always wanting more—are associated with Mara’s activity, as well as with wetiko. The image of Mara’s hosts being routed is often likened to darkness being dispelled by the sun. The Mara-image is a living symbol, the outcome of a radical religious insight—a “revelation”—of the Buddha. Without this insight, there was no knowledge of Mara, which is to say that previous to the Buddha’s revelation, Mara, like wetiko, could act itself out without restraint. When the historical Buddha, just like any one of us, sees Mara, this realization instantaneously registers in

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

the collective consciousness of all humanity, thereby making this insight more accessible for all of us. Just as when the Buddha “knew” Mara, when we know wetiko, it has no power over us.

The goal of the sacred art of alchemy is to unlock the light encoded and imprisoned within the darkness. The mystery of the coniunctio, the central mystery of alchemy, has to do with the synthesis of opposites, which involves integrating the darkness, however it is represented, into consciousness. Jung says, “as long as Satan is not integrated, the world is not healed and man is not saved. But Satan represents evil, and how can evil be integrated? There is only one possibility: to assimilate it, that is to say, raise it to the level of consciousness ... [this is a state] in which the devil no longer has an autonomous existence but rejoins the profound unity of the psyche. Then the *opus magnum* is finished: the human soul is completely integrated.”⁹ This involves a genuine confrontation with both the personal and the archetypal shadow within ourselves. We become awake by making the darkness conscious. When there is light in the darkness that comprehends the darkness, darkness no longer prevails. The chains that were binding us fall back unto themselves, no longer imprisoning us, as if in ascending to our higher nature our lower nature is “left behind,” no longer having any power over us to compel us to act it out. When sunlight floods into a room, darkness is rendered powerless and is instantaneously evacuated. As the late Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis wrote in connection with publicizing societal injustices, “Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants.” Although we think of illumination as “seeing the light,” “seeing the darkness” is also a form of illumination. In becoming illuminated, it is the darkness that illuminates us.

We are only able to bear the experience of the evil within us and not fall into overwhelming despair if we recognize the “transpersonal” origin of evil. Instead of personalizing or identifying with the evil we have found within, erroneously thinking it “belongs” to us individually, solidifying ourselves as *being* evil, we recognize that evil is “archetypal” in nature, belonging to the universe itself. Because evil is archetypal, we are not responsible for having these impulses, but only for how we deal with them. Realizing the archetypal dimension of evil is itself an expression

that we are in touch with our intrinsic wholeness, which enables us to not split off from nor identify with, but rather contain, transmute, and liberate, evil's deleterious effects. Becoming engaged with and intimately related to the transpersonal evil within us simultaneously acquaints us with the part of ourselves that is beyond the personal ego and plugged into something far greater and vaster than ourselves.

On the one hand, we don't want to ignore the evil of wetiko, which, being an avoidance of what it brings up in us, simply feeds the wetiko virus. Ignorance is not bliss at all, because shrinking away from the specter of evil into denial only prolongs our suffering. On the other hand, we do not want to become overly fascinated with the evil of wetiko, which would only feed its intoxicating effects. Once we really see wetiko, however, we can choose to not focus on it too much. Instead of unconsciously reacting against it, we can make a conscious choice of how and where we invest our attention, a choice which empowers our sovereignty. Once we see wetiko and come from a position of choice as to how we respond to it, instead of it draining us of our life force, it then literally feeds our awareness. Once we have gotten to know wetiko within ourselves, we can choose not to unnecessarily give it our attention, which means we no longer offer ourselves as its feeding station. By withholding its food, we are effectively dispelling the curse of wetiko in no time. We can then consciously invest our attention in creating and re-engineering a world in which we want to live.

Self-Destruction

The multiheaded hydra that is the wetiko collective psychosis materializes and insinuates its nonlocal tentacles within families, groups, nations, and, indeed, in whole species such as our own. Just as the community of believers was described by the Apostle Paul as the "body of Christ," so can the individuals taken over by wetiko be considered to be the physical "organs" of this higher-dimensional, metaphysical energy. In a sense, these individual organs of wetiko compose the physical body of wetiko, and can be considered to be wetiko's emanation or projection of

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

itself into the third dimension. Due to the primal fear which ultimately drives it and which it is driven to cultivate, wetiko's body politic has an intrinsic and insistent need for centralizing power and control so as to create imagined safety for itself. Fueled by the bottom line of corporate-driven profits, people motivated by the greed of the wetiko virus have little meta-awareness of the long-term implications of their rapacious actions. All that the wetiko bug wants is to satisfy its narcissistic cravings, experience orgasmic release, and glory in the seeming victory of short-term profits. The Cree musician Buffy Sainte-Marie wrote a song about wetiko (using the term *windego*) called "The Priests of the Golden Bull," which evokes both the greed of Wall Street and the golden calf that the Israelites worshipped as a false idol while Moses was encountering God on Mount Sinai. The monster of ever-expanding imperialism, exploitation, plundering, and profiteering is the most diabolically evil form of wetiko's cannibalism. A "front" for the underlying wetiko virus, the military-industrial-criminal complex, with its ultimately self-destructive, intrinsic need for endless wars to feed greed-driven expansion, is like a systematic runaway in cybernetic theory. The Frankenstein monster of ever-enlarging empire, under the deceptive banner of "progress," is like a runaway locomotive gaining speed, approaching the event horizon of its inevitable "crash." Meanwhile, this progress destroys people, families, communities, and potentially, our entire species. "Wetikos," Forbes writes, "have taken their Satan to the four-corners of the world, and they have made him their God."¹⁰ Evil is the number one export of a wetiko culture.

Wetiko disease is a self-devouring operating system that leaves nothing unmolested. It is a living death sentence that, if left unchecked, destroys everything within its dominion, including itself. Wetiko psychosis ensures that everything is sacrificed on its altar of death and destruction. Full-blown wetikos are "necrophiles"; their impulses are perversely directed against life—whose spontaneity they fear—and toward death and destruction, to which they are secretly attracted. From a galactic perspective, our planetary so-called civilization is a living, virulent, and metastasizing outbreak of wetiko psychosis that is threatening to destroy

not only its human host but also the entire biosphere which makes life on earth possible as well. Wetiko's ravenous, voracious, rapacious hunger will cause it to literally eat everything, including, finally, itself. Forbes writes, "The rape of a woman, the rape of a land, and the rape of a people, they are all the same.... Brutality knows no boundaries. Greed knows no limits. Perversion knows no borders. Arrogance knows no frontiers. Desire knows no edges. These characteristics all tend to push toward an extreme, always moving forward once the initial infection sets in."¹¹ Untreated, this psychic infection gradually takes hold of the wetikos' being, corrupting their heart, blurring their vision, poisoning their psychic body politic from within, as it fuses with their soul. When we follow and support someone afflicted by wetiko, we unwittingly take on and into ourselves wetiko-like qualities. Being highly suggestible, humans learn through imitation and mimicry, similar to the way in nature an insect adopts the color of the leaf whereon it sits. Like the virus of evil insinuating itself into the soul in incremental, unnoticed and insidious steps, at a certain point this leukemia of the soul becomes irreversible, inevitably leading to its host's destruction. The wetiko virus's pathogenic effects within an individual are a microcosmic fractal iteration of the collective, macrocosmic dynamics of the disease; how wetiko works within each of us is synchronistically mirrored with stunning perfection in how it plays out throughout the greater body politic.

Unchecked by a psychic vaccine, the disease, like an addiction running rampant, is progressive and is thus getting worse over time. Forbes writes, "The wetikos destroyed Egypt and Babylon and Athens and Rome and Tenochtitlan and perhaps now they will destroy the entire earth. But neither the 'junkie' looking for money for a shot of heroin nor the capitalists destroying Amazonian forests for big profits are able to stop their own destructive behavior."¹² Wetikos can't help themselves. Suffering from a compulsion to destroy, if left to themselves they are unable to stop their suicidal behavior. The Chinese *Book of Changes*, the *I Ching*, says of "evil" that it "inevitably destroys itself in the end." Having lost their internal freedom, people taken over by wetiko are singularly lacking in options. Wetikos are as blinded to their own cure as they are oblivious to

their own sickness. It is helpful to remember that the evil we see in those afflicted with wetiko is a reflection of ourselves.

ME Disease

As mentioned earlier, in my first book, as if “finding” a name, I gave myself creative license to make up the name malignant egophrenia, or ME disease, to signify what the Native American people call wetiko. I chose the name ME disease to refer to a misidentification of who we imagine we are, a misperception of our identity (our sense of “me”-ness), and a distortion of what we imagine to be real with reference to ourselves. In ME disease, our identification with an imaginary “me” separate from the rest of the universe is itself the root of the seeming problem. In this somnambulistic state, we fall into the trap of identifying with, grasping at, protecting, and defending a “me” that doesn’t exist in the way we imagine it does. Absorbed in this personalistic perspective, we personalize our experience, as well as ourselves, imagining we exist as a separate person isolated from other seemingly separate persons. We thus become entranced into a fixed and particularized point of view which develops a seemingly autonomous life of its own and becomes a self-generating feedback loop, a true “self”-fulfilling prophecy. It should be noted that this unconscious process is what the Buddha found to be the very cause of human suffering.

Ultimately, the evil in our world is a result of our misguided, wrong-headed, and futile attempts to maintain our constructed and seemingly solid identities, whose contingent and illusory nature is continually ignored. This most deeply entrenched of our afflictive dispositions is a narcissistic illusion that psychologist Henry Stack Sullivan calls “the mother of all illusions,” and what anthropologist Gregory Bateson referred to as “the epistemological error of Occidental civilization.” Our misapprehension of ourselves is a true inversion of the way things are, an attempt that Buddhists call “turning reality on its head.” To the extent we are unaware of our self-deception, this error of treating our identities as permanent and self-substantially existing is not only left uncorrected,

but is continually re-invested in and reconstituted in a misguided attempt to secure what is not possible to secure, often at the expense of others. Our uncorrected error is an open door for the spirit of wetiko to lend its deviant force to what is already going off course, taking us with it in an ever-downward spiral. Our self-created and uncorrected illusory imagination of an independently existing self is truly a lethal mirage. This fragile, constructed, and yet functional illusion whose originating conditions remain obscure is the stuff of which madness is made.

ME disease/wetiko's perspective on the world is "I, me, mine," the unholy trinity of narcissism in which the world exists simply to serve this imagined I, rather than the other way around, that is, that we exist in order to serve the world. Not knowing our own true nature, we misapprehend the nature of outer reality, thinking that it exists separate from ourselves, which serves to confirm and further concretize the delusion of a "me" that we cling to, ad infinitum. Imagining we exist in a way in which we do not is simultaneously a cause and effect of a self-perpetuating, autohypnotic self-constriction in consciousness which, ultimately speaking, we are doing to ourselves. We are constantly hypnotizing ourselves and falling under a spell of our own making, an important feature of which is the very convincing sense that we are not under a spell, but rather, are seeing things clearly, as they "really are." To become identified with the fixed reference point of the separate self limits our freedom, entraps our creative potency, and hinders our compassion. In another example of the macrocosm reflecting the microcosm: as if inter-nested iterations of the same fractal, nation-states have become sacralized by the same process through which individuals are reified into seemingly separate entities.

The ego isn't a bad thing. If we didn't develop a strong ego, a strong sense of self, we wouldn't be able to relate to and engage with the extremely powerful and archetypal forces (both dark and light) of the unconscious. If we don't have a strongly developed sense of self (even though it is not, ultimately speaking, the true self), we will get overwhelmed and taken over by the powers of the unconscious such that we will compulsively act them out. We have to develop a sense of an egoic

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

self in order to be able, when the time is right, to offer it to something greater than ourselves. In order to surrender, we must have something to let go of. The development of the ego is part of the growth and evolution of the Self, as if the Self realized it needed and thereby created the instrument of the ego in order to actualize itself. The birth and formation of the ego, however contrary to our nature it seems, is not an aberration, but rather, is the very vehicle through which our nature evolves itself into ever-newly emerging and creative forms. This is to say that the ego plays a key function in the divine plan of awakening. It is incredibly important to develop a sense of self, even though in the ultimate sense, any reference point for who we are needs to be seen through for the relative illusion that it is. This is analogous to becoming lucid in a dream and realizing that we are not the “dream ego” with which we’ve been identifying, which we recognize as simply being an assumed model, an unreflected-upon “stand-in” for who we really are. Though the construct of ego has served us well, helping us to get to where we are, we needn’t hold onto it after it has outlived its usefulness. An arbitrary construction, the ego is a convenience that can serve us in many different circumstances, helping us to navigate situations in the world that require us to play different roles. When we understand the illusory nature of the ego, we can play whatever role the field is calling for us to step into, without overly identifying with and being caught by the role. We are then in the dream but not of the dream, bringing to mind Christ’s words “to be in the world, but not of the world.”

The name malignant egophrenia, however, points to the negative, toxic, and poisonous aspect of the phenomenon of the ego. The ego turns rancid whenever we overly identify with and get absorbed into and attached to it. This sense of mistaken identity is the shadow aspect of the ego. The ego, which could be our means of spiritual transport to a more integrated place within ourselves, then becomes an obstacle to our evolution. The danger is getting stuck in a phase of ego development such that we don’t transcend our image of ourselves. Having our development arrested by seemingly anti-evolutionary forces within the psyche is to be imprisoned back in time as if in a state of trauma. This is malignant

egophrenia and wetiko in a nutshell, and depending upon the level of trauma, it can be a hard nut to crack.

Ultimately speaking, when we get right down to it, what we call evil is simply the result of our clinging and grasping. The real demon is our own ego-clinging, our own grasping onto our self-created imagination of who we think we are. Being that we have both dark and light aspects, our inner darkness is not evil, but rather, a vital part of our totality. It is our contracting against any part of ourselves, whether dark or light, which generates the seeming problem. The extent to which we are under the influence of the demon of wetiko is the extent to which we are clinging and grasping, trying to hold onto our concept of ourselves as a discrete and separate self, when in actuality there is nothing (no “thing”) to hold onto. Ultimately speaking, evil’s origin is our self-contraction against our own inner boundless radiance. To the extent we are clinging or grasping, we have fallen into the self-reinforcing, habitual pattern of contracting against ourselves, and in so doing we are blocking the brilliance of our own light. We can, in this very moment, and in each and every moment, step out of our own way and let our light shine.

The paradox is that, on the one hand, our clinging and grasping, our self-contraction, is the very act that appears to be blocking our true nature. And yet, from another point of view which is just as true, our self-contraction is itself a disguised expression of our true nature. From the “absolute” point of view, a state which includes the relative, and yet simultaneously embraces and transcends it in a higher synthesis, everything *is* spirit. Seemingly obscuring our true nature, our clinging is, in fact, its own revelation—for “who” is the me who is clinging? This realization releases us from the vicious circle of contracting against our self-contraction. We can then recognize in this moment that our very subjective experience of contracting against ourselves is the momentary and ephemeral display of our true nature, which we can simply allow to effortlessly self-liberate by itself. We have then embraced even the part of ourselves that is not embracing, which is to cultivate the lucid awareness of compassion. Might this be the inner meaning of Christ’s radical teaching “Resist not evil”?

Reflecting upon Evil

The evil of wetiko literally cultivates itself through our unreflected-upon unconscious reactions to it, in which we unwittingly support the very psychic disease against which we are reacting. If, when we see this virulent pathogen (whether in ourselves or the outside world), and we contract against it, having judgment, anger, hatred, revulsion, etc., we're helping to perpetuate the diabolical polarization that is the signature of the disease. Our reacting in this way is an expression that we ourselves have the disease, or to say it more accurately, the disease has us. We are then acting out, however well intentioned, the same process of shadow projection that underlies wetiko disease in the first place—which is to dissociate from, project outside of ourselves, and react to our own evil. We are unconsciously reacting to the unconscious part of ourselves which the wetikos embody. This reaction is an unconscious ritualistic invocation and re-enactment of the initial impulse within ourselves of turning away from and contracting against a seemingly darker part of ourselves. This is the timeless, primal act which called forth and spawned the spirit of wetiko in the first place. To the extent we are unaware of what we are doing, we, as “reps” for wetiko, are compulsively re-enacting our trauma and participating in re-creating and propagating the wetiko virus in this very moment. We are then playing out our unresolved internal affairs in the outside world by, in, and through our reactions, unwittingly becoming a vector that is carrying the wetiko bug further out into the world. Instead of unconsciously reacting and projecting the shadow outside of ourselves, however, when we consciously relate to and take responsibility for the evil within ourselves, we are energetically withdrawing and disinvesting from our complicity in the continual re-animation of evil in the world.

There is a great danger when we see evil. We cannot bear witness to archetypal evil and remain a separate, detached witness who is unaffected, as if passively sitting in the audience, out of harm's way, for every archetype has an infectious quality. Something inside of us becomes ignited and set aflame when we experience archetypal evil, as if everything evil produces a chain reaction. No one can see archetypal evil, which being

nonlocal, has more breadth and depth than merely personal evil, and stay untouched. Jung emphasizes this very point when he writes, “The sight of evil kindles evil in the soul—there is no getting away from this fact.”¹³ Plato observed millennia ago that the sight of ugliness produces something ugly in the soul. When we see evil “out there,” our own evil is activated by the experience. For example, when we see evil, if we react with moral indignation, cocksure of our own innocence and righteousness, this is an expression that we have become infected by the very evil to which we are reacting. Mapping wetiko’s nonlocal footprints, both out in the world and in the corresponding places within ourselves that are being touched, is to discover the nonlocal multidimensional “anatomy” of wetiko. It is impossible to encounter wetiko and not be activated, as wetiko’s nonlocal force field is activating by its very nature, in that it is co-extensive and interwoven with our own. Our unconscious, knee-jerk reactivity is the primary way that the wetiko psychosis regenerates and propagates itself in the field. Like a pathogen invading a body, this virulent psychic bug strikes and hooks us through the weakest point in our unconscious, the most tender and vulnerable spot within ourselves through which we are most likely to react.

Seeing evil triggers a resonant darkness within us, as if we have secretly recognized a part of ourselves. We could not look at the face of evil and truly see it unless we have that very same evil within ourselves; we wouldn’t be able to recognize it otherwise. It is then a question of whether we can integrate what has been triggered in us, or whether we inwardly dissociate from our own darkness, imagining it to be separate from ourselves, and project the evil “out there” onto some “other,” starting the cycle all over again.

The way to “responsibly” (which connotes the “ability to respond”) engage with wetiko disease is to (at)tend to what it triggers within us. One of the most beautiful teachings in Buddhism is called the “Lion’s Gaze.”¹⁴ The following example is given as an illustration: If you throw a stick at a dog, the dog runs after the stick; but if you throw a stick at a lion, the lion will chase after you! The stick represents an uncomfortable negative emotion that gets triggered inside us. When we are triggered—when

THE SHADOW OF WETIKO

something “pushes our buttons”—it activates an unconscious, compulsive knee-jerk reflex. Running after the stick like a dog, indulging in and “acting out” the negative emotion, means that we put our attention outside of ourselves. This is to relate to what is triggering us in the outside world as “the problem” instead of looking inward at the source. If only what was triggering us in the outside world would stop, we tell ourselves, we would feel better and the problem would be solved. But if we have the “gaze of the lion,” we turn our gaze within when we are triggered and treat the moment as an opportunity to self-reflect, looking at whatever it is within us that has been activated. The lion is not afraid to go to the source of the trigger, which is never outside but always within ourselves. Assuming the fearless gaze of the lion, we relate to the triggering situation as a gift, as it has helped us access a part of ourselves that up until now has been unconscious, and hence hidden.

Could it be that our unconscious reaction against even the mere mention of the word “evil” is touching a deeper, hidden part of ourselves so as to potentially reveal it to us?

Just as the way to cut off the head of the mythic Medusa is to look at her reflections in the mirror-shield, the way to stalk the vampiric entity of wetiko is to track and sense its fingerprints within ourselves by looking into the mirror of our own mind. The evil of wetiko can be too much to stare at directly, however, just as looking at the snake-haired Medusa turns us to stone. Vampires are “petrifying,” which means both “terrifying,” as well as “paralyzing” and “turning to stone.” They petrify their victim, just as a mouse becomes immobilized by the transfixing gaze of the serpent. Vampires are not creatures to be messed with by the frivolous. Evil has its divine depths into which it is irreverent to look directly; its power needs to be respected. In indigenous cultures, objects that “reflect” are thought to magically drive away evil spirits, as if the object that mirrors evil throws the harmful rays back upon its source. This expresses in symbolic terms the archetypal idea that the act of reflection safeguards against the powers of evil. Another symbolic protection against evil in cultures that were still in touch with the magical level of reality were sacred art objects called “fear masks.” The faces of these masks were horrifyingly distorted and

Evil

evil-looking, and were thought to reflect back upon the demon its own image, an image from which it flees in terror. This is to say that when we reflect upon the demon, it ceases to bother with us, as then it must deal with itself. Self-reflection is not only the most beneficial response to evil, it is in fact the only response where we have any real influence or control. The Big Wetikos have no real power or control over the sanctity and sovereignty of a truly self-reflective mind.

Part Three

Meta-Dreaming

9

A Wetiko Cult(ure) of Madness

Our Culture's Madness Is Shocking

People have to be cured of their spiritual sickness before they can build a just society. It is no great accomplishment to adapt to and be considered sane by an insane society. To become well adjusted in and to a wetiko-driven society is to become insane. The culture of wetiko promotes the systematic destruction of the human heart, which when fully internalized, alienates us from everything human in ourselves, save what reproduces the conditions of the system. Adopting the values of our oppressors, however, ensures the continuation of our own dehumanization. The system is set up to be a setup such that a person oppressed by the system of wetiko must adopt the values of wetikos if they want to rise in positions of power and rank. Big Wetikos learn to exploit every situation to their advantage and sacrifice in themselves everything that doesn't advance this motive. To become a Big Wetiko requires a lot of back-stabbing, ass-kissing, drinking, scheming, strategizing, and maneuvering; it is an acquired taste. It requires the corruption of other young people who, in turn, will become new initiates co-dependently entangled with and hooked into the system. It is very easy to be seduced into becoming a wetiko in our society because of all of the perks and incentives, for people toting the wetiko party line tend to get promoted, get better salaries, and typically get testimonials and finally, the symbolic gold watch when they retire. Because of all of

META-DREAMING

the benefits of the role, there is not merely a passive disinterest, but rather, an active resistance for wetikos to self-reflect upon the evils of the system they are participating in and being fed by, an unwillingness which continually supports the wetikoized system and nourishes the wetiko parasite within them and their society.

Built into the very fabric of the system of wetiko is a progressive disincentive for its members to realize the level of depravity into which they have fallen. What keeps us stuck in denial is an inner self-protective mechanism that shields us from the overwhelming awfulness of the shock that would necessarily ensue if we were to consciously experience and shake off the lies that we have been living, a disillusionment that would be too much for most people to bear. The major obstacle blocking us from seeing through our own self-deception is our unwillingness to consciously experience the pain, shame, guilt, mortification, and trauma of this realization. Part of this realization is dealing with the shock of realizing that we have given away our power to those in positions of power over us who have misused that power; it is quite a shock to realize that those who were supposed to be protecting us were the very ones from whom we most needed protection. These multilevels of realization literally shatter our self-image, our identity of who we think we are, as well as our sense of belonging to a collective, social fabric. It is truly an unforgettable, soul-shattering moment when we have the courage to look in the mirror and see that we have been “out of our minds,” “beside ourselves,” having suffered a genuine “break from reality,” in the sense that we have been unwittingly supporting the collective madness and have been complicit in our own victimization. To see the magnitude of the depraved situation we have been faithfully living in and to realize how sick we have become can be so overwhelmingly traumatic that we shun its onset, as this horrifying realization has programmed within it a counter-incentive to fully experience itself.

What is required from us is a courage and clarity analogous to that experienced by cult members who with brutal honesty snap out of their collective brainwashing and repudiate the systems of belief in which they were held in thrall. Realizing our complicity in the collective madness is

simultaneously liberating and traumatizing, creating higher orders of freedom while simultaneously inducing a form of PTSD, itself a form of madness. In other words, to realize how we have been part of the collective madness is truly “shocking” and induces a form of madness, just as trauma can literally cause a fever in a person. The fever is potentially the organism’s way of metabolizing and healing the trauma, just as the trauma of seeing how perilously asleep we’ve been can propel us to wake up. This form of trauma can potentially so “shake us up” that it can snap us out of our fear-based, frozen paralysis of feeling stuck and can mobilize and inspire us into empowered action. Paradoxically, it is the trauma itself that activates the response in us which potentially leads to its own creative resolution.

In these moments of shock we have the opportunity to break our habitual patterns, see through our implicit assumptions, snap out of our denial, and step out of our programming so as to literally rewire ourselves. These shocks are like gaps in our awareness that are open doorways to potentially higher orders of freedom. These brief moments in time don’t last very long, however, so it is important to expeditiously go through these portals and take advantage of them when they are available. If we don’t, there are backup systems in place for dealing with shocks within our psyche that can override this potential opening in our awareness and re-install the ruling, reigning mechanical programming within our wetikoized mind.

Forbes writes, “the wetiko disease has so corrupted European thinking (at least of the ruling groups) *that wetiko behavior and wetiko goals are regarded as the very fabric of European evolution ... if we continue to allow the wetikos to define reality in their insane way we will never be able to resist or curtail the disease.*”¹ It should be noted that indigenous people are not free from the wetiko virus as well. While there are indigenous cultures that are governed by wisdom, there are also indigenous cultures that are ruled by wetiko. We should be careful to not romanticize and idealize indigenous, aboriginal cultures as contrasted to European cultures, which would be too simplistic and dualistic a view.² When wetikos possess power in any culture (or more accurately, when power possesses them), they are

in a position to influence, define, and create a level of reality that, though based on falsehood, operates as if it is real. In words that would be just as relevant with regards to the Obama administration, author Ron Suskind quotes a neocon in the George W. Bush administration as saying, “We’re an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you’re studying that reality—judiciously, as you will—we’ll act again, creating other new realities.”³ If left in positions of power, wetikos will ultimately dream up into full-bodied materialization their own, as well as our, worst nightmare into reality.

Full-blown Big Wetikos are morally insane, and abuse power simply because they can. The development of a rigid patriarchy follows wetiko disease like a shadow. In other words, cultures dominated by wetikos tend to organize themselves around the calcified, archetypal mythic pattern of the “negative patriarchy,” which, simply put, is founded on domination over others (see **archetype of the negative father** in the Glossary). This figure of the wicked father has (arche)typically dissociated from and lost touch with feeling, with eros, with relatedness, with creativity, with the heart, with compassion, and with love. The archetypal, negative patriarchy suppresses the feminine, as well as the spontaneity of life itself. The negative father is dissociated from mother nature and the environment, which it objectifies and tries to dominate, instead of being in relationship with. To quote Forbes, “‘Might makes right’ [the defining characteristic of the negative patriarchy] is the wetiko belief, but it is often accompanied by self-serving doctrines of ‘divine will,’ ‘manifest destiny,’ ‘providence,’ ‘the march of civilization,’ ‘doing God’s work,’ ‘stopping communism,’ or comparable slogans.”⁴ These slogans are the mantras, or words of power, by which the collective spell of group-think is disseminated throughout the collective psyche. Any rationalization will do, as long as it serves as cover for the wetikos to continue to exploit others, centralize power, and feed their ever-expanding sickness. Big Wetikos may never know nor be forced to come to terms with the harm they have caused, as oftentimes they have ensconced themselves in the privileged position of the victors who rewrite history on their own terms. Many of our society’s historians, themselves infected by the wetiko virus, exalt aggressive and exploitative

behavior, categorizing as “primitive” and “backward” those who don’t forcibly “conquer” others, thereby subtly and subliminally brainwashing the young into the ways of the world of wetiko.

Interconnected Roles in a Nonlocal Field

Speaking about how our species has never been able to get a handle on what is at the root of our self-destructive behavior, Forbes comments, “Unfortunately, most of these efforts have failed because they have never diagnosed the wetiko as an insane person whose disease is extremely contagious. Nor have they, generally, understood that the [seemingly] non-wetikos, whether flunkies, pimps, or the most oppressed, are often ‘secret carriers’ of the disease.”⁵ The wetiko virus can only thrive in the global human family if, as in any family system, each member enables and is complicit in the abuse. A field phenomenon, wetiko incarnates by embodying itself through various interconnected, form-fitted roles arising in the field, all at various stages of the disease. Each of these figures are various representations of the multiple faces of the underlying pathogen. Wetikos can be hard to recognize because the people who are its instruments often seem to be normal, well-intentioned, innocent-looking people; and yet, it is these seemingly ordinary people, not unlike you and I, who often become “secret carriers” of the disease. To the extent that we are not aware of this insidious, nonlocal, psychological disease, both in others and potentially within ourselves, we can very easily become its secret carriers, its unwitting accomplices.

Forbes writes, “But this we must emphasize over and over, *that the whole wetiko disease is not limited to the brutes and goons who handle the gun, the lash or the instruments of torture.* The nice people in the offices, the typists, the lab technicians, the clerks and, of course, the owners, directors, stockholders, senators, generals and presidents who use, profit from, and feed on human exploitation are also cannibals to one degree or another.”⁶ The Big Wetikos could never get away with the murder that they do without “the nice people in the offices” enabling them. These “typists, lab technicians, and clerks” are just “following orders,” and yet are

unwittingly complicit in the insidious evil that is being spread throughout the world with their cooperation. Modern, corporate, technological systems are set up to distance us, both physically and psychologically, from what we do for a living and the ultimate, potentially destructive consequences of our actions. Even “the nice people in the offices,” people just like you and me, are tiny cogs in the great predatory machine, complicit in the impersonal evil of the faceless system and the destruction it wreaks upon all life. In the last few centuries, a new *breed*, or re-incarnation, of wetiko has come on the scene—the multinational corporation.

Wetiko is an entity that becomes co-dependently entangled and inextricably coupled with others in its environment in order to survive. It serves us to differentiate the interdependent roles in the field which “conspire” (which literally means to “breathe together”) to create and sustain the wetiko disease. All these figures collaboratively enable the bug of wetiko to play out its reign of (t)error. Forbes writes, “The most guilty of the wetikos are, I would think, those who mastermind, justify and profit most from such systems. Such persons are the ‘master predators.’”⁷ The full-blown Big Wetikos, the “master predators” in positions of power, can be suave and sophisticated, highly intelligent, educated people of refined taste, with offices in places like New York and London; they can be highly respected by society, all of which makes their malady hard to recognize. Some are cast in the role of “protecting the abuser”—the master predator’s handlers, minions, sycophants, enablers, supporters, and followers—while others are complicit by simply remaining silent and looking away. Others, in the face of such unmitigated evil, pick up the role of feeling powerless, thinking “what’s the use?” Some politically active sorts can pick up the role of attempting to fight the disease in ways that simply strengthen the diabolical polarization in the field, which is the signature of the disease itself and only serves to feed it. Whatever the roles, they are all just multiple guises wearing the same underlying uni-form.

All wetikos, including the Big Wetikos, are only pawns in the hand of the underlying archetype itself, however. It is as if Toto, in *The Wizard of Oz*, pulls away the curtain, but instead of there being an old man behind the curtain, there is no one there but the formless archetype itself. The

archetype “clothes” itself in numberless variations of people throughout history, as it is the animating power that shapes what plays out in the world theater. Unless we recognize and deal with the deeper archetypal process that is in-forming world events, we are doomed to unconsciously re-create them, as if we are stuck in a recurring dream. If the master predators are removed from their positions of power, but if the underlying system which spawned them remains in place and is not dealt with, “Central Casting” will send others who will eventually pick up and assume their vacant and vacuous roles. Even if the system itself is changed, but the underlying psyche out of which it emerged remains unconscious, over time the system with its concomitant roles will emerge in a new guise. These power-mad roles exist as potentials in the field waiting to be filled, fleshed-out, and incarnated, as these roles are an expression of the full spectrum of possibilities implicit in the underlying field, reflecting, as always, this same range of potentials within ourselves. The nonlocal field is seamless, and the roles do not, and cannot, exist in isolation, but rather, in co-relation to each other, as well as to the whole field itself, in an interconnected web of infinite interrelatedness.

To awaken to the dreamlike nature of reality, the symbolic dimension of existence, is to realize that events in our world are lower-level shadows or reflections of a higher-dimensional reality. It is important to see the whole system, rather than fixating on, and demonizing, one of its parts as separate from the whole. Focusing on an individual person is analogous to contemplating one finger on a glove without recognizing the underlying hand in-forming and animating all of the interconnected and fundamentally inseparable fingers in the glove. To concretize a localized manifestation of a nonlocal pathology in an individual would be analogous to only seeing the circle that a three-dimensional sphere makes as it passes through a two-dimensional plane. The circle is a lower-level reflection of a higher-dimensional entity (the “sphere” of wetiko’s influence), just as the person taken over by the wetiko bug is a surface expression of a deeper, more fundamental pathogen that pervades the underlying field. To use another example, the person momentarily afflicted with wetiko is like a shadow on a wall, cast from a globe hanging from the ceiling,

META-DREAMING

relative to the globe. The shadow on the wall is a re-presentation and projection of the higher, three-dimensional entity of the globe into a lower dimension of space. Studying the shadow within its proper context relative to the globe is the way of understanding the object casting the shadow (the higher-dimensional entity of the “global” wetiko psychosis). By tracking the variety of shadows the object is casting, we are illuminating an unknown, mysterious object from as many different angles as we can imagine. From enough of these shadows it becomes possible to reconstruct the illumined object. In these examples, the point is not to focus on the personal manifestation of the disease, but rather, to see the deeper, nonlocal field that is giving shape to, in-forming, and pervading the particular, localized outbreaks of the disease in the greater body politic. Seeing, in Jung’s words, “the numinous character of the reality in the background”⁸ is the very expansion of consciousness which becomes the doorway connecting us to a deeper part of ourselves, as well as to each other. Recognizing the underlying field paves the road to healing.

In the culture of wetiko, people at various stages of the disease pick up seemingly different and separate roles from each other, but when the deeper, underlying pattern comes into focus and is seen, it can be recognized that all of these interlocking roles fit together like a higher-order mosaic. This process couldn’t play itself out without all of its parts reciprocally co-arising relative to each other. The whole field’s myriad fluid and unfixed roles—each of us at various moments in time picking up the different roles—are mutually conditioning each other in a seamless, interpenetrating net of relations, as if these roles are appendages of a higher-dimensional organism that is revealing itself through our non-linearly orchestrated and coordinated interplay.

10

Stepping Out of Separation

Not Personalizing Ourselves

The in-spirit-ed organism of wetiko is a field phenomenon, and can only be seen when we snap out of the illusion of imagining we exist as a separate self and recognize and become conversant with the deeper underlying and more fundamental nonlocal field in which we are all indissolubly interconnected. The field is the intersection of the collective unconscious and each individual's personal subjectivity; it is "in between" these two, while being the same as neither yet including both. In modern physics, the field—the invisible organizing principle of the universe—has become more fundamental than matter. "The field," as Einstein once succinctly put it, "is the only reality." It bears repeating: instead of relating to any part of the field as an isolated entity, it's important to contemplate the entire interdependent field as the "medium" through which wetiko manifests itself. The Native American concept of wetiko disease is a social phenomenon, a relational dynamic of the field itself that cannot be understood, and does not exist in isolated individuals apart from the social milieu in which they move, interact, and have their being. For social creatures such as ourselves, self-identity is never simply given; it is forged in the crucible of interaction with others. Seeing the nonlocal field drives a stake into the very heart of the prevailing scientific, materialistic perspective, which ironically enough, still attempts to see the world as "machine."

META-DREAMING

Seeing the field, and stepping out of the perspective that we are separate from each other, converges into being the same experience. Seeing “through” the illusion of the separate self, rather than seeing “through the separate self” as a lens through which we view the world, entails recognizing that even the full-blown Big Wetikos, the master predators themselves, are not separate from us. Big Wetikos are fully embodying, in personified form, a pathological tendency that exists in potential within ourselves. Their madness is truly a reflection of our own. It is as if they are the externalized materialization of this potential within ourselves that we’ve projected outside of ourselves and collectively dreamed up into manifestation. Recognizing this generates compassion for this part of ourselves. It is only through compassion that we immunize ourselves from the virus.

Paradoxically, although wetiko disease doesn’t exist in isolated individuals separate from the field, someone taken over by the wetiko bug, though merely its instrument and not, in the ultimate sense “who they are,” can be said to be “the incarnation” of the disease in human form. The person so possessed (think of George W. Bush as one example, as I did in my first book) is the “revelation” of the pathology in living flesh and blood. The person so stricken is showing us, in fully embodied, personified form, the underlying infrastructure and dynamics of this transhuman disease. When someone is so possessed, they are the local crystallization “in form” of a nonlocal, and ultimately “formless,” phenomenon. The person taken over has been dreamed up into materialization to be a living, breathing symbol of the nonlocal disease, an embodied reflection of an archetypal, and pathological, aspect of ourselves. Recognizing this is to realize that this person doesn’t exist as an isolated, discrete entity, a skin-encapsulated ego, separate from the surrounding field. Seeing the person so possessed in their true context—as literally inseparable from all of us—becomes a portal through which we can refine our inner vision and see through the transparent illusion of the separate self. That the person so taken over is not separate from the field is a reflection of our own condition; seeing the other’s transpersonal nature enables us, likewise, to not personalize ourselves.

Holographically enfolded within the psyche of every human being, the wetiko virus pervades and underlies the entire field of consciousness, and can therefore potentially manifest through any one of us at any moment if we are not mindful. Who among us has not been guilty of being a channel for the evil of wetiko at one time or another? Who among us has not fallen asleep and unwittingly acted out our unconscious in a way that was hurtful to others or to ourselves? Unlike Big Wetikos, most people simply incarnate the disease locally, within our personal sphere of influence, which is usually our family system and within our own minds. We've all had our "wetiko moments." That's just the way it works. Recognizing this cultivates humility, which helps to psychically immunize us from the pernicious effects of the disease. This realization ultimately collapses the boundary between those who have the disease and those who don't. Wetikos' nonlocal nature makes the question of who has the disease irrelevant, as we all have it to varying degrees, or more accurately, it has us. We are all in the soup together, which is an insight that engenders compassion. This realization means that we can't blame anyone else—on the one hand, we alone are ultimately responsible for our experience of ourselves, while at the same time, there's nothing else to do but to forgive. This does not mean, however, that the Big Wetikos are not ethically, spiritually, and *legally* responsible for the unimaginable carnage they cause.

The primary line of distorted code through which the wetiko virus deviates our mind is the presumption of the separate self. The unreflected-upon acceptance of the axiom of separation is what makes all of the other delusions that make up wetiko possible. Seeing the diabolical nature of the disease entails realizing that it is the bifurcating "us" versus "them" duality which splits the world into opposites, that is itself the generative root of the wetiko germ. Creating duality out of something that is inherently, seamlessly nondual is as impossible as trying to separate heat from a flame, wetness from water, or sweetness from sugar. In the same way, we can't separate ourselves as the observer from the universe that we are observing. Buying into the presupposition of separation plows fertile ground for wetiko's seeds to flourish.

Coming Full Circle

This book began by our shared act of invoking the spirit of wetiko in order to conduct this inquiry. As we shed light on wetiko, we become sensitized to its movements within ourselves. At this point the cat is out of the bag, so to speak, for there is no place for the spirit to hide. We are in a position of having access in our lucid, self-reflective awareness to a sacred vessel which can nourish the very spirit which is to be venerated. To come full circle and successfully accomplish the original, healing intent of our magic ritual, the hidden, powerful spirit of wetiko needs to be “contained”; this is the archetypal point behind the alchemical idea of a sacred, mystical vessel which transforms the entire universe.

As people who are becoming wise to the wiles of wetiko collaboratively help each other to step out of the illusion of separation, a psychic alchemical container that is greater than the sum of its parts gets created (please see the Appendix: Wetiko-Dispelling Communities). This holy grail-like vessel of collectively shared lucidity is reciprocally conjured up through our shared realization. This higher-dimensional mystic container is forever stimulating lucidity, as well as stabilizing and strengthening itself in a positive, “over-unity” feedback loop. The system is “over-unity” in the sense that more energy comes out of than goes into the system. This “breakdown” of the illusory walls of separation is at the same time a “breakthrough” into a world of shared recognition, which gives birth to a constant outpouring of abundant, radiant energy inspiring, evoking, and being inspired by the creative spirit. This jewel-like higher-dimensional entity composed of the crystalline force of consciousness itself is a lucidity generator that is tapping into the zero-point energy of the mind, a form of higher-mind technology that attracts and dreams the universe into itself. This is to say that the open heart of lucid awareness incorporates itself in the world, while at the same time incorporating the world into itself. “Lucid” (a word which etymologically speaking, is related to “light”) awareness is the polar opposite, energetically speaking, of what a “black hole” symbolizes. Instead of “disappearing” and imprisoning energy like a black hole, lucidity’s enlightening energy nonlocally “appears” throughout

the field, offering its stimulating gifts to whoever is open to receive its liberating effects. As compared to a black hole, lucid awareness is like a “white hole” or rather, a white “whole,” omni-directionally and nonlocally emanating radiant awareness throughout the entire field of consciousness. Liberating experience to spontaneously unfold creatively, lucidity is a truly creative act in that it is actively participating and consciously engaging in the co-creation of the universe with itself.

When we recognize that we exist not apart from, but relative to, each other, our connection with each other is “hermetically sealed” with the stamp of Hermes. We then relate to each other such that none of our projections unconsciously leak out into the world, for the simple reason that the world is recognized to be our projection. This realization bonds us together, uniting us with the world, each other, and ourselves. Becoming “tight” in this way, we are “blessed” by the master magician Hermes/Mercury, god of the sacred art of alchemy. Tapping into what is called the “quantum vacuum,” a field of living energy with nearly boundless potentiality, luminosity, and sentience, we become conduits for the over-unity technology of consciousness itself. We become “over-unity humans,” what the visionary Swedenborg calls “the Divine Human” (in Latin, *homo maximus*), who step into and incarnate the part of ourselves that is a creator. Empowered, we are able to trans-fix, trans-mute, trans-form, and liberate the vampiric spirit of wetiko, while simultaneously snapping out of our en-trance-ment of ourselves.

Come Together

The evil that is manifesting in our world is an expression that light is nearby, just as shadows are themselves expressions of light. A strong light is the best shadow-projector; in the source of light there is darkness enough for any amount of projections. We tend to think of shadows as the absence of light instead of one of its manifold expressions. Only when the full light shines in the darkness is the full intensity of the darkness made manifest. Joining the shadow with its light is, spiritually speaking, to be in possession of great wealth. A medieval proverb says, “Light over

META-DREAMING

darkness is the Antichrist; Light through the darkness is the Christ.” Light is ultimately revealed through darkness; it needs darkness, for otherwise, how could it appear as light? Light only has meaning when it illuminates something dark; our inner realization isn’t worth much if it doesn’t help us recognize the darkness within us. Knowing our own darkness gives us the best opportunity for dealing with the darkness of others. Lucifer, “the bringer of light,” is the necessary dark side of life, of shadow revealing light by contrast, who was indispensable for the unfolding and completion of the divine drama. We like to imagine that God is all light, but St. John of the Cross, the author of *The Dark Night of the Soul*, posits the truly psychological notion that the darkness and seeming remoteness of God is, rather, an effect of the divine presence. Based on overwhelming empirical evidence, it does not seem to fit God’s plans, so to speak, to exempt humanity from conflict and hence from evil. In alchemy, the most evil figure, the very creature of darkness itself, is destined to become the medicine. The darkness of the unconscious stands in a secret, compensatory relationship to us, supplying everything we need for awakening to our wholeness. It is helpful to remember that it is darkest right before the dawn. In a demonically inflated dementia, a final, fatal, and narcissistic frenzy of attempted control, it is in the moment right before a demon is vanquished that it makes its worst stink and unleashes its most destructive and toxic outburst.

To initiate the resolution of our current dilemma, what is needed is the slightest shift of focus in our vision. It is as though our fingers are one key to the right of where they’re meant to be on the computer keyboard. When we type, what comes out looks illegible and hopeless, a terrible mess. We might not even know where to begin to fix our seemingly overwhelming problem. As long as our fingers are on the wrong keys, any intervention we make to rectify our situation only makes it worse. In reality, all we need to do is make the slightest little adjustment, and our seeming problem is resolved; now all we have to do is invest our energy into what we want to create. Our situation is similar; we just need to make the slightest little change in our perception of what’s happening, and our entire situation can be transformed.

We must continually invent new alarm clocks to keep pace with the rapidly evolving systems of control embedded both within our culture and within our own minds. These control systems have a built-in damage control factor which quickly mobilizes to shut down any fissures in the fabric of the illusion. Much to our advantage, spiritual alarm clocks, natural stimulators of lucid awareness, spontaneously precipitate into and out of the dreamlike nature of the universe reflecting, expressing, and revealing the totalitarian psychosis called wetiko. This is to say that at the same time that wetiko is destroying us, it is simultaneously—potentially—waking us up. Everything depends upon if we recognize what is being revealed to us, and how we respond. The choice is truly ours.

We capture within ourselves and truly “see” the nature of wetiko disease—“*Vampire/Cannibal Psychosis*”—when we realize that, just like in a dream, its full-bodied manifestation in the world theater is a reflection of a process going on deep within our very soul. We are all dreaming up the wetiko epidemic together. Seeing through our experience in this way gives world events a certain transparency, *as well as rendering us transparent to ourselves*. Seeing through ourselves, and having borne the dark side of ourselves, we are no longer delivered up to the darkness to the same degree. This intimacy with ourselves enables us to step into and embody a role in the field of being like “psychic T-cells” that help to heal the malignant cancer in the collective body politic of the world soul. For it is only when the immune system of the host, which in this case is the collective psyche of our species, is malfunctioning that the pathogenic wetiko parasite can penetrate the cell wall. Human consciousness and imagination are rapidly evolving to function as the earth’s “lymphocytes,” the planet’s white blood cells, who can potentially come together so as to heal the illness that is infecting the global body politic. A novel emergent behavior is spontaneously arising through and within our species in which the whole is revealing itself to be greater than the sum of its parts. As if fostering divinity to blossom in human spores, seeing the dreamlike nature of the world helps to generate a culture and climate of compassion, which is the “wetiko dissolver” par excellence. Compassion is a nonlocal force of immense healing and whole-ing power that should not be

META-DREAMING

discounted nor underestimated. When necessary to protect life, however, compassion can set a firm boundary and display itself in the most fearsome of ways. This is not an airy-fairy notion of compassion form-fitted into our preconceived ideas of what being spiritually compassionate looks like; Christ, for example, was the very embodiment of compassion, yet he fiercely chased the money-changers out of the temple.

While acting itself out through us, our collective psychosis is simultaneously showing us something important about ourselves. To recognize how the collective psychosis of wetiko cultivates itself through our unconsciousness of it transforms us from being part of the problem to embodying the solution. Encoded in the collective psychosis is a deeper process which potentially awakens the participants, that is, all of us, to wake up to how we are all unwittingly participating in the “insanity” playing itself out in the world. This realization enables us to connect with each other “in sanity,” becoming islands of sanity in an ocean of madness. Over time the islands in our archipelago of sanity join with each other and form continents, so to speak, as we dispel the madness in the field. This is similar to when, in a dream, a number of characters in the dream become lucid and, I imagine, realize that they can connect with each other and cooperatively and actively put their lucidity together such that they can transform the dream. We, in this mutually shared waking dream, are in the very same situation right now, in this very moment. In a (r)evolutionary moment in time, we are invited to participate in our own evolution. Our expanding consciousness is simultaneously the cause and result of this evolutionary process.

One individual having the realization of the symbolic, dreamlike nature of our situation makes it easier and more accessible for others to have the same realization, for we are all non-locally connected. Any one of us self-reflecting might be the very grain of sugar that tips the scales and catalyzes the field into a higher order of crystallization, initiating a phase shift in the collective consciousness of humankind. The hundredth monkey’s realization precipitates a telepathic expansion of consciousness in the entire species. Like the symbolic number 144,000 in the Book of Revelation, if enough of us wake up to what is being revealed, we act as so

much yeast in the dough, so to speak, helping the bread of this universe to leaven successfully. We are then in a position to avert a potential catastrophe and experience second-order change, which is not a change within a given system, but is an evolutionary up-leveling of the very system in which we find ourselves.

From the point of view of this being a dream, you have dreamed up these very words to potentially awaken you. As I am writing these words, I am being dreamed up by the you who is reading them, in this very moment, to write them. In a true collaboration taking place outside of the three-dimensional space/time continuum, it is as if the you who is in this moment reading these words is a future part of myself, reaching back in time and influencing me in the present to write them in this particular way. We genuinely connect with each other through our particular present moment in time as writer and reader in such a way that collapses and transcends time, as if we are meeting outside of time. Or so I imagine. Just like a dream, these very words—continually pointing out the dreamlike nature of the universe—are simultaneously an expression of the very dreamlike nature at which they are pointing. These very words are your own mind manifesting in exactly this way so as to help you awaken. And being like a dream, if you see it this way, “Abracadabra,”¹ so it is. The power of the Word has everything to do with our own intrinsic, God-given power, as we are the co-dreamers of the dream. Anyone awakening to the dreamlike nature in this moment could, and does, in actuality, change everything. We are the ones who give meaning to and create our experience. *We* are the one. When *we* come together in lucidity, *WE* are the living antidote to ME disease.

“You may say I’m a ‘dreamer’” when I profess these seemingly idealistic and naive beliefs. I will respond by quoting John Lennon, “but I’m not the only one.” There are ever-expanding numbers of us—millions growing into billions—around the planet who in various ways are being drafted by the Self to be channels for a deeper process of awakening, enabling a vast range of new, previously unimagined possibilities to become available to us. When enough of us recognize the deeper, archetypal pattern that is happening, that is, that the universe is waking itself up through

META-DREAMING

us, we can “come together,” I “imagine,” and help each other to deepen and stabilize our mutually shared awakening, what I call “dreaming ourselves awake.” When we synergistically get into phase with each other, we endlessly co-inspire and replenish each other in a positive feedback loop that’s infinitely creative. Seeing our co-relatedness activates its full-bodied revelation, which in turn strengthens our seeing of it, ad infinitum. We can then heal our psychic blindness and help each other to see. *All we have to do to see is open our eyes and look.* It is within our capability to configure ourselves relative to each other such that we can dream ourselves awake. We are being invited by the universe to actively participate in our own evolution. As human beings, we are autopoietic agencies in co-evolution with ourselves as well as with the universe. When we get in sync with this deeper process, Lennon reminds us of what is truly possible when he sings, “the world will live as one.”

As wounded healers, shamans, dreamers, and multidimensional artists whose tool is the divine creative imagination and whose canvas is life itself, we can “conspire to co-inspire” each other to greater heights of lucidity, or so I imagine. We can activate our collective genius and collaboratively create what I call an “Art-Happening Called Global Awakening,”² a work of living art in which we can help each other to awaken. When the universe is recognized to be a creative and visionary work of living art, a true work in progress in which we are all participating, it becomes clear that no one fully wakes up until we all do, simply because we are all interconnected. In this light, anything less than a full and utter global awakening would be unsatisfying and miss the mark. The only limitation is our own lack of imagination, which is the very thing that is being revealed to us.

11

Archetypal Psychohistory

The Unconscious Is Coming

It should be clear by now that wetiko isn't something that exists in isolated individuals, nor is it something unique to our current day and age. What can be referred to as "archetypal psychohistory" is the study of the unfoldment of the collective unconscious as it expresses, elaborates, and transforms itself politically, economically, socially, and culturally in, throughout, and as the very process of history itself. In understanding the wetiko psychosis, it is important to contextualize it and see it in its greater meta-historical perspective. Instead of seeing wetiko as an isolated entity, we can view it within the greater context of the living psychospiritual ecosystem from which it sprouted. This helps us to see wetiko through a broader lens that is simultaneously historical and trans-historical, which helps us add a deeper sense of significance and meaning to its current outbreak. Bringing meta-awareness to the wetiko epidemic, where we contemplate it from a vantage point simultaneously within, above, and beyond itself, helps us to connect the dots and see the deeper mythic, archetypal pattern that is emerging. Seeing in this way can not only help us put wetiko "in its place," but can also help us find our place in the cosmic drama. Viewing things meta-historically can also shed light on where and who we are in the midst of the wetiko epidemic, inspiring us to create a new and empowering mythos for our world and ourselves.

META-DREAMING

Just as we can interpret our dreams symbolically and we can view our life as a dream, we can also contemplate the history of the world as a dream being dreamed by a deeper part of ourselves. Being a dreamed-up phenomenon, it is helpful, even essential, in understanding wetiko psychosis to view human history as if it is a mass shared dream that our species has been collaboratively dreaming up over millennia. This perspective opens up vast vistas of perception and insight that are unavailable to the more reductionist and literal-minded. Seeing the dreamlike nature of existence is to be awakened to the nonlocal field, which is like an omnipresent atmo-“sphere,” an etheric amniotic fluid that seamlessly connects us and in which we are all contained. Seeing the nonlocal dreamlike nature is to realize that the field isn’t just manifesting itself all around us, but that the field is coming through us and expressing itself in our inner subjective domain as well. We are not in any way separate from the field, a realization that is the doorway through which we can step out of the part of ourselves that thinks and imagines otherwise. As we become aware of the field’s omnipresence and all-pervasiveness, it is as if the field becomes aware of itself through us.

We can contemplate humanity as a single individual, and view its history as a dream it is having that is being performed on the world stage, revealing the inner condition of its psyche. When the psychic history of humanity is viewed in this way, the strength of our shared human consciousness can be seen to be quite weak and in its early formative stages. Humanity may be likened to a person carried away by the torrential, rushing waters of the unconscious. The forces of the unconscious all too easily seize power and have their way with us for many seemingly interminable whiles. In our current day and age we are experiencing an irruption of the unconscious itself, a huge upheaval of titanic forces which have been lying dormant in the collective unconscious. As if we are experiencing a second “Great Flood,” the powers of the unconscious are ready to break through all moral barriers and burst the dams. In our modern world the unconscious, instead of being in the background, is coming to the foreground, and is forcing us to turn one eye inward upon it. The unconscious is coming, whether we like it or not! Like Noah, we

must build an “Ark,” that is, a psychic container, if we are to survive.

Dreams, an unmediated expression of the unconscious, function to compensate and bring in balance a one-sidedness in the dreamer. Spontaneous expressions of our unconscious aspects, while at the same time both literally and symbolically revealing to us our deepest unconscious, dreams help us to potentially become conscious of what was previously unconscious. Paradoxically, dreams are a manifestation of our unconscious itself, while at the same time, they can help to wake us up. Not only are symbols the language of dreams, but dreams are themselves living symbols that bring together and unite the opposites of consciousness and the unconscious in one phenomenon. Just as in a dream, this upheaval in our modern-day world of dormant forces emerging from the unconscious was meant to be a compensation, but because it is not being recognized as such and thereby not integrated, it manifests, as we are seeing today, as the worldwide wetiko collective psychosis. Those of us who are waking up to the dreamlike nature of reality can be the compensatory agents, the “human anti-psychotics” within the greater body politic which is currently having a collective nervous breakdown.

The unconscious is revealing itself by synchronistically configuring events in the outer world so as to give shape to itself. What is happening in our world *is* the unconscious manifesting itself in, as, and through the forms of our world. The unconscious is revealing *itself* through its very projections onto the world. We are living in a truly historic moment of time in which, just like a dream that is potentially becoming “lucid-ified,” the inner is revealing itself to be the outer and vice versa. The unconscious simultaneously is veiling and revealing itself as it acts itself out and births itself through us. As long as this deeper process continues to go unrecognized, however, it will continue to be acted out unconsciously, and hence, destructively. When the unconscious appears in full-bodied form, it catalyzes a deeper, unconscious process in all of us. Recognizing and consciously metabolizing what is being activated within us is the very act that can transform us.

This is a historic time, a time when the gods of the unconscious are transforming. We are living in a time that the Greeks called the

META-DREAMING

Kairos—the right moment—for a “metamorphosis of the gods,” that is, a transformation in and of the collective unconscious itself. The peculiarity of our time, which is certainly not of our conscious choosing, is that the timeless unconscious within us is transforming itself in unprecedented, dramatic ways. Coming generations, if there are to be any, will undoubtedly appreciate this monumental transformation in which we are all currently participating, as it will deeply influence their very form of being. We are blessed to live in such “interesting” times. It can be helpful to consider the possibility that those of us who are alive today may have chosen to incarnate at this time in history so as to help birth this realization into living form for the benefit of the whole of humanity. When I make such statements some people might accuse me of merely dreaming, an accusation with which I would not disagree.

We can't compare this time with early Christianity, which was a movement that came down from above, inspired by a light shining forth from heaven. Today, instead of God incarnating in his light aspect, it is as if the powers of darkness are coming out of hiding in the shadows and are emerging from below, increasingly unmasked so as to reveal themselves. The powers of the underworld are giving shape to and in-forming our world as they incarnate in visible form all around us. Instead of the spirit coming down from the celestial realm, it is as if spirit, in its darker aspect, is emerging and rising up within and as the material world itself. As a species we are experiencing an undeniable uprising of the dark, destructive forces of the collective unconscious. As thinking, reflective, conscious human beings, we can no longer deny the dark stirrings of the unconscious as it plays itself out ever more conspicuously on the world stage. These overwhelming psychic forces are active powers that cannot be fitted into our rational world order, explained away by our reason, nor argued out of existence. If we are not in denial, it is obvious that the powers of the underworld, as if they have a severe “control process,” are attempting to centralize power and global control over our entire species in a way that is devoid of any pretense of democratic legitimacy, compassion, or redeeming charm whatsoever. We are being confronted with the naked darkness of the soul, and asked, make that *demand*ed, to come to

terms with and face up to this darkness. The dark side of our nature, or we could even say the shadow of God, is revealing Itself and incarnating through the unconscious of humanity. In these apocalyptic times we live in, the dark God, the *deus absconditus*—which is an essential element of the psychological self—is incarnating. This hidden God is paradoxically present in its apparent absence. Something is being revealed to us in the process. The times in which we are living are truly initiatory.

The Archetype of the Apocalypse

Psychologically speaking, the “apocalypse archetype” is highly activated in the collective psyche and is living itself out in, as, and through human history in an unconscious and hence destructive way. When an archetype like the apocalypse is activated in the collective unconscious, it tends to attract, conscript, and direct whatever is of a psychic nature in its vicinity to align with its own field of force. The word “apocalypse,” etymologically speaking, refers to something previously hidden and invisible being uncovered, revealed, and brought to light. Whereas in religious language, the apocalypse has to do with the Incarnation of God and the coming of the Messiah, psychologically speaking, the “apocalypse” means the momentous, world-shattering event of the coming of “the Self” into conscious realization. What is happening on the world stage is the very archetypal “event”—we can call it the “wetikolypse” (the apocalypse informed by wetiko)—into which we have all been born so as to play our supporting roles, whether we are conscious of this or not. God and humanity are operating in concert with each other, co-creating the apocalypse together. If the wrath of God comes, it will be human hands that push the button; if the love of God will replace the old order with a new age, it is human work and creativity which will fashion it.

“The Self” is considered to be an antinomy, a conjunction of opposites—a *coincidentia oppositorum*—containing both light and dark, consisting of and uniting the most extreme opposites within itself. The Self is a borderline concept, expressing a reality to which no limits can be set. The Self is both indefinite and unique, personal and universal,

META-DREAMING

and absolutely paradoxical, in that it represents in every respect thesis and antithesis, and at the same time synthesis. The concept of an all-encompassing wholeness must necessarily include its opposite if it is to represent any kind of totality. The principle of the coincidence of opposites must therefore be completed by that of absolute opposition in order to attain full paradoxicality, perfect psycho-symmetry, and hence psychological validity. Being a co-occurrence of opposites, when God or the Self incarnates, the opposites split apart and become totally polarized (think of Christ and Satan in the last iteration of this divine drama of Incarnation: Satan didn't make his appearance on the scene until Christ Incarnated; these figures mutually co-evoked each other). Every intensified differentiation of the Self brings about a corresponding accentuation of its unconscious complement. Opposites are intrinsic to the nature of the Self, and as the Self incarnates in an individual (or a world), that person (or world) becomes a vessel filled with divine conflict. If the person is unable to contain, metabolize, and transform this inner conflict, these opposites get enacted via projection out in the world through conflicts big and small. As the Self, or God, emerges into conscious realization, we are faced with a divine problem, to which we are literally demanded to find an answer. As Jung points out, "It is the question of the opposites, raised at the moment when God was declared to be good only. Where then is his dark side?"¹ In the wetiko epidemic, we are truly confronted with the dark side of God.

Contemplated as a dreaming process, the fact that the apocalypse archetype is activated deep within the human psyche and is playing itself out collectively in the world means that the Self, or what some call God, is incarnating; but this time, instead of incarnating through one man, as "It" did a little over two thousand years ago through the chosen person of Jesus, God is incarnating in modern times through the collective unconscious of all of humanity. This is a big discovery, of the greatest significance, something genuinely worthy of our deepest attention. To realize that the **God-image** is transforming and Incarnating itself through humanity is to be contributing to and supporting Its transformation and Incarnation. The degree to which we comprehend this process is the

degree to which we become active participants contributing to the very process we are comprehending.

The ancient art of alchemy unconsciously prefigured, presciently anticipated, and symbolically expressed that the *opus Christi* (work of Christ) is transferred to the individual, as human beings themselves have now become the bearers of the divine mystery. In a further iteration of the divine Incarnation, it is as if the New Testament has turned into an even newer one—the Newer Testament—with us as its living tabernacles. We “find ourselves” in the present moment participating in a genuine “Second Coming,” only this time the “Incarnation” is happening within and through the unconscious of all of humanity. It is as if we ourselves are potentially the Messiah for whom we have been waiting. In an insight with profound relevance for us today, the ancient alchemists had the epochal, revolutionary, and evolutionary realization that we are all collaboratively playing a crucial, participatory role in the Incarnation and, if we can speak in such human terms, evolution of the divine being. The alchemists realized that in a cooperative venture, God and humanity (or in psychological language, the ego and the Self) mutually redeem each other, whereby God descends into the human realm and humanity rises up and ascends to the realm of divinity. Just as in alchemy, the interaction between the subject and the object reciprocally transforms both. The alchemical symbol of the “lapis” (which symbolizes the alchemical gold and the philosopher’s stone—the highest, most supreme value, i.e., the Self) was expressing something created by and yet supra-ordinate to humanity. Participating in the transformation and Incarnation of the deity, the alchemists developed a relationship with, became assimilated into, and thereby became a channel for the Incarnation of the emerging Self. Wetiko requires us to put on our alchemical garments and vestures of light and in a very real sense, become “living philosopher’s stones.” Paradoxically, humanity is a living, breathing alchemical vessel in which spirit has seemingly become trapped, while simultaneously being the very instrument through which spirit becomes materialized in space and time so as to be liberated into greater orders of freedom. As the ancient alchemists intuited, it is as if God, with our help, is born into and out of

humanity. *Deo concedente*—God willing—as the alchemists never failed to add.

Instead of leaving the work of redemption to an autonomous divine figure, alchemy was an expression of the dawning realization that we ourselves play a crucial role in this process. The incarnation of the (Higher) Self can only be accomplished if humanity becomes conscious of this deeper, archetypal process in which it has gotten drafted, because consciousness is the agency of transformation and incarnation for both the Self and humanity. In a mutual alchemical opus, the ego and the Self reciprocally and collaboratively redeem each other: the ego needs the guidance and support of the Self, while the latent Self needs the cooperation and participation of the ego in order to incarnate in embodied form. The ego is the child of the timeless Self, as the Self is the source of the ego's being. At the same time, the realized Self can only be born in time and space through an ego. This is why Christ, who symbolizes the Self, in addition to being called the "Son of God," is also referred to as the "Son of Man." The formless Self emerges in embodied, incarnate form as a result of an encounter with a conscious human ego; the Self is therefore called the son of man, or the child of the philosophers (i.e., the alchemists). The alchemists' art allows God to know Itself by creating Itself through the individual alchemist. To quote an ancient alchemical text, the "Stone [i.e., 'the philosopher's stone,' a symbol of the awakened state of consciousness] can only be brought to its proper form by Art."² Notice the key role that "Art" plays in the Incarnation of the deity itself. Through their sacred art, the alchemists, in discovering the philosopher's stone, were literally re-creating themselves in its image, becoming living philosophical stones, as they participated in the process of creating consciousness. Individuation is Incarnation.

Stepping out of viewing our situation from the personal perspective into the more expansive view of the archetypal, it is as if we are all playing roles in a deeper, mythic, cosmic process, a divine drama of Incarnation. Commenting on the incarnation of this divine figure, Jung writes, "Although he [God] is already born in the pleroma [the atemporal, divine fullness of the collective unconscious], his birth in time can only

be accomplished when it is perceived, recognized and declared by man.”³ Jung is pointing out that what has already taken place in the timeless dimension of the pleroma exists in our dimension in a state of potential, and we, through our consciousness of this process, play the crucial, participatory role in this divine drama of actualizing this potential in embodied form. In other words, the process of the Incarnation of God in, through, and as humanity is apparently playing itself out in linear, sequential time in our world; yet, in the atemporal, higher-dimensional reality in which our universe is contained and from which it continually emerges into form, this process of divine Incarnation in humanity has already been accomplished. We simply need to recognize what is symbolically being revealed to make it so and fully consummate its realization in full-bodied, incarnate form. Recognizing what has potentially already happened “attracts” that particular universe and “matter”-ializes it. Just as the past affects the present, it is interesting to contemplate how the future may be affecting the present, too (a view called **retrocausality**). To the extent that God intends to become incarnate in empirical humanity, we are drafted into, immersed, even baptized, so to speak, in the pleromatic process of Self-Incarnation. This is what Jung is referring to when he talks about “a broadening process of incarnation,”⁴ “the Christification of many,”⁵ and “a continuing incarnation of God.”⁶ Jung refers to Christ as “the first born who is succeeded by an ever-increasing number of younger brothers and sisters”⁷ and “a divine paradigm which will be followed by further incarnations of the Holy Ghost in the empirical man.”⁸ But, and here’s the rub, it should be noted that humanity, unlike Christ, who symbolically was spotless in his purity, participates in the darkness and evil of this world. When God became man through the Christ event two thousand years ago, all darkness and evil were carefully kept outside of God’s chosen instrument, who was considered to be solely the Incarnation of the light, untainted by darkness. In our current day, however, it is as if God is incarnating through the darkness that is emerging from the underworld. From all indications, God (the Self) now wants to incarnate through all of humanity, and has chosen the creaturely human tainted with darkness and who has learned the divine arts and sciences from

the fallen angels. The closer this connection becomes between God and humanity, however, the greater the danger of a coming to terms with the darkest evil, which is what is happening in the current worldwide wetiko epidemic. Thus we can see wetiko as not just an isolated, aberrant happening, but rather, in its greater cosmological context.

There is a psychological truism that says when an activated inner psychic content is not consciously realized and integrated by the individual in the course of the individuation process, this content will manifest itself externally in the outside world, where, as if by fate, it gets unconsciously dreamed up and acted out in a literal, concrete, destructive, and potentially initiatory way. Conversely, we can say that an inimical external event which is threatening to happen may be averted or mitigated through becoming conscious of its inner, psychic origin. If the danger can be experienced psychologically and successfully integrated, we can be spared the concrete living out of it experientially. Those who understand the deeper psychological and spiritual meaning of the apocalypse archetype being activated are thus able to more easily navigate and “incarnate” this archetypal process as individuation.

Self-Reflection

We are clearly destroying ourselves. Yet, in this act of self-destruction, *something is being revealed to us*. It is as if we are destroying ourselves as the way to learn how *not* to destroy ourselves, which we clearly haven't yet learned, or we wouldn't be destroying ourselves. If we can step out of time for a moment, and step into the point of view of the aforementioned “pleroma” (the indwelling cosmic plenitude, otherwise known as the **plenum**), we have already had this realization and events in our world are the medium through which this realization is actualized and made real in sequential time. What exists in the pleroma as an archetypal, eternal, whole process projects itself into and repeatedly materializes itself in time in a variety of different patterns. It is as if fragments of the pleromatic process, essential components of the divine drama itself whose source is from outside of time, have crystallized into our three-dimensional world

as potential revelations of itself. The seemingly endless self-destruction we are perpetrating on each other is the atemporal footprint of this revelation, expressed symbolically, projected backward in time from the future into the present moment, just waiting to be recognized as such. The poet Emerson writes in his first published essay, *Nature*, “Every man’s condition is a solution in hieroglyphic to those inquiries he would put. He acts it as life, before he apprehends it as truth.”⁹ The negative, destructive energy being dreamed up and played out in our world is the catalyst and potential inspiration for the very necessary collective realization and collaborative action that dispels it. Once again we have a situation where encoded in the seeming problem is its own resolution. This process is accomplished by an expansion of consciousness co-joined with the creative giving shape and form to this realization in the outer world. The outer world is the 3D holographic canvas, so to speak, in which this realization is made manifest. Our widening of consciousness, a further step in the realization of the “Anthropos,” the primordial human being, signifies a rebirth of the deity through humanity as well as in the world.

By self-reflecting, we thereby play a key role in the divine Incarnation process, as we become the medium or instrument through which God, so to speak, becomes conscious of, reconciles, resolves, and re-unites the opposites intrinsic to the totality of Its nature, which includes both light and dark simultaneously. Where else, after all, could God’s paradoxical, antinomous nature attain unity except in the very vessel of humanity that God has prepared just for this very purpose? The cradle in which God is born, humanity is the alchemical retort in which God descends into the densest matter, transforms Itself, and out of which the refined spirit emerges. As if the circle is now closing, just as humanity arose and was revealed out of God, it is as if God is emerging and being revealed out of humanity. This vision re-contextualizes and re-frames our place in the cosmos, expressing a new mythos of who we are and the role we play relative to God.

It is as if the unconscious, through its local wetiko “rep,” is arranging events in our life so as to potentially catalyze our lucidity. To quote Jung, “The unconscious works sometimes with most amazing cunning,

META-DREAMING

arranging certain fatal situations, fatal experiences, which make people wake up.”¹⁰ Paradoxically, while the inertial, entropic, and darker forces of the unconscious seemingly paralyze us and keep us asleep, another aspect of the unconscious, or perhaps it’s the same part, has a tendency to create an overwhelmingly impossible situation for us in order to propel us over our edge and help us to step into our highest evolutionary potential and deepest wholeness. The unconscious itself is a conjunction of opposites, in that it is the source of the tension of opposites within us, while simultaneously—potentially—uniting them. Paradoxically, that which wounds us is also the source of our healing.

The “good news” is that a deeper realization is potentially available to us at such uniquely challenging moments of time as we are currently living through. The fact that an archetypal, daemonic energy like wetiko is manifesting in fully visible form in our world right now is an expression that this particular energy is available for assimilation in a way that it previously was not. Before an archetypal energy such as wetiko can be integrated consciously, it always materializes itself and manifests physically, forcing its subject(s) into its own form. When an unconscious, daemonic content such as wetiko is ready to be metabolized, it causes the universe to self-organize in such a way so that it can manifest in fully embodied, corporeal form as the “medium” to potentially transform itself *if enough consciousness is available* to effect this transformation. This physical universe then becomes the stage upon which the energy bound up in the infinitely regressing feedback loop animating wetiko disease is dreamed up, accessed, and potentially transmuted. It is only when these deeper energies become incarnated into the physical realm can the energy bound up in the compulsion to re-create the deeper archetypal pattern be accessed, unlocked, and liberated. This emancipation is the teleology—the underlying purpose, or goal—of the repetition compulsion of trauma. This realization occurs within and is accomplished by the agency of our consciousness, through the medium of the fully embodied world, which is the very thing being revealed.

The only thing that really matters now is whether humanity can climb up to a higher moral level through self-reflection and be able to evolve

into a more expanded state of consciousness in order to mediate the superhuman powers that the dark God has placed in our hands. Jung comments, "If—and this is the great question—he has today acquired enough consciousness to keep up with the furious pace of the devil within him."¹¹ If ever there was a time when the turning inward of self-reflection was of critical importance, it is now, in our present catastrophic epoch. Self-reflection, an act in which we recognize ourselves in the mirror of life, is a bending of consciousness back upon itself, a privilege born of and intrinsic to human freedom, in contradistinction to the compulsion of the demonic. In the moment of self-reflection, the psychospiritual necessity for evolutionary growth overrules the biological compulsion of unreflective animal instinct. Though an ego is needed for its actualization, reflective awareness occurs not by the will of the ego, but by the promptings to individuation originating from the Self. Self-reflection is a genuinely spiritual act, which is, essentially, the act of becoming conscious. In alchemy, the work is considered to be brought to perfection by reflection; the essence of reflection is to understand what we have previously not understood. The attitude of self-reflection returns us to the ground of our deepest being, connects us to our destiny, and it begins a cure for the pervasive psychological and spiritual blindness which reigns at the present hour. Whoever reflects upon themselves can't help but to touch upon the cutting-edge frontiers of the unconscious, which contains above all else what is most important for us to know.

To concern ourselves with our dreams at night, as well as to contemplate the dreamlike nature of waking life, are ways of reflecting upon ourselves, of "self-reflecting." The instinct toward self-reflection, or what amounts to the same thing, the urge to individuation, is a true retrieval of our soul. It has an integrating effect, as it gathers together and re-collects what had previously been projected out, dis-owned, divided, and separated by the dis-integrating effects of evil. Genuinely lasting gain is a direct result of broadened reflection. The true leaders of humanity are typically not the political leaders, but those relatively few individuals who are capable of sustained self-reflection.

Any one of us self-reflecting and recognizing the dreamlike nature

META-DREAMING

of our situation is immediately nonlocally registered and invested in the “psi bank,” the collective consciousness of humankind, where our realization gains incredible “interest,” so to speak. Self-reflection is truly the best “investment” that any of us could possibly make. Describing the nonlocal nature of the collective unconscious, Jung writes that it is like “an omnipresent continuum, an unextended Everywhere. That is to say, when something happens here at point A which touches upon or affects the collective unconscious, it has happened everywhere.”¹² The act of self-reflection activates a process of transformation in the archetypal realm, which results in the Incarnation of God through humanity, that is, the light of consciousness is born. This is why Jung says, “God becomes manifest in the human act of reflection.”¹³ The human act of self-reflection motivates God to empty Itself of Its Godhead and to step off Its throne, so to speak, and incarnate through humanity in order to attain the precious jewel which humanity possesses via self-reflection. If we can speak in such human terms, whoever knows an aspect of God has an effect on God, similar to the way becoming aware of the unconscious transforms the unconscious. In essence, humanity is the aperture through which God makes Itself known and real in time. We are the eyes through which God sees Itself from the outside, thus becoming conscious of Itself. Not merely the “subjects” of our inner process, we become the “objects” of a deeper, mythic, archetypal, and divine process that is incarnating through us. We are the conduits through which the universe, in becoming consciously aware of itself, is waking itself up. Self-reflection is therefore the best service we can do for ourselves and the world, as well as being the highest way for us to serve and love God. It should get our highest attention that wetiko disease is the very catalyst and inspiration for our self-reflection.

The present-day manifestation of the daemonic is an archetypal expression of the potentially catastrophic upheavals that accompany the great transitions from one age to the next. Wetiko is both spirit and anti-spirit in one. When an archetype like the daemonic appears as it is today in the wetiko epidemic, things become critical, with heightened possibilities for both good and evil alike. Catastrophe can only be avoided if enough people wake up to what is being revealed to us as we act out the

unconscious destructively, and then connect and cooperate with each other in new ways so as to creatively de-activate, assimilate, and transform the potentially deleterious effects of the activated daemon. We can then, under the guidance of the Self, more fully incarnate our intrinsic wholeness, as we help each other to usher in a new era of sustainable peace, understanding, and mutual cooperation. Just like becoming lucid in a dream en masse, we can connect with other parts of ourselves who are also waking up in the dream, and realize that we can put our lucidity together so as to change the shared waking dream we are having. Imagine that! Our continued existence as a species on this beautiful planet depends upon our imagining, participating in, and embodying this realization in our lives.

Part Four

Wetiko in Action

12

Wetiko Tactics

Wetiko works through the intrinsic projective tendencies of the mind so as to cultivate and strengthen itself, while simultaneously keeping itself hidden in the process. It turns our own “genius” for reality-creation against us in such a way that we literally become be-witch-ed, as if under a spell, en-trance-d by our own powers, gifts, and talents for dreaming up our world. We are like magicians, enchanted and entrapped by our own natural facility for creation. To the extent we are not consciously aware of our power, however, we unconsciously dream up the universe in a way that not only doesn’t serve us, but rather, is destroying us in insidious and systematic ways. We have unknowingly hypnotized ourselves with our God-given power to creatively call forth reality in such a way that it is boomeranging against us and undermining our potential for individual and collective evolution. It will greatly serve us to understand the myriad of ways that the wetiko virus deviates our perceptions and misguides us. There are multiple attitudes, stances, postures, perspectives, and points of view that are secret outposts from which wetiko can work its black magic. From wetiko’s point of view, the last thing it would want, its worst nightmare, is for us to gain insight into its tactics, for then it would truly go out of business. Writing about wetiko’s tactics remains a work in progress. Our role is like that of an explorer, map maker, or cartographer who is continually working at the cutting edge, outlining the contours of a novel universe that continues to expand and grow in richness in pace with our growing awareness of it, corresponding to a deepening

awareness of ourselves. The reader is invited to add to the ever-growing anthology of wetiko's many dis-guises drawn from their own experience. There are numberless ways we fool ourselves, countless tactics through which wetiko can ensnare, entrance, and entrap our minds.

Thinking

Wetiko affects our thinking process, influencing the formation of thought itself, what could be called "thought morphogenesis." One of the covert ways that the wetiko virus works, for example, is to produce a thought which conceives of or implicitly presumes a separate thinker that it imagines is thinking it. In attributing its origin to this thinker, which it experiences as if it were real and separate from itself, thought then behaves as if it were produced by this thinker, which further serves to entrench the illusory delusion of a separate thinker which has produced it. All the while, the truth of the situation is actually the other way around—the idea of a thinker is itself produced by thought and therefore cannot be separated from the process of thinking itself. When our relationship to our own thoughts is so inverted, how can we possibly be expected to be in proper relationship with ourselves and the world around us?

Thinking is a natural function and expression of mind; it is not necessarily problematic in and of itself. There is a certain type of thinking that is secretly inspired by wetiko, however, that not only creates problems, but in a sense is the very problem itself. This type of thinking creates an apparent problem, and then tries to solve the problem, all the while forgetting that it is creating the very problem it is trying to solve. The more it thinks in this way, the more problems it creates. In another example of the boundary between the inner and the outer collapsing, this inner process of the mind is getting enacted on the world stage for all who have eyes to see. For example, the way we are fighting terrorism is endlessly creating more terrorists in a war without end, as if in fighting against terror we are a species enacting its unhealed trauma, continually re-traumatizing both ourselves and others. Once our mode of thinking creates problems, it then has all the evidence it needs to confirm its point of view

that our situation is indeed problematic, a viewpoint which attains a self-generating, seemingly autonomous life of its own. Thinking can then become a cyclic feedback loop that continually feeds back upon itself, as it endlessly creates and feeds itself on more problems by its very activity. As the physicist David Bohm would say, thought is not being proprioceptive—self-aware—about what it is doing. Bohm writes, “We could say that practically all the problems of the human race are due to the fact that thought is not proprioceptive.”²¹ The body is proprioceptive, in that it has a self-perception, it knows when it is moving, it knows what it is doing. Unlike the body, thought is not proprioceptive, in the sense that thought creates something, and then forgets that it did so, which is to not know what it is doing. The crazy thing is, thought has then made a seemingly real problem out of a situation that is ultimately not problematic.

Wetiko can insinuate itself into our decision making process by making us too intellectual, overly mental, and cut off from our feelings. And yet, wetiko can just as easily work the other way around, too, convincing us to naively and unilaterally trust our *gut feelings* above all else. Of course, at certain points in time we have all experienced how our gut feelings are the very form our inner knowing and wisdom is manifesting, and therefore at these moments these deeper feelings most definitely should be honored and listened to. But there are times when our thinking itself produces what seems like a gut feeling, which we then mistakenly interpret to be an expression of our inner wisdom. Our thoughts profoundly affect our emotion and the whole state of the body, which in turn affects thought in a self-reinforcing feedback loop which can easily lead us astray. Wetiko distorts our ability to differentiate between true feelings and feelings that appear to be deep feelings but are produced from thought. In addition, wetiko can obscure our discernment for when we should listen to our thoughts and follow our reason instead of simply going with our gut feelings.

Bohm contemplates what is “preventing mankind from working together for the common good, and indeed, for survival,” and concludes that one of the key factors is “a kind of thought that treats things as inherently divided, disconnected and ‘broken up’ into yet smaller constituent

parts. Each part is considered to be essentially independent and self-existent.”² In this mode of thinking that creates seeming fragmentation between things that are not separate nor ultimately separable, Bohm, one of the most original, radical, and important thinkers of the second half of the twentieth century, is pointing at wetiko. He writes, “It’s similar to a virus—somehow this is a disease of thought, of knowledge, of information, spreading all over the world. The more computers, radio, and television we have, the faster it spreads. So the kind of thought that’s going on all around us begins to take over in every one of us, without our even noticing it. It’s spreading like a virus and each one of us is nourishing that virus.”³ Describing wetiko in his own way, Bohm is saying that to the extent we are unaware of this contagious thought-virus, we are all complicit in its propagation. He then wonders, “Do we have a kind of immune system that stops it? The only way to stop it is to recognize it, to acknowledge it, to see what it is. If any one of us starts to look at that, then we are looking at the source of the problem.”⁴ Bohm is pointing out that awareness of the problem is a key antigen for the dangerous distortions of thought that wetiko can insidiously produce.

The Wound

Say, for example, if at a given moment we feel wounded, traumatized, a victim of some sort of abuse, feeling as if there’s something terribly wrong with us. This feeling is a perfect doorway through which wetiko can insinuate itself into our minds, for people who are identified with being wounded are perfect abodes for wetiko to take up long-term residence. When I solidify myself as having a wound, just like a dream, where the inner and the outer are mirrored reflections of each other, the universe instantaneously reflects back and supplies all the evidence I need to prove to myself that I really am wounded, which further confirms and validates my point of view of seeing myself as someone who has an unhealed wound, *ad infinitum*. In this way of experiencing my wound, I relate to it as if it is an expression of a deeper, unhealed part of me that I identify with, and that concretely exists and persists over time, at least in

my imagination. It thereby has a sense of seeming to possess a real, long-lasting, substantial, independent, and intrinsic existence, at least for the time being, which experientially, is all there really is.

The more I relate to my wound *as if* it really exists, the more I have created and empowered it to manifest *as if* it really exists, which endlessly justifies my increasingly entrenched viewpoint that it really does exist, as I now have all the proof I need of the “objective reality” of my wound. When I relate to my wound in this way, feeling victimized by it, what I am unwittingly doing is colluding with my wound to sustain, solidify, and perpetuate itself. I then concretize in my imagination that I have an unhealed problem that objectively exists in and over time, through this moment, into the next moment, and the next, ad infinitum. When I imagine that my wound exists in and over time like this, I at the same time imagine that I do too, which is to say that I imagine myself to exist as a solid, physical being who is bound by time, that is, “time-bound.” Just as in a dream, when I solidify my situation like this, my experience of the universe and myself has no choice but to shape-shift and reflect back to me what I am choosing to perceive, thereby repeatedly confirming my viewpoint in each moment. To become bewitched by my own perceptions in this way, entranced by my mind’s power to give shape to and in-form “reality,” is to fall into an infinitely self-perpetuating feedback loop that is of the nature of a “self”-fulfilling prophecy.

A nonlocal, immediate, and unmediated “faster than the speed of light” co-relation and correspondence exists between how we perceive our wound and how our wound manifests.⁵ This link happens in “no time” whatsoever, which is to say it takes place outside the realm of linear time altogether. Because this process happens in no time at all, we don’t see it and thereby become fooled by the creative, reality-shaping powers of our divine imagination into thinking that the world objectively exists independently from ourselves and has nothing whatsoever to do with our internalized frame of reference, belief systems, tacit assumptions, attitudes, and perspectives. The instantaneous immediacy of our reality-creating powers, configuring the world around us faster than we can think or blink, is the very thing that seduces us to imagine that they are not

operating at all, and that the world simply is as it appears.⁶ We cannot separate out how we “subjectively” view our wound from how our wound appears “objectively,” for in reality all assessments of reality as being objective are by their very nature subjective in origin. It is due to this nonlinear, atemporal, “faster than the speed of light” effect we have on our universe that we fall prey to and entrance ourselves by our God-given power to co-create and shape the universe through our unceasing creative interactions with it. The dreamlike universe instantaneously mirrors back to us our perceptions in a way that validates them by making our perceptions appear to us as if they objectively exist and are arising independently and outside of ourselves (as if such a condition were even possible!). Being like a dream, how we perceive instantaneously generates the universe to *reflect* back our perceptions, which further confirms the very perceptions which generated the reflections of them in the first place.

There’s no denying that we are in fact all wounded, to one degree or another, similar to the way a car over the course of its life accumulates dents in its frame. The point isn’t whether or not we are wounded; rather, it is that the wound does not need to define us nor be a dead end, for it is in fact a potential doorway to awakening. There is a way to creatively engage with our wound that liberates the energy that is bound up in re-creating it while at the same time transforming our consciousness. As we decode the wetiko virus, we midwife ourselves into our wholeness.

There exists another possibility that becomes available to us, however, when we awaken to the wiles of wetiko: when our wound comes up, instead of interpreting it as evidence that we really are wounded, we can recognize its momentary appearance as the unfolding, releasing, dissolution, and dis-illusion of the very same wound that we had previously imagined to substantially exist. In other words, we can allow our wound to manifest in this moment as an evanescent, transitory, and self-liberating revelation of what the moment before we had imagined existed in and over time in solid, “real” form. We can awaken to the fact that the situation in which we find ourselves is malleable, fundamentally characterized by a fluid and open-ended potentiality, and is therefore infinitely creative if we simply allow it to be.

When we experience the effortlessly self-liberating quality of our wound, rather than reaching backward (and forward) in time in our imagination, and creating ourselves in a solidified, limited, and problematic identity that is not fully healed, we simply relate to our wound as an impermanent, ever-changing, and fluid phenomenon that does not characterize our true nature, while at the same time being its momentary expression. Our wound is an event that is only happening in the present moment and nowhere else; it is an ephemeral artifact of our present perception, existing simply as a momentary phantom of the dynamics of our creative process in this moment. This is to realize that we are not constrained and circumscribed by linear time, nor stuck in seemingly solid matter in the way we had previously imagined. This realization frees us from the mental straitjackets by which we had been imagining ourselves to be bound. Viewing our wound in this way, we do not make it “real,” nor grant it an undeserved solidity or invest it with an unwarranted substantial existence. We simply relate to our wound as its own impermanent self-display, its own self-liberating revelation. In doing this, we are at the same time removing any psychic “Velcro” within us onto which the wetiko bug can latch itself. Paradoxically, instead of obscuring our evolution, our wound has then “raised us,” for the wound has been the very impetus for our expansion of consciousness. This is another example of what seems to be the problem actually bearing a hidden gift. Simultaneously containing both the pathology and its own medicine, our wound is a higher-dimensional event which has manifested in our three-dimensional life, offering us either a deeper liberation or greater constriction, depending upon how we choose to perceive it.

We are all potentially “wounded healers.” The archetype of the wounded healer⁷ reveals to us that, rather than attempting to get rid of or avoid our wound, it is only by being willing to face, consciously experience, and go through our wound that we receive its blessing. To quote Karl Kerenyi, a colleague of Jung who elucidated this archetype, the “wounded healer” refers psychologically to the capacity “to be at home in the darkness of suffering and there to find germs of light and recovery with which, as though by enchantment, to bring forth Asklepios,

the sunlike healer.”⁸ There is a secret tie between the powers that seemingly obscure our true nature and the very true nature they appear to be obscuring. Our wounding is a “numinous” event, in that its source is transpersonal and archetypal, which is to say that our wound is the very way by which something beyond ourselves touches and makes contact with us. Our wound is the palpable manifestation of bearing witness to the powers that are beyond the ego’s control and the insufficiency of the ego’s limited perspective. Archetypally, the God enters through the wound. The word “vulnerable” is related to the Latin word *vulnus*, which means “wound”; it is only through our being vulnerable, which can be a wounding experience, that we become able to heal. Only those of us who bear sickness as an existential possibility within ourselves can constellate the healing factor in others. Because the figure of the wounded healer consciously knows the experience of being wounded, this figure is able to bear it with others. The wounded healer, Jung writes, shows “the mythological truth that the wounded is the agent of healing, and that the sufferer takes away suffering.”⁹ As wounded healers, we only become able to heal and help others (which is to simultaneously be healing and helping ourselves again and again in the form of seeming “others”) when instead of feeling resentful, bitter, and victimized by our wound, we recognize our wound to be a sacred event, an archetypal moment that seeks to make us participants in a divine, eternal happening.

Our personal wound is, in condensed and crystallized form, the particular instantiation of the collective wound in which we all share and participate. The doorway to the deeper, archetypal dimension is not found by going around our personal process, but rather, by going directly into and through it. As if shamans-in-training, we are like psychic organs who individually “process” and potentially transform the unresolved, unconscious shadow and wound in the collective field. It is truly liberating to step out of the ingrained habitual pattern that many of us have of pathologizing ourselves, and instead, re-contextualize our personal conflicts, problems, and wounds as part of a wider transpersonal pattern enfolded throughout the field of human experience. As wounded healers, we become transformed when we recognize that our wound is

completely personal and uniquely our own, while simultaneously being a universal, impersonal process in which everyone is participating. This is the paradox: an experience of our wholeness, what Jung calls the Self, is both personal and transpersonal at the same time. When we get in touch with the deepest, most true part of ourselves, it is the part of us that is most unique and personal, while at the same time, there is a universal aspect, in that it is the same Self that is incarnating through everyone. To experience this paradox consciously *is* itself the expansion of consciousness which initiates a transformation in ourselves, and by extension, the world around us. This is to paradoxically step into being a genuinely autonomous, independent being, while at the same time realizing our interconnectedness and interdependence with other autonomous, independent beings. It is this “shared felt sense” that deeply connects us with each other, cultivates compassion, helps us see through the illusion of the separate self, and dispels the curse of wetiko. In a universe that resounds with the sound of compassion, OM MANI PADMA HUNG, wetiko’s name is never heard.

Our Looking Away Is Wetiko

The wetiko epidemic is self-evident for all who have eyes to see. To not look at what’s happening, to turn away and ignore it, is to be lying to ourselves and to be colluding with and unknowingly feeding the disease. Our looking away is a form of blindness. Our looking away is a form of ignorance. In our modern-day culture with all of its dazzling, technological wizardry, we have devised a million ways for us to look away, intoxicate, and distract ourselves. Our looking away from wetiko actually invests it with a seeming reality and power that enables it to operate on us unbeknownst to us. Our looking away, our contraction, *is* itself the disease; our evasion is wetiko in action, our distracting ourselves is wetiko’s “ticket to ride.” Our resulting complacency and inaction in the face of our species’ self-extinction is, in fact, an expression of our lack of compassion.

If our state of psychic blindness is reflected back to us, we will undoubtedly feel “not seen,” which likewise induces in the one offering

the reflection the experience of feeling unseen too. It is then as if the quality of not seeing, of blindness, of unconsciousness has entered the field. If we do not face reality, however, we have no chance of transforming it. Evil can only happen in the global body politic when good people, looking away, remain silent and do nothing. Just as in a family system, the perpetrator does everything in their power to promote forgetting. All the perpetrator asks is that the bystander do nothing and remain indifferent, appealing to the near-universal desire to see, hear, and speak no evil. And yet, as Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. reminds us, “He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.”¹⁰

Abstract thinking, to think outside the box, to reflect upon the world, ourselves, and our experiences from multiple angles simultaneously, is a uniquely human capacity that differentiates us from all other known species. Abstract thought is one of the most advanced and complex stages of human mental development; it enables us to perceive underlying, universal forms and patterns within a widely diverse range of seemingly different events. Empowering us with remarkable conceptual flexibility and creativity, our facility to think abstractly is an expression of a living, evolutionary impulse of the universe using us as its instrument of actualization. Though one of the crowning achievements of human consciousness, abstract thinking is susceptible to being deviated by wetiko, thus turning one of the greatest capacities of the human mind to serve wetiko’s warped agenda. One way wetiko works is to keep us in our heads, stuck in our intellects and conceptual minds, resulting in the world transforming from a living experience into something purely conceptual and abstract. This is a place many people go to to avoid and escape the pain of incarnation, of being fully embodied. And yet, wetiko can work just as well in the opposite way—inspiring people to get out of their heads, to connect with their sensuality, sexuality, bodies, feelings, emotions, and so forth, which are all wonderful things with which to connect. However, in certain circumstances, these experiences can be indulged in such that they amount to little more than stimulating chemicals in the body which

results in a “feel-good experience,” but has little to do with integration, healing, or expansion of consciousness, and can wind up feeding their attachments, which become addictions. Under the guise of getting out of their head and getting into their body, this can be another distraction from being present and dealing with the pain of incarnation, as well as with themselves. Wetiko can potentially subvert and subsume even the most wholesome activities to its own unwholesome ends. True healing comes when we connect our heads and hearts in a truly embodied way.

Wetiko disease literally has the potential to humble us. We may think, “Not us, with all of our good, spiritual intentions, we could never catch this disease.” However, this very arrogance leaves us open to falling prey to the virus. When we see people who are seemingly taken over by wetiko and allow ourselves to feel superior to them, our feeling of superiority is itself a symptom of the disease. The psychological need for oneness, for establishing our superiority over others, can become an automated process designed to compensate for deeply ingrained and unexamined insecurities. This habitual need to feel better than others serves as the breeding ground for wetiko. Conversely, we may think, “Let’s step out of our arrogance, for who are we to know anything? Let’s be an enlightened bodhisattva (which itself can be a subtle form of hubris) and not judge what anyone is doing, for who are we to judge? Let us not solidify, diagnose, or pathologize anyone in any way, for we don’t want to cast any spells.” However, to have these attitudes is to fall under the seductive spell of the bug, causing us to disconnect from and give away our power. In this way, we forsake one of our greatest and most essential spiritual treasures, the ability to discern.

Discernment

Wetiko disables our ability for discernment. Being a spiritual warrior, however, requires, embraces, and includes the most extreme discernment, which is the capacity to differentiate and tell one thing from another, and is related to our ability for naming things. Etymologically speaking, the word “discern” means “to distinguish between, to detect or discover

that which is hidden or obscure.” Discernment is radically different from when we are unconsciously caught in judgment, which is a reaction to and contraction against something. Discernment is the ability to make distinctions and see clearly, which is an expression of an expanded and evolved consciousness. It requires an ability to see through and beyond the outer plane of appearances and penetrate to the deeper, essential dynamics at play beneath the surface. As our consciousness develops, so does our facility of discernment. The faculty of discrimination and discernment is the *sine qua non* of all consciousness. Wielding the wisdom of discernment is an essential function of an awakening consciousness and is an expression of genuine compassion. The primary factor determining whether a daemonic energy like wetiko will move in mainly destructive or constructive and creative directions is whether or not our capability for discernment in-forms our actions in the world.

A non-wetikoized psyche has developed a strong psychic muscle of discernment. For example, consider darkness. There are two sources of darkness: one we don’t want anything to do with, the other we do. We need to be able to differentiate the two, or we’ll be lost and disoriented in the shadows. The first type of darkness is the darkness of the abyss of evil which actively refuses the light of consciousness and thereby prevents us from seeing. This darkness is truly destructive, in the “demonic” sense, in the extremity of its distance from the light, and is the darkness to which the lower self is susceptible. We don’t want to become involved with, entangled in, nor invest our attention in this kind of darkness which, energetically speaking, is like a black hole. The other type of darkness is what mystics call by names such as the “black light,” the “luminous darkness,” and the “black sun.” This darkness isn’t merely an absence of light, but a quality that is an expression of the presence of a higher-dimensional, invisible, and uncreated form of light, the indwelling light of being that has no opposite. This luminous darkness has a light hidden within it; the way to discover this light is through this darkness. To quote Meister Eckhart, “Truly, it is in the darkness that one finds the light.” This invisible form of light, the nondual light of sentient awareness itself, cannot be seen because it is the light by which we see. However, this second type of

darkness is also very dangerous, in that it heralds the final, perilous stage of the mystical journey in which we can potentially transcend the illusion of our ego and recognize the divine presence. This divinely inspired dark night of the soul, a phase in which the soul is being purified of any remaining obscurations, must be clearly distinguished and discriminated from the demonic shadow that obscures it. To do this requires a cultivated, refined, and fully operating organ of discernment.

In the *prima materia*, there is a certain intractable amount of what is called *terra damnata* (accursed earth), which defies all efforts at transformation, and therefore must be rejected and thrown out. This is symbolic of that there are certain energies in the psyche—we can call them “archetypal evil”—that need to be resisted. This has its analogue in the physical realm, in that there are certain extremely lethal germs that can literally kill us. These dark, archetypal energies of the psyche are literally saturated in evil and are unredeemable; they are not able to be metabolized, assimilated, digested, nor incorporated into the psyche. Immune to any human intervention, these energies cannot be united with, nor in any way integrated in, the alchemical laboratory of the psyche; they are analogous to the deadliest of toxins. They must be kept outside the alchemical operation, for if let in they will contaminate and destroy the work. Similarly, we don’t invite a vampire into our house, nor negotiate, make deals with, nor compromise with this figure, for if we do so, we have already lost. This is like an alcoholic taking the first drink, which is in that moment to be offering their neck to the vampire. If someone has an overly righteous and fixed idea of wanting to be “all-embracing,” however, thinking that to be all-embracing is to have no boundaries, which they mistakenly think would mean letting these toxic elements into the operation, they will pay a huge price, sometimes even with their lives. To be all-embracing includes embracing the understanding that there are energies in the psyche that must not be embraced; this is to be genuinely all-embracing, which includes the capacity for discriminating whether to engage with something or not. In addition, to be all-embracing means to embrace the part of ourselves that doesn’t embrace, which literally cuts through the dualistic polarization which feeds the unholy heart of wetiko.

The awakening heart of humanity is truly all-embracing; it not only overflows with compassion but also is strongly steeped in the ability to discern one thing from another and thus has the wisdom to know what to avoid.

In alchemy, the final stage of the work is known as the “coniunctio,” the uniting of the opposites. The alchemists differentiate, however, between the “lesser coniunctio” and the “greater coniunctio.” The lesser coniunctio is a combining of elements that haven’t been fully separated. Because the elements that are combined are too mixed up with each other, as if co-dependently entangled (think of relationships), their mixture is impure; the lesser coniunctio doesn’t lead to the alchemical gold, but rather, a big mess. In the greater coniunctio, however, the elements that are to be combined have been fully separated (related to the “separatio” stage in the alchemical opus) and differentiated from each other such that their mixture leads to the true uniting of the opposites into a higher synthesis. This is mirrored in relationships: when two partners, not co-dependently enmeshed with each other, but truly autonomous and independent, come together in a real union—the “sacred marriage” in alchemy—they create something via their relationship that is greater than themselves, the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.

The Curse of Pessimism

Through the “Big Lie”—which is based on the principle that the bigger the lie, the harder it is for people to see the truth—the government has transformed myth into seeming fact, and has achieved its goal of muddling our minds so as to make us feel powerless, thereby inspiring deep pessimism regarding our future. To be pessimistic and think that we can’t change the trajectory of our species’ suicidal, trancelike behavior is to be under the spell of wetiko, as if we have fallen under a “demon’s curse.” Having fallen under such a spell, we only strengthen and solidify our spellbound conviction by acting *as if* there are no other possible outcomes. Part of the spell being cast is that we have no power to stop the Big Wetikos from doing whatever they want to advance their self-serving agenda. Feeling that we are powerless and adopting pessimism as our

lens through which we view the world are symptoms that the darkness of the wetiko bug has insinuated itself into our consciousness, and is manipulating our perception of our own power, and our relation to the world and ourselves, so as to further propagate itself. To be pessimistic is to be arguing for our own impotence and limitation. If we win an argument about the truth of our pessimism, the “prize” we win is that we are screwed. There is clearly something flawed and even perverse about our logic if it leads to such a self-defeating result.

If we become entranced by the very convincing display of outer darkness that is materializing in the world and fall prey to pessimism, we are then feeding, supporting, amplifying, and helping to create the very darkness to which we are reacting so pessimistically. Bewitched by our own darkness, we relate to it as if it exists independently, outside of ourselves, believing our pessimistic reaction is justified by and independent of the dark goings-on that are “objectively” happening in the outside world. In choosing to see pessimistically, we don’t realize that we are filtering our interpretation of events through a dark lens which then obligingly provides us with overwhelming evidence to confirm our pessimism. This is similar to when we hold a particular viewpoint within a dream; the dream, being nothing other than our own reflection, has no choice but to shape-shift and supply us with convincing evidence to confirm our viewpoint. We are then using the reality-creating genius of our own mind against ourselves in a way that keeps us unnecessarily restrained in a dismally limited domain of self-restricted possibilities.

To the extent we have fallen under the spell of pessimism, it is as though we are looking in a mirror and deeply frowning, saying, “We’re frowning *because* of how the outside world (our mirrored reflection) is. We’re not going to stop frowning until the outside world (a reflection of our own face) stops being so negative, *stops giving us reasons* to frown.” Not recognizing the reflection in the mirror as our own, we have all the evidence we need to justify our frowning. We imagine we’re only reacting, like any other sane person would, to how things really are. And yet, our having fallen into this infinite regression is a form of madness, as if we have become bewitched, having fallen under a self-generated spell.

Inherent in this process is that at any moment we can step out of our self-created dilemma, stop endlessly re-creating our trauma, and spontaneously cease frowning, for frowning is an activity that we are *actively doing* in each moment. The outer world (in this case the mirror) will instantaneously reflect back this change within ourselves. The energy that was formerly bound up in our unconscious compulsion to frown, and hence re-create our trauma ad infinitum, becomes liberated and available for creative expression (and smiling).

To become caught in pessimism is to fall victim to an infinitely regressing feedback loop: we wouldn't be so pessimistic if our world wasn't manifesting so darkly, and our world wouldn't be manifesting so darkly if we weren't so pessimistic. To become fixated in the point of view of seeing things pessimistically is to unwittingly become an ally of the very darkness that is inspiring our pessimism. This is to have fallen into a self-generating, samsaric feedback loop, self-fulfilling in nature, that will, if so empowered, undoubtedly destroy us. It is crazy to *not* invest our creative energy into envisioning that we can "come together" and turn the tide, and just as crazy to imagine that we can't. If we aren't investing our creative imagination in ways for us to heal, evolve, and wake up, then what are we thinking? If we aren't using our God-given gifts to create a better world, we have fallen under the spell of wetiko.

The Curse of Over-Optimism

Once an autonomous complex such as wetiko emancipates itself from the cooperative economy of the psyche, it can take on a truly demonic status. Even though the demon of wetiko came about through the creative power of the divine, once it attains sufficient autonomy, it is no longer totally under the control of divine power, no longer wholly under the divine thumb, nor safely domesticated in the divine household. Rather, it can oppose divine power and threaten its purposes. To put on my theological hat for a moment, everything is not and could not be separate from God, as everything that is or could ever be is God Itself. And yet, God has set up the universe, so to speak, such that the creation has a degree of

autonomy relative to its creator. An autonomous, daemonic power like wetiko is an example of a divine energy gone bad, reminiscent of fallen angels becoming corrupted and running amok. Scholar Rudolf Otto, in *The Idea of the Holy*, refers to it as the “*mysterium tremendum* cut loose from the other elements and intensified to *mysterium horrendum*.”¹¹ The Bible refers to this as the “abomination that causeth desolation” (Mark 13:14). It is crucial to not be absorbed in the fantasy of magical thinking and think that everything will turn out OK because God is in charge. To not recognize that the demonic has potentially deadly consequences is to be in denial, is simply bad theology, and is ultimately a form of ignorance.

An overly optimistic view, believing that God is in complete control of everything and will therefore come to our aid like a cosmic parent, and that everything is perfect, is equally as misguided a view as pessimism. On the one hand, from the absolute perspective, everything is perfect. And, at the same time, from the relative point of view, things are obviously far less than perfect, sub-optimal beyond belief. There exists a point of no return, the crossing of a certain threshold, the symbolic Rubicon, such that if things get bad enough, attain a sufficient momentum, they become truly irreversible in our lifetime, with severely destructive consequences (think of the environment, for one example). To not realize this is to be simply fooling ourselves. If we assume that we can go on with business as usual, while destructive evil mounts on all sides, naively assuming that a beneficent God will take care of us, preventing anything really disastrous from happening, we are deluding ourselves. This would be analogous to viewing the current state of our body politic, which can be likened to a ship of state being driven by drunken adolescents who have fallen asleep at the wheel and are steering us over a cliff, and we, as passengers, are totally trusting, just assuming that God will take care of everything (forgetting the maxim that God helps those who help themselves). This is an incredibly naive, preadolescent, ignorant point of view, simply called “wrong view” in Buddhism. It is an expression of not being grounded in this world, of avoiding the harsh reality that from one very real point of view, things really are as bad as they seem. To just think that God will come down and save the day is to not realize our responsibility as

co-dreamers of the dream to proactively do something, to channel this daemonic energy that is informing events in our world in a constructive, instead of a destructive, way. If we are attached to an optimistic point of view without realizing that what plays out in our world is not written in stone but depends upon us, we are investing in a complacent attitude which falsely absolves us from the need to act and do whatever it is that can and needs to be done. The demonic potentially can become an instrument for God, but this depends not just on God, but upon us too, as we are playing a crucial role in the Divine process of creation and Incarnation.

This being said, having a healthy dose of optimism is a good and helpful attitude, as there is an ever-increasing number of people who are awakening. This optimism is to be in touch with reality, in contrast to the overly one-sided optimism described previously, which is a denial and avoidance of reality. As those of us who are awakening to our intrinsic gifts stabilize our lucidity and connect with each other, all bets are off, as anything becomes possible. The only limitation is our lack of imagination, a limit which itself is truly imaginary.

Self-Negating Statements

There are many different stances, perspectives, points of view, and thought-forms that are secretly inspired by wetiko. An example of holding a seemingly enlightened viewpoint, with the best of intentions, while unwittingly to have fallen under the wiles of wetiko is the assertion, which certain spiritual teachers make, “to not be against anything.” Though this statement is supposed to be an expression of being truly all-embracing, it is actually anything but. It is what I call a self-negating statement, in that it is doing (being against) the very thing it is counseling not to do (i.e., be against anything). Implicit in the underlying logic of the statement is an unrecognized contradiction, in which we are simultaneously holding two contradictory points of view that cancel each other out. On one level of our mind, we know these perspectives to be contradictory, but we perform an act of self-entrancement in which we create amnesia about

this knowledge and believe both points of view to be true, all the while hiding from ourselves our act of self-bewitchment. We can justify our actions based on the belief that we are using a higher form of logic, all the while fooling ourselves about the fact that we are simply fooling ourselves. There is a process of self-hypnosis that is at the root of the underlying cognitive dissonance implicit in this dynamic. Believing in the truth of a self-negating statement necessarily involves a splitting of the mind, for to invest in the truth of a self-negating statement forces one to deny and then forget the underlying contradiction inherent in the statement. It is as if one is lying to oneself and then believing one's own lies. This dissociation is simultaneously both the cause and effect of the self-negating statement. It makes me want to create a new statement to amplify the absurdity of such statements: "I am against not being against anything."

In moments of lucidity, I continually re-discover that being awake is an all-embracing state, a state in which I embrace even the part of me that doesn't embrace. If I don't embrace the part of me that doesn't embrace (analogous to being against againstness), then I am unwittingly embodying the very state (not embracing) that I am reacting against, all the while believing I am doing the opposite. Unless such contradictions are seen through, self-negating statements induce in us a state of unconsciousness such that we disconnect from our discriminating wisdom and become susceptible to mind-control and brainwashing, not just within ourselves, but from the outside world as well. As George Orwell wrote about in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the "doublethink" necessary for self-negating statements to be believed ultimately paves the road to fascism. Fascism is ruling by force, whether in the outer world or within one's heart. Under the guise of passivism, not being against anything is ultimately a violent act against ourselves.

Sadly, the students who unquestionably follow such a "teaching" are complicit in and enabling their teacher's delusion, while at the same time giving away their power and literally offering a smorgasbord for wetiko to feast upon. In a collaborative dreaming process, such a teacher and teaching can ironically only exist by virtue of followers who are not against what is being taught. Sometimes, however, we are dreamed up by the

universe to strongly take a stand and say “no.” Yes, on one level what we resist persists. And on another level that is just as true, sometimes we are dreamed up by the field to oppose and resist what is happening, and if we don’t step into this role we are avoiding relationship with a part of ourselves. If we are truly called to be against something and refuse, we are giving away our power and literally dis-owning, abandoning, and disassociating from a part of ourselves.

Resistance

One characteristic of the wetiko psychosis is that it feeds off of people resisting it. This is to say that those who try to fight wetikos, in order to survive, often unknowingly end up adopting wetiko values. So on the one hand, in resisting wetiko, we are unwittingly supporting it and becoming its agents. And yet, in another articulation of a wetiko-inspired conundrum, if we don’t resist wetiko’s advances, we then become under its sway. I don’t imagine that the members of the French underground who were resisting the Nazi’s occupation of their country during World War II could be convinced that what they were doing was not the right thing.

Another example of how cleverly wetiko can inspire people with the best of intentions to unwittingly serve its nefarious agenda: sometimes, spiritual practitioners use the mantra “whatever we resist persists” as an excuse and justification to deceive themselves and avoid stepping into the very role being demanded of them by the universe. Why was Jacob wrestling with the angel? Because he would have been killed otherwise. It is important to differentiate between what I call “reactive resistance” and “proactive resistance.” Reactive resistance is a habitual pattern in which we unconsciously react against something out of fear and avoidance of what it touches within ourselves, thereby giving power to the very thing we are resisting. In reactive resistance, we are possessed by and complicit in the evil we are fighting against; what we *reactively* resist persists. Reactive resistance is the link in the chain that secretly, reciprocally feeds into and is fed by evil. In an infinite feedback loop, our contraction against what we are reactively resisting is the very thing that feeds the resistance,

as it is our resistance itself that is the very thing that creates the thing we're resisting.

Conversely, proactive resistance is an activity in which we consciously and creatively respond out of a sense of empowerment. Proactive resistance is when we step into the role of standing up for ourselves when our situation invites us to—or better, demands that we—pick up this role. In our current day and age, each of us is being asked to bring forth the truth of our being in a particularly unique and creative way; “incarnation” is about showing up. We need to “step up to the plate,” to use an analogy from our national pastime, and engage with, participate in, and get involved in the greater body politic in whatever way that suits our innate talents, sensibilities, and aesthetic. As each human cell has a different role in the body, likewise, in the greater organism of humanity, each has a task which perfectly suits the skills of the individual as well as the needs of the whole. In proactive resistance we speak with our true “voice.” If we cling to thinking that being a spiritual practitioner means to unilaterally not resist anything (similar to being attached to not being against anything), in that moment we split off from and disown a part of our totality, as we are, in essence, avoiding relationship with a part of ourselves. Being a genuine spiritual practitioner means not clinging to any fixed perspective, no matter how spiritual it appears.

From the ultimate point of view, our deepest contractions and resistances, though seemingly obscurations to our true nature, can be recognized to be the impermanent, unmediated expression of our true nature. If we don't recognize this, we will react to our resistance as though it is something objectively real and separate from ourselves, seeing it as a true obstruction to our enlightenment. If our resistance is seen in this way, it will, in no time whatsoever, spontaneously shape-shift and manifest as a seemingly genuine obscuration, as it is nothing other than our own reflection, and we will once again be caught in the self-generated, infinite regression known as samsara or cyclic existence. On the other hand, if we recognize our resistance as the expression of our true nature and the particular form that it is taking at that moment, not only does the resistance not last very long, but it ceases to be problematic, for we are no longer resisting our resistance, and have

thus snapped out of our infinite regression. The resistance reveals itself to be the very vehicle through which we have deepened our realization, as we have embraced even the part of ourselves that is non-embracing.

Spiritually Informed Political Activism

Just as in a dream, the outer world is the externalization and materialization of our inner process, as if the outside world is our inner process projected onto the screen of time and space. This is to say that the outer world can be recognized to be the medium through which we can work on integrating and transforming our inner process. Paradoxically, we transform our inner process by engaging with and participating in the outer world, while simultaneously transforming the outer world by working on our inner process. As we track wetiko, we discover that its “fingerprints” are found in those places in our lives where we lack consciousness of the correspondence between the inner and the outer. Wetiko manifests when we are not in “self-referral” (self-reflection), but rather, are in “object-referral,” fixating on the problem as though it is separate from and outside of ourselves.

The wetiko bug gets enlivened when we artificially keep parts of ourselves separate from each other that should be in relationship with and cooperatively helping each other. For example, we need to step into our roles as “spiritually informed political activists,” or to say it differently, “politically active spiritual practitioners,” where spiritual understanding informs our political actions in the world. If we keep these two inner figures—spiritual practitioners and political activists—separate within ourselves, this is an expression of our inner fragmentation, and nonlocally feeds the wetiko psychosis in the field. These two critically important roles co-join and interpenetrate each other so fully that they synergistically complement and complete each other like two parts of a greater whole. This whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts, as a greater, benevolent force is activated and empowered when these two levels of experience mutually embrace, support, and cross-pollinate each other. When these two levels collaboratively work together, something is birthed, as these

two dimensions “flesh each other out,” which is what genuine incarnation is all about. These two disciplines need to creatively interpenetrate and impregnate each other to be truly effective. Either one by itself separate from the other makes us susceptible to becoming unwitting instruments for the wetiko bug to propagate itself in the field.

Some spiritual practitioners, for example, use their practice as a way to avoid dealing with real world problems. Every genuinely accomplished spiritual practitioner that I know, on the other hand, is fully engaged with and participating in life. Spiritual practitioners who don't recognize the outer universe as a continually unfolding revelation of their inner process become entranced by and absorbed into the spell of their own narcissism and ironically, in their quest for enlightenment, fall into a state of self-hypnosis which limits their active participation in the world and is lacking in genuine compassion. Dis-engaging from the greater body politic as an avoidance of being in relationship with a part of themselves, they are unwittingly supporting the cause of wetiko.

In our current world crisis, we all need to do something, even if in certain rare and exceptional cases this may look like “doing nothing” other than simply meditating, praying, or being in the present moment. If, as spiritual practitioners, we are truly called to this “action-less action,” instead of being an avoidance, in this case our “doing nothing” is a conscious response to what is going on both inside and outside of ourselves and can be a proactive way of facing what is actually occurring. Consciously embodying the simple presence of being is a very powerful form of spiritually informed political activism, which profoundly affects the greater field. Our simply being present, however, in no way precludes our being socially and politically active in a more participatory way if we so choose or are so chosen. The combination of embodied presence with direct action inspired and guided by this heightened awareness is a particularly powerful agent of genuine change in our world.

The (arche)typical political activists, in fighting against the perceived darkness in the world as if it is separate from themselves, are unwittingly acting as a conduit to create and sustain the very thing they are fighting against. In fighting the system, they're still in it. Fighting against evil in

this way, they are unconsciously reacting against something in themselves, which is a form of aggression that perpetuates the diabolical polarization in the field, the calling card of wetiko. Fighting the devil is radically different from loving God. If they are unconsciously taken over by and acting out feelings of anger and hatred toward the perceived evil-doers, these political activists, however well intentioned, are feeding the spiritual poisons inside their own souls. Lacking in genuine compassion, they are then unwittingly supporting the plague of wetiko.

As spiritual practitioners we can recognize, bear witness to, and actively engage in the deeper, archetypal process that is being revealed to us as it plays itself out through the world and ourselves. At the same time, we can connect with each other and act as compassionate political activists who are fully participating in the unfolding body politic of the world. Combining these two roles within ourselves is to truly “occupy” our true selves and is the intersection through which we simultaneously expand our consciousness and become empowered and empowering agents of effective action who can literally change the world.

New Age

Spiritual/New Age practitioners who endlessly affirm the light while ignoring the shadow are one more example of yet another style of falling under the spell of wetiko. It’s a beautiful thing to visualize and affirm the light, just not as an unconscious or fearful reaction against the darkness. Many metaphysical “light-workers” are actually caricatures of genuine spiritual practitioners, as in their affirmations of the light they are unwittingly avoiding conscious relationship with the darkness within themselves. Thinking that they don’t want to “feed the darkness” by putting their attention on it, in their turning away from and avoiding their own darkness, they are unwittingly reinforcing the very evil from which they are fleeing. Looking away from the darkness, thus keeping it unconscious, is what evil depends upon for its existence. If we unconsciously react, as compared to consciously respond, to evil by turning a blind eye toward it—“seeing no evil”—we are investing the darkness with power over us.

It is true that we don't want to focus on the darkness too much, lest we invest it with unwarranted power and energy. On the other hand, we create genuine peace not by turning away from the darkness out of fear, but by becoming instruments through which the radiant light of consciousness shines upon the darkness so as to dispel its apparent power over us.

In trying to magically wish the very real effects of evil out of existence by denying that it exists, and thereby refusing to attend to any signs of its operations within themselves, many well-intentioned, spiritually inclined people are unknowingly participating in a form of denial that strengthens and supports the reality of what they are denying. This "New Age" stance requires little in the way of reflection or action. In solely identifying with the ultimate, absolute point of view, that is, seeing everything as "perfect," they are unwittingly marginalizing the relative world of flesh and blood, without realizing that the relative and absolute levels of reality interpenetrate each other so fully that they are inseparably one. Overly identified with the light and trying so very hard to be pure, they become rigid, self-righteous, and one-sided, which guarantees that they will act out their shadow in the world unconsciously, and hence destructively.

These "light-workers" generally run the other way screaming in horror when someone has the temerity to even mention the word "evil." I personally had an experience of this after the first edition of this book was published. For many years I've given lectures at the very popular, spiritual, metaphysical New Age bookstore in the city where I live. A week or so after setting up a book release event at the store, I was told by the bookstore that not only were they not going to carry my book, but they were also canceling the book release event. The bookstore's reason? My book was, in their opinion, "focusing too much on evil, wasn't 'uplifting' enough, and offered no solutions." It was clear to me (at least in my imagination) that they got triggered by the mention of the word "evil," or some other shadowy thing I wrote about. Ironically, this kind of reaction to my work is a classic example of one of the very processes that I was trying so diligently to illumine in the book. I suspect they never read the book; I can't imagine that they would feel the way they did if they had (on the slight chance that they did read it, they clearly didn't understand it).

I didn't pursue the dialogue, as the bookstore, though no doubt having the best of intentions, felt very self-righteously and non-negotiably fixed in their "spiritual" point of view.

Some well-intentioned spiritually inclined people suffer from a form of woolly mindedness and fuzzy thinking. They interpret in a literal sense spiritual teachings that are meant to be understood metaphorically and symbolically. They hear teachings that point out that there is nothing to do, that we already are enlightened, which is true at the absolute level, and use this to justify their complacency and laziness at the relative level. They hear advanced spiritual teachings that tell them to embrace all of themselves in a way that they will use to justify acting out their unconscious abuse. They interpret teachings that point out that the universe is a dream as an excuse for not dealing with their responsibilities in the nuts and bolts world of relative reality. They interpret the empirical evidence that points to that there is no "objective" reality outside of themselves to mean...God knows what. These are all hidden forms of spiritual materialism, or just plain ignorance, and they are all ways that the wetiko virus uses to implement its agenda. There is a reason why many wisdom traditions will not give out their highest teachings to the uninitiated.

I'd be remiss if I didn't point out another way that wetiko deviates our perceptions. Over the course of history countless people have been killed in the "name" of religion. On the one hand, developing a truly "religious" outlook on life, in which we establish a genuine relationship with the living creative spirit and deepen our connection with our soul, is fundamental for our health, vitality, and wholeness. On the other hand, to connect with our true nature, we don't need any person or institution outside of ourselves to mediate the holy and whole-making spirit for us, as we discover that we can cultivate an intimate relationship with spirit that is based on our own living experience. When a house of worship such as the church becomes institutionalized, however, it can't help but to keep the "holy spirit" well chained up (as this is good for "business").

The one thing we most need salvation from is the notion of salvation itself. When we connect with our true nature, we liberate ourselves from the pretensions of a salvation that would save us. Religious groups

that believe in an off-planet deity who is going to come down and save humanity help to provide the underlying cover and inspiration for the crusaders of wetiko to wreak havoc on our planet. In an extreme and very virulent form of wetiko's illogic, fundamentalists who buy into end-time prophecies are completely misguided, so much so that they are willing to destroy other people to prepare for the coming of "Christ the Redeemer." We are in a very dangerous situation: because of the position of power in which some people in the extreme religious right find themselves, they can literally dream up and materialize a self-fulfilling prophecy that helps to create the very apocalypse they are imagining is prophesied. In a perversely self-reinforcing feedback loop, the more death and destruction that happens, the more this serves as evidence, confirming to them the truth that their deluded end-time scenario is actually occurring as prophesied. In a diabolical self-validating vicious cycle, the religious right is ignoring the role they themselves are playing in inadvertently creating the very thing they are using as evidence to prove the rightness of their viewpoint. A clearer, more dangerous example of wetiko at work is hard to imagine.

To try to convince or enlighten someone stricken with wetiko about the error of their ways is comparable to attempting to show a person who is mad how not to be mad, which is a simply mad thing to do. It is then as if their madness has become contagious and triggered our own unconscious madness. I am talking from personal experience; I myself have fallen prey to this form of wetiko numerous times. For people who are not seeing the evil of wetiko, which is equivalent to being infected by it, it is not a matter of preaching the light to them, for they are unable to see, as if they are blind. If we see that someone is suffering from a form of blindness, why would we attempt to show them the light? It is pointless to praise the light to those who cannot see it, especially if they are convinced that they do see it. Wetiko is a form of psychic blindness that imagines itself to be sightedness. It is far better to teach people the art of seeing, as well as to embody and model the very realization that we're wanting them to achieve. If we want someone to be able to see their blindness, we have to be willing to see our own blind spots. If I'm trying to "enlighten"

WETIKO IN ACTION

someone stricken with wetiko, then who is the one not seeing, but myself? I'm then doing the very thing, that is, blindly acting out my unconscious, that I see them doing, which is to say that in my unconscious reaction to seeing wetiko in others, I myself have become its carrier. This is not to say, however, that if we see someone afflicted with wetiko who is open to our reflections, we shouldn't offer them our insights, infused with what in Buddhism is called "skillful means," combined with not being attached to whether or not they receive our offering.

13

Vampire Squid Economics

A Case Study in Full-Blown Wetiko Disease

Wetiko is nonlocal, in that it is an inner disease of the spirit, soul, and psyche that explicates itself through the canvas of the outside world. Certain people, groups of people, corporate bodies, and nation-states embody and act out this psychological malady in the world. Specific situations in the world, such as the destruction of the Amazon rainforest by myriad multinational corporations, or Monsanto instituting terminator seeds as it tries to gain control of the production of the food supply, are real-life enactments, both literally and symbolically, of this self-destructive, inner process. There are many potent symbols in our shared waking dream that are literally showing us this inner, vampiric dynamic, a stupefying process in which we get bled dry of what really counts.

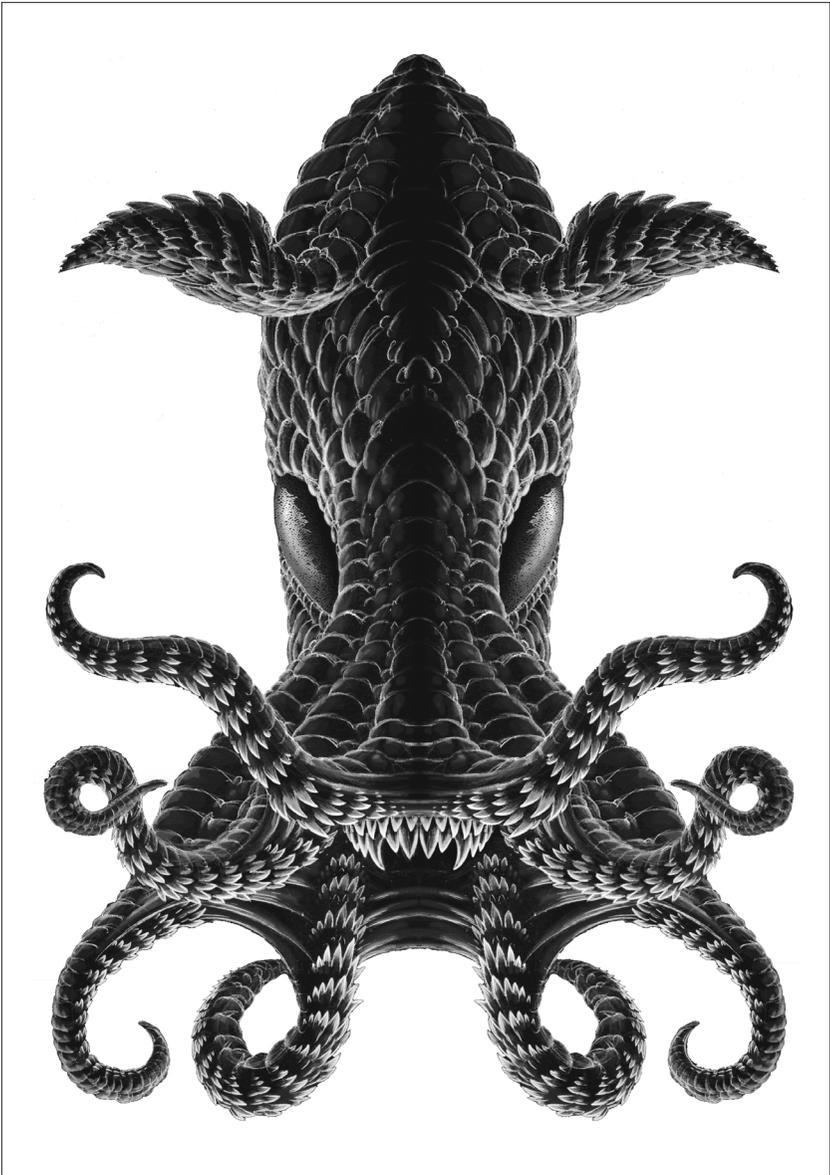
Seen as a symbolic entity, the destructive force working through the global financial system, for example, is the revelation of the essential features of wetiko disease displayed graphically and schematically in its architecture, operations, and overall design, such that anyone with a trained eye can discern the telltale signs and spore prints of this maleficent psychopathology getting down to business. The global economy (which can appropriately be referred to as the “wetikonomy”) displays the fear and scarcity-based, linear logic of wetiko disease as it reduces everything to the bottom line of dollars and cents. Only concerned with

the immediate gratification of short-term profits to feed its never-ending hunger for more and ever more money, the wetikonomy destroys the genuine wealth of the whole system, considering people, communities, and the environment to be nothing more than collateral damage. We are living inside of a horrifying, abstract, dissociated, multiple-personality economic structure that itself is a living symbol and representation of the out-of-control insanity of the wetiko virus running rampant throughout the collective human psyche. The corruption in the global financial system is one of the most rapid vectors and pathways through which the ravenous virus of wetiko is wreaking havoc, propagating itself and going pandemic in our world.

The current economic corruption is a projection of the collective human psyche, but particularly the psychology of the Big Wetikos, who hold disproportionate power in crafting the operating system of the global economy and in running its day-to-day operations in the world. In the wetikonomy, money has become indispensable for our biological survival, as well as our psychological well-being and need for social prestige. This results in the drive for acquiring money being increasingly conditioned into us to the point of becoming practically hardwired into the most primal centers of our lower, animal nature. This can generate a dependency that can easily lead to a treadmill that spirals downward toward degeneracy, a true “rat race” in which we become addicted to chasing after “the buck,” as we increasingly worship “Mammon” (the god, or demon, of the love of money).¹ Interestingly, the esteemed economist John Maynard Keynes considered the love of money a form of mental illness. Our need for money becomes the “hook” through which the Big Wetikos, who control the supply and value of money, can “yank our leash” and manipulate humanity. To say it differently, the current economy is engineered by a few, the Big Wetikos, who then utilize their creation to manipulate the collective human psyche and in so doing influence and warp it in ways that serve their wetikoized agenda.

Using the global financial and monetary system as our case study, we can gain insight into and understanding of how the wetiko virus operates in the psyche and in the world, which are both interactive and

Vampire Squid Economics



Drawing by Luke Brown, *Vampire Squid*, 8½" x 11", multimedia, 2011

WETIKO IN ACTION

co-creative reflections of each other. The invention of money was a breakthrough in human affairs, an innovation in which real wealth is allowed to be symbolically represented by something else. Money is a construct, something made up, which adds liquidity and convenience in the trading of goods and services that have value. The wetiko germ, however, can usurp anything to serve its nefarious and pernicious agenda. Even the best of ideas, in the hands of the wrong people, can turn into weaponry; one person's eco-village is another person's labor camp. The wetiko virus is like a parasite that feeds off, takes over, and aberrates the curren(t)cy of the infected system. The wetiko-created fiat money system is the doorway through which a deviant distortion in this cooperative process of exchanging value among ourselves emerges. A fiat-based money system is itself neither all good nor all bad; it can work well if managed properly; we don't want to demonize fiat-currency itself as being the sole root of the problem. The root of the problem is never in any system per se, but in how and for what purpose a system is used; the root of the problem lies in human motives, which is to say it is to be found within the psyche. The wetikonomy's fiat-currency is not backed by real value, however, but rather, is a system in which, as if by magic, money is created out of thin air, using debt (that by design can never be repaid) to create a chronic need for more money in an endless cycle. This gives rise to the wetiko-inspired thought-form that we can never have enough money, which creates an endless sense of need and thereby engenders and even justifies a sense of greed. This never-ending impulse to acquire money can cause people, as if becoming addicts, to become "money-junkies." Having fallen through the rabbit hole, we now live in a world where money materializes simply by decree (fiat) of an elite cabal of Big Wetikos, who can exchange these tokens of value they have conjured up for the time, life force, and natural resources of everyone else.

The wetikonomy is basically a legitimized counterfeiting operation. The Big Wetikos use their military and police state "enforcement" resources to ensure that others cannot accumulate and circulate capital outside of their system by creating their own currencies or stock

exchanges. As if that isn't bad enough, in a further diabolic sleight of hand, this virtual fiat currency, backed by nothing real and having no intrinsic value in and of itself, is then equated with debt, thus making it *worse* than nothing (i.e., worth less than nothing). Instead of being equity-based, which facilitates the allocation of capital and trade and builds alignment and cooperation, the wetikonomy is debt-based, which facilitates warfare, what financial analyst James Turk calls the "central banking-warfare model." Based on the principle of "buy now, pay later" (reminiscent of making a Faustian bargain in which we sell our soul to the devil), a debt-based financial system is rigged so as to ensure that the financiers win, no matter what the outcome. This total inversion of our concept of value itself is a glaring symbol in our midst primal-screaming to us that there is something *terribly* amiss with our financial system. There is indeed something seriously wrong with a virtual, bubble economy that is decoupled from the real economy and is dictated and manipulated by the few at the expense of the many.

The over-leveraged wetiko economy is a "phantom menace," in that financial speculation becomes more and more important while, at the same time, there is less and less real, substantial value changing hands except in appearance. Unlike a real economy that is based on, is backed by, and generates genuine wealth, the wetikonomy, because it has no conventional solid, objective, substantial reality, has only a phantom-like, apparent existence. It is as if authors of a fantasy novel or a fairy tale are trying to "market" and "sell" their creation as nonfiction, and we, as consumers, are "buying" it, believing it to be true. Collectively pretending the fiction is real, we have forgotten that we are playing a mass game of "make believe." The bubble economy of wetiko is a confidence game (a "con" game), a con-struct of our mind maintained in each moment by the belief that the system is real, solvent, and legitimate. This belief, or rather, "suspension of disbelief," is enforced by the threat and specter, in the background (and increasingly in the foreground), of force used on those who don't buy into the system.

The core problem, however, is not the nature of the currency system nor the financial markets. The root of this problem is that certain select

people, as if they are above the law, can commit violent acts of larceny and pillage with impunity. These select people are wetiko's living representatives and a direct reflection of how the germ of wetiko incorporates itself within a system and corrupts the economy of a human psyche. A small group of people—the global elite—are permitted to manipulate and control behind the scenes what plays out on the global financial stage to their own benefit. For example, in a true criminal enterprise, the same people who control the wetikonomy have gamed the system such that they control the financial data that gives them the ability to trade on insider information throughout the economy, endlessly enriching themselves at the expense of everyone else—a clearer picture of wetiko “in business” is hard to imagine. The wetikonomy itself is engineered by those in power to help them steal from everybody else with ever-greater efficiency and efficacy. It is truly shocking to realize that we do not live in a system that is governed by the “rule of law.” If we simply change or reform the currency and financial systems, leaving the centralized governance that controls and oversees things in place, while the psyche out of which the whole system ultimately emerged remains unconscious, nothing will be solved, as the same problems will persist and reappear in a new (dis)guise.

A virtual, synthetic economy such as ours is a product cooked up by the fevered imagination of the wetiko financiers. Like a collective dream, or a mass spell, it is a concoction based upon mutually shared agreements among its participating members. The wetikonomy in which we live, unlike a free market economy, is subject to the intervention of and manipulation by the central bank (in the United States—“The Fed”), an “entity” which has interposed itself between us and the market. The agency of the central bank, in its attempts to interfere with and control a natural, self-regulating marketplace, is a living symbol of the wetiko pathogen and how it disrupts a living system by trying to centralize control. In a truly co-dependent relationship that symbolizes how we can become perversely entangled with the wetiko bug within our own minds, the central bank is supported in its legal and financial force by the regulatory powers of the related governments and physical force of the military and intelligence agencies that it helps to finance. Once the inherent balancing forces of a

system, be it the economy or the psyche, are co-opted, usurped, and corrupted by wetiko, these regulating powers, instead of reigning in wetiko's malevolence, co-dependently feed this virulent germ while at the same time feeding off of it. This perverse outer process is a reflection of how wetiko co-dependently entangles itself within our minds in such a way as to parasitically keep itself in business as it drains us of our inner resources.

Just as a vampire can't stand to be seen and thus avoids the light of day at all costs, as it is only able to operate under the deceptive cover of darkness, so the very nature of the institutions and operations by which the phantom wetikonomy functions must be kept hidden from the light of public awareness. The financial instruments of the wetikonomy are purposely crafted to be incredibly complex and hard to understand so as to hide and obfuscate the theft that is happening. Hiding the reality of what they are doing is one of the chief features of wetiko finance. Replacing the transparency which is essential to free markets with opacity, it has become standard accounting practice in the wetikonomy to "cook the books" so as to avoid being held accountable. In a totally inverted model that is the opposite of a healthy economic system, there is no privacy for the individual investor and consumer, while there is near complete privacy for the controlling parties. If clearly illuminated and exposed to the light of collective disclosure and transparency, the shell-game and Ponzi scheme that *is* the global financial system will be revealed to be the staggering and unlawful deception that it is. In a vast computerized web of electronic transfers and accounting shenanigans, the global economic system has become an insanely desperate pyramid scheme, a high-tech casino-like scam. A monstrous, planetwide Madoff-like rip-off performed with smoke and mirrors, the wetikonomy is like a massive optical illusion that is projected by the Big Wetikos, a cadre of master spell-casting wizards, who have nearly infinite resources at their disposal to make their illusion seem real. The wetikonomy, like apparitions of majestic castles in the sky, is a magical display that captivates and holds spellbound the credulous, semi-conscious masses, who are more than willing, based on their childlike need to hope and believe in an authority outside of themselves, to give away their power so as to

quell their fear. This is a regressed form of magical thinking writ large on the world stage.

At first glance, an optical illusion appears one way, but when we investigate further, we can see the illusion for what it really is. If this grand financial illusion were to be unmasked and collectively seen through, the underlying and pervasive “fraud as a business model” approach to running the global economy would reveal itself to be the spectral phantasm that it is. Once the seemingly rock-solid, concrete skyscrapers of the wetikonomy reveal themselves to be a stage set with nothing behind it, built on ever-shifting sand, it is not enough just to realize this and do nothing. It is then our responsibility to re-create and re-dream a different set of agreements regarding how to be in relationship with each other. This sets the stage to re-engineer the system of wetikoized control mechanisms that, through locked-in contractual relationships, freezes the economy in a corporate and wetikoized trajectory. The power structure in a wetikoized society is inherently fiscal instead of political, which is why political change doesn’t result in economic change. It is the banks that control the government, not the other way around. As our collective realization gathers momentum, however, such a process of waking up en masse could dissolve the wetikonomy to its empty core, bursting the bubble economy and collapsing the whole artificial edifice—the artifice—of fake finance, like the house of cards that it is. This realization lays the groundwork for a more enlightened financial and investment system grounded in real economics, a healthy environment, and the cultivation of a humane human civilization. The Occupy movement is the “green shoots” of this atemporal realization, as if the potential future universe of a healthy economy has emanated itself back in time in, as, and through the Occupy movement.

The unsustainable illusion that is the wetikonomy, however, is based on and supported by violence or the threat of violence, from a personal level up to the capacity to collectively wage war, both visible and invisible. The ability and willingness to kill is not an illusion. This is why many people collude in supporting and perpetuating the illusion, for to not do so inevitably leads to some form of coercion, which is a subtle (or

not so subtle) form of violence. In the highly uncivilized world of the wetikonomy, “might makes right.” The nature of the beast that we are dealing with needs to be factored into the equation of how we creatively and strategically respond.

The wetikonomy, to use journalist Matt Taibbi’s infamous phrase describing the world’s most powerful investment bank Goldman Sachs, is a “vampire squid” that is sucking, draining off, and redistributing more and more wealth from the poor, and the formerly middle class, into the hands of the already unthinkably wealthy. This “great vampire squid,” to quote Taibbi, is “wrapped around the face of humanity, relentlessly jamming its blood funnel into anything that smells like money.”² Unlike a real economy that creates wealth, the vampire squid wetikonomy, a global, organized crime syndicate, extracts and extorts wealth from the real economy and from real people like you and me. There is an actual creature called *Vampyroteuthis infernalis*, which literally translates as “vampire squid from hell,” a living symbol and perfect description of wetikonomics.

Writing about Goldman Sachs, which, as Taibbi reminds us, is “everywhere,” he calls it “not a company of geniuses [which is its self-created reputation], it’s a company of criminals.”³ Taibbi revealingly refers to Goldman Sachs as “a parasitic enterprise that has attached itself to the American government and taxpayer and shamelessly engorged itself on us all.”⁴ Goldman Sachs, which Taibbi refers to as a “planet-eating Death Star,” can be said to be a symbol of the wetikonomy as a whole. Taibbi further describes Goldman Sachs as “a huge, highly sophisticated engine for converting the useful, deployed wealth of society into the least useful, most wasteful and insoluble substance on earth, pure profit for rich individuals.”⁵ Taibbi, in describing the “engine” of Goldman Sachs, is pointing at the direct consequences of the wetiko virus running rampant and feasting on the living body of humanity.

The Big Wetikos are debt “pushers,” in that they inject credit into the would-be victim, artificially enlarging, pumping up, and ultimately poisoning the recipient. The more money owed the better, as the bigger the meal of debt off of which the predators will be able to cannibalistically

feed. The bigger the debt, the deeper the pockets they can pick, and the more blood there is for the vampires to drink. They create VSID—“Vampire Squid Induced Debt,” whose victims become its slaves and indentured servants. As it says in Proverbs 22:7, “The borrower is servant to the lender.” The modern-day, debt-based wetikonomy is designed to have an exponentially ever-increasing debt that in principle can never be paid off, analogous to how in wetiko disease there exists an insatiable hunger that can never be satisfied. Throughout history, debt has served as a way for states to control their subjects and extract resources from them. The antimimon spirit of wetiko is a counterfeiting operation: as it creates currency it simultaneously increases the debt, a process which is presented as the best way to keep the economy going. In actuality, however, it is doing the exact opposite—sucking the real economy dry.

The economic system imposed on humanity by the rapacious Big Wetikos is a perversion of the original, wholesome meaning of the word “eco-nomy,” which has the same root as the word “eco-logy,” and refers to the harmonious management of a household. The wetikonomy, instead of creating value and wealth that can be shared by all, impoverishes and enslaves the vast majority of humanity while simultaneously enriching the Big Wetiko predators. Big Wetikos are the “anti-Robin Hoods” of this world, as they rob from the poor to give to the rich (themselves). The Big Wetikos buy up all of the assets that have tangible, real world value, like land for example, in exchange for their made-up fiat currency. Once the exchange is made, and they are in possession of the stuff of real value, they then devalue and debase the currency, which becomes “worth-less” as time passes. The people are left holding an empty bag, while the Big Wetikos are increasingly in possession of everything else of value. The Big Wetikos are financial terrorists, actively engaged in warfare against humanity, using weapons of financial mass destruction (WFMDs).

In a wetikonomy, a perverse synergy occurs in the revolving door between government and high finance. The political system becomes a front for and extension of the banks. The United States Treasury is bankrupt, which is to say that it is owned by the banks. Having the upper hand, an international clique of banking elites are the ones who give

the orders and, appearances to the contrary, choose the politicians who will occupy the positions of power to do their bidding. This is clearly evidenced by President Obama stacking his cabinet with the very same people who created the economic crisis in the first place, all of whom have intimate insider connections with and allegiance to a corrupt cabal of high financiers. Our political process is merely “theater” that creates the convincing display that we have the “illusion of choice” and that we live in a functioning democracy governed by the rule of law; it is truly a stage set, a distraction designed to keep the masses “spellbound” and asleep. It can’t be pointed out often enough—the political process that is playing out on the national and world stage is a symbolic reflection revealing the inner workings of the body politic of wetiko within our own minds.

In a wetikonomy such as ours, the Big Wetikos who create economic crises get rewarded for their actions, gaining untold riches. Think of the bank bailouts, a criminal heist of historical proportions, where the banks blackmailed our nation, putting a metaphorical gun to our government’s head, threatening that if we don’t give them what they ask for, they will crash the global economy and we will have martial law. We acquiesced at the expense of our national sovereignty. True to form, there was very little accountability regarding how the banks used this money, and much of what happened to it is still a mystery. In the total opposite of what happens in a “real” economy, in the bailout, money was invested and sucked into the least productive aspect of the economy—the financial system—all at the expense of the taxpayers. The Big Wetikos get the booty, and the risks and liabilities are then dumped onto the general population, increasing our nation’s debt, and turning almost everyone else into “serfs.” The inevitable austerity measures—for example, cuts in retirement benefits and social services—will then be put squarely on the backs of the working people. Taxpaying citizens will be forced to pay off the debt over decades of hard work and toil, as they become indentured servants to the bank. As it is said, “Crime that pays, stays.” We live in a “klepto-plutocracy”—a ruler-ship by really wealthy thieves. We need to wake up to the reality that we are being taken for all that we are worth.

The result is the largest gap in the distribution of wealth between the rich and poor since right before the start of the Great Depression in 1929, which creates enormous economic instability, a situation that the Big Wetikos can then use to their own advantage. This transferring of assets from the broad class of working people and entrepreneurs to the super-rich is no accident, but is purposefully being implemented by the cold-blooded, Big Wetiko banksters and power brokers, who operate as a global banking cartel, so as to continually centralize their power and control. Unfortunately, this isn't some sort of wacky conspiracy theory. The evidence is all around us, fully visible to anyone who has the eyes to see beyond the carefully crafted, stage managed, and widely disseminated spell that is being woven all around us. All we have to do to see is open our eyes and look. The network of wetiko is threaded throughout the entire warp and woof of the global economic system. A global robbery is in progress; the Big Wetikos are enacting a financial coup d'état⁶ of staggering proportions right in front of our eyes; this whole process is a glaring reflection of wetiko. It is quite potently symbolic that the one time in the New Testament that Jesus got really angry was toward the money-changers. Big Wetikos in positions of power in high finance, manipulating the markets so as to loot the planet's treasuries and precious resources, have become the modern-day pirates, ransacking and pillaging humanity and all living things. What is happening in our world has more the "feeling" of an invasion from a parallel universe than a physical coup d'état. This is because the intrusion is taking place on the plane of mind, and only secondarily on the physical plane. If we could stop this covert incursion into our minds by wetiko it would be much easier to mitigate the outer wars that plague our world. This real world process is an externalized reflection of the psychic coup d'état being perpetrated by the wetiko bug within our own psyche. This is to say that we can recognize a deep process within ourselves as it is revealed to us in the seemingly outside world. Seeing this is to begin to spiritually awaken, as we aren't just waking up to the fact that we are being robbed, but are waking up to the deeper, dreamlike nature of our overall situation.

The Big Wetikos are not just draining the resources of individuals, but are sucking up the real assets of and taking down the economies of entire nations around the world. One striking symbol of this process is the IMF (International Monetary Fund), a vampire squid–like entity if there ever was one (along with its accomplice, the World Bank), contrary to their noble sounding rhetoric and public relations propaganda. The IMF in its current form is essentially a bankrupt institution backed by a cadre of banks that are themselves mostly insolvent. The IMF is constantly on the lookout for real assets to scarf up so as to sate its voracious debt-driven hunger. When a country finds itself in financial dire straits (a crisis oftentimes created by a coordinated, criminal cabal of financial terrorists that are in league with the IMF), the IMF swoops in, and, like the archetypal, sinister figure of “the moneylender,” offers a seemingly beneficent, helping hand in the form of bailouts to the ailing country in its time of need. The IMF, however, effectively loots and pillages the country that it is purportedly aiding, for once the country accepts the IMF’s “help,” the IMF winds up taking over the country’s real assets to pay back the loan, thus turning it into an economic hostage. The IMF and its associated financial terrorists then are in a position to forcibly seize the country’s assets, enacting a hostile takeover, which had been what was planned from the beginning. Each country that the IMF subjects to its “economic shock therapy” becomes a laboratory experiment by which it continually refines and perfects its financial weaponry. Multiple crises over the last few decades demonstrate the same pattern, including Russia in the 1990s, along with various Latin American countries. Then in the first part of the twenty-first century, the crisis in Europe shows a new level of sophistication, beginning with Greece, which is a brazen example of further refinements in this sinister experiment in how to financially take down and extract the wealth from an entire country. The resulting austerity measures that were imposed upon the intentionally hobbled countries are akin to a modern-day form of feudalism. The consequences of these financial assaults upon countries are not adequately reflected in abstract, technical measurements and statistics, but have very real human costs that are more often than not tragic if not devastating to the lives of

innocent people caught in the midst of these rapacious takeovers. As if stricken with an epidemic sickness, many people in these now enfeebled countries become ill, literally. Dramatically increasing suicide rates in countries under these financial assaults speak volumes about what is actually happening to the quality of people's lives in these countries.

One of the main signatures of wetikonomics is ever-increasing centralization of power and control, which is falsely presented as if it is an advance in the name of efficiency, progress, and integration, and deceptively portrayed as if it will serve to prevent future crises. This is a perfect example of wetiko's spirit of countermimicry in action as it attempts to centralize control over the whole system. This is an outer reflection of how the wetiko bug is always striving to consolidate control within a human psyche by whatever means it deems necessary. As the wetiko infection progresses in the global body politic, the worldwide economic system becomes gradually redesigned to become more centralized and to exert more and more effective top-down control by the few over the many, to the benefit of the elite few.

These very hard economic times we live in, unbelievably, are the times of record-breaking profits for certain select corporate conglomerates, the greatest profits *in all of history*. Are people aware of this eye-opening and mind-blowing fact? It is revealing that the very phrases used to describe the grand larceny occurring daily in and as the global financial system are terms that specifically apply to the psychopathology of wetiko disease, such as "predatory lending," "liar loans," "vulture capitalism," "zombie banks," "disaster capitalism," "financial terrorism," "monster capitalism," "voodoo economics," and "tapeworm economics,"⁷ to name but a few.

The one thing the Big Wetikos are most afraid of, however, is large numbers of people seeing through their charade and realizing that the emperor has no clothes; wetiko is like a vampire that has no clothes. If enough people clearly see what the Big Wetikos are doing—committing unconscionable crimes against humanity on a grand scale while they play roulette with our planetary inheritance—their gig will be up. This is an externalized reflection of how the wetiko virus within ourselves is terrified of being seen, for once the bug is seen, it is "out of business."

The global financial system is a symbolic reflection openly revealing the psychospiritual disease of wetiko “in business.”

The wetiko economic system is a bribery system. The Big Wetikos give us a tiny, overflow infinitesimal trickle, the minimal scraps of the over-the-top profits they unjustly reap, in which we gladly share. We then pretend that we are “clean,” that we are not complicit in the systematic evil that is playing out. We fall under the self-inflicted illusion that we are not responsible and are merely victims of the system, and yet, we are simultaneously feeding off and supporting the very evil of the system as it kills us. Energetically, on the level of the deeper, underlying field, we pay a steep price if we are buying into this Faustian pact with the devil. We receive what appear to be benefits, wetiko “frequent flyer miles,” so to speak, but at the ultimate cost of our own genocide. Similar to accepting candy from a predator, the rush of immediate gratification provides an apparent short-term benefit at the cost of our integrity, our freedom, and ultimately, our lives. Our collusion with and in the wetikonomy is an externalized reflection of our complicity with the wetiko bug within our own minds. Our true power comes when we see our culpability and complicity in this (inner and outer) process and accept our responsibility, thus enabling our ability to respond, which gives us the power to choose differently and change things.

The wetikonomy is both a symbol of and a portal through which we can see the bug of wetiko as it informs a living, yet diseased system emerging from the human mind. When we see the workings of the wetiko virus in any system, be it the financial system, the family system, or within our own selves, we are at the same time generating a living antibody of awareness which neutralizes the virulence of wetiko. Seeing how the global financial system is literally being animated and driven by the wetiko virus is to pop into a heightened state of awareness in which we are seeing a wetikoized system from outside of itself. We could only do this if we are beginning to see with healthy, wetiko-free eyes, and are thus separating and freeing ourselves from the toxic system. As we increasingly illumine the workings of wetiko, we more and more “distinguish ourselves” from it.

WETIKO IN ACTION

Our real debt is to ourselves; we owe it to ourselves to take a closer look and inform ourselves so as to see through the business of wetiko. In doing so, we can discover how money and healthy financial systems can be used as a tool that helps us cultivate and share true abundance. The return on our investment of attention will truly stimulate the neglected real economy and further inspire greater heights of lucidity. This allows us to tap into the place within ourselves that is untainted by wetiko, through which we can consciously leverage and redesign the system to our collective advantage, which is to say, for the benefit of all. Herein lies our power to overcome the scourge of wetiko, and in so doing, to build a world that works for everyone.

Part Five
Freedom from Wetiko

14

Wetiko No More

Wetiko-Free Psyche

One way to understand how the wetiko bug deviates the psyche is to contemplate a wholesome psyche free from wetiko's pernicious influence. In the same way that we become more acquainted with the light by studying how it contrasts to the dark, we can gain deeper insight into wetiko by studying it in contrast to what it is not. When I refer to a wetiko-free psyche, I am speaking in relative terms, in terms of degree, as wetiko can be understood to be a spectrum of deviance from our genuine wholeness that we all have in potential and which any of us can succumb to at any time. Being a field phenomenon, wetiko is something that we all have to come to terms with within ourselves. When we are firmly established in the wholeness of our true nature, instead of being food for wetiko, wetiko becomes fuel to deepen our realization.

As a starting point in our discussion, a wetiko-free psyche, I imagine, has woken up to the existence of the wetiko pathogen. Turned onto wetiko's nonlocal and shape-shifting nature, both as it plays out in the world and within ourselves, we become aware of the very real tendency within ourselves of self-deception, of how we all have the potential to fool ourselves via the creative power of our own mind. This realization of our potential susceptibility to self-deception, which could lead to unwittingly becoming instruments for the evil of wetiko to act itself out through us,

FREEDOM FROM WETIKO

serves as a psychic immunization, inculcating a true humility that safeguards against evil. Everyone, including ourselves, has the potentiality for falling into—and acting out—the unconscious. Because of our awareness of the possibility of pulling the wool over our own eyes, a relatively wetiko-free person cultivates on a daily basis the practice of “mindfulness,”¹ which serves as a guardian of the gates of our psyche. In addition, to use religious terminology, because we are aware of our potential weakness and yetzer ha-ra (Hebrew for the “evil inclination” within us), we develop a relationship with and rely upon a “higher power” beyond our own limited ego, whether we call it God, the Self, our daemon, our true nature, or whichever of the thousands of names by which it is called. This is very different from when we are afflicted with wetiko, as we are then unconsciously identified with this higher power, which is the very stance which allows us to get away with murder.

The healthy human psyche is primarily characterized by an empathic sensibility in relation to all apparent “others” as well as to the Whole of Existence. The wetiko pathogen simply cannot survive in so coherent a psyche because the wetiko deviation cannot grow in the healthy ground of a psyche pervaded with the felt sense of the radiant contiguity and unity of all Existence. The psychic substrate or “soil” of a psyche suffused with the felt sense of unity and radical non-separateness does not provide any toxic “nutrients” of fragmentation or separateness upon which the wetiko pathogen can feed and thereby ramify and propagate itself. Only in the fallow, poisoned, and infertile soil of a split-off sector of a psyche that presumes itself to be walled off and isolated from the rest of Existence and is thereby bereft of the felt sense of empathic and compassionate resonance with others and with the Universe as a Whole can the wetiko pathogen take root and grow into its myriad deviant varieties of psychopathic forms. The wetiko pathogen can only flourish within the specious hall of mirrors of a fragmented psyche because it is in Reality *nothing but* an artifact of the shattered mirror of the psyche. There is no autonomous, independent wetiko virus separate from the optical distortions and self-replicating hall of mirrors that creates the appearance of an independent virus that infects a psyche and gradually takes it over. In

fact it is the fragmented and broken wholeness of the psyche reflected through the hall of mirrors of its own lack of coherence with itself which creates an aberrant relationship with the very ground of the psyche, the light of Primordial Awareness itself. This distorted relationship with the light of Primordial Awareness is what creates both the illusion of the separate self and the illusion of the separate wetiko virus, as both are optical delusions and artifacts of an un-integrated and fragmented psyche. Therefore the cure for both delusions lies in the healing and Whole-ing of the psyche such that the broken mirror of the body/mind is restored to its original un-shattered, coherent condition. Then the very real seeming delusions within the fragmented state vanish and are revealed to have had no reality outside of being a spectral phantasm created by the hall of fractured mirrors of a shattered, traumatized, or un-integrated psyche. The wetiko pathogen then dissolves into the clear light out of which it arose—undermined and eliminated in the irradiation of the radiance of indivisible unity and the blazing fullness of a psyche having realized the always already existing truth of non-separation.

Wetiko progressively desensitizes us to the sentient (sensitive) nature of other beings. The wetiko pathogen breaks or engenders a progressive deterioration of the empathic bond which enables the holistic awareness of universal interconnectedness. It is this empathic feeling-connectedness that bridges the gap between self and other and helps us to see through the seemingly convincing illusion of the separate self. Wetiko-free people have what I call “tel-empathy,” a highly developed telepathic sense of empathy, which combines the intuitive, telepathic power of the mind with the empathic feeling of the heart. Unlike people afflicted by wetiko, a wetiko-free psyche has a strong sense of empathy, of being able to feel into another person’s experience and point of view, as if the quality of empathy has been “promoted” to be the guiding light of all of our relations with the world. Wetiko-free, we can find within ourselves the place that resonates, identifies, and relates with the other, thereby recognizing the other as a part of and not separate from ourselves, a realization which engenders compassion. Genuinely wanting the best for others, a healthy person has a felt sense that the well-being of all other beings is deeply

FREEDOM FROM WETIKO

connected to our own well-being. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama puts it, we should become “wisely selfish,” by which he means that in thinking of others’ welfare, because of our interconnectedness, we are ultimately benefiting ourselves. Buddhism calls this attitude the “precious bodhicitta,” which translates as the mind or the heart of awakening. Interestingly, the precious bodhicitta is the very attitude to be cultivated at the beginning of the path, while also being the very result that is accomplished. Simply put, in cultivating the precious bodhicitta, we are taking our narcissistic fixation off our selves, and are devoting our energies to be of service to others. Generating the precious bodhicitta, we are cutting through the illusory, dualistic pattern of relating to the world in terms of self and others. This realization instantaneously expands our compassion, connecting us with our deeper mission in life, as we invest in our newly found career as fledgling bodhisattvas. The precious bodhicitta is of the nature of a diamond, in that it cuts through wetiko, leaving wetiko no place to stand, while it itself cannot be harmed. The compassion at the heart of awakening which results from seeing through the “us versus them” duality dissolves the toxicity of wetiko on the spot.

In distinction to when we are afflicted with wetiko, which is to be continually grasping and clinging, attempting to fill a void within ourselves that can never be satiated, which is, in essence, to be coming from a place of lack, need, and scarcity, when we are wetiko-free we embody and express a place of wholeness, of fullness within ourselves. Not needing anything from outside of ourselves, the “economy” of our psyche is self-sustaining, neither depending upon nor requiring “imports” such as recognition or validation from outside of itself. Feeling safe within ourselves, we have no desire to impose our will, control, manipulate, coerce, or force others to do anything or be a certain way. Because we genuinely embrace and accept ourselves, others typically feel accepted when they are around us.

When we are wetiko-free, we are in touch with ourselves such that we don’t give away our power or feel compelled to take on other people’s point of view, be it about the world or ourselves. We are able to imagine how others see us, which are reflections that inform our own self-image

with potentially useful information about our own unconscious, but we don't necessarily buy into, take on, identify with, or get hooked by others' version of ourselves. We are therefore able to see and experience the world, and ourselves, through our own eyes. Having found the balance between being spontaneous while at the same time being able to, at least to a "good-enough" degree, control our desires and impulses, we don't just compulsively act out whatever idea falls into our head. We are able to delay short-term gratification with an awareness of the long-term view in mind. We have an appreciation and understanding of what in Buddhism is called "the law of karma," of cause and effect, which points out that it is our own "doing" that conjures up our experience and its fruits, for good and for ill. This understanding becomes the basis for an internally generated morality which engenders a great sense of self-responsibility. Jesus says in the Apocryphal texts, "If thou knowest what thou doest, thou art blessed; but if thou knowest not, thou art cursed and a transgressor of the law,"²² which is to say that it is consciousness itself that is the true basis of individual morality.

Seeing the world through wetiko-free eyes, we would be aware that there might be a difference between what we perceive or imagine is happening out in the world and what might actually be going on, which is to say that, unlike many people, we wouldn't conflate the two. We would not just assume that what we are seeing objectively exists, as we are aware of the projective tendencies of the mind to influence our perceptions at each and every moment. We'd be aware that what we are perceiving to be happening in the outside world oftentimes tells us as much, if not more, about what is going on within ourselves. This is tricky business, however, as some of us at certain points in our lives have had our perceptions marginalized and negated, so that for some, part of freeing ourselves from wetiko's influence is to stand up for the "objective truth" of our perceptions as a way of healing from having them wrongly dismissed in the past. Supporting our perceptions as having validity can be a vital phase in our healing; once we develop this capacity, we can then realize that our perceptions by their very nature are subjective, which instead of being a put-down, is simply the nature of how we all see the world differently.

FREEDOM FROM WETIKO

Wetiko-free, we are aware of the dreamlike nature of reality; we cannot help but see that the world and its experiences are in the nature of a symbol, reflecting back something that lies hidden within ourselves, in the realm of transsubjective reality. We realize that we can mytho-poetically re-imagine our lives, as well as our very selves, to reflect our shift in perspective from seeing things literally to realizing that the universe, just like a dream, is speaking symbolically. Instead of relating to our life in a literal, linear, and objectively existing way, in which we “author” our novel life as if writing prose, simply “reporting the facts,” when we are in touch with the dreamlike nature of reality, we realize that our moment-to-moment experience of ourselves and others is a function of our creative imagination. The expression of our experience is then not based on dogma or holy writ, but, to choose but one example of the numberless mediums at our disposal, on the holiness of writing itself. From this point of view, it is not the story of Christ that is liberating, but the storying Christ. We are literally being created and re-creating ourselves anew each moment. How we experience life is determined by the meaning we place on it, how we view it, the metaphors we use to contextualize it, and the story we tell ourselves about it. When we “tell our stories,” about ourselves, both to ourselves and others, it is important to differentiate: there’s a way of telling our story that solidifies and reinforces the spell we are under, and conversely, there’s a way of telling our story that liberates us from our spell. The first form of storytelling feeds wetiko, while the second type of storytelling dissolves wetiko and is worthy of the name “art.” Storytelling is a shamanic art-form through which we can, shaman-like, journey back in time and change the past, transforming the past by changing how it affects us in the present. The fictive power of the literary imagination is the imaginal power of the psyche, and as we develop this part of ourselves, we are like shamans, retrieving the lost “soul” not only of ourselves, but of humanity as a whole.

This realization highlights the importance of the “storying” part of our psyche, that is, the part of ourselves that is endlessly mythologizing, imagining, and dreaming through the events in our lives, as if creating a work of living art, of flesh and blood fiction. We can become agents of

awakening who help to creatively re-imagine and transform the prevailing myths of our culture, which have become rigidified, imprisoning, suffocating, and literally death-creating instead of life-enhancing. This is to creatively give (re)birth to the universe as an ongoing work of art, which is to realize that we are the creative artists through which the revelation of the universe as art becomes manifest. Just as in a dream at night, there is a deeper part of ourselves that is literally the “author” of our experience, a fundamental aspect of ourselves which invests us with genuine “authority” to create change in ourselves, and by extension, the world around us.

To awaken to the dreamlike nature of reality is to symbolically “kill” the mythic negative patriarchy, Saturn-Chronos. To be under the spell of the negative father, “Father Time,” is to be entranced and absorbed in “chrono”-logical, linear time at the expense of the timeless dimension of our being. There’s nothing inherently wrong with linear time; it’s simply a construct of the mind which can be a convenient tool for navigating our life, but it is a terrible master. To symbolically slay the negative patriarchy is to step out of being “time-bound” and find ourselves “syn-chronos,” in “dreamtime,” where time is experienced as a radial matrix whose center is here and now. Dreamtime is not linear but circular, not fixed but fluid, not mechanistic but natural, and not historical but ahistorical. Dissolving the figure of Father Time, no longer living by the clock in a world where “time is money,” however, we become introduced to the “syn-chronic” order. The synchronic order, whose timing frequency is a universal factor of synchronization, is a realm of infinite interconnectedness and inter-resonance between everything and everything else. In the synchronic realm the microcosm and macrocosm are synchronistic, mirrored reflections of each other, different iterations of the same underlying, harmonic fractal. This inter-nested fractal reflects a singular oneness eternally unfolding in endlessly diverse and novel patterns through multiple dimensions simultaneously. This realization not only changes our sense of time, but as if becoming “time travelers,” we have entered not only a different order of time, but a different time altogether. Symbolically slaying the negative patriarchy snaps us out of the spell and logic of linear time and introduces us to the four-valued logic of dreamtime

and the synchronic order. This is to “die” to the sense of being a “separate self” who is alien to and alienated from the universe, and to be “reborn” in and as spirit, interconnected and at one with all beings. This releases us into and as the present moment, the access point through which we connect with our true power to consciously change the shared waking dream we are having. As if agents from “outside of time,” we are able to be of genuine benefit to others and to our world as a whole, or so I imagine.

Freeing Ourselves from Wetiko

Any constellated, unconscious content which we are not in relationship with possesses us from behind and beneath our conscious awareness. This unconscious content is still too much a part of the frame of reference through which we interpret our experience for us to examine it with any objectivity. When we are unconscious of something that is activated within us, we are identified with it and are compelled to act it out unconsciously in our life. What we don’t know about ourselves is what we do—to the other. When we are unconscious of something that is kindled within us, Jung writes, “It moves us or activates us as if we were marionettes. We can only escape that effect by making it conscious and objectifying it, putting it outside of ourselves, taking it out of the unconscious.”³ If an unconscious content is not made conscious, it becomes a devilish factor that is always thwarting our best-laid plans. It is essential, therefore, to differentiate ourselves from this unconscious content so as to bring it into relationship with consciousness (see **active imagination** in the Glossary) and de-potentiate its demonic potentialities.

Regardless of our religious beliefs, or lack thereof, there is a psychological fact that we can *call* the devil. Jung writes, “To consciously take into account the existence of an evil factor would be the psychological equivalent of devil worship. Of course that is quite different from those [Satanic] cults that worship the devil under the symbol of a peacock, for instance.”⁴ On the contrary, in an act of devotion, undertaken for the love of our neighbor and ourselves, rather than projecting this evil factor onto our neighbor, it is a necessity to objectify and construct a devil

to carry our projections (a process, I might add, which is similar to how we “construct” a dream). Objectifying our devil-like complexes is the psychological equivalent to, in religious language, “casting out” the devil. When there is a diabolical, separating factor between us and someone else (be it our neighbor or our neighboring country), we need to “catch” this demon in an alchemical vessel in between us and our seeming enemy. To compare this devil to water: if we don’t create an image for it, this devil will either get projected outside of ourselves and poured all over others in a hurtful, destructive way, or it will flow and dissolve back into our own unconscious and not only will nothing be gained, but this will do us harm.

The seeming autonomy of these diabolical unconscious contents is a most uncomfortable thing to reconcile ourselves to, and yet the very fact that the unconscious presents itself in this way gives us the best means of handling it. This is to say that encoded and hidden in the seeming problem is its own resolution. It is not hard to objectify the contents of the unconscious, as being autonomous, they seemingly possess an identity all their own, so they naturally have a tendency to spontaneously personify themselves within our psyche. It is our unconscious identification with autonomous complexes that makes it so hard to get a handle on them. Objectifying and dialoguing with these contents allows us to get on “speaking terms” with them. Personifying and entering into conscious relationship with the figures of our unconscious *as if* they are autonomous, independent living entities takes away their compelling power over us. When they are fully objectified, we “distinguish ourselves” from them, which not only takes away the unconscious contents’ power over us, but allows us to access and unite with the power which animates them in a way that empowers us. The energy giving life to the seemingly darker powers then becomes a force serving the light. Relating to the contents of our unconscious as if they are other than ourselves is at the same time to relate to ourselves as other than these contents. In objectifying contents of the unconscious, we are simultaneously dis-identifying from them and creating ourselves distinct from and relative to these contents. As we see the “evil” part of ourselves, the part of us that is seeing the evil is free from

FREEDOM FROM WETIKO

it, for we couldn't objectify it otherwise. For example, if we have jaundice, we couldn't pick out what objects are truly yellow, for everything looks yellow. The part of us that is seeing the color yellow is the part of us that is "yellow-free." It is only in recognizing the evil within ourselves that allows us, by virtue of being the witness to it, to relate to it as "other" than ourselves; that is, the part of us that is witnessing evil is not the "guilty party."⁵ Paradoxically, recognizing these contents as other than ourselves is the very act that allows us to eventually own, embrace, and integrate these unconscious contents as parts of ourselves.

Just as a vampire can't stand the light of day, a bug like wetiko can't stand to be seen. The disease obfuscates itself, creating any number of distractions to hide behind, and will even react violently to being seen, for being seen takes away its seeming omnipotence. Flooding light on wetiko's machinations takes away its seeming autonomy and alleged power over us, such that it can no longer compel us to act it out unconsciously. "Seeing" this vampiric parasite is to relate to it as other than ourselves, while at the same time recognizing it within ourselves. Though the vampire is a figure within us, it is *not* us. In differentiating ourselves from the vampire, we recognize the difference between ourselves and it, thereby dis-identifying from our subjective experience of the vampire within. This is to say that in seeing the vampire, we free ourselves from our unconscious identification with and possession by it, and step back into ourselves. The evil I witness within me is an aspect of myself and I own it, but it is not mine. This is the personal/impersonal paradox of the soul: what is most me is not mine.

Our True Nature

The greatest protection against becoming negatively affected, and in extreme cases possessed, by the evil aspects of wetiko is to be in touch with our intrinsic wholeness, which is to be "self-possessed"—in possession of the part of ourselves that is not possess-able, which is the Self, the wholeness of our being. We truly "defeat" evil when we connect with the part of ourselves that is invulnerable and cannot be vanquished by it. In

Buddhism, the wholeness of our true nature is likened to a mirror, which embraces and reflects whatever is put before it. The mirror itself, however, no matter how vile the object it is reflecting, is detached from and never tainted nor stained by its reflections, always remaining the same, retaining its intrinsic purity and never wearing out. The reflections do not affect our mirror-like nature, which is transcendent to the reflections, just as a mirage of water in the desert doesn't make the grains of sand wet. Fire can't burn our true nature, earth can't bury it, water can't drench it, and the wind can't blow it away. Pure from the beginning, our true nature is "unimpeded," in the sense that it cannot be bound by anything. In the same way, when we are in touch with our true nature, the evil of wetiko cannot "touch" us. Paradoxically, while on one hand the reflections seemingly obscure the empty, open surface of the mirror, on the other hand we would never notice the mirror without the reflections, which is to say that the reflections are the revelation of the mirror. The reflections in the mirror are the inseparable, indivisible, unmediated expression of the mirror, as we never have reflections without a mirror, nor a mirror without reflections. The reflections are the expressions of the mirror, indistinguishable from the mirror, while simultaneously, "not" being the mirror.

The reflections in the mirror help us recognize what is *not* a reflection, that is, the underlying mirror which embraces, contains, and is fundamentally *unaffected* by whatever it reflects. In the same way, wetiko potentially introduces us to the part of us that is wetiko-free. Without a break in its symmetry, the true nature of Being would have no way to encounter and become aware of itself. This is similar to light transforming aspects of itself into particles so as to reveal its potential in a new way. It is only after we have become engaged with wetiko that we potentially become aware of the part of us that is invulnerable to its effects. Previous to wetiko's bursting on the scene, we were unconsciously identified with our true nature, which is to say that we were not conscious of it. It is as if a deeper part of ourselves dreamed up wetiko so as to make us conscious of the part of ourselves that is transcendent to it. Wetiko itself becomes the very instrument through which our intrinsic wholeness is consciously realized in time—the present moment—the only "place" it can be realized.

FREEDOM FROM WETIKO

Similar to how a shadow is simultaneously an expression of the presence of light as well as its absence, wetiko, though apparently obscuring our true nature, is a disguised form of, expression of, and introduction to it. Then wetiko is not only recognized to be a manifestation of our true nature, but actually evokes it. Once again we are at that mysterious place where the opposites become indistinguishable: is wetiko a disease of the soul that is getting in the way of our fully realizing who we are, or is it an initiation into the very true nature that it is apparently obscuring?

We won't notice the underlying mirror, however, if we become entranced by, fixated on, or conditioned by the reflections. The reflections in the mirror are like thoughts in our mind; the problem is that we become absorbed in, react to, and identify with the thoughts in our mind, without recognizing that who we actually are is the pure, all-embracing mirror which underlies and is transcendent to the reflections. Thought-forms in our mind are like dreams, in the sense that if we recognize the empty, illusory nature of our thoughts, they have no power over us, just as when we recognize within a dream its illusory nature, the dream has no binding power over us. On the other hand, if we identify with our thoughts, which are like whole, self-contained universes, it is as if we have gotten absorbed into and attached to the forms of the dream, which we then take to be "reality." In doing so, we have invested our thought-forms with an unwarranted reality and have unwittingly created reality to reflect back our thought-forms, thereby limiting our creative freedom, as well as ourselves, in the process.

The intrinsic purity of our true nature can be likened to the way the clouds in the sky, though apparently obscuring the clear nature of the sky, in actuality never sully the deeper, spacious nature of the sky one iota. The spaciousness of our true nature is transcendent to and other than its contents, similar to the way the clouds in the sky are separate and can be differentiated from the underlying spaciousness of the sky. Though both the clouds and the sky are present together, the clouds never become a part of nor touch the spacelike nature of the sky. And yet, from another point of view, clouds are actually an expression and adornment of the sky, inseparable from the sky, in the sense that they emerge out of and

dissolve back into the sky. This is similar to the way our true nature is inseparable from its infinite manifestations, though its essential substance is transcendent to its myriad display.

Our true nature is like a spacious, empty openness in which the endless variety of thoughts arise, momentarily have their existence, and in which they dissolve. Our true nature is like the background and deeper spacious “context” in which the specific “contents” of the mind appear. Our true nature is empty, in that it doesn’t have any form, while at the same time it is the nature of this emptiness to “take on” form. As the Heart Sutra, a.k.a. Prajnaparamita Hridaya, or Heart of the Perfection of Transcendent Wisdom, reminds us, “Form is empty. Emptiness is form.” Just as in a dream, the physical forms of the universe are empty of inherent, substantial existence from their own side, as the seemingly outer, waking dreamscape is inseparable from our consciousness of it. There is no independent universe; there is no independent observer—life is truly a participatory sport, a display in which we are creatively engaged, whether we know it or not. Form isn’t just empty, “Emptiness is form”: it is the nature of emptiness to appear in the form of form. If we become overly attached to the forms of the dreams, however, we are cultivating ME disease, that is, wetiko, within the petri dish of our own minds.

Emptiness and form are not separate things joined together; they are inseparably one, the universal opposites completely united. Quantum physics has had a similar realization: the material-like “stuff” of the universe has been recognized to be a condensation of and inseparable from the spacious, underlying formless field out of which it arises. Entertaining both opposites as being true simultaneously—emptiness *is* form—is an expression that we have become united with(in) ourselves, while at the same time we ourselves have been united by the opposites. When the opposites come together, a profound question arises: is wetiko the deepest evil, or is it a Judas-like entity of utmost necessity, evoking its own evolutionary transmutation, and thereby an expression of the highest good? When the opposites start to reveal themselves as being indistinguishable, wetiko “outs itself” to be a reconciling symbol whose function is transcendence that unites the opposites within us. Seeing the identity of the

FREEDOM FROM WETIKO

opposites is to step out of the two-valued logic of the dualistic mind into the four-valued logic of a mind seeing (w)holistically. To recognize the relativity, and hence, identity of the opposites is to realize the Self, which is a union of opposites. One of the deeper meanings of the Buddhist word “nirvana” is to be released and have attained freedom from the opposites. In alchemy, the philosopher’s stone is found and the “gold” is made when the “greater coniunctio” is accomplished via the “sacred marriage,” which is when the opposites are united as one.

Our true nature is already accomplished, in that we don’t have to attain it in the same way that we don’t have to “attain” our body; we just have to recognize that we can’t avoid having it. We always remain naturally abiding in our true nature, which is spontaneously present without any effort on our part whatsoever, whether we know it or not. Our true nature conceals itself by immersing itself in us as a kind of camouflage, while at the same time it reveals itself through us. Once we recognize and become more familiar with the primordially pure, spacious mirror-like nature that has been our ever-present condition from the very beginning, we then are able to simply rest and abide in and as that, realizing that we already have in our possession that for which we are looking. Recognizing and opening to our true nature allows it to address us with its inherent richness, which is our true and rightful inheritance.

The nature of the mind is likened to the spaciousness of the sky, in the sense that we can’t really see the transparent, spacelike sky as a thing, for there is nothing (“no-thing”) to see except a state of openness which itself cannot be seen as an object. In a sense we recognize our true nature when we recognize that there is no-thing to recognize. Our true nature is not an object to be recognized just as we are not a subject recognizing it. Like space, our true nature is not identifiable, as it cannot be illustrated within a conceptual framework. Our true nature is like the element of space in that space is the most fundamental of all the elements, in that it is the element out of which all the other elements arise and into which they are absorbed, while space itself exists beyond all arising and ceasing. Our true nature is also like space in that it has no center (in that its center is everywhere), no circumference, no edge, no end, and no extremes. One

view of space is to maintain that the skin is the boundary of ourselves, which would make the space within us the separate self and the space without us the space which separates the separate selves. But when we see that space as a whole is the very ground of existence in which we are all contained, then space is recognized to not separate us, but rather, it unites us.

Our situation is also like those children's puzzles where we attempt to find the "hidden" faces. The concealed faces are actually staring us in the face, hidden in plain sight, we just have to recognize them. In the same way, our true nature is literally staring us in the face, we just haven't recognized it; only the slightest shift in focus is needed in order to see it. The only thing to do, once we become acquainted with our true nature, is to not get distracted and fall back to sleep, which is easier said than done. Recognizing our true nature is not difficult, in the same way that momentarily becoming lucid in a dream is not hard; the challenging part is to be able to stabilize this realization and not fall back to sleep and get reabsorbed back into the forms of the dream. This is where the discipline of spiritual practice comes in, for the essence of any genuine spiritual practice of whatever tradition is to become familiar with and establish ourselves in our true nature, whereby we recognize everything that arises as its expression. Just as when we are in a dream, everything that arises within the dream is contained within and permeated by the fabric of the dream; everything that arises in this universe never strays from our true nature, in the same way that the reflections in the mirror never slide off the face of the mirror. Every moment is literally infused with our true nature, in the same way that water is saturated by wetness, and the waves of the ocean always remain within the domain of the ocean. Recognizing the nature of our situation, we are then able to alchemically transform whatever is happening in each moment into a "lucidity stimulator" that helps to wake us up to the dream-like nature of reality even further. The greater the darkness of wetiko, the more energy is available for its liberation. The fetters that bind us become transformed into the very means of liberation, and the energies released can be utilized for this purpose. When we integrate this realization, wetiko self-liberates, and can do us no harm, like a thief entering an empty house.

FREEDOM FROM WETIKO

Everything, and every state of consciousness we can ever experience, from the most debased to the most exalted, is, in fact, a manifestation of our true nature, in the same way that sesame oil permeates and is found throughout every part of a sesame seed. It's not that thoughts are something "bad" that we have to get rid of; we simply need to recognize their empty nature and not unconsciously identify with them. In the same way that the reflections are the manifestation of the mirror, thoughts are themselves the expression of our true nature. Just as the rays of the sun are not separate from the sun, and the waves of the ocean are not separate from the ocean, but are rather, its unmediated expression, thoughts in our mind, instead of obscuring our true nature, are its very expression. Once we recognize this, thoughts cease to be problematic in any way, as they effortlessly self-liberate into their own empty nature in, of, and by themselves. Then, instead of being created by our thoughts, we can play with them such that we can create with them. If we think it is impossible to recognize our true nature, then we simply need to rest directly in that which thinks it impossible to recognize, and "that is it." Our true nature can never be obscured, just as the clouds in the sky on one level seemingly obscure the sun, but from the sun's point of view, it is *always* radiantly shining, even on the cloudiest of days.

15

Let's Spread the Word

Wetiko is like a psychic Nautilus machine that is continually “working” us. This is similar to the way the forces of Mara, the Evil One, who attacked the soon-to-be-enlightened Buddha as he was meditating under the Bodhi tree, were actually a secret ally to Buddha, for Buddha wouldn't have developed the muscle of realization without Mara's challenge. Seen as a dream character in Buddha's dream, Mara was an aspect of Buddha's own consciousness that was dreamed up to play out this very unpopular, adversarial role so as to help Buddha become illumined. In a similar way, humanity's highest virtues are called upon when confronted by evil. If the obstacles presented by wetiko didn't exist, they would have to be created intentionally and invented, because it is by overcoming obstacles that we develop the higher qualities that we need. If we place a seed in the palm of our hand, for example, it doesn't grow, but when that same seed is buried underground, it is inspired by the soil's resistance to grow toward the light and actualize its potential. Encoded within the evil of the wetiko virus is its own psychic vaccine, a potential inoculation against our own ignorance and laziness, which if not overcome, will overcome us. The wetiko bug's existence requires us to strengthen our muscle of discernment, lest we get “taken” for all we are worth. The virus demands that we cultivate impeccability within ourselves, or we don't stand a chance. Wetiko tests us so as to make sure that we will make optimal use of our divine endowment. Wetiko literally demands that we step into our power and become resistant to its oppression such that we discover how to step

out of bondage and become free, or else! *Instead of a typical virus mutating so as to become resistant to our attempts to heal it, the wetiko virus forces us to mutate relative to it.* It is as though the evil of wetiko is itself the instrument of a higher intelligence. This higher power, through the revelation and understanding of wetiko, connects us to a sacred, creative source within ourselves. The wetiko bug is the greatest catalytic force of evolution ever known—as well as *not* known—to humanity.

Finding the Name

Naming is a magical act, typically done when something new is born into our life. In our culture's Judeo-Christian creation story (Genesis 1 and 2), the giving of names is at the same time a bestowal of existence. Like Adam naming the animals in the Garden, we have to name something before it can be seen, formally "discovered," and brought into our shared collective cartography. In the Old Testament, naming was the first recorded human activity, the original "vocation" of Adam. It was only by naming these creatures that Adam could differentiate and distinguish himself from them and realize who he was. Traditionally, the way humanity has overcome the negative aspect of the daemonic is by naming it. In the New Testament, Christ calls out the name "Beelzebub" or "Legion" and the possessing demon is immediately evicted and exits the scene. The "pronouncing" and "recitation" of the correct name was sufficient to expel the offending evil spirit. In the Bible, the Lord says, "In my name they shall cast out devils" (Mark 16:17). The power of names is also shown in the Bible by the refusal to reveal one's name (Exod. 3:14; Gen. 32:29), because those who know the name have power over those who bear it. Jung writes, "The act of naming is, like baptism, extremely important as regards the creation of personality, for a magical power has been attributed to the name since time immemorial. To know the secret name of a person [or a demon] is to have power over him."¹ Etymologically speaking, the word "diagnosis" means "knowing through," and is our modern form of finding the name of the offending demon.

It is to our great advantage to expand our psychospiritual fluency so

as to enable us to navigate the living waters of the psyche. Language is not a fixed or static thing, but is an ever-evolving medium which is always in need of being updated so as to keep pace with and express our ever-expanding consciousness. Never a finished phenomenon, language, in a way of speaking, is a dynamic and creative activity which requires of us that our words, as well as ourselves, be continually born anew. Calling things by their proper name is a moral need of our species. By naming something we form personal meaning out of what was previously a merely threatening impersonal chaos. In essence, finding the name is symbolic of raising an unconscious content to consciousness. “Finding the name” for the higher-dimensional, virulent virus of the psyche we are calling *wetiko* helps us to more easily recognize it and get a “handle” on it, which is the first step in taking away its destructive power over us. Finding the name empowers us to creatively engage with these darker parts of ourselves that are emerging from the shadows “in the name of healing.” Seeing *wetiko* and calling it by its rightful name initiates a process that resigns it to the ranks of the unemployed, leading to the monstrous *wetikonomy* that it animates being put out of business. The energy that was being invested and bound up in feeding the *wetiko* pathogen then returns to nourish and be nourished by the creative wholeness of the psyche. An act of power, denominating something creates “currency” in the economy of the psyche. The process of naming something not only expels energies, but simultaneously invokes that which is being named, as routinely occurs in religious rites and ceremonies the world over. To name something is to spell it out, to call it out, which is an expression of an intrinsic, magical power that we all have within us. This is related to the Australian aboriginal belief that we “sing” the world into being—that we are creating as we name things. To quote anthropologist Misia Landau, “Language is not merely a device for communicating ideas about the world, but rather a tool for bringing the world into existence in the first place. Reality is not simply ‘experienced’ or ‘reflected’ in language, but instead is actually produced by language.”²²

To understand the meaning of and utter the name “*wetiko*” is a form of exorcism. Jung says, “For mankind it was always like a deliverance from

a nightmare when the new name was found.”³ Becoming conscious of and finding the name of wetiko is exorcistic in the sense that it is casting off the compulsive-autonomous nature of the underlying complex. It will serve us greatly as we introduce the word “wetiko” into our planetary dialogue, making wetiko part of our day-to-day vocabulary. By “planting” new words in our lexicon, we are letting living language take root in and through our interchanges with each other. Words are real things, a part of creation of which we are the instruments and guardians. Words have real effects, in that they affect thoughts and emotions, thereby inducing a change in the operation of the brain. Language has to do with meaning; a change in meaning evokes a change in our being. A living language can change the way we see the world, as it changes the way we “can” see, which is to say, it changes us.

Getting to know this psychospiritual disease of the soul in a personal and intimate way, regardless of what name we designate it by—wetiko or malignant egophrenia—puts us on a “first-name” basis with it. In “spell”-ing a word, we are casting a spell, calling forth a spirit, and creating a universe, all while discovering our power to name. In learning new, creative ways to express ourselves, we are dispelling the curse we were under of not being able to symbolize our experience. In divining the true name we de-“literal”-ize language, as we create language to “symbol”-ize our experience. The word “grammar” has the same root as the French *grimoire*, a manual for invoking and casting magic spells. The archaic word for magic is *gramarye*, implying that language itself is a conjuration of spells. In learning to consciously spell-cast, the world is no longer written in stone, with us as its passive victims, as we realize and tap into the creative and transformative power of the Logos, of the Word. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). The Logos, which is the ground of language, creates the world through a kind of utterance. Speaking the world into existence, the agency of the Logos creates through the word; it is the Word of Being. It is the speech by which Being itself becomes a speaker and by which the manifest world comes into being. Language itself is the articulation of the very ground of Being. The esoteric meaning of the Logos—the

Word—is that the Divine essence itself is concentrated in the name. The word *wetiko*, being a sacred name, is like a mantra, a word of power, in that the speaking of it empowers us, giving us a magical power over that which we are naming. As a sacred word, *wetiko* denotes and “signifies” something, which is to say that something is captured and anchored to consciousness when its name is found, which becomes a stimulator of awakening. “Let the word go forth,” in the most healing sense, and let us therefore “spread the word.”

A Chinese proverb says, “The beginning of wisdom is to call things by their right name.” We are only able to name “*wetiko*” when we see and register its nonlocal nature, both throughout the world and within ourselves. This can only be done when we become acquainted with our nonlocal nature, the part of us that is woven into both the evil of *wetiko* and the wholeness of the divine. As that great maxim of medicine states, “Do not attempt to cure what you do not understand.” The philosopher Socrates reminds us that if we want to understand something, we first must name it. Naming something means to find our experience of its nature within ourselves. Indigenous, wisdom-based cultures understand the exorcising power of finding the right name of a “demon,” which is precisely what they would understand the *wetiko* pathogen to be. An exorcist does not act in his own name; he invokes *the* Divine name. In the same way that nuclear weapons are an unparalleled means of physical mass destruction, the misguided development of the soul that is inspired by the demon of *wetiko* leads to psychic mass destruction on a collective scale previously unimaginable. The process of curing the human soul starts when we discover the name and understand the nature of the disease with which we are dealing. Jung comments, “The moment you can designate the lived archetype by its symbol, you feel relieved; that is a good and positive moment even if it is horrible.... Therefore old Egyptian medicine consisted in giving the thing the right name.... A new name always produces an extraordinary effect; we cannot rationalize these things, they cast a spell, they are symbols, they really do influence the unconscious as the unconscious influences us.”⁴

As everything has two sides, there is a “shadow” side to naming,

FREEDOM FROM WETIKO

however, for the forces that are animating wetiko can usurp the solution in the service of perpetuating the disease. Though the original meaning of the arrangement of letters and the speaking of words and names was a magical one, these same modes of expression can be used to distance and separate us from that same magic. We should be aware that sometimes the act of naming can be used not as an aid for change, but as a substitute for it. This can play into modern humanity's central defense, intellectualization, which would use words as substitutes for feelings, experiences, and action. Finding the words skates on the slippery slope of explaining away and thereby covering up the demonic instead of disclosing it.

Its simultaneously diabolical and mercurial energy makes the Native American idea of wetiko disease incredibly hard to capture in words. Jung comments, "But when something is little known, or ambiguous, it can be envisaged from different angles, and then a multiplicity of names is needed to express its peculiar nature."⁵ Whether we conceive of this trickster-like entity as a virus, parasite, tapeworm, vampire, werewolf, cannibal, or a demon, or call it wetiko disease or malignant egophrenia, doesn't really matter. These various names are interchangeable, as they are naming one and the same thing. To quote a sixteenth-century alchemical text called the *Rosarium Philosophorum*, which is talking about the philosopher's stone but whose words could just as easily be describing wetiko, "For however much its names may differ, yet it is ever one thing alone, and from the same thing."⁶ Having multiple names is an expression of a miraculous quality of that which defies being captured by any one name. There is no one definitive model for this disease, as each model has both its utility as well as its limits. When all of these models are combined and looked at together, it gives us a greater resolution and capacity to see what no one particular model by itself can reveal. In spreading "the" word, we are not necessarily spreading "a" single word, but rather, spreading a message of what certain key words such as "wetiko" and "malignant egophrenia" are representing and to what they are pointing. Let us spread not just one word, but many words, new words even, which is to say let us truly find and express the full range of our creative voice. Re-discovering the language of experience itself, the universal language known as art, we "find ourselves" in the process.

The Idea of a Cure

Finding the right name(s) invokes the sacred, creative, and transformative power of the “Word.” Wetiko is the “word made flesh” in its most depraved form. In finding the name, however, we are accessing the divinely sponsored power of the word to create an *idea*, a living psychic organism of real value and merit, with an intrinsic power all its own. Like a symbol crystallizing out of the psyche, an idea grows out of the dark depths of the unconscious like a lotus emerging from the mud. Ideas can be liberating, or they can be extremely destructive. Jung writes, “The most tremendous danger that man has to face is the power of his ideas [or lack thereof].”⁷ New ideas, arising at the “right” time, have a magical effect by holding the destructive forces of the unconscious spellbound. Ideas are ways of regarding things, the means by which we see, as well as the perspectives through which we view the world. The word “idea,” etymologically speaking, has to do with both “to see” as well as “to know.” In other words, a novel idea opens our inner eye and helps us know by giving us insight into something previously unconscious. What Plato called the “eyes of the soul,” ideas are the modes of consciousness through which we envision and create our life. In finding the right name(s), we are impregnating and incubating a novel idea. Once we become more acquainted with the idea of wetiko and all that it entails, we can then give birth to and spread our meme by sharing it, as we create our own psychic anti-virus, a living antigen to the heretofore unrecognized mind-virus of wetiko. As Communist China’s Chairman Mao openly confessed, the one thing he was most afraid of was a new idea. For nothing is more powerful than a magical idea whose time has come.

Let’s spread the word.

This spells the end of wetiko.

May these words be of benefit for all beings.

OM MANI PADMA HUNG

AFTERWORD

All You Have to Do to See Is Open Your Eyes and Look

In filling out a questionnaire for the publisher of this book regarding publicity, there was one question that asked, “What made you decide to write this book?” This question could potentially open up a huge file in my mind, as this book is a crystallization of a process that began more than thirty years ago. There was a particular moment in my life when I was twenty-four years old during which I walked through the proverbial looking glass and fell through the rabbit hole into a radically different universe from the one in which I had been living. From that moment on, my whole life radically changed, as I was now residing in a world of expanded possibilities, where even the seemingly impossible and miraculous seemed possible. As if a new part of me was being given birth to, I found myself playing a role in a cosmic, visionary drama that certainly had my highest attention. One of the main choices that has to be made when any of us tells our story is where to begin; telling the story of this particular episode in my life feels like it creates the context and completes the circle regarding how this book came to be. Previous to this questionnaire, I had purposely kept as much of myself out of the book as possible, as from my point of view, the subject matter of the book was the topic of primary importance, relegating, at least in my mind, the author to background status. It’s been reflected back to me from people who’ve read the first edition of this book, however, that it might be helpful to know a bit more about how I came to write about such matters. Well, we should be careful what we ask for. Here goes.

It was May 1981. For about a year and a half I had been doing an intensive meditation practice called *shamatha-vipashyana*,¹ also known as “insight meditation,” or the practice of mindfulness. One day I was sitting in

meditation and all of a sudden, out of the blue, in one nanosecond, a bolt of lightning ignited in my brain. The lightning bolt didn't come from outside of myself, but originated from within the inner sky of my own mind/body. At the time I had no idea that being struck by a bolt of lightning, as with Zeus and his thunderbolts, symbolizes in mythologies the world over the initiation of a spiritual process.

Within hours of being struck by that flash of lightning, I began merging with the spontaneity of the present moment, and entered into an ec-static ("beyond stasis") state. The next day I began acting so unlike my ordinary, conditioned, repressed, and domesticated self that a close friend thought I was having a nervous breakdown and had me brought, by ambulance, to Highland Hospital in Oakland, California. Little did my friend and I realize that I had gotten drafted into a psychospiritual process of an entirely different order—a spiritual awakening/shamanic initiation—that was blowing my mind as it was simultaneously revealing it. I felt on the cutting edge of the big bang itself; I had so "let go" that I was just following the process and going along for the ride. I was stepping out of myself in such a way that every moment was synchronistically and effortlessly creative and overflowing full in a way I had hardly even imagined was possible previously. I had become unselfconscious, as if a part of me that had always felt slightly out of phase with myself had gotten into alignment, resulting in my feeling truly "at one" with myself. I had tapped into an unfettered part of myself, as if I had stepped out of all restraints, as if released from any social conditioning, in that my actions were no longer a reaction to what I thought others thought of me. As if snapping out of a double-bind, I wasn't limiting myself anymore, in that I was experiencing for the first time in my life that "I" wasn't a problem to be solved. I wasn't contracting against myself but simply getting out of my own way so as to let my light shine. It was as if I went from being a seventy-five-watt light bulb to transducing a million watts. I felt as if I had plugged into not merely a more powerful source of energy, but the very source of energy itself. This was a dangerous situation, however, as at the time I certainly hadn't yet developed the container within myself to skillfully channel this boundlessly creative energy in a way that was socially acceptable. I had so surrendered to what was happening, which

was not only the only thing that made sense to do, but the only thing that I could do, that I had stopped trying to control the situation. Little did I realize that as I entered the hallowed halls of psychiatry I was about to experience a particularly unique synchronistic event within the first minute of my arrival on the scene that would rock my world and change my life forever.

It feels like the right time to share this, as it feels like it's not just my story, in that it has universal relevance for all of us. On the one hand, this synchronistic experience was tailor-made just for me, while on the other hand, it wasn't just my experience, a circumstance meant solely for my personal consumption. The more I have contemplated this experience over the years, the more it feels like it is a revelatory experience that contains gifts for all of us, as if the experience was a cipher, which once decoded, unlocked a treasure trove filled with meaning-rich information. It feels right to share it now because it has taken me this many years to digest it and to integrate the meaning of what was being shown to me through this experience so that I'd be able to share the story from a more reflective place within myself, without overly identifying with the role. It also feels like the time is right to share this miraculous-seeming event because I've developed the psychological fluency so that I can now describe and articulate my experience in a way that I imagine will be received and taken in, instead of judged. Being archetypal, my synchronistic encounter is a self-reflection for all of us, revealing a process that exists deep within each one of us in potential.

Setting the Stage

To place this event in context, a couple of years before this experience, I had experienced the culmination of horrific emotional and psychological abuse at the hands of my father, who, unbeknownst to me at the time, was not only fully taken over by what I now am calling wetiko disease, but was a portal for this nonlocal bug to enter the petri dish of our family system. Because he was so fully possessed by the wetiko virus, my father, like anyone so taken over, became the "revelation" of this higher-dimensional virus in human form for those who have eyes to see. All of what I write about in this book stems from having had the father I did; I didn't have

to study other books to learn about this pathology, I just had to watch my father. In a very real sense, I had an incredible teacher from whom to learn about wetiko.

Completely taken over by wetiko, my father became its “carrier,” a portal through which the field around him “warped” in such a way as to feed, support, and protect his pathogenic process. My entire family, my closest friends, and even the mental health system itself got enlisted in my father’s illness in such a way that they colluded with and enabled him in his pathology. Other people, to the extent that they were not aware of the deadly and contagious nature of the disease, got hooked through their unconscious blind spots and became unwitting conduits through which the nonlocal disease propagated itself. This is typical of the way that wetiko works. Seeing this process was my introduction to the nonlocal field.

The specific content of the abuse is unimportant to the story I want to tell here, and it would take a lot of time, energy, and words to fully do justice to the many-sided nuances of the story, so the details will have to wait for another time. The abuse from my father wasn’t obvious physical or sexual abuse, but was more hidden and covert, a psychological rape of the soul, a true mind-fuck, that only someone as psychically close as a parent can perpetrate upon a child.² The salient feature of his emotional incest is that I felt psychologically violated to my core, feeling as if the very sanctity of my psyche had been shattered, the boundaries of my sense of self not just transgressed but obliterated; to use an image: if my sacred self was a glass vase, it had gotten completely shattered into a million pieces. At the same time, in the midst of the worst of the abuse, something alien had penetrated me and been injected into the core of my being.³ Something very dark and sinister, using my father as its channel of transmission, had forcibly entered me and had taken up residence within my mind/body that wasn’t there before. Little could I have possibly realized at the time that, as if bitten by a vampire, I had gotten a transfusion of the virulent wetiko virus, as if I had just received a “living” transmission from the “undead.”⁴ It was overwhelmingly obvious to me that either this energy was going to make me one of its victims, or I was going to somehow vanquish, liberate, transmute, or heal it, or I was a “goner.”⁵

The emotional abuse from my father was so toxic that I literally woke up with a fever the day after the worst of a series of “episodes”; from that day onward the fever lasted on and off (mostly on) for a year. I went to doctors and hospitals, and no one could find anything physically wrong with me. Over the years I’ve realized that the fever was my mind/body’s way of attempting to integrate the overwhelming and shattering nature of the emotional trauma I had endured. My shock was due to the dark depths of the psychic inheritance that I had received from my father, who by unconsciously and compulsively acting out his own unresolved abuse, was transferring something to me that he wasn’t able to deal with within himself. In so doing, he connected me as a link in a chain to an unbroken lineage of violence and abuse extending far back in time. Like countless other recipients of abuse, I had been directly and involuntarily introduced to the “dark side.” Shattered by the experience, I literally felt broken. Dropping down into the darkness of the unconscious underworld, it was as if a part of me had died. From that particular moment of abuse—Thanksgiving night, 1978—it was as if a “death imprint” was encoded into my soul, an experience, I imagine, to which many people who survive an overwhelming trauma can relate. This abuse changed the trajectory of my whole life, altering and reconfiguring both my psyche and my destiny, simultaneously severing and initiating a connection to a deeper part of myself. After the fever subsided, I was never even remotely the same, never to return to the seemingly normal life I had been living. It was as though my psyche had been run over by a Mack truck. It created enormous suffering for me, and yet, at the same time, it’s what inspired me to find my calling. The over-the-top suffering was the very circumstance which led me to be doing such intensive meditation, which in turn resulted in my being hospitalized, which brings us back to the story of what happened next.

The Blind Woman

In the very first room I was brought to in that hospital, a lounge for psychiatric patients, I saw among the group of patients a blind woman, whom I immediately felt drawn to and approached. Her eyes were a blind person’s

eyes, opaque, with no color or radiance at all. Without any thought on my part, I went right up to her and found myself staring at her eyes, saying over and over the following words: “All you have to do to see is open your eyes and look.” These words were literally coming through me, having fallen into my head and out of my mouth; it was as if I were channeling them. I kept on getting closer and closer to her as I repeated these words, looking into her eyes all the while. What happened next, over the course of less than a minute, I will never forget. In front of my very eyes, her eyes began regaining their color and luminosity, going from the dead, diseased eyes of a blind person to normal, healthy, seeing eyes. She had regained her sight.⁶

At that moment, as if divinely choreographed, a beautiful woman doctor came into the room, gave me some pills to swallow, and brought me into another room. The attendants then strapped me down on a bed, where I was bound hand and foot. The accommodations were a bit on the “might makes right” side. And there I spent the night. I remember lying there knowing I was going through a profound spiritual experience. It was hard not to realize this, after just having had the healing interaction with the now ex-blind woman. My encounter with her helped me to inwardly know that I wasn’t going crazy, but rather, was evidently going through some sort of spiritual awakening process. There is a correlation between abuse and spiritual awakening: the seeming miraculousness of what had happened with the blind woman feels inversely proportional to the horror of abuse that I was passing through via my relationship with my father, as if they were inverted mirror images of each other. While tied up, I remember feeling that whomever I would think of, I was in some way connecting to and “bringing along” on my awakening, so I kept on expanding my imagination of whom I could bring along until I began thinking of everyone I had ever known and then some, which eventually included all sentient beings. Needless to say, I didn’t exactly get a normal night’s sleep that evening.

The next morning, after I was unstrapped, I was brought to a room and the only other person in the room, sitting across the table from me, was, coincidentally, that same ex-blind woman. She’s looking at me and lovingly smiling from ear to ear, not having said one word to me as of yet. All of a sudden, it was as if a closed fist in my heart completely

opened; the thousand-petaled lotus of my heart chakra was blossoming. I then had the spontaneous realization of what had happened between the two of us the night before. I intuitively understood that her eyes had been physically fine; it was just that she was not letting herself open her (inner) eyes and look, which was “causing” her blindness to manifest at the physical level. It was as if she was keeping her inner, psychological eyes closed, was choosing not to look, and this was reflected through her apparent physical blindness. The night before I somehow “saw” this, as if a clairvoyant part of me had announced itself to both of us in a most eye-opening way. In addition, I somehow knew just what to say and do, as if I had become a conduit for some deeper, healing force to play itself out in full-bodied and fully visualized form. It was also clear to me that it was no accident that she and I had come together, which was clearly a synchronistic meeting, one in which we were both playing roles in a deeper drama. As if telepathically connected, within a few moments she said to me, “Aren’t you going to answer the phone call from Roy [my father’s name]?” These were, literally, the first words she spoke to me. Moments later the nurse came into the room and said my father was on the phone. Word had evidently reached my parents that their only child had been hospitalized with a nervous breakdown.

Descent to the Underworld

While in the hospital I found myself in an absurd situation: I’m in the midst of a full-blown, life-changing spiritual awakening, while the doctors are interviewing me about my grasp on reality to see if I am crazy. In my “enthusiastic” (*en-theos* means to be filled with spirit) sharing with them about the revelatory experience I was having, I can only imagine how this confirmed in their minds that I *was* “certifiably” crazy. In essence, the more I authentically expressed my experience, the more I was convincing the doctors I was crazy. This reminds me of a line from an email that I received a few years back in which the person wrote, “When I told my psychiatrist that I thought my mission in this world was to spread the message of love, she prescribed me an anti-psychotic.”

When this event happened with the blind woman, I couldn't possibly have been prepared for the energies that this synchronicity unleashed, both within myself and in the field around me. Not having had time to integrate the overwhelming spiritual experience that I was having, I was "crazy" not to realize that I shouldn't be talking about my non-consensus reality experience with people who were still entrained in mainstream, consensus reality. Many years later, my friend, the late Harvard psychiatrist Dr. John Mack,⁷ shared with me his definition of being crazy: "It's not knowing who to tell, or not to tell, what you're experiencing." From his perspective, I was out of my mind to share my mystical experiences with his colleagues, and in retrospect, I fully agree.

Tragically, my parents bought into the psychiatrists' diagnosis that their only child had had a nervous breakdown, as in my parents' world doctors were genuine authority figures who "knew what they were talking about." In the words of the late psychiatrist R. D. Laing, "Attempts to wake before our time are often punished, especially by those who love us most. Because they, bless them, are asleep. They think anyone who wakes up, or who, still asleep, realizes that what is taken to be real is a 'dream' is going crazy."⁸ I was let out of the hospital after three days, once it was reflected back to me by the doctor in charge that if I simply appeared normal and talked about my "problems," I could leave. After my release from the hospital, whereas all of my friends and family thought I had suffered a psychotic break, I knew something of great importance had happened to me.

Over the next sixteen months, I continued to have a series of over-the-top "non-consensus reality" experiences, as if I were being introduced to some sort of other, parallel reality that existed side by side with our normal, day-to-day world. This healing experience with the blind woman was not a physically impossible event, but rather a highly improbable one. Some other experiences that followed, however, so defied the conventional laws of three-dimensional time and space that they seemed physically impossible, as if they could only happen in a dream. Because I was in the middle of the process of metabolizing what was happening to me, I was still learning how to express my experiences in a way that didn't upset the applecart of consensus reality. I wasn't in a container such as a monastery or ashram

however, which would have helped me over time to naturally assimilate my experiences, but rather, I was running around in an incredibly open and vulnerable state out in a world that did not understand the value or significance of such experiences.⁹

As a result, I was hospitalized at least three other times during this time period, as I tried to contain, understand, digest, and express the deeper process that was happening both within me and in my outer life circumstances. For the last hospitalization in September 1982, I was flown back to New York to spend three weeks in a hospital getting “stabilized” on “meds” so as to fix my newly discovered “chemical imbalance.” Unfortunately, as fate would have it, I was concretized by the psychiatric system as being mentally ill. The psychiatrists were like the high priests of a modern, scientific religion which had invested in them by the power of the state the ability to “deem” who was sane and to “doom” who was insane. By unconsciously identifying with their positions of power, rank, and privilege, they were monopolizing the role of the healthy one, unwittingly casting the patient—in this case, me—into the solidified role of the one who is sick. In consulting their hallowed diagnostic manual, the DSM, it was as if they were reading from a *grimoire* (see page 264), trying to match what little they understood of my experience to something somebody wrote in a book. I felt both objectified and marginalized in my own treatment, as the doctors weren’t interested in consulting with me. I was literally treated as a mental “in-valid,” as if my perceptions were deleted from having any validity whatsoever, which was truly “crazy-making.” Describing the situation of a human being who is committed to a mental hospital, R. D. Laing writes, in words that accurately describe my experience, that he “is degraded from full existential and legal status as human agent and responsible person to someone no longer in possession of his own definition of himself.”¹⁰ The psychiatrists didn’t have much of an idea of where or who I was in this whole process, and, frighteningly, they were in the position of making decisions which might greatly affect the rest of my life.

The psychiatrists, with the seemingly best of intentions, “hoped to one day make me a functioning member of society.” I was cast in the role of the “identified patient,” the one in my family system who was considered

“sick.” Typically, the identified patient is considered to be the one in the family system who both “has the problem” and “is the problem.” Though the sickness in a family system is fundamentally nonlocal in nature, which is to say it pervades the entire system, it typically gets “localized” and is thought to exist only in the member who is cast in the role of the identified patient. This is an expression of the myopic and stunted psychiatric worldview, in which there is little connection between having one’s emotions disturbed, for example, and the state of the world, as if the greater context of the pervading social and political insanity is not relevant to one’s state of being upset. The psychiatrists treated me as if I existed as an isolated entity who had an “illness” that was unrelated to the family of which I was a part; it was as if they didn’t understand nor had ever heard about the idea of a family system. In a family system, the members are not seen as independently existing “parts” of the system; rather, all of the members are viewed relationally, which is to say relative to each other, as ultimately speaking, each member does not exist apart from the whole web of interrelations within the system. Since the family is a system which is contained within, as well as being an expression of, a deeper interconnected field, when a family member becomes “sick,” it is always an expression of a pathology in the family system and deeper field. The psychiatrists’ compartmentalized and solidified view of me was a reflection of their own inner state of fragmentation and rigidity. In becoming the identified patient, I had also unknowingly assumed the archetypal role of the “scapegoat,”¹¹ the sacrificial lamb who typically carries the family system’s (which in my case, now included psychiatry’s) split-off, disowned, unconscious shadow and madness.

In any case, I was assured, as if my prognosis were written in stone, that I was going to be mentally ill for the rest of my days; I was being given a life sentence with no possibility for parole, with no time off for good behavior.¹² The fact that I wanted to dialogue about this and question their diagnosis was proof, to the psychiatrists in charge of me, of my alleged illness. What the psychiatrists were doing was truly maddening. By myopically seeing people’s behavior as pathological, the psychiatrists drew out the pathology in the person, which only further confirmed to

them the correctness of their diagnosis in a self-fulfilling prophecy, as if they were both under a spell and casting one at the same time. The insanity of what the psychiatric system was unconsciously playing out was itself a crystallization of the more fundamental pathology of wetiko that pervades the underlying field of human consciousness. If I compliantly took on their idea of who I was, from their point of view this would be considered a successful “treatment.” While I was under their “care,” the psychiatric system wanted me to sign on the dotted line, making it financially worth my while if I agreed to take on their idea of who I was. In a truly insane logic—“wetiko-logic”—the fact that I refused to acknowledge their diagnosis as being accurate was simply more proof to the psychiatrists of how crazy I was. It wasn’t just that they wanted to form-fit me into a temporary role; they wanted to inaugurate me into a whole new lifelong “career” as mental patient.

The whole situation was totally nuts. My saving grace was never falling into and “buying” the viewpoint of the doctors that was literally being “sold” to me as it was being forced down my throat. It couldn’t have been more obvious from my vantage point inside myself that I was having a spiritual awakening. Fortunately, I never lost sight of this, even during the darkest of times, which allowed me to trust the process which was unfolding within myself. After getting out of the last psychiatric hospital in 1982, I felt ashamed and mortified at now having the stigma of being labeled, for the rest of my life, an “ex-mental patient.” As I’ve healed over the course of time, however, I now “advertise” that I was locked up in psych wards so as to get the word out, as “I am not the only one.” There are many other people who have suffered and are presently suffering through similar waking nightmares with the psychiatric system.

As time passed under their watch, the spiritual awakening component of my experience faded into the background, and the abuse came to the fore, front and center. Then, in a crazy-making double-bind, the fact that I wanted to talk about my father’s abuse became the very thing for which I was further pathologized. Crazier still, in a seemingly never-ending game without end, my attempts at meta-communicating about the nature of the double-bind I found myself in were themselves pathologized.¹³ In a

true mind-bender, according to the psychiatrists, the care I was receiving from them was “for my own good.”

In the psychiatric system, I found myself in a place that felt truly “bewitched,” as if under a curse of and controlled by black magicians, where reality was inverted in a way that was truly get-me-out-of-here crazy. Don’t get me wrong: there are plenty of well-intentioned psychiatrists, including the ones with whom I worked. I am not talking about individual psychiatrists; I am talking about the underlying psychiatric system as a whole. It is important to acknowledge that in some ways the psychiatric system has evolved since the early ’80s, but in other ways it has not, or has even gotten worse—with its increasing reliance on the use of medication to address most problems, for example. Our mental health system is an expression of the mental health, or lack thereof, of our culture. Within the psychiatric worldview, there is a consensual agreement and implicit, unreflected-upon set of assumptions with reference to behaviors and modes of thinking/perceiving that are considered “normal.” There is a way of understanding the very nature of health and sickness, as well as fundamental ideas of *who we are*, that all representatives of the “academy” have to accept in order for them to be considered card-carrying members in good standing. There is an axiomatic set, a way of perceiving the world that has been drilled into psychiatrists’ heads during their “training” in medical school that is required for them to become true initiates. The psychiatric system is set up to be a setup, in that built into the system is the unconscious set of assumptions of materialistic science, not the least of which posits that we exist as encapsulated, separate selves apart from the underlying field, which is nothing other than a cardinal thought-form inspired by the wetiko virus. In fact, for most psychiatrists, there is no concept of an underlying field of consciousness at all. Consciousness is rather understood as something that arises from matter and thus can be manipulated by material, that is, electro-chemical means (via psychiatric drugs, for example). It takes an exceptional practitioner of the art of psychiatry, a true doctor of the soul, to see through the implicit materialist in-doctrine-ation they have received as part and parcel of their very conditioning and training. Built into the non-level playing field of

psychiatry, into the very organization and structure of the field, to the extent that self-reflection is not part of its practice, is the hidden abuse of power (which also gets played out, once internalized, within traumatized psychiatric patients' heads). It takes more than good intentions for a psychiatrist to not unwittingly become an instrument for "the system" to play out its unconscious, destructive aspect. A true healer knows that they are meeting themselves time and time again in their patients.

Over time, however, I've been able to reframe my experiences in the backward "back wards" of psychiatry as a crucial part of my spiritual awakening. I now feel that my experience with psychiatry was a shamanic descent into the underworld, a journey into a true "hell realm," into the depths of a modern-day Hades. The psychiatric system turned out to be one of the crucibles for my awakening, in that it gave me a living experience of how wetiko has incorporated itself into the mental health system. I was ultimately dreamed up in my interaction with the psychiatric system of having to choose between 1) stepping more fully into my power by staying connected to and standing for my experience, or 2) taking on their version of who I was—giving away my power, dissociating from myself, and falling into self-deception, which is to be complicit in my own victimization and become my own abuser. I was being dreamed up right to my edge, where I was asked to make a choice. In matters of my own experience, however, I am a true authority—fully "certified"—as I am "the one" who is experiencing myself.

While I was under their power, it was a waking nightmare: the more I was solidified in the role of being the sick one, the sicker I got, which in a diabolically self-perpetuating negative feedback loop, only confirmed to those in authority how "sick" I truly was. After the "care" of the mental health system, I had become truly "sick"; the wetiko bug had "taken me down." My illness was like a particularized, acute "breakout" of an underlying, more fundamental systemic illness, pervading both my family and the psychiatric system, as well as the field of consciousness itself. Little did I realize at the time that the "archetype of the shaman" was the underlying template that was informing and giving shape to my experience.

Spiritual emergences/emergencies oftentimes become activated

because of a deep experience of wounding, abuse, or trauma, oftentimes growing out of unresolved abuse issues from childhood; this was certainly true for me. The trauma initiates and catalyzes the deeper process of the “archetype of the shaman” to begin to form-ulate and crystallize itself in the unconscious of the future, potential shaman, activating the sense of feeling “called” by something beyond themselves. This precipitates a deeper part of the psyche to become mobilized, as the would-be shaman journeys deep inside themselves, flying on the wings of their creative imagination to address and become acquainted with what has gotten activated within them. In its initial stage, a shamanic initiation/spiritual awakening can, and often does, look like and mimic a nervous breakdown, as our habitual structures of holding ourselves together fall apart and break down, as if our inner “constitution” is being rewritten, so that a deeper and more coherent expression of our intrinsic wholeness can emerge. Oftentimes, when the archetypal process of spiritual awakening is first activated within us, our constructs about the nature of reality de-construct such that we can appear, from the mainstream point of view, a little “crazy.”

According to consensus reality, I was “certifiable,” and I was in full agreement, in that I had certifiably stepped out of my self-entrancing, self-limiting, and self-binding conceptual, cognitive mind into a much more expansive space. As we awaken, we are, in fact, stepping “out of our (conceptual) minds,” while concurrently recognizing that we are “inside of our minds,” which is now discovered to be nonlocally “everywhere.” To find ourselves within our psyche is to become lucid and consciously recognize that we are dreaming.

The archetypal figure of the shaman “takes on” (which, interestingly, means both to confront, and take within oneself) the sickness of the collective field, becoming sick themselves, often to the point of near death, and yet, if surviving, becomes able to metabolize and heal their sickness in a way that is of benefit to the whole field. It was clear to me that what was playing out in my life was either going to make me very sick, maybe even kill me, or, if I was able to connect with my “shamanic body” (i.e., get in touch with and allow the deeper archetypal dynamic of the shaman

to move, inform, and inspire me), the entire ordeal might wind up revealing itself as initiatory and potentially even useful, for both myself and others. In the archetypal shamanic process, the shaman descends into the underworld of the unconscious and goes through the experience of madness, where they have to come to terms with the darker parts of their being without getting stuck in these realms.

We are all potential “shamans-in-training.” We are being invited by the universe to step into our shamanic “garments” and consciously participate in our own evolution. Instead of our ritual implements being solely limited to drums and rattles, however, as “modern-day shamans” our accessories might be the keyboard of a computer or the tools of multimedia, as we work to inspire change in the underlying consciousness of the field by a simple keystroke or the creative use of a video camera or website.

Our species and its civilization are currently in the throes of a collective nervous breakdown. If what we, as a species, are doing to ourselves isn't collective madness, then what in the world is? Our underlying institutionalized and incorporated structures that are helping to keep us asleep are breaking down and coming apart. Just as within an individual's psyche, only writ large on the world stage, we are going through a collective shamanic initiation process, a genuine “death/rebirth” experience. The false, illusory separate self, which experiences ourselves as alien from others, is “dying” as the fundamental framework by which we relate to each other and the world. At the same time, we are increasingly incarnating and giving “birth” to a truer sense of who we are, realizing our deep interconnection and interdependence with each other and all living beings.

I was one of the lucky ones, however, as I was able to extricate myself from the Stone Age, draconian horrors of our “might makes right” mental health system as soon as I possibly could. In retrospect, the overall treatment I received from psychiatry is truly staggering in its incompetence and level of abuse; I've barely scratched the surface in this Afterword. The psychiatric system's egregious lack of insight into the nature of the mind is truly tragic and causes great harm. The extent of disservice and mistreatment that I received from the “mental health” community has been

so traumatic and overwhelming that it has taken me more than thirty years to even begin to wrap my mind around the horror of what played out. The abuse I suffered at the hands of the psychiatric community, which embodied true psychological violence in the flesh, is so beyond my comprehension that even now I struggle to find the words. I struggle because the abuse was truly an “unspeakable” form of torture. I was lucky to escape with my sanity intact, over the years becoming a pioneer in the field of spiritual emergence.¹⁴ Tragically, many others are not as fortunate, and their potential spiritual awakening/shamanic initiation process becomes aborted as they become bound and captive to the psychiatric establishment. The psychiatric establishment’s mal-practice is harder to see than in other, more concrete fields, and hence the incompetence and induced harm oftentimes go unrecognized, as they are operating in the province of the psyche, where much is hidden, shrouded in both mystery and misunderstanding to begin with.

My encounter with the blind woman, and then psychiatry, was also a turning point in my relationship with my parents, who bought in hook, line, and sinker to my psychiatric diagnosis. From that moment on we were living in two very different universes. Over the course of time my relationship with my parents deteriorated, becoming more and more fractured, disconnected, and estranged. Tragically, both of my parents died convinced, with the psychiatric community’s blessing, that their only child was mentally ill. It was as if the deadly wetiko virus had insinuated itself into my family through the portal of my father, and nonlocally replicated itself through the psychiatric system in such a way that it ultimately consumed my entire family. I have no family-of-origin left. As a result of trying to shed light on my father’s (and family’s) illness, after my parents’ death I’ve been shunned, ostracized, and banished from the extended family by my remaining relatives. There was something in the family system that was not supposed to be talked about, and I was talking about it. The silence about the abuse in a family system is itself a manifestation of the very sickness in the field of which the abuse is an expression. The extent of my father’s madness was such that it resulted in my being excommunicated from my own family. I am still trying to

wrap my mind around this. To say that I have feelings of anger, sadness, and grief about this is an understatement. Thankfully, I am blessed to have a huge, loving spiritual family, which only continues to grow. This entire ordeal has empowered me with an authority to author this book on wetiko that I could not have received by reading every book on the planet or receiving a million PhDs.

Psychiatric Dreaming

Even though the situation with that blind woman actually happened in waking life, as did my nightmare with psychiatry, it is quite profound to contemplate what happened symbolically, *as if* it were a dream. To see our life in this way is to view the events in our life as if they are a dream that a deeper part of us, which I call the “deeper, dreaming Self,” is dreaming into materialized form in and as our life itself. Just as if doing dreamwork on a night dream, we can ask ourselves: What is the meaning of this waking dream we call our life? How would we interpret it? What parts of ourselves are embodied in the different dream characters that we meet as our life unfolds? What are the symbols in our waking dream revealing to us?

As if iterations of the same underlying, inter-nested fractal, through my transactions with the blind woman and with the blindness of psychiatry, I was being introduced to the nonlocal field of consciousness that synchronistically informs our world, a burgeoning insight which years later would form the foundation for my work. This underlying, all-pervasive field drafts people into being its instruments and unwitting operatives, choreographing events in the world so as to materialize itself in living form. This seamlessly interconnected field ceaselessly animates innumerable nonlocal “hands” to set the “stage,” arranging the scenes in the play of our waking dream so as to simultaneously veil and reveal itself, entrancing or potentially liberating us at each and every moment. A more fundamental aspect of my being was making itself known to me, and was using my experiences in the world—with my father, the blind woman, and the psychiatric system—as its canvas.

Though very different on the surface, the figures of my father and

psychiatry had a certain underlying, essential similarity, as if a deeper, unconscious process was emerging into consciousness, enacting itself in ever-novel and ever-the-same ways. Just like my father, to the extent that the psychiatrists were abusing their power, they were unconsciously acting out a form of violence masquerading as love. In abusing power, the psychiatrists were unwittingly acting out the deeper, underlying archetypal process that is making us all sick in the first place. Abusing power is related to the **archetype of the negative father**, which is to say, at least in part, both my father and psychiatry were informed by the same deeper, archetypal pattern. Blindly enacting their shadow in their treatment of patients as “objects,” rather than fellow human beings with whom to be in “relation,” they had unwittingly become instruments for wetiko, a form of psychic blindness that doesn’t just believe itself to be sighted, but arrogantly believes it sees more clearly than others. In these psychiatrists, I had dreamed up, in Freud’s words, “new editions of the old conflicts,” only this time on “steroids” (actually psych meds). As if having a recurring dream, it was “*déjà vu* all over again.” Seeing the psychiatrists symbolically, as characters in my dream—embodied reflections of aspects of myself—is to recognize them as living figures existing within my own psyche. Seen as aspects of myself, the psychiatrists represented the parts of me that were not seeing, that were psychologically and spiritually blind. How interesting, that after my healing encounter with that blind woman, I became “committed” to engaging with more blindness, but on an even grander, more system-wide scale. It certainly got my attention, that literally, as well as symbolically, a deeper, blind part of myself was insistently showing up in my waking dream in ways that were getting increasingly harder to ignore.

Ours is a very dangerous time, “a time of grave peril.” We, as a species, are desperately in need of vision. “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18). Both my father and the psychiatric system were informed and animated by the same unconscious blindness, which was signifying itself in different channels. Ultimately, as with any recurring dream, this deeper process is a reflection of a psychological blindness existing not only within my own psyche, but being archetypal, within the

collective unconscious of humanity as well. This is to say that not only was my unhealed father process recapitulating itself with psychiatry, but my unique personal process was a reflection of a deeper, archetypal process woven into the fabric of the macrocosm. Seeing this correspondence is in the service of lucidity, for to realize the isomorphism between these multiple levels of reality—inner and outer, personal and universal—is to begin to realize that the entire multiverse, both microcosmically and macrocosmically, is enfolded within itself in such a way so as to be reflecting back something to us within ourselves; this is to step through the doorway into the miracle of self-reflective, lucid awareness. Seeing this “bigger picture,” we are dispelling the curse of wetiko that has befallen our planet by healing our own psychic blindness.

As is true for each of us as well, the symbolic events that were literally transpiring in my life were a synchronistic reflection and revelation of a living process deep within myself. It was as if everything that was playing out with my father, within the field of psychiatry, and for that matter, in every aspect of my life, was communicating to me through the symbolic dimension of my awareness, which is the same part of me that dreams my dreams at night. The spirit that animates synchronicities, if we can speak of such immaterial matters, is the same spirit which inspires our dreams at night. I was beginning to realize that the same deeper, dreaming Self that dreams our dreams at night is dreaming our lives. Though my close call with psychiatry almost drove me crazy and nearly killed me, I have learned something through my ordeal, an insight so profound that it can't be repeated often enough: how things turn out depends upon how we dream them. I am my own living proof.

Blind Woman Dreaming

The experience between the blind woman and me was an epiphany in materialized form, a revelation in time encoded with catalytic information and hidden teachings. The encounter with the blind woman was a waking dream that the two of us were collaboratively dreaming up together. Being a mutually shared dream, we can look at what got dreamed up between

us from either of our points of view: what dream character was I in her dream, and what part of myself was she? Who was I in her dream, but an insightful (i.e., “filled with sight”) part of herself that she had been split off from, and hence projected out and dreamed up into materialization as a vision-filled figure in her waking dream? As if she had been waiting for me to arrive, I had become drawn in and drafted into playing a role in her dreaming process. It was as if I was sent by “Central Casting” because I was open and sensitive enough at that moment to simply pick up a voice that was being dreamed up in the field, waiting for someone to give it full-embodied, incarnate form. Just as I was the living representative of a part of herself, at the same time, seen as my dream character, she was an embodied reflection of a blind part of myself. In my dream, she symbolized the part of me that was refusing to look at something within myself. In healing her own blindness, she also stood for the part of myself that was now stepping into and embodying a new level of seeing, as if the blind part of myself was regaining its sight.

It was as if the blind woman was ready to heal her blindness, and just needed a verbal cue, a little reminder of what to do. Upon entering the scene I said my lines perfectly, with genuine aplomb, as if I knew the script, as if I had practiced for lifetimes. We stepped into each other’s waking dreams in such a way that our interaction was a representation of what was going on inside both of our psyches, as if an inner situation, with both personal and archetypal dimensions, got dreamed up into materialization in front of and through our very eyes. At the same time that I was being dreamed up by her to help her heal, she was being dreamed up to pick up a (third) eye-opening role in my unconscious. We were collaboratively dreaming each other up, reciprocally co-arising relative to each other, as if we were both contained within and expressions of a higher-dimensional process.

The two of us were engaged in a mutual synchronicity that we were sharing, not just as passive witnesses sitting in the audience, but rather, as active participants in our own living revelation. Though this experience seemed like a “miracle,” with biblical connotations, it was actually a synchronistic, auspicious co-incidence of factors, a synergistic convergence

of two beings coming together in a particular moment of time, revealing a deeper, more fundamental creative and healing process at play. At that moment my relationship with that blind woman was the medium through which a more grace-filled order of reality incarnated into the third dimension. She and I were just the actors through which a deeper process clothed, informed, and revealed itself. Unable to heal in isolation, the two of us were collaboratively helping each other to conjure up our own healing. The relationship between the two of us is a prototype, a microcosmic iteration of a fractal, of something available to us both individually, and en masse, as a species. Like the blind woman and I, each of us can come together and cooperatively help each other heal our psychic blindness as we more fully participate in our own conscious evolution. When we get “in sync” with each other, the deeper synchronistic field informs us such that it effortlessly, endlessly, nonlocally, and virally transmits and fractally explicates itself throughout time and space.

Through this experience, a deeper order of reality was revealing itself, with the two of us conscripted to be its instruments of revelation. This deeper dimension wasn’t something outside of ourselves that either of us could objectively contemplate as separate from ourselves, but rather, we were participating in our own self-revelation. I was enlisted in the service of being a conduit for something deeper to happen in the field. I didn’t do anything special, but rather, a miraculous-seeming event made itself apparent through a synchronistic encounter with another human being. “I” didn’t do anything, other than to just be myself. There was no “I” healing anyone other than being spontaneously present to what arose in front of me. There was no “I,” for in that moment, “I” was empty, an opening, simply allowing the universe to move through me so that healing could happen in the field.

Over the years I’ve come to realize that what happened between the two of us, when contemplated symbolically, as if it were a dream, was revealing a co-creative dynamic which is happening with everyone all of the time. With the majority of people, however, this mutual dreaming process—in which we are reciprocally dreaming each other up—is happening in such an unconscious way that it only serves to continually reinforce each other’s limited, wounded identities. We are co-dreaming with each other all the

Afterword

time; we are interconnected and interdependent in such a way that we only ultimately exist in relation to each other, which is to say that there is no separation between us. In a nonlinear, acausal process that happens outside of time, we are dreaming each other up to play roles in each other's waking lives. Every part of the universe is evoking, while simultaneously being evoked by, every other part. The good news is that we can collaboratively support each other to recognize this in a way which helps everyone. The event with the blind woman was a materialized crystallization in form revealing, literally and symbolically, how we dream up our world. Encoded in what happened between the blind woman and myself is a revelation of the dreamlike nature of our universe. Contemplating the experience with the blind woman symbolically, as if it were a dream, was the key which helped me to decipher and extract the blessing this situation was revealing, becoming the seeds which later helped me to articulate and develop my life's work.

“All we have to do to see is open our eyes and look.” This is in essence what I am saying in a variety of ways throughout this book. Wetiko disease is a psychic blindness that believes itself to be sightedness. The moment we see the pervasive, nonlocal nature of wetiko, and the way it operates through the blind spots in our awareness, we have begun healing our psychic blindness and dispelling the curse of wetiko. “Seeing” wetiko involves stepping out of the denial it induces within ourselves, such that we simply “open our eyes and look.” It brings to mind the saying of Jesus from the Gospel of Thomas, “The Father's kingdom is spread out upon the earth and people don't see it.” All we have to do to see is open our eyes and look. As we teach what we need to learn, I am in essence talking to myself. In finding these words, and writing this book, I am helping to heal my own blindness.

APPENDIX

Wetiko-Dispelling Communities

Another quality of a wetiko-free psyche is its permeability and continuity between the conscious and the unconscious. There is no clear demarcation between the conscious and the unconscious, as they are integrated in an un-boundaried continuum, one beginning where the other leaves off. As the light of consciousness penetrates into the unconscious, it creates a bridge allowing the unconscious contents to cross over more easily into consciousness. Instead of the separate parts of the psyche being compartmentalized, we could say, in Jungian terminology, that there has become a genuine connection, dialogue, and relationship between the ego and the Self such that they fluidly and reciprocally affect and inform each other. It's not that a wetiko-free person never falls asleep and acts out the unconscious, which would be impossible, as the ever-present unconscious nonlocally pervades the entire field of consciousness. We are always getting dreamed up to pick up and give embodied form and voice to the different marginalized and unconscious roles in the collective field. Becoming more conscious actually allows us, like the archetypal figure of the shaman, to give ourselves over to and submerge ourselves in the unconscious time and time again, enabling us to gain growing insight into its nature. Non-wetikoized psyches, however, do not stay stuck in and unconsciously identified with the roles they are incarnating, but at a certain point they are able to dis-identify from the role and to witness and reflect upon what is moving them. This is to say that they are able to experience the unconscious contents that they have just acted out from the inside, that is, subjectively (as they act it out), as well as from the outside, that is, objectively (as they contemplate what they have just

acted out). This reciprocal going back and forth between the subjective and objective standpoints is a true shamanic journey between the worlds through which they are adding consciousness to and assimilating the unconscious in the field, as well as metabolizing the unconscious parts of themselves that have been activated. As they integrate their unconscious through this process, it nonlocally registers throughout the entire field, lightening the shadow in the collective unconscious of everyone ever so slightly. Due to their “standing” at the gateway between the conscious and unconscious aspects of the community, they are able to act as agents transforming and raising unconscious contents into conscious awareness and making these available to the community at large. Being able to step out of themselves and self-reflect upon what they have just given full-bodied shape and form to is the key that allows them to extract the hidden blessings encoded within the unconscious. Their ability to purposely dissociate, which is very different from the pathology of dissociative disorder, is a talent and skill that helps them to remember, to put together all the disparate parts of themselves, as well as to retrieve the split-off soul of the community. Their shamanic ability to dissociate and journey between the worlds is a real offering and gift of healing to the community in which they live.

In what can be considered to be “shamanic performance art,” this process oftentimes involves the participation of the entire community as reflecting mirrors, and results in the de-potentiating of wetiko’s malevolent effects upon the community. We’re all potential shamans-in-training. Wetiko is a relational disease, in that it happens between and among people. One of the implications of its being a pathology that doesn’t exist, ultimately speaking, in any one individual is that a way to get a handle on it is through a group or community of people who are turned onto wetiko’s nonlocal wiles. In a community which is unaware, for example, of the way wetiko plays itself out through its relationships with each other, wetiko has free rein to animate the unproductive and destructive activities of gossip, shadow projection, power plays, conflict, and endless unconscious acting out among its members. In contrast, in a community tuned into wetiko’s machinations, these same divisive processes become

the very “stuff”—the alchemical *prima materia*—with which to work so as to increase their lucidity, the very doorway through which the community assimilates wetiko into its wholeness. When people come together with the intention to awaken, they are inviting a “guest” to appear, which is to say they are evoking the unconscious to act itself out through them so as to potentially be illumined and liberated. The unconscious, with all of its potential for creating conflict, misunderstanding, and separation, will play itself out through whoever is susceptible to falling asleep and becoming, through their unconscious reactions, its instrument of incarnation at any given moment. Instead of this person being labeled the “identified patient” (i.e., the one who has, and is, the problem), whatever is coming through them can be recognized as “belonging” to, and being a reflection of, all the members of the group, as everyone is dreaming up the person to manifest in this particular way. Being each other’s dream characters, we are all interconnected, expressions of the underlying unified and unifying field. Once this deeper, shared process is recognized, anchored to consciousness, and contained, however, the energy that was bound up in and literally feeding the unconscious, compulsive, and destructive acting out in the community then becomes available for creative expression and love. Related to the archetypal figure of the trickster and the divine fool, the non-wetikoized person is able to pick up, “make light of,” and “play” out this shamanic role of embodying the community’s unconscious—for the moment “catching” wetiko—thus becoming an oracle of divination for the community, de-potentiating wetiko’s hold on the community.

Interestingly, the role of the shaman in indigenous communities was not a role that existed in isolation, but a role that the community cooperatively dreamed up for the shaman to play out for the health of the community. The figure of the shaman is like a healing enzyme and awareness nutrient that is specifically crafted to address the unique needs and imbalances of the particular human community in which they live and operate. It is a wonderful thing for a community to dream up one person to play this role, but it is even better for the community to realize that the figure of the shaman is simply a role in the field that anyone can potentially pick up and play out. It is ideal when the role of the shaman

is not monopolized by one member of the community, but is a role that is equally shared by all members of the community. In a family system, when one person is always cast in the same role, for example, this is an expression that **the dreaming** of the community has a blockage. In a genuinely healthy and functional (as compared to dysfunctional) community, the roles are very fluid and get picked up and played out at various times by each of its members. This is a form of “collective shamanism” which can serve as a model for the way we can refigure and reconstitute ourselves communally so as to channel our collective genius in the most optimal of ways that serves everyone. Instead of the intrinsic projective tendencies of our minds being used, or more accurately, using us, to create separation, this is a way of working with the projective, dreaming tendencies of our minds so as to deepen our intimate connections with each other and further increase our lucidity. It should be noted that for this process to be successfully accomplished requires both the person and the community in which they are a member to have developed a safe “container” which allows for the unfolding of this process. This alchemical container is literally conjured up by the meta-awareness of its members.

As I wrote the Appendix, I realized I was describing the Awakening in the Dream groups that I facilitate each week in Portland. These groups are based on our life being a dream; to be more specific, they are based on how we are all **dreaming up** our life moment by moment. The same dreaming mind that is dreaming our dreams at night is dreaming our life. In a sense, in these groups we are doing a radical experiment, as we are imagining, taking seriously, and stepping into the premise that our life is indeed a dream, and following where this leads us. Seeing our life as a waking dream, we can realize that we are all collaboratively evoking the field in which we are contained, while concurrently, we are being evoked by it in a circular and acausal (as compared to linear and causal) process. In this shared waking dream, we are all conjuring up what is happening moment by moment, as we are getting cast to pick up roles in each other’s dreaming process, as if figures inside each other’s minds. This is what is happening all the time, 24/7; the groups are an alchemical container in which we simply add consciousness to what is usually happening

unconsciously. The groups are based on and work with the projective tendencies of our mind, the way we are in essence connecting the dots on the waking inkblot so as to dream up our life in a way that's similar to how we dream at night; just like a dream, our inner process is getting materialized as our waking life itself. When we step into the unconscious, we become like psychic flypaper, like an inkblot that immediately attracts people's unconscious projections. We unconsciously react to and amplify in our waking dream exactly what needs to be played out so as to express in embodied form our inner process. The groups and the relationships in the group themselves become the vehicle for this realization, as over time, our psyches intermingle, pushing each other's buttons, triggering projections, touching and affecting each other's unconscious.

In the groups we are discovering that we can inquire into who we are by unfolding the process of our being together, without any agenda, structure, or strategy about what we're going to do; I call this "following the dreaming." In a sense, in the groups we are doing real dreamwork, with the dream being whatever happens in the group. And we simply inquire into and "play" out this collaboratively co-created process with each other within the container of the group, entering the present moment together with the realization that we are embodied reflections—dream characters—in each other's waking dream.

This is not some sort of elaborate visualization practice, but is simply seeing and engaging with the truth of our situation. When something in us gets triggered by someone in the group, rather than thinking that *they* are the problem, as if the problem exists outside of ourselves, we immediately try to self-reflect and look upon what within ourselves has been touched. When everyone is training in seeing the dreamlike nature of our situation, a field gets conjured up that is lubricated for healing. The groups function as an alchemical container that allows for this collectively shared healing to happen. When any one of us gets healed of something in the group, we all do, as being dream characters in each other's dream, we are not separate. There is a healing energy that becomes available when we come together and get "in sync" with each other that is simply not available by our lonesome selves. There is a way of configuring ourselves

Appendix

such that we can activate and access our collective genius that can help all of us to heal and wake up. For more information, please go to my website, www.awakeninthedream.com.

GLOSSARY

Active Imagination

Active imagination is the most powerful technique Jung ever encountered for metabolizing, digesting, and assimilating the contents of the unconscious and hence, becoming conscious. Instead of passively watching the manifestations of the unconscious, in active imagination we fully engage with and actively participate in a conscious, living relationship with our unconscious. In active imagination we find ourselves being asked to creatively respond and come to terms with the voice of the “other” within ourselves. The psychological process of active imagination is the equivalent of the symbolic operations of alchemy. When the alchemists speak of *meditatio* and *imaginatio* (meditation and imagination), they are referring to developing an inner, creative dialogue with, and hence cultivating a living relationship to the answering voice of, the “other” in ourselves, that is, the unconscious. When an unconscious content is about to become conscious, it first becomes partially conscious, simultaneously visible and invisible. In active imagination, we enter into a creative dialogue with these unconscious contents, facilitating their passage from an unconscious, potential state to a conscious, actual one. In active imagination, we “objectify” the contents of our unconscious by creatively giving them shape and form, thereby making them into an object that we, as subject, are separate from, and with whom we have an interactive relationship and dialogue. By objectifying these inner figures, we dis-identify from them and give a body and voice to these seemingly autonomous, disembodied, and dismembered parts of ourselves who appear to have a mind of their own and simply need translation into the three-dimensional, spatio-temporal medium of matter. Objectifying the contents of the unconscious is to discover and step into the perspective that we are a subject with a viewpoint other than that held by the now objectified contents.

Speaking about his own personal experience, Jung writes in his autobiography that it was actually animated figures within his imagination that “brought home to me the crucial insight that there are things in the psyche which I do not produce, but which produce themselves and have their own life.”¹ Seemingly living, autonomous figures existing inside of Jung’s imagination, figures whom Jung subjectively experienced as other than himself, revealed to him and taught him to recognize the autonomous nature of the psyche, what he calls “the reality of the psyche.” Speaking about one such inner figure, Jung comments, “In my fantasies, I held conversations with him, and he said things which I had not consciously thought. For I observed clearly that it was he who spoke, not I.”² Jung was “hearing voices,” which in his case, as well as in many others, was not a pathological phenomenon, but a revelation. Though many of his psychiatric colleagues at the time thought that he had “gone crazy,” thank God for all of us that he didn’t get medicated out of his illumination by psychiatry. These inner figures helped Jung understand “that there is something in me which can say things that I do not know.”³ There is a figure in us, the Self, who knows us better than we know ourselves. In the final analysis the decisive factor is always consciousness, which can understand the manifestations of the unconscious and take up a position toward them.

An example of active imagination: after we have awakened from a dream at night, we can go back, with our wake-full consciousness, in our imagination, back into the scene of the dream. We can step back into the dream ego that we were identified with and unconsciously playing out in the dream, and then imagine consciously responding as the dream ego to the circumstances in the dream in the way we would want to respond. If in the dream we were victimized by an abusive figure, for example, how would we respond, what would we want to say to them if we were conscious and in our power? We might be surprised at how the “other” within ourselves responds to our stepping into our voice; for it is not us, as an ego, that is writing their script, but rather, if it is genuine active imagination, it is truly the voice of the unconscious that comes through these other parts of ourselves. In active imagination, we are not passively

contemplating the dream, but actively participating in re-dreaming it, as if we are creating new neural pathways in our psyche. Other examples of active imagination would be to draw, paint, or sculpt images from our dreams, imaginations, or visions, and then contemplate, and even dialogue with, the images we have created. When we one-pointedly focus our attention on an image, for example, we can't help but to impregnate it with meaning, energy, and life; we can't help but to develop a relationship with it if we pay attention to it. Examples of active imagination in ritual form are Tibetan Buddhist sand mandalas and Native American sand paintings, both of which involve creating living symbols that represent the sacredness of the Self. When we create these images (or when they spontaneously emerge in our dreams and visions), they are reflections of the balanced, harmonic quality of our inner wholeness (and holiness). Typically, the deity, or God-image, is thought to reside in the center of the mandala (as the mandala is considered to be the emanation of the deity). In contemplating the mandala, and identifying with the deity which it represents, we awaken the same energy within ourselves and re-connect with our intrinsic wholeness.

Aparticipatory Delusional Syndrome—ADS

What I call “Aparticipatory Delusional Syndrome” (ADS for short) is based on the deluded assumption that we are separate from and not participating in calling forth the very situation in the outside world to which we are reacting and object-ing. To the extent that we feel ourselves the victim of circumstances and don't realize our complicity in what is playing out in our lives is the extent that we have fallen prey to ADS. ADS effectively immobilizes and renders inoperative our ability to self-reflect, as it relates to the world through the fixed and non-negotiable lens of assumptions that the world “object”-ively exists, independent of ourselves. When we are stricken with ADS, we react to our perceptions and interpretations as if they exist inherently and independently in the objects of the world, rather than realizing that they are automatic reflexions of the way we are looking and are thus always revealing the subject

(ourselves). When we have fallen under the spell of ADS, we always see the cause of our problems as being outside of ourselves. In an unconscious “reflex,” we then try to “attack” the problem from the wrong point of view, externally, instead of approaching its source, which is within ourselves. ADS is a “semantic syndrome” in which we are misinterpreting the nature of our experience, subtly but significantly altering the way our mind gives meaning to and contextualizes our experience of the universe as well as ourselves. ADS is one of the primary, underlying psychological “dynamics” or “engines” that fuels the “malignant” aspect of malignant egophrenia (wetiko).

A simple example: I am withdrawing from my girlfriend due to my own wound. She senses this, which triggers her insecurities around being rejected. In her reaction, she acts out her wound, which gives me all the seemingly “objective” evidence that I need to further justify my withdrawal. I don’t realize, however, my complicity in invoking the very wound in her to which I am reacting.

Archetypes

Though it sounds like a big, fancy word, an “archetype” is something we all experience and know intimately from the inside. Archetypes are the most ancient and universal “thought-forms” of humanity. They are living entities, psychological instincts, or informational fields of influence that pattern human perception and experience. Psychic organs of the pre-rational psyche, archetypes are the invisible, formless “ground plan” which inform and give shape to both individual and collective human behavior. Called by Jung “typical modes of apprehension,” archetypes are like the underlying grid-lines or blueprints which inform and structure how we perceive, interpret, and respond to our experience. They are like the invisible stage managers behind the scenes of the world theater. The determining power underlying both individual and mass psychology, the archetypes of the collective unconscious are the formative templates that give breath (inspire) and depth (materiality) to events in both the inner and outer worlds. Indefinable, the archetypes are the eternally inherited

possibilities of ideas which initially have no specific content. They are the psychic skeleton upon which the individual and collective body politic is formed. Archetypes are the structural forms that underlie consciousness, just as the crystal lattice underlies the crystallization process. Archetypes, like the crystal lattice, are empty of concrete, material existence, yet they shape consciousness and events in the world just as the crystal lattice gives shape to and informs the individual crystal. Just like the smallest particles in physics, the archetypes themselves are non-perceptible and irrepresentable, yet are experienced through their effects in the world. The archetypes precede all representation, while simultaneously re-presenting themselves through informing and giving shape to the perceptible universe. The archetypes are exceedingly important to know about because they have powerful real world effects, and thus merit our closest attention. The *complexes* are the inner, psychological vehicles that flesh out the rich repository of contents of the underlying archetypes, giving the formless archetypes a specifically human face. Primordial images, archetypes are the image-making factor in the psyche, informing and giving shape to the images in our mind and the dreams of our soul, and as such, they insist on being approached imaginatively.

Archetypes are not produced by us nor are they objects of the mind, but are self-existing, autonomous factors that are their own “living subjects.” The relative autonomy of the archetypes gives rise to the idea of angels, demons, “principalities and powers,” and the archons of the Gnostics. Archetypes are of a “transcendental” nature, meaning they exist in a realm outside of space and time. Archetypes nonlocally exert their informing influence through the frictionless and super-fluid medium of the collective unconscious itself. They irrupt, unfold, and bleed into, over, and through linear time so as to incarnate and reveal themselves in form. The archetypes are pure information. Archetypes become visible by arranging and magnetically attracting events into their field of force so as to give shape to themselves. When an archetype is constellated, it generates and manifests itself individually, as well as in the collective psyche of any group it happens to touch. Archetypes live themselves out in whatever psychic stuff they can appropriate; they are like devouring

mouths—finding egos they can consume, and then living out of and through those egos, who become the archetype's instruments of incarnation into the third dimension (notice the similarity to the eating/consuming/devouring aspect of *wetiko*). People so enlisted have, knowingly or unknowingly, been drafted into becoming actors in an archetypal drama. Collective psychoses are always animated by a constellated archetype.

Archetypes are atemporal, self-organizing fields, which is to say that they organize, inform, and give shape to both the outer and inner dimensions, the world and our experience. Archetypes nonlocally configure events in the outer world so as to synchronistically express what is going on inside us, and vice versa. When the archetypal dimension is emerging, the boundary between the inner and the outer begins to dissolve, as the inner experience of the archetype becomes synchronistically enacted in the outer world.

Even though an archetype expresses itself through individuals, an archetype is impersonal. This is similar to the way I pay no attention to the hammer I use; it is not a personal hammer—I use it and afterward, after I no longer need it, I throw it away. That is the way the archetype uses humanity, simply as an instrument, as a tool of a most transitory kind. Archetypes enlist us for their purposes, taking possession of us like pieces of property, and drop us when we are no longer of use.

The destructive world events that have played out from time immemorial are the effects of an archetype getting constellated and being *unconsciously* acted out as human history. The archetype is continually creating novel iterations of the same underlying invariant process, which is to say “itself,” like an eternally self-generating fractal unfolding over linear, historical time. The archetypal dimension is continually unveiling and revealing itself to us as it actualizes and materializes itself on the stage of history. Until the archetype is *consciously* recognized and related to, however, instead of *unconsciously* acted out, we are doomed to endlessly and compulsively re-create its negative, destructive aspect as if having a recurring nightmare.

Archetype of the Negative Father

Symbolically speaking, the *prima materia*, the very stuff which needs to be transformed in the alchemical opus, corresponds to lead, which relates to Saturn-Chronos, the archetypal figure of the negative father. One of the *prima materia*'s many symbols is a weak and infirm old man, the mythic dying king, or "senex." This figure of the rigid-old-man-negative-father is symbolic of a calcification of consciousness which, out of fear of its own weakness, clings and becomes addicted to power and control, dictating to all who fall under its dominion. The archetype of the negative father has to do with dominating and using force ("might makes right") over others, rather than participating in a reciprocal, dialectical relationship. The dying old man symbolically represents a dominant position in consciousness which has outlived its usefulness, and thus becomes an obstacle to the further growth and development of consciousness. This archetypal figure of the negative father is in need of being liquefied, dissolved, and de-solidified, of being given an alchemical bath in the healing and renewing waters of the psyche. To be under the spell of Saturn-Chronos, the dark father, "Father Time," is to be entranced by and absorbed in linear, "chrono"-logical time at the expense of the timeless, "syn-chronic" dimension of our being. Saturn, the corrupted patriarchy, mythologically speaking, is the governor of the prison, the one who binds us and seemingly limits our freedom, while simultaneously being the supreme tester and great purifier. Saturn-Chronos's peculiar form of "blessing"—restraining us as it seemingly takes away our freedom—is almost always "cursed" by its recipient, and yet, is the very thing which catalyzes us to discover our own power and authority. Encoded in seemingly hidden form within this archetype is our own intrinsic power, as it challenges us to find and speak our true voice, access and step into our place of empowerment and true authority, and in so doing connect with the intrinsic wholeness of the Self. Due to its initiatory aspect, the archetype of the negative father is an unmediated expression of the Self, but in its darker aspect.

Complexes

Thematically organized (such as the power complex, savior complex, mother complex, inferiority complex, etc.), the complexes are the vehicles that flesh out the rich repository of contents of the underlying archetypes, giving the formless archetypes a specifically human face. Having complexes is not pathological, as everyone has them. What is pathological, however, is thinking that we don't have complexes. Jung clarifies, "Everyone knows nowadays that people 'have complexes.' What is not so well known, though far more important theoretically, is that complexes can *have us*."⁴ We don't need to get rid of our complexes; rather, we need to become consciously aware of them. What is important is what we *do* with our complexes. Complexes are the psychic agencies which flavor and determine our psychological view of the world. To quote Jung, "The *via regia* [royal road] to the unconscious, however, is not the dream...but the complex, which is the author of dreams and of symptoms."⁵ Complexes are the living elemental units of the psyche, acting as the focal or nodal points of psychic life, in which the energy charge of the various archetypes of the collective unconscious is concentrated. An emotionally charged complex acts like the epicenter of a magnetic field, attracting and potentially assimilating everything that has any resonance, relevance, or is related to it in any way into itself. This inner process can be seen as it enacts itself in the outer world when we come in contact with someone who has an activated complex and we find ourselves drafted into their process, picking up a role in their psyche. This is an outer reflection of how a complex can attract, co-opt, and subsume other parts of the environment, both inner and outer, into itself. When split off from consciousness, what are called "autonomous complexes" develop a seeming independent will and quasi-life of their own that can potentially engulf and possess the total personality.

The Daemonic

A power of nature, the “daemonic” is not an objectively existing metaphysical entity in the Christian sense, but rather is an archetypal function of human experience, a psychic as well as an existential reality in which we all participate. Being an archetypal, transpersonal energy that can literally take over and possess a person, group, nation, or species, the daemonic announces itself by drafting people into its service, enlisting human beings as instruments of its full-bodied revelation of itself. People so possessed will be compelled to unconsciously act out so as to give shape and living form to this archetypal, daemonic energy in the third dimension. The word “daemon,” etymologically speaking, is related to our inner voice and guiding spirit. The daemon is also related to the words “genius” and “genie” (as reflected in the punning title of the old TV show *I Dream of Jeannie*); the word genie has its roots in the Arabic *jinn*, the spirit beings of Islamic lore, mentioned in the Qur’an as “the hidden ones.” The daemon is also related to the words “calling” and “vocation.” Encoded within the daemonic is the creative spirit. The idea is that if we honor and connect with our daemon, we will access our creativity, discover our calling, and find our true mission in life; if we turn away from our daemon, it turns negative and becomes a “demon.”

Diabolic

Etymologically speaking, “diabolic” means that which separates, divides, and disintegrates; its antonym is “symbolic,” which means that which unites, connects, and integrates. Symbols are the language of dreams. This is to say, the antidote to the diabolic evil playing out in our world is symbolic awareness, which is to realize the dreamlike nature of our situation.

The Dreaming

I refer to the process of how projections constellate counterprojections as “the dreaming.” The dreaming is the shared, interactive space between

us which informs us. The dreaming is the deeper, underlying dynamic which shapes our reactions and configures our relation to each other. I am dreaming you up, but you, likewise, are dreaming me up to dream you up, ad infinitum and vice versa at the same time. The dreaming is the space between us in which our relationship happens; it is a whole, self-perfected, and self-contained universe, a living entity, a mutually shared dream that is clothing itself in our form as it reveals itself in ever new guises. The dreaming takes “two (or more) to tango,” so to speak, in that it is created by being in relationship with each other. We have conjured up the dreaming through our collaborative interaction, and there is a way of “following the dreaming” that can awaken us to a deeper level of freedom and healing. This calls to mind Christ’s statement, “Whenever two or more are gathered in my name, there I am” (Matthew 18:20).

The Dreaming-Up Process

In a process that happens in, over, and outside of time, when two or more people come together, projections activate counterprojections, creating a mutually shared dream of relationship. For example, say I have an unhealed wound in my psyche. If I go to sleep tonight and dream, my unhealed wound will be sure to show up in my night dreams, which are a projection or reflection of my inner process. Similarly, I will unconsciously connect the dots and give meaning to the inkblot called waking life so as to dream up into materialization aspects of my inner process that need resolution. I will unconsciously dream up and attract to myself someone in the outer world with whom to play out my unhealed, inner process. All it takes is the slightest “hook” in the other upon which I can hang my projection. The hook is like a piece of velcro upon which my projection becomes lodged, as it is where the other buys into and secretly agrees with my projection. Even though the part of them that resonates with my projection might be only 1 percent of who they are, my attention will tend to focus on this 1 percent of them as being all of who they are. Jung comments, “The moment one forms an idea of a thing and successfully catches one of its aspects, one invariably succumbs to the illusion

of having caught the whole.”⁶ My focusing on and relating to only one narrow part of the other will amplify this particular quality in them, thus making it far more likely that they will step into and embody this very quality, providing all the evidence I need to prove to myself even more that this is who they really are, further entrenching me in my viewpoint of seeing them this way, which only serves to draw this quality out of them all the more, in a diabolical, self-confirming, and self-perpetuating feedback loop which becomes a mutually created self-fulfilling prophecy.

Like a marriage made in heaven (or potentially, hell), in a mirrored template that fits like a lock and a key, the other is reciprocally dreaming me up to play out their unconscious process in a similar way. In a mutually created, shared dream, we dream each other up to play out roles in each other’s process. When this mutual dreaming process fully emerges and bodies forth, each person becomes a fully materialized dream character, an incarnation of a living figure inside of the other’s mind.

Co-creating a shared dream-space to inhabit together, at this point we are as much in the psyche as the psyche is within us. Something deeper is revealing itself through our synchronistic interplay. To recognize this in oneself is to become lucid in the waking dream. When both people involved recognize this and become cooperatively lucid together, they can collaboratively play with and transform the shared waking dream they are having, which is evolution in action. This is a reflection in the microcosm, an iteration of a fractal on the small scale of individual relationship, of what is available to us, macrocosmically speaking, as a species.

We are always dreaming others up while at the same time being dreamed up by them. I imagine we have all experienced, consciously or otherwise, what it feels like to be dreamed up by someone else into their process. With certain people, we find parts of ourselves that we usually don’t manifest getting drawn out of us, as if the other for some reason needs someone to play this particular role for them. As we watch and participate in how we get drafted into the other person’s inner process, we discover that synchronistically, the role we are cast in is not only showing us something about them, but at the same time is revealing a previously unconscious part of ourselves as well.

God-Image

A living symbol that points beyond itself, the God-image is not a concoction of the conceptual mind, but is an autonomous, self-produced phenomenon that is not invented by the intellect, but rather, experienced. The God-image is not a static entity but a living, dynamically evolving process which is the core archetype and supreme symbol of the collective unconscious. It is the collective unconscious' projection of itself, representing the Self as well as the individuation process. The God-image expresses our conception of and relation to God, while at the same time being the image through which God (i.e., the Self) is revealing itself to us. A unique phenomenon, it is the intersection point through which the human and divine imagination reciprocally inform each other. The human psyche is the organ through which we imagine God while God simultaneously imagines Itself into incarnation through our imagination. The God-image is the expression of the unconscious of humanity, while simultaneously being God's disclosure of Itself to us. On the one hand, we are supposedly made in the image of God; on the other hand, it is our image of God that makes us.

The figure of Christ, for example, is a living symbol of the God-image of the Western psyche. Christ in himself represents a completely perfect emanation of the Self in its radiant light aspect, lacking nothing, being an open doorway into and mirror of our divine and primordially pure nature. Seen symbolically, however, the figure of Christ is too one-sided a symbol of the two-sided, bipolar archetype of the Self. Christ himself is too overly light and identified with the good, and as the Gnostics realized, he "cast off his shadow from himself," which Satan is carrying. Because he is the full-blown Incarnation of the Light, psychologically speaking, Christ is only a symbol for one side of the Self (the light), whereas the figure of the devil embodies the other (the dark). Seen as dream characters who symbolically represent aspects of ourselves, in the figures of Christ and Satan the opposites had become completely severed and dissociated from each other. When the Christ event is viewed as a dream of the deeper dreaming Self and interpreted symbolically like a dream,

it reflects the incredible polarization and deep inner split existing in the collective unconscious of humanity. This tension of the opposites symbolically played itself out on the world stage in the adversarial figures of Christ and Satan. Christ's utterly sublime and spotless nature evoked a blacker darkness on the seemingly other side to oppose it, as if the two interconnected opposites reciprocally co-arose together. Seen symbolically, Satan represented the counterpole of the tremendous tension in the world psyche which Christ's advent on the scene signified. Satan was a relation of and related to Christ as inseparably as the shadow belongs to and cannot be separated from the light. Seen as a symbol in a dream, the figure of Christ lacks wholeness in the modern psychological sense, however, since it does not include the dark side of existence within itself, but specifically excludes it in the form of a Luciferian opponent. Seen psychologically, Christ corresponds to only one half of the archetype of the Self, which is to say that the Christian image of the self—Christ—lacks the shadow that properly belongs to it.

When we view the history of the world as the progressive differentiation of the Self, which is to say the incarnation of the deity, we begin to notice that the Self responds to a one-sided symbol of itself by gradually expressing and giving rise to the part of its totality that is left out and marginalized, just as in dreams the unconscious compensates a one-sided image to a dreamer.

This process can be clearly seen in the minds of the alchemists, who after the Christ event discovered a new God-image—Mercurius—within their own psyche. Mercurius was a further differentiation over time as well as a revelation in time of the archetype of the Self, which exists outside of time. The symbolic figure of Mercurius is a living example of the Self making itself known by revealing itself through the image-making psyche. A further emanation of the resurrected body, Mercurius is an elaboration over time of the birth of the Self, an Incarnation which is happening within the creative imagination of humanity. The symbolic figure of Mercurius is a spontaneous God-image that has crystallized into and out of the human psyche, which is a manifestation of, as well as a doorway into, an inner experience that unites the opposites. The alchemists

were having a living experience that evil didn't exist outside of, nor in opposition to, God but rather was an internal component of the deity. In Mercurius, the energy that had animated the Christ event had further extrapolated itself in the imagination of the alchemists by taking into itself its darker half. In a radical re-visioning of itself, in the figure of Mercurius the collective unconscious has offered us an image of God which includes and embraces evil as an integral aspect of our wholeness. It was as if in the fully revealed Incarnation of Christ, the Word had become flesh such that it precipitated its symbolic complement in the figure of Mercurius, a genuine praising of the Logos. Just like consciousness and the unconscious, the figures of Christ and Mercurius collaboratively illumine each other as complementary and compensatory aspects of a greater whole. Not meant to replace the figure of Christ, nor be identical with him, in the figure of Mercurius the collective unconscious compensated its one-sided image of itself through its own ever-evolving self-revelation. Mercurius is a prefiguration of and a symbol related to wetiko, in that, just like wetiko, Mercurius represents the juxtaposition in one phenomenon of the highest divinity and the deepest evil. From this point of view, the idea of wetiko can be recognized to be a newly emerging God-image.

Integrating within ourselves an expanded image of God can only be achieved at the moment when we ourselves change in relation to our new imagination. To enlarge our conception of God is to ourselves grow and become greater in volume, as the limits of who we imagine we are and what we imagine we are capable of expand simultaneously to greater heights and more abysmal depths. Seen in its progression since ancient times, the God-image was mediated in the Old Testament through the *law*, in the New Testament it was dependent on *faith*, and in the new psychological dispensation of our time the God-image is centered in and mediated by direct *experience*.

Hermetic Vessel

One of the key conditions needed for the success of the alchemical art is a closed, air-tight hermetic vessel, or “container,” which is able to withstand

the pressure needed for the transformation and “cooking” of the prima materia. The life-giving alchemical container typically is portrayed as having a purifying fire underneath it, symbolizing the heat of introspective, contemplative awareness, which is needed to create sufficient psychological pressure for transformation. If there’s not enough pressure, no transformation takes place. In alchemy, the fire purifies, while simultaneously melting and synthesizing the opposites into a unity. Attention warms and activates the unconscious, thereby breaking down and making more permeable the barriers that separate it from consciousness, allowing its contents to pass between the conscious and unconscious more easily. The alchemists used images of the gentle warmth of a brooding hen incubating her eggs and the baking of bread to symbolize this process. The first was an image of the heat from nature; the second was an image of humanity’s ability to alter nature through the heat of awareness. “Heating” is necessary for the alchemical operation to succeed; that is, there must be an intensification and concentration of consciousness in order for light to be kindled in the dark dwelling place of the true self. For the “work” to be successful, the “heat” generated by the mutual cooperation and cross-fertilization of nature (both terrestrial and celestial), combined with human art, was essential.

A “hermetically sealed” vessel (sealed with the stamp of Hermes, who is related to Mercurius, the two-faced God-image of the alchemists), symbolically speaking, prevents anything extraneous from entering into the operation, as well as stopping unreflected-upon projections from leaking out into the world. In addition, a hermetically sealed container keeps the flask from “blowing its lid,” which would be symbolic of not being able to “contain” the creative tension and pressure. “Blowing our top” is to become possessed by, and thereby compelled to unconsciously act out, primitive, un-integrated, archetypal affects of overwhelming emotion and passion.

Speaking of the profundity of the alchemical vase, the legendary writer of antiquity Maria Prophetissa says that “The whole secret lies in knowing about the Hermetic vessel.” A vessel of and for the spirit, the alchemical container is no mere physical apparatus, but is a mystical idea, a primal

image, a genuine symbol expressing something of real value within the very psyche that produced it. The concept and experience of the hermetic vessel develops and emerges out of the unconscious itself as a result of contemplating and thus shedding light on the unconscious.

In a mysterious way, the alchemical vase is identical with its contents. The psyche itself *is* the mystical hermetic vessel, in that the psyche catalyzes the transformation of the prima materia, is itself the prima materia which is being transformed, is the container in which the transmutation occurs, as well as being the philosopher's stone that is born out of the work. Feminine in nature, the spacious hermetic vessel is a receptive uterus and matrix of spiritual renewal and rebirth. Jung writes that as the psyche of humanity becomes conscious, "It becomes the divine cradle, the womb, the sacred vase in which the deity itself will be locked in, carried and born."⁷

If we try to escape the pain, frustration, and dissatisfaction of our existential situation by continually acting out our unconscious without reflecting upon what we are doing, we are postponing a deeper and more genuine relationship with ourselves. In avoiding relationship with ourselves, we are like a hamster frantically running around inside of a wheel, and our suffering is totally neurotic and unproductive. Conversely, if we are able to hold the powerful psychic energies that get constellated when we go inward, and consciously explore, express, and embrace the experience, a psychic container gets created through our efforts; our suffering then becomes redemptive and genuine transformation occurs. Creatively holding the tension of the opposites without splitting, dissociating, or projecting out one of the opposites is a conscious experience of reclaiming the darkness that nourishes and cultivates the light of the Self. Instead of oscillating and being thrown back and forth between the opposites, a state in which we identify with one of the opposites while having no conscious connection with the other, we develop a "container" within ourselves in which we are able to experience both opposites simultaneously. The inspiration for this process is the philosopher's stone, which crystallizes in, as, and through the individual psyche as a result. Consciousness is a psychic substance that is produced by the opposites suffered, not

blindly, but in living awareness. With a good container, the endless circling and cycling, instead of being an endless holding pattern that parasitically drains our energy, becomes a circulating spiral that leads both ever higher into consciousness and deeper into the unconscious, where it circumambulates, illuminates, and activates the latent creative source at its center.

Inflation

Full-blown wetikos, and particularly Big Wetikos, suffer from inflation, a situation where the ego unconsciously identifies with the archetype of the Self, the wholeness and totality of our being. Inflation is when something small (the ego), instead of being in conscious relation to something larger than itself (the Self), has arrogated to itself its qualities. As a result, the ego is blown up beyond its proper human limits. In unconsciously identifying with the archetype, the ego appropriates its power, while simultaneously forfeiting its own humanity, which is to truly “miss the mark.” Inflated personalities are filled with hubris, becoming “full of themselves,” a legend in their own mind, feeling they are not bound by the laws of the three-dimensional universe.

Being caught up in an inflation is like being sucked up by a cyclone, as there is no getting through to the person who is inflated, who has been taken over and lifted off the ground by a more powerful energy. Jung pointed out that “Inflation magnifies the blind spot of the eye.... A clear symptom of this is our growing disinclination to take note of the reactions of the environment and pay heed to them.”⁸ When we are inflated, we don’t accept any reflection, feedback, or informing influence from the outer universe that contradicts our puffed up image of ourselves. Instead of being open, receptive, in relationship with, and learning from the outer world, when we are inflated we continually interpret everything so as to support our delusional, grandiose self-image. We see the world through the filter of our own narcissistically self-serving image, which is a form of psychic blindness.

Speaking about an inflated consciousness, Jung says that it “is incapable of learning from the past, incapable of understanding contemporary

events, and incapable of drawing right conclusions about the future. It is hypnotized by itself and therefore cannot be argued with. It inevitably dooms itself to calamities that must strike it [and others within its sphere of influence] dead.”⁹ Just as the unconscious always compensates a one-sidedness, inflation inevitably results in all of the air (life, breath, spirit) being taken out of the person who is inflated. Inflation is ultimately self-destructive, and if not consciously reflected upon, always results in disaster. Talking about inflation, Jung says that it “can be damped down only by the most terrible catastrophe to civilization, another deluge let loose by the gods upon inhospitable humanity.”¹⁰

Malignant Narcissism

A narcissist is someone who has become hypnotized and entranced by their own inflated self-image. They have become so self-absorbed, that not only are they not in genuine relationship with others, but they relate to others (including the environment) as objects to satisfy their own need for self-aggrandizement. A full-blown wetiko is a “malignant” narcissist, however, which is a narcissist who reacts sadistically to others who don’t support and enable their narcissism. Ultimately, a malignant narcissist wants to annihilate anyone who in any way threatens their illusory self-image and self-serving agenda. Malignant narcissism is a flatland version of wetiko/malignant egophrenia, in the sense that it is one particular surface aspect of this higher-dimensional pathology. Malignant narcissism is to wetiko as the shadow on a wall is to the object that is casting the shadow. Studying the shadow (malignant narcissism) can therefore help us to understand the object that is casting it (wetiko). To learn more about malignant narcissism, see chapter 5, “George Bush and Malignant Narcissism,” in my book *The Madness of George W. Bush*.

Memes

Memes are self-replicating thought-forms, like thought-viruses. Memes can be either potentially fear-based and negative, or inspiring,

empowering, and positive. Memes are the instruments with which we, knowingly or unknowingly, create our reality. This is why the very first words in the *Dhammapada*, the Wisdom Sayings of the Buddha, are as follows: “All that we are is the result of what we have thought.” When we collectively entertain a thought-form as having a certain reality, we literally materialize that very thought-form into full-bodied incarnation; we dream it up. As more and more people contemplate memes that liberate, we will dream up a universe where more of us are truly free.

Nonlocality

When something is said to be nonlocal, it is not bound or localized to one particular place or time, but on the contrary, transcends the conventional, three-dimensional rules of space and time. Nonlocal interaction is characterized by instant informational exchange, where one part of the universe, in no time whatsoever (i.e., outside of time), appears to interact with, affect, and communicate with another part of the universe in an immediate and unmediated way. Imagine, in baseball terminology, a throw from deep centerfield to home plate, only the outfielder is halfway around the planet, and the ball takes zero seconds to arrive. The interaction involved in a nonlocal universe is not any known form of interaction we are familiar with, as it occurs infinitely faster than the speed of light can travel through the medium of space, while at the same time it doesn't involve any expenditure of energy. Nonlocality's action-at-a-distance is an expression of an underlying and outflowing information-filled field which connects and inextricably links every part of the universe with every other part in no time. In a nonlocal universe such as ours, no part of the universe is or can be fundamentally separate from any other part, which is to say that nonlocality is an expression of the indivisible wholeness of the universe. This linking, according to the quantum theoretician Henry Stapp, could be the most profound discovery in all of science. To view the universe as consisting of separate parts is as off the mark as to view the little eddies and whirlpools that often form in a river as separate from the water.

Plenum

A similar idea to that of the pleroma which is referred to by Jung in his writings, the plenum is a field of abundant potential, boundless luminosity, and infinite sentience. Instead of space being defined as a quantum vacuum that is empty, the plenum expresses the idea that space is characterized by an ever overflowing fullness.

Prima Materia

Seen alchemically, wetiko is related to the prima materia of alchemy. The “famous secret” and the basis of the entire alchemical opus is the unique prima materia, which is the chaos and raw material out of which the refined substance or “gold” is revealed. The elusive prima materia needs to be found before the magnum opus could begin. Psychologically speaking, the mysterious prima materia represents, and is discovered in, the parts of the psyche that we deny, disown, and marginalize, the aspects of ourselves that we feel ashamed of, and turn away from in revulsion and disgust. Our neuroses and our wounds are the alchemical prima materia, the rejected and despised part of the psyche, the raw material which we should learn to be thankful for, without which we would be unable to make the alchemical gold.

This is related to how the figure of Christ, the archetypal incarnation of the Messiah who is the symbol of the True Self, unless recognized for his divinity, was an object of scorn and contempt. “And just as, in Christianity, the Godhead conceals itself in the man of low degree,” Jung writes, “so in the ‘philosophy’ [alchemy] it hides in the uncomely stone [i.e., the philosopher’s stone].”¹¹ Symbolically, this is the stone “rejected by the builders,” which ultimately becomes the cornerstone. It is an archetypal, universal idea that the highest value is to be found in the lowest, that the blessing is to be found in the curse, and wisdom is to be found in ignorance. Similarly, encoded in wetiko is a revelation.

To the alchemists, there was a spirit hidden in the darkness of the prima materia, a divine spark buried in the darkness of matter. The

much-prized prima materia is the psychic flypaper which catches every imaginable projection buzzing around in the human mind. Symbolically speaking, the enigmatic prima materia represents the unknown substance within us that carries the projections of the unconscious. It is the psychic emulsion or medium in which the subconscious contents within us are encoded. The prima materia is thus a symbol for the unconscious itself.

The prima materia is often symbolized as an old man, as it is related to the figure of Saturn-Chronos, the archetypal negative father, who is a binding and limiting power that is related to the element “lead.” The prima materia in its leadlike aspect contains the spirit of depression, a downward movement into the depths of our being which is felt as melancholia, and which corresponds, psychologically speaking, to the encounter with the shadow. The tantalizing prima materia has a dangerous, toxic aspect, and was considered “bedeviled,” causing insanity if not approached with the highest regard. Though potentially deadly, the prima materia, like the wetiko virus, contains within itself its own medicine, which is to say that the alchemical process is its own solution. The prima materia is a quantum phenomenon, in that it is of an indeterminate nature of open-ended potentiality, and contains within itself both the poison and its own medicine. The more virulent the poison, the more powerful are its potential healing qualities.

In its original form, the paradoxical prima materia contains the most incompatible possible opposites inherent in the human psyche within itself in uncombined form. An eruption of the unconscious, the prima materia is often symbolized as a dragon, as it is the personification of the instinctual psyche. The prima materia is called *radix ipsius* (root of itself). It is an *in creatum*, an uncreated, autonomous, self-generating, spirit-like entity which is rooted in itself, is dependent on nothing, and has everything that it needs.¹² Without beginning or end, and in need of “no second,” it can by definition only be something of a divine nature. Its a priori, beginning-less, and self-existing nature brings to mind the famous words from the Bible, “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58, D.V.). Alchemically speaking, the ungraspable prima materia is considered to be the virginal mother which gives birth to the lapis.

The prima materia is also considered to be an orphan because it is so completely unique and utterly one of a kind. It is seemingly hard to find because it is found everywhere. To quote an ancient alchemist, the prima materia is the subject of the “Great Stone of the Philosophers, which the whole world has before its eyes yet knows not.” Jung contemplates, “Yet nobody has ever known what this primal matter is. The alchemists did not know, and nobody has found out what was really meant by it, because it is a substance in the unconscious which is needed for the incarnation of the god.”¹³

Psyche

Jung uses the word “psyche” (*Seele* in German) in an all-inclusive sense, meaning the totality of all psychic processes, both conscious and unconscious. (The adjective “psychic” here has no parapsychological connotation.) Not reducible to biochemical processes in the brain, it is a mysterious “substanceless substance” that exists between spirit and matter. See chapters 2 and 4.

Retrocausality

“Retrocausality,” also referred to as “backward time causality” or “reverse time causality,” is defined as the future influencing the past; it adds to and enlarges the idea of linear causality in the sense that it implies that the effect is not only produced by a cause, but that the effect can also precede the cause. This is to say that what might conventionally be seen as an effect that exists in the future could in some way be a causal agent affecting the outcome of events that occurred before it in linear time. Retrocausality thus implies a symmetrical treatment of time in which both past and future events can play a role in causing the present moment to happen the way it does. Such a perspective collapses our notion of sequential time as always flowing in one direction, that is, from the past to the future, as it allows causal movement in two directions simultaneously. In this Archimedian “view from nowhen,” there is a two-way contact, contract,

and information exchange between the past and the future. The present moment, the point where our power to shape reality is to be found, is the place in which the “handshake” completing this transaction happens. Retrocausality implies that not only a future self, so to speak, is influencing us in the present, but that the questions we ask and perceptions we have in the present affect the past as well. The past is not thought to be fixed, unchangeable, and already existing, but is considered to have no existence except as it is recorded in the present. This view considers that the past doesn’t exist in a solid or objective way that causes or determines our present-moment experience in the way that is imagined by classical physics. Rather, the perspective of retrocausality says just the opposite—the way we observe the present moment reaches back in time and creates the past, selecting one out of many possible quantum histories for the universe. Because of the probabilistic nature of the quantum universe we live in, the arena of history is enlarged such that the past is an amalgam of all possible pasts compatible with the version of the present moment we are currently experiencing. Retrocausality greatly expands our sphere of influence, pointing out that we have a great deal more ability to influence historical events than we have previously imagined. Retrocausality is related to the shamanic perspective which considers that the shaman journeys, in the present moment, both backward and/or forward in time so as to effect changes in the past and/or future, thereby changing the present circumstance.

The Shadow

The shadow, a term coined by Jung, is a living part of the personality. We all have a shadow, as everything substantial casts a shadow; it is what makes us human. Psychologically speaking, the shadow is typically conceived of as the underdeveloped, undesirable, and inferior parts of our personality, the aspects of ourselves which we repress the most; it is the part of ourselves we are least proud of and want to hide from others. It is our dark side, the “other” in ourselves; in terms of family systems, it is likened to a darker brother. If we consciously identify ourselves as being a

good, kind, spiritual person, for example, then imagine the polar opposite of this perspective—this is what comprises the contents and informs the point of view of the shadow side of our psyche. The less the shadow is embodied in an individual's conscious life, and the more one-sidedly the person identifies with a bright persona, the darker and more destructive the shadow becomes. Unless we are “working on our shadow” by making consistent efforts to become conscious of it, we typically relate to it by classifying it as not-self and reflexively projecting it outside ourselves onto others. The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-person. The shadow is not merely negative, but contains within it hidden gifts that can revitalize the personality. There are personal and archetypal dimensions to the shadow, which is to say that parts of our shadow have to do with our own personal darkness, while another part of our shadow has to do with the darkness that is the inheritance of our species. The shadow is not to be eradicated, but more “come to terms with.”

The shadow includes both a dark and a light aspect. It is not just our darkest parts which we project; we also have a “positive shadow,” which we also project outside of ourselves. We are just as willing to project onto someone else, be it Christ, Buddha, or our guru, our positive or “golden shadow,” which is our highest genius. It is time for us to withdraw our positive shadow projections and creatively express and incarnate our true genius, for God's sake, as well as our own. The world needs, and deserves, nothing less. To own our shadow (both positive and negative) and withdraw our projections is to embrace all of ourselves.

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NOTES

Acknowledgments

¹ Catherine’s website is at solari.com. For an excellent detailed case study of wetikonomics, see Catherine Austin Fitts; Dillon, Read & Co., Inc.; and the Aristocracy of Stock Profits, at dunwalke.com.

Introduction

¹ You can read the first chapter of *The Madness of George W. Bush* on my website at www.awakeninthedream.com.

² “Psychic” is used throughout this book as the adjective form of “psyche” and not with any parapsychological connotation.

³ R. D. Laing, *The Politics of Experience* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1971), 28.

⁴ See my article “Diagnosis: Psychic Epidemic,” at www.awakeninthedream.com.

⁵ Jung, *Aion*, CW 9ii (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), para. 19.

⁶ See my interview “Psychiatry Almost Drove Me Crazy,” in Karen Sawyer, *The Dangerous Man: Conversations with Free-Thinkers and Truth-Seekers—A Collection of Alternative Research* (Winchester, UK: O Books, 2010).

⁷ In an absurd double-bind that in retrospect is actually humorous, when I verbalized my experience, I was told either that I must be on drugs or, if I wasn’t, that I needed to be.

⁸ See my article “Lucid Dreaming” in Daniel Pinchbeck, ed., *Exploring the Edge Realms of Consciousness* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2012).

⁹ The Buddha himself prophesied that an even greater incarnation than himself would soon be born, a second Buddha, whose name would be Padmasambhava, the “Lotus-Born.” Spontaneously self-arisen during the ninth century in an innately pure physical body directly from the womb of origination itself, Padmasambhava, who is considered to be the Buddha of this very age we live in, was the actualized figure who, by the power of his realization, “conquered” the country of Tibet, turning its inhabitants into practitioners of the holy Dharma. Transforming the negative, demonic energies into

protectors of the Dharma, he founded Tibetan Buddhism. Known as the tantric Buddha, he is the self-originated display and incarnation of the nonlocal mind of enlightenment itself. The embodiment of the dynamic and atemporal process of spiritual realization in form, Padmasambhava was, and is, able to engage with this world in such a way as to transcend time and be able to creatively conspire with us, in the present moment, in our own awakening. To learn more about Padmasambhava, go to padmasambhava.org.

¹⁰ This is the mantra of Avalokiteshvara, known in Tibetan as Chenrezig, who is the Bodhisattva of Compassion and is an energetic aspect of Padmasambhava, inseparable from him.

Chapter 1: The Greatest Epidemic Sickness Known to Humanity

¹ Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, xv.

² Some critics of my work assert that I am creating a false dichotomy of separation by setting up an “us versus them” polarity via my notion of wetiko: i.e., “they” have wetiko and “we” don’t. I feel that this is an important point that deserves further clarification. In discussing wetiko, I continually point out that it is a “field phenomenon,” *not something that some people have and others don’t*. In other words, everyone “has” wetiko, to varying degrees. This is why the Buddha said, “All sentient beings are deranged.” It is not a matter of individual finger-pointing; we are all drowning in the stuff, as wetiko is everywhere. I point out that even the most hard-core wetikos are embodied reflections of these parts of ourselves. My entire discussion about wetiko can only be truly understood from the “radical” (which, etymologically speaking, means “getting to the root”) point of view of the universe being a whole system in which separation does not ultimately exist among any of its parts. Please do not dismiss my work out of hand because you imagine that it’s creating separation, for in the very act of doing so, you yourself may be creating the very separation you are opposing, ironically, in the name of opposing it. As Rumi writes, “Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I’ll meet you there.”

³ Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, 46.

⁴ Etymologically, the word *religio* derives from *religare*, which means to link back and reconnect (to the source, God, our true selves). The term “religion” designates the attitude peculiar to a consciousness which has been changed by

Notes

experience of “the numinous.” Jung writes, “The main interest of my work is not concerned with the treatment of neuroses but rather with the approach to the numinous. But the fact is that the approach to the numinous is the real therapy and inasmuch as you attain to the numinous experiences, you are *released from the curse of pathology. Even the very disease takes on a numinous character.*” [Emphasis added] Jung, *Letters*, vol. 1, 377.

⁵ Jung, *Nietzsche’s Zarathustra: Notes of the Seminar Given in 1934–1939*, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 1321.

⁶In the Apocryphal Acts of John, Jesus says, “I would be wounded, and I would wound.” M. R. James, ed., *The New Testament Apocrypha* (Berkeley: Apocryphile Press, 2004), 253.

⁷ Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, xvi.

⁸ Writing about the importance of coming to terms with the shadow within ourselves, Jung comments, “One would therefore do well to possess some ‘imagination for evil,’ for only the fool can permanently disregard the condition of his own nature. In fact, this negligence is the best means of making him an instrument of evil ... our lack of insight [into our own potential for evil] deprives us of the capacity to deal with evil.” *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), para. 572. Jung also talks about the importance of developing an imagination for evil in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973), 331.

⁹ Rollo May, *Love and Will* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1969), 121.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 129.

Chapter 2: Understanding Wetiko

¹ To quote Jung, “Mercurius, the revelatory light of nature, is also hell-fire, which in some miraculous way is none other than a rearrangement of the heavenly, spiritual powers in the lower, chthonic world of matter.” *Alchemical Studies*, CW 13 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), para. 257.

² Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, CW 12 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), para. 93.

³ Artist and poet William Blake comments, “The Eternal body of Man is the Imagination, that is God himself.” Blake refers to Jesus as “Jesus the

Notes

Imagination.” Christ, from the alchemical point of view, is the revelation of the divine imagination itself, referred to as the “Imagined God.” Alchemically speaking, this is the highest compliment.

From the point of view which recognizes the reality of the divine, creative, and reality-shaping imagination that works through humanity, it is precisely because God is an expression and creation of our sacred imagination that we pray to It. From this perspective, prayer, which is a form of active imagination, is the highest form, the supreme act of the creative imagination.

⁴ Of Canada’s indigenous population, three-quarters speak the Algonquian language, including the Cree and Ojibwa.

⁵ Robert Brightman, Field Notes, Pukatawagan and Granville Lake, Manitoba (1977–1979), in Robert A. Brightman, “The Windigo in the Material World,” *Ethnohistory* 35(4) (Autumn 1988), 337–379, at www.jstor.org/stable/482140.

⁶ E. E. Rich, ed., *James Isham’s Observations of Hudson Bay, 1743, and Notes and Observations on a Book Entitled A Voyage to Hudsons Bay in the Dobbs Gallery, 1749* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1949).

⁷ Richard Glover, ed., “David Thompson’s Narrative, 1784–1812” (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1962). Quoted in Robert A. Brightman, “The Windigo in the Material World,” 343, at www.jstor.org/stable/482140.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Similarly, in the Western tradition, the alchemical spirit of Mercurius is portrayed as a trickster who, being mercurial, changes shape at will.

¹⁰ Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), para. 600.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, para. 290.

¹² *Ibid.*, para. 639.

¹³ Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil* (New York: Beacon Press Books, 1969), 257–258.

¹⁴ Four-valued logic was introduced in the second century CE by Nagarjuna, who is considered to be the most important Buddhist philosopher after the Buddha himself and who is one of the most original and influential thinkers

in the history of Indian philosophy. Nagarjuna stated emphatically that the unnecessary and artificially distorting limitations of two-valued, either/or logic are the greatest cause of human suffering.

Chapter 3: Under a Collective Spell

¹ Thomas Merton, *Gandhi on Non-violence* (New York: New Directions, 1965), 3.

² Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, xix.

³ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴ See Arendt's classic 1951 work *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

⁵ George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (New York: Penguin, 2003), 36.

Chapter 4: Dreams of the Psyche

¹ Richard Evans, ed., *Jung on Elementary Psychology: A Discussion Between C. G. Jung and Richard Evans* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1976), 94.

² Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, CW 8 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), para. 747.

³ Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), para. 326.

⁴ Jung, *The Practice of Psychotherapy*, CW 16 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), para. 442.

⁵ Gospel of Truth, 29–30, found in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, ed. James M. Robinson (New York: Harper One, 1990), 45.

⁶ In Tibetan Buddhism, rainbows symbolize the empty, dreamlike nature of all phenomena; all appearances are said to be empty of inherent existence, just like a rainbow. Rainbows can only be said to exist when particular factors come together in relationship in a certain way—light, moisture, and an observing consciousness (with an eye, brain, etc). If any of these factors aren't present, no rainbow appears, which is to say that rainbows do not objectively exist separate from consciousness. Rainbows are also a manifestation of the polar opposites of water and fire combined as one, which is to say they can be likened to a living symbol of the true nature of the universe, uniting the opposites in a higher synthesis.

Notes

⁷ W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *The Tibetan Book of Great Liberation* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 232. This text is considered to be a *terma*, or hidden treasure. To learn more about *terma*, see my article “Hidden Treasures” at www.awakeninthedream.com/wordpress/hidden-treasures.

⁸ To read more about this teaching, see chapter 16, titled “As Viewed, So Appears,” in my book *The Madness of George W. Bush*.

⁹ M. R. James, ed., *The New Testament Apocrypha* (Berkeley: Apocryphile Press, 2004), 256.

¹⁰ Gospel of Thomas, 113, found in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, ed. James M. Robinson (New York: HarperOne, 1990), 138.

Chapter 5: The Shadow and Its Projections

¹ Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, ix.

² Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, CW 9i (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), para. 455.

³ Gerhard Adler, ed., *C. G. Jung, Letters*, vol. 1:1906–1950 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 541.

⁴ Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy*, CW 14 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), para. 203.

⁵ Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, CW 12 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), para. 36.

⁶ Quoted from *Projection and Re-collection in Jungian Psychology: Reflections of the Soul* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1980), 182.

⁷ M. R. James, ed., *The New Testament Apocrypha* (Berkeley: Apocryphile Press, 2004), 253.

⁸ Georges Berguer, *Some Aspects of the Life of Jesus* (trans. Eleanor Stimson Brooks and Van Wyck Brooks), 265, quoted in R. Scott Frayn, *Revelation and the Unconscious* (London: Epworth Press, 1940), 182.

Chapter 6: Vampires, Parasites, and Aliens

¹ Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, CW 7 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), para. 370.

² Henri F. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 13.

³ Simone Weil, “The Love of God and Affliction,” in *Simone Weil Reader*, ed. G. Panichas (Mt. Kisco, NY: Moyer Bell Limited, 1977), 441.

⁴ Jung, *Children’s Dreams: Notes from the Seminar Given in 1936–1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 373.

⁵ David Ray Griffin, *Christian Faith and the Truth Behind 9/11* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 179.

⁶ Castaneda, *The Active Side of Infinity*, 218. There has been much controversy over whether Castaneda’s books, presented as anthropological nonfiction, were simply made up. From one point of view, it makes no difference, as there is much wisdom in the books. We live in a culture that has worshipped the hyperrational literalism of facts and lowered the status of imagination to a marginalized nonreality. Whether or not they are simply flights of Castaneda’s imagination, his works point to the “fictive power,” the world-creating artistry of the imagination itself to shape our world and influence our souls, as his books have clearly touched something very deep in the unconscious of his readers. Shamanism is very much related to the art of storytelling, dreaming, imagining, visioning, and mythologizing. If Castaneda’s books are fiction, they are living examples of the shamanic art in action, genuine shamanic flights of fictive power that help us to deliteralize our own reading of the world. The imaginal reality that Castaneda may have fabricated out of his own creative imagination is then no more real or unreal than the upper/underworld journeys of the shaman into the collective unconscious.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 219.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 220.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 229.

¹⁵ See John Lamb Lash, *Not in His Image: Gnostic Vision, Sacred Ecology, and the Future of Belief* (White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2006). John Lash's website is metahistory.org.

¹⁶ Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, 188.

¹⁷ Jung, *The Symbolic Life*, CW 18 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), para. 1374.

¹⁸ Quoted in P. D. Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1949), 316.

¹⁹ Wilhelm Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (New York: Noonday Press, 1970), xvii.

Chapter 7: Psycho Analysis

¹ Michael Eigen, "Mystical Precocity and Psychic Short Circuits," in Edward G. Corrigan and Pearl-Ellen Gordon, eds., *The Mind Object* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1995), 114.

² Robert D. Hare, *Without Conscience: The Disturbing World of Psychopaths* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1999), 219.

³ Infamous serial killer Ted Bundy, for example, claimed that a "malignant entity" had taken over his consciousness. Ibid., 4.

⁴ See chapter 3, "George Bush and the Pale Criminal," in my book *The Madness of George W. Bush*.

⁵ R. D. Laing, *The Politics of Experience* (New York: Pantheon, 1971), 73.

⁶ Abraham J. Heschel, *Who Is Man?* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1965), 47.

⁷ Ibid., 101.

⁸ Jung continues that Antimimos "appears as the antagonist of the Son of God: he too considers himself to be God's son.... We meet this daemon in many

other places ... he is the spirit of darkness in a man's body, compelling his soul to fulfill all his sinful tendencies." *Psychology and Alchemy*, CW 12 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), para. 460.

⁹ From an essay by Jeanne de Salzmann originally published in *Gurdjieff: Essays and Reflections on the Man and His Teaching* (New York: Continuum, 1996), ed. Jacob Needleman and George Baker; posted at www.gurdjieff.org/salzmann3.htm.

¹⁰ Jung, *The Symbolic Life*, CW 18 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), para. 1363.

¹¹ From W. H. Auden, "In Memory of Ernst Toller."

¹² Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, 60.

Chapter 8: Evil

¹ This is similar, I imagine, to when a shaman takes on the illness of those they are trying to heal. Of course, what differentiates an accomplished shaman from a shaman wannabe is that genuine shamans, through this very process of catching and being infected by the other's illness, are able to creatively heal themselves, and by extension, the person (or persons) with whom they are working.

² One of Jung's favorite words, left untranslated in English editions of his work, *Auseinandersetzung* is a German compound meaning literally "a sitting apart" (*Setzung*) and having it out (*aus*) with one (*ein*) another (*ander*).

³ Buddhism points out that *avidya* (a Sanskrit word; the Tibetan equivalent is *ma-rigpa*), which translates as ignorance, delusion, not-knowing, or unconsciousness, is the primary root of evil. Referring to the "suffocating darkness of unconsciousness," Jung writes, "This indeed is Sin with a capital S, and Evil *par excellence*." *C. G. Jung Letters*, ed. Gerhard Adler, vol. 1: 1906–1950 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 488.

⁴ Jung, *Aion*, CW 9ii (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), para. 255.

⁵ Bertrand Russell, *Unpopular Essays* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 162.

⁶ Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, CW 12 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), para. 36.

⁷ II, 5, 134.5–20.

Notes

⁸ II, 3, 83.5–30.

⁹ William McGuire and R. F. C. Hull, eds., *C. G. Jung Speaking: Interviews and Encounters* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 227–229.

¹⁰ Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, 188.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, xvi.

¹² *Ibid.*, 164.

¹³ Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), para. 410.

¹⁴ See Khenpo Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche, *Lion's Gaze: A Commentary on Tsig Sum Nedek*, trans. Sarah Harding (Boca Raton, FL: Sky Dancer Press, 1998).

Chapter 9: A Wetiko Cult(ure) of Madness

¹ Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, 38.

² I want to thank Jonathan Zap for this clarification in a comment that he wrote after the initial posting of parts of Chapter 1 online. To quote Zap, “There’s an anthropologist with a lecture on ted.com who provides considerable evidence that the per capita war death rate of an indigenous rainforest tribe is much higher than that of Western Civilization (even during the 20th Century). Western Civilization because of its far greater novelty magnifies the outer edge of light and the outer edge of dark” (see zaporacle.com for more of his writings).

³ From the article by Ron Suskind titled “Faith, Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush,” in the October 17, 2004, *New York Times Magazine*.

⁴ Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, 48.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), para. 886.

Chapter 10: Stepping Out of Separation

¹ The word “Abracadabra” seems to have its origin in the Aramaic language, in which *ibra* means “I have created,” and *k’dibra* means “through my speech.” This is clearly related to the power of the Word.

² If you are wondering what exactly is the “Art-Happening Called Global Awakening,” I will ask you what is it you imagine it to be? If you realize right now, in this very moment, that we are all dreaming, how would you, as one of the artists and dreamers, creatively engage with the dream so as to dream it to its highest unfoldment? How do you imagine the dream wants to dream itself through you?

Chapter 11: Archetypal Psychohistory

¹ Jung, *The Symbolic Life*, CW 18 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), para. 1661.

² Trismosin, *Splendor Solis: Alchemical Treatises of Solomon Trismosin*, 18.

³ Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), para. 748.

⁴ Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, para. 658.

⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 758.

⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 693.

⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 658.

⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 698.

⁹ Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature and Selected Essays* (New York: Penguin, 2003), 36.

¹⁰ Jung, *Visions 1* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 340.

¹¹ Jung, *Alchemical Studies*, CW 13 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), para. 293.

¹² Gerhard Adler, ed., *C. G. Jung Letters*, vol. 1: 1906–1950 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 58.

¹³ Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, para. 238.

Chapter 12: Wetiko Tactics

¹ Bohm, *On Dialogue* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 29.

² Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (London: Routledge, 1981), 11.

³ Bohm, *On Dialogue*, 58.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 58–59.

⁵ It is not quite right to talk of this correlation in terms of speed at all, which is an artifact of our being conditioned into thinking of everything in terms of the logic of three-dimensional space and linear, sequential time.

⁶ To further unfold and elaborate this contemplation, in a bit of quantum strangeness, if we ask whether the universe really existed before we started looking at it, the answer we get from the universe is that it *looks* as if it existed before we started looking at it.

⁷ See my article “The Wounded Healer” in Daniel Pinchbeck and Ken Jordan, eds., *Toward 2012: Perspectives on the Next Age* (New York: Jeremy Tarcher/Penguin, 2008).

⁸ Kerenyi, *Asklepios: Archetypal Image of the Physician's Existence* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), 100.

⁹ Quoted in Donald Sandner, *The Sacred Heritage: The Influence of Shamanism on Analytical Psychology* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 15. Sandner's quote is from Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, CW 9i (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), para. 457 (which is a slightly different translation than in Sandner's book).

¹⁰ James Melvin Washington, ed., *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King Jr.* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), 429.

¹¹ Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 106–107n.

Chapter 13: Vampire Squid Economics

¹ To quote Christ, “No man can serve two masters.... Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24).

² Matt Taibbi, *Griftopia: Bubble Machines, Vampire Squids, and the Long Con That Is Breaking America* (New York: Spiegel and Grau, 2010), 209.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 210.

⁶ See <http://solari.com/blog/financial-coup-d'etat>.

⁷ See <http://solari.com/articles/the-american-tapeworm>.

Chapter 14: Wetiko No More

¹ In Buddhism, the practice of mindfulness is the best protection against the snares of the Mara, the “Evil One” (another symbol for wetiko).

² This is one of Jung’s favorite sayings from the Apocryphal texts.

³ Jung, *Dream Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 217.

⁴ Jung, *Nietzsche’s Zarathustra: Notes on the Seminar Given in 1934–1939*, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 1324.

⁵ This is tricky business. On the one hand, due to the nonlocal nature of evil, when we see it outside of ourselves, it activates a similar energy within us, which we then have to deal with. When we see evil within ourselves, we usually either dissociate from it, which feeds it, or we unconsciously identify with it, which also feeds it. On the other hand, if when we see it within ourselves, we objectify it, get into relationship with it, etc., we are then distinguishing and freeing ourselves from it, which paradoxically, is ultimately in the service of integrating it.

Chapter 15: Let’s Spread the Word

¹ Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, CW 5 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), para. 274.

² Quoted in Roger Lewin, *In the Age of Mankind* (New York: Smithsonian Institution, 1988), 180.

³ Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), para. 14.

⁴ Jung, *Visions 2* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 746–747.

⁵ Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), para. 806.

⁶ Quoted in Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, CW 12 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), para. 404, fn. 12.

⁷ William McGuire and R. F. C. Hull, eds., *C. G. Jung Speaking: Interviews and Encounters* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 86.

Afterword

¹ I had become a member of the local Dharmadhatu (now called Shambhala Centers), started by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche. Within a few years I would start meeting a number of Tibetan lamas from the Nyingma lineage, who became my teachers and with whom I have become very close.

² Psychological violence, by its very nature, is very challenging to describe in words; it doesn't easily lend itself to language. I plan on writing a book about it in the future.

³ Leonard Shengold talks about "soul murder," or "soul rape." His two books, *Soul Murder* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991) and *Soul Murder Revisited* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), describe better than any other books I have found what played out between my father and me.

⁴ Instead of just expressing my opinion about this, I'd like to bring in what the unconscious has to say. In one of many "big dreams" I've had over the years that helped to show me what I was dealing with, within the first few years of this trauma, I dreamed the following: *My father bursts into my bedroom without knocking. Seeing my art supplies, he angrily says, "I thought I told you to throw those out." I throw my art supplies in the garbage. He leaves. I immediately start looking in a mirror that is in my bedroom, and my reflection looks like the Incredible Hulk, in that I am totally muscular and powerful, so much so that my buttons are popping off my shirt, and I am completely outraged. Then I go to find my father, and when I find him, I'm about to say to him, "Dad, you're possessed," but out of my mouth, to my complete astonishment, come the words "Dad, I'm possessed and you're possessed, but at least I'm doing something about it."* I wake up. A quick commentary on the dream: Notice my father transgressing boundaries by barging into my bedroom (my *temenos*, i.e., sacred space). Angrily "ordering" me to throw out my art supplies is symbolically expressing how he wants me to throw out the creative expression of my true self. Notice that I then did as told, throwing my means of creative expression in the trash, which symbolizes my complicity in my own victimization. When a mirror shows up

in a “dream” (which itself is a “reflection” of our mind), it oftentimes is reflecting unconscious, split-off parts of ourselves that we are not in touch with, which can only be seen in reflection; these are parts of ourselves that we need to own and step into. I clearly needed to become more intimately acquainted with my rage and power. The final scene was an expression of my dawning realization, played out in the real time of the dream, that the evil that I was seeing in my father was my own condition. Possessed by the evil of wetiko, my father had unconsciously acted it out in such a way as to give the virus to me, which was something that I now had to deal with. Unlike my father, however, by doing spiritual practice, working on myself, going to therapy, creating art, studying, working on my dreams, etc., I was “doing something about it.” As Jung points out, the figure of the father has an extremely large influence on the destiny of the child. Due to my father’s inability to come to terms with the wetiko virus that had taken him over, it fell into my lap to have to come to terms with it. It was as if in my case, the “sins of the father,” to use a biblical phrase, were “passed on” to the son.

⁵ I’ve since learned that when we are called by a deeper process, if we assent and cooperate with it, the universe constellates so as to support us in our endeavor, for it is the universe itself that is the “sponsor” of our calling. On the other hand, if we kick and scream, feel victimized and resist, this is when we can potentially become really sick.

⁶ If I were in my normal state of mind, which I clearly was not, I would have asked for her name and phone number, so as to be able to connect with her after I got out of the hospital and prove to people that I wasn’t making this up. Trying to validate my experience while I was in my expansive state, however, was the last thing that was on my mind. A week after I got out of the hospital, I got together for lunch with the doctor in charge of me, and told him what had happened with the blind woman. He became very uncomfortable and claimed he couldn’t talk about it due to patient confidentiality.

⁷ Kindly endorsing my work, John Mack said, “Paul is a living inspiration for transforming trauma.”

⁸ R. D. Laing, *Politics and the Family, and Other Essays* (New York: Routledge, 1971), 82.

⁹ Cultures based on wisdom have the capacity to discern and recognize an individual who is potentially going through a process of spiritual awakening.

Notes

Such wisdom-based cultures especially value such individuals and recognize that these people are being called by spirit to potentially become a shaman or healer who in the future might greatly benefit the community. Usually, what these would-be shamans or healers need is some time and a safe container for their process to naturally integrate into the emerging wholeness of their psyche.

¹⁰ Laing, *The Politics of Experience* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1971), 122.

¹¹ Interestingly, this figure is related to the figure of the *pharmakon*, who originally was considered to be a healing agent.

¹² I was informed that I needed to be medicated till I took my last breath. It should be noted that I haven't taken any psychiatric medication since 1983, with no "episodes," which, from the psychiatric point of view, would be impossible if I truly had what is now called bipolar illness.

¹³ People who are in extreme states, and are having nonordinary experiences, or who see things differently from the agreed-upon, consensus reality are (arche)typically pathologized by those in positions of power, which is the default setting for psychiatry. Psychiatry's unreflected-upon propensity to see only illness is an expression of psychiatry's own pathology. To put my experiences in context, they happened years before "Religious or Spiritual Problem" (Code V62.89) was accepted as a new diagnostic category in the DSM-IV (APA, 1994). When I was going through these experiences, although it was only thirty years ago, it was as if I had time traveled and was living in the Dark Ages. In the early '80s, the very concept or possibility of a spiritual awakening was precluded and excluded from the worldview of psychiatry.

¹⁴ See my interview in Seth Farber, *The Spiritual Gift of Madness: The Failure of Psychiatry and the Rise of the Mad Pride Movement* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2012) and Russell Shorto, *Saints and Madmen: Psychiatry Opens Its Doors to Religion* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1999).

Glossary

¹ Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973), 183.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

Notes

- ⁴ Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, CW 8 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), para. 200.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 210.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 356.
- ⁷ Jung, *Nietzsche's Zarathustra: Notes on the Seminar Given in 1934–1939*, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 981.
- ⁸ Jung, *Aion*, CW 9ii (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), para. 44.
- ⁹ Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, CW 12 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), para. 563.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 562.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, para. 413.
- ¹² Related to and identical with the prima materia, Mercurius begets himself. In the *Allegoriae super librum Turbae*, Mercurius says of himself, “The mother bore me and is herself begotten of me” (Art. aurif., I, p. 151). Jung comments, “As the uroboros dragon, he impregnates, begets, bears, devours and slays himself, and himself ‘lifts himself on high,’ as the *Rosarium* says (Art. aurif., II, p. 339), so paraphrasing the mystery of God’s sacrificial death.” *Alchemical Studies*, CW 13 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), para. 272. Being that the alchemical figure of Mercurius is similar to wetiko, this should give us some idea of the deep mystery with which we are dealing when we inquire into wetiko.
- ¹³ Jung, *Nietzsche's Zarathustra*, vol. 2, 886.



Courtesy of Maria Allred

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Levy was born in 1956 and grew up in Yonkers, New York. In the mid-'70s he attended the State University of New York at Binghamton (now called Binghamton University), receiving degrees in both economics and studio art. While an undergraduate, he was hired by Princeton University to do research in economics. After graduating college, he stopped his studies in economics and pursued his career in art, moving to the San Francisco Bay Area, where he both made and taught art. In 1981, due to intense personal trauma suffered a few years before, he had a life-changing spiritual awakening in which he began to recognize the dreamlike nature of reality. During the first year of his spiritual emergence, Paul was hospitalized a number of times and was told he was having a severe psychotic break from reality. Much to his surprise, he was (mis)diagnosed as having a chemical imbalance. He was informed that he had manic-depressive (bipolar) disorder and that he would have to live with his illness for the rest of his life. Little did the doctors realize, however, that he was taking part in a mystical-awakening/shamanic-initiation process, which at times mimicked psychosis but in actuality was a spiritual experience of a far

different order that was completely off the map of the psychiatric system. Fortunately, he was able to extricate himself from the medical and psychiatric establishment so that he could continue his process of self-discovery. Thankfully, as Paul freed himself from the shackles of psychiatry, he found his spiritual teachers, who, instead of seeing Paul as crazy, recognized that he was beginning to spiritually awaken. A Tibetan Buddhist practitioner for more than thirty years, Paul has intimately studied with some of the greatest spiritual masters of Tibet and Burma.

After the trauma of his shamanic breakdown/breakthrough, he became a certified art teacher. Because of his intense interest in the work of C. G. Jung, by the end of the '80s he found himself the manager of the C. G. Jung Foundation Book Service in New York, as well as the advertising manager for the Jungian journal *Quadrant*.

In the fall of 1990, Paul moved to Portland, Oregon. In 1993, after many years of struggling to contain and integrate his nonordinary experiences, he started to openly share his insights about the dreamlike nature of reality by giving talks and facilitating groups based on the way life is a shared waking dream that we are all co-creating and co-dreaming together. Paul is the founder of the Awakening in the Dream community in Portland, Oregon, and facilitates a number of Awakening in the Dream groups every week, in which people who are awakening to the dreamlike nature of reality come together in a way that helps everyone deepen and stabilize their lucidity even further. A wounded healer in private practice, Paul is a pioneer in the field of spiritual emergence, assisting others who are also awakening to the dreamlike nature of reality.

Paul Levy is also the author of *The Madness of George W. Bush: A Reflection of Our Collective Psychosis*. His website, Awaken in the Dream, is at www.awakeninthedream.com; his email address is paul@awakeninthedream.com. Though he greatly looks forward to and reads every email, Paul regrets that he is not able to personally respond to all of them.

ABOUT THE ART

The drawing on the cover was done by Paul Levy (as were the two pencil drawings on pages xvi and xxiii). The way this cover drawing emerged illustrates how the dreaming process works. The publisher and I were collaboratively co-dreaming, trying to decide on a cover together. For one reason or another all of our ideas for the cover weren't working, and then word came down that we had twenty-four hours to decide on the final image of the cover. Up until this point, I had been trying to describe to other artists my vision of what I wanted so that they could make the cover for me. This impending deadline catapulted me over my edge, however, and I stayed up all night and did the drawing that is now on the cover. Feeling as if I had "objectified" and captured wetiko's essence in the image, it was as if I had performed some sort of exorcism, as I felt something within me had become liberated through the act of creating the drawing. In doing the drawing, I knew without a shadow of a doubt that I had "found" the cover for the book, or to say it differently, the cover of the book had found me.

From the dreaming point of view, in trying to have someone else incarnate my vision, it was as if I was not fully connected with, and therefore had been projecting outside of myself, my "inner artist" onto others. The deadline increased the pressure in the alchemical vessel such that I was able to withdraw my projection, however, and step into the creative artist living inside me. This is the way dreaming works: if in a given moment we are not fully embodying a part of ourselves, just as in a dream, we project it outside of ourselves, and then it becomes a question of whether or not we recognize the projection as our own. Thankfully, in my case, my waking dream was conspiring to have me own my projection, become more intimately acquainted with my own creativity, and do the drawing myself.

Regarding the self-portrait on page xvi, this was the first drawing I did after recovering from the fever that I had for a year (I talk about this in the Afterword). I had originally titled this drawing *Self-Portrait after*

Long Illness, but changed the title after realizing that the drawing was produced after I was introduced to the spirit of wetiko. In this drawing I clearly remember that in searching for the image, I didn't know what I wanted, but I knew what I didn't want—I kept on erasing, till I “found” the final image, as if I had been looking for it all along. This drawing really expresses how I was feeling at that point in my life. Interestingly, at the time this was the best self-portrait I had ever done.

My drawing on page xxiii, titled *Padmasambhava*, was done as a way of clarifying my visualization of this deity that I had been working on as part of my Tibetan Buddhist practice. Instead of drawing it in the traditional way, with very precise proportions and classical composition, I just imagined that Padmasambhava was sitting in front of me, and as an artist, I was simply trying to do a portrait of what I was seeing.

The vampire squid on page 229 was done by Luke Brown, who is an intrepid psychonautical explorer, part of a new generation of visionaries who are redefining the templates of art as we know it. His creative output speaks of the spiritual mysteries in the human imagination. His work is inspired by mystical experiences, dreams, medicine journeys, and channeled lucid dialogues with the source of creativity itself. Much of his work emerges from a graceful synthesis of digital and painting mediums. Luke is constantly redefining his style as a spiritual medium for growth. His intent is to map his hyperspatial experiences with the utmost accuracy, using whatever medium seems best suited for the moment, as a living form of multidimensional cartography. Luke Brown's website can be found at spectraleyes.com.

