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Three Poems

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Abstract

Paganism CONSTELLATIONS BY WHICH TO steer the barque of the soul. "If the Moslem understood Islam he would become an idolworshipper" --Mahmud Shabestari. Elegua, ugly opener of doors with a hook in his head & cowrie shells for eyes, black santeria cigar & glass of rum -- same as Ganesh, elephant-head fat boy of Beginnings who rides a mouse. The organ which senses the numinous atrophies with the senses. Those who cannot feel baraka cannot know the caress of the world. Hermes Poimandres taught the animation of eidolons, the magic in-dwelling of icons by spirits -- but those who cannot perform this rite on themselves & on the whole palpable fabric of material being will inherit only blues, rubbish, decay...

Law & The Sacred: Three Poems

Hakim Bey

Paganism

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"If the Moslem understood Islam he would become an idolworshipper" --Mahmud Shabestari.

Eleggua, ugly opener of doors with a hook in his head & cowrie shells for eyes, black santeria cigar & glass of rum -- same as Ganesh, elephant-head fat boy of Beginnings who rides a mouse. The organ which senses the numinous atrophies with the senses. Those who cannot feel baraka cannot know the caress of the world.

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The pagan body becomes a Court of Angels who all perceive this place -- this very grove -- as paradise ("If there is a paradise, surely it is *here!*" --inscription on a Mughal garden gate)... But ontological anarchism is too paleolithic for eschatology -- things are real, sorcery works, bush-spirits one with the Imagination, death an unpleasant vagueness -- the plot of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* -- an epic of mutability. The personal mythscape.

Paganism has not yet invented laws -- only virtues. No priestcraft, no theology or metaphysics or morality -- but a universal shamanism in which no one attains real humanity without a vision. Food money sex sleep sun sand & sinsemilla -- love truth peace freedom & justice. Beauty. Dionysus the drunk boy on a panther -- rank adolescent sweat -- Pan goatman slogs through the solid earth up to his waist as if it were the sea, his skin crusted with moss & lichen -- Eros multiplies himself into a dozen pastoral naked Iowa farm boys with muddy feet & pond-scum on their thighs.

Raven, the potlatch trickster, sometimes a boy, old woman, bird who stole the Moon, pine needles floating on a pond, Heckle/Jeckle totempole-head, chorus-line of crows with silver eyes dancing on the woodpile -- same as Semar the hunchback albino hermaphrodite shadow-puppet patron of the Javanese revolution.

Yemaya, bluestar sea-goddess & patroness of queers -- same as Tara, bluegrey aspect of Kali, necklace of skulls, dancing on Shiva's stiff lingam, licking monsoon clouds with her yard-long tongue -- same as Loro Kidul, jasper-green Javanese sea-goddess who bestows the power of invulnerability on sultans by tantrik intercourse in magic towers & caves.

From one point of view ontological anarchism is extremely bare, stripped of all qualities & possessions, poor as CHAOS itself -- but from another point of view it pullulates with baroqueness like the Fucking-Temples of Kathmandu or an alchemical emblem book -- it sprawls on its divan eating loukoum & entertaining heretical notions, one hand inside its baggy trousers. The hulls of its pirate ships are lacquered black, the lateen sails are red, black banners with the device of a winged hourglass.

A South China Sea of the mind, off a jungle-flat coast of palms, rotten gold temples to unknown bestiality gods, island after island, the breeze like wet yellow silk on naked skin, navigating by pantheistic stars, hierophany on hierophany, light upon light against the luminous & chaotic dark.

Crime

JUSTICE CANNOT BE OBTAINED under any Law -- action in accord with spontaneous nature, action which is just, cannot be defined by dogma. The crimes advocated in these broadsheets cannot be

committed against self or other but only against the mordant crystallization of Ideas into structures of poisonous Thrones & Dominations.

That is, not crimes against nature or humanity but crimes by legal fiat. Sooner or later the uncovering & unveiling of self/nature transmogrifies a person into a brigand -- like stepping into another world then returning to this one to discover you've been declared a traitor, heretic, exile. The Law waits for you to stumble on a mode of being, a soul different from the FDA-approved purple-stamped standard dead meat - & as soon as you begin to act in harmony with nature the Law garottes and strangles you -- so don't play the blessed liberal middleclass martyr -- accept the fact that you're a criminal & be prepared to act like one.

Paradox: to embrace Chaos is not to slide toward entropy but to emerge into an energy like stars, a pattern of instantaneous grace -- a spontaneous organic order completely different from the carrion pyramids of sultans, muftis, cadis & grinning executioners.

After Chaos comes Eros -- the principle of order implicit in the nothingness of the unqualified One. Love is structure, system, the only code untainted by slavery & drugged sleep. We must become crooks & con-men to protect its spiritual beauty in a bezel of clandestinity, a hidden garden of espionage.

Don't just survive while waiting for someone's revolution to clear your head, don't sign up for the armies of anorexia or bulimia -- act as if you were already free, calculate the odds, step out, remember the Code Duello -- Smoke Pot/Eat Chicken/Drink Tea. Every man his own vine & figtree (*Circle Seven Koran*, Noble Drew Ali) -- carry your Moorish passport with pride, don't get caught in the crossfire, keep your back covered -- but take the risk, dance before you calcify. The natural social model for ontological anarchism is the child-gang or the bank-robbers-band. Money is a lie -- this adventure must be feasible without it -- booty & pillage should be spent before it turns back into dust. Today is Resurrection Day -- money wasted on beauty will be alchemically transmuted into elixir. As my uncle Melvin used to say, stolen watermelon tastes sweeter. The world is already re-made according to the heart's desire -- but civilization owns all the leases & most of the guns. Our feral angels demand we trespass, for they manifest themselves only on forbidden grounds. High Way Man. The yoga of stealth, the lightning raid, the enjoyment of treasure.

Anarcho-Monarchism and Anarcho-Mysticism

IN SLEEP WE DREAM of only two forms of government -- anarchy & monarchy. Primordial root consciousness understands no politics & never plays fair. A democratic dream? a socialist dream? Impossible.

Whether my REMs bring verdical near-prophetic visions or mere Viennese wish-fulfillment, only kings & wild people populate my night. Monads & nomads.

Pallid day (when nothing shines by its own light) slinks & insinuates & suggests that we compromise with a sad & lackluster reality. But in dream we are never ruled except by love or sorcery, which are the skills of chaotes & sultans.

Among a people who cannot create or play, but can only *work*, artists also know no choice but anarchy & monarchy. Like the dreamer, they must possess & *do* possess their own perceptions, & for this they must sacrifice the merely social to a "tyrannical Muse". Art dies when treated "fairly". It must enjoy a caveman's wildness or else have its mouth filled with gold by some prince. Bureaucrats & sales personnel poison it, professors chew it up, & philosophers spit it out. Art is a kind of byzantine barbarity fit only for nobles & heathens. If you had known the sweetness of life as a poet in the reign of some venal, corrupt, decadent, ineffective & ridiculous Pasha or Emir, some Qajar shah, some King Farouk, some Queen of Persia, you would know that this is what every anarchist must want. How they loved poems & paintings, those dead luxurious fools, how they absorbed all roses & cool breezes, tulips & lutes! Hate their cruelty & caprice, yes -- but at least they were human. The bureaucrats, however, who smear the walls of the mind with odorless filth -- so kind, so *gemutlich* -- who pollute the inner air with numbness -- they're not even worthy of hate. They scarcely exist outside the bloodless Ideas they serve.

And besides: the dreamer, the artist, the anarchist -- do they not share some tinge of cruel caprice with the most outrageous of moghuls? Can genuine life occur without some folly, some excess, some bouts of Heraclitan "strife"? We do not rule -- but we cannot & will *not be ruled*.

In Russia the Narodnik-Anarchists would sometimes forge a *ukase* or manifesto in the name of the Czar; in it the Autocrat would complain that greedy lords & unfeeling officials had sealed him in his palace & cut him off from his beloved people. He would proclaim the end of serfdom & call on peasants & workers to rise in His Name against the government.

Several times this ploy actually succeeded in sparking revolts. Why? Because the single absolute ruler acts metaphorically as a mirror for the unique and utter absoluteness of the self. Each peasant looked into this glassy legend & beheld his or her own freedom -- an illusion, but one that borrowed its magic from the logic of the dream.

A similar myth must have inspired the 17th century Ranters & Antinomians & Fifth Monarchy Men who flocked to the Jacobite standard with its erudite cabals & bloodproud conspiracies. The radical mystics were betrayed first by Cromwell & then by the Restoration -- why not, finally, join with flippant cavaliers & foppish counts, with Rosicrucians & Scottish Rite Masons, to place an occult messiah on Albion's throne?

Among a people who cannot conceive human society without a monarch, the desires of radicals may be expressed in monarchical terms. Among a people who cannot conceive human existence without a religion, radical desires may speak the language of heresy.

Taoism rejected the whole of Confucian bureaucracy but retained the image of the Emperor-Sage, who would sit silent on his throne facing a propitious direction, doing absolutely nothing. In Islam the Ismailis took the idea of the Imam of the Prophet's Household & metamorphosed it into the Imam-of-one's-own-being, the perfected self who is beyond all Law & rule, who is atoned with the One. And this doctrine led them into revolt against Islam, to terror & assassination in the name of pure esoteric self-liberation & total realization.

Classical 19th century anarchism defined itself in the struggle against crown & church, & therefore on the waking level it considered itself egalitarian & atheist. This rhetoric however obscures what really happens: the "king" becomes the "anarchist", the "priest" a "heretic". In this strange duet of mutability the politician, the democrat, the socialist, the rational ideologue can find no place; they are deaf to the music & lack all sense of rhythm. Terrorist & monarch are *archetypes*; these others are mere functionaries.

Once anarch & king clutched each other's throats & waltzed a totentanz -- a splendid battle. Now, however, both are relegated to history's trashbin -- has-beens, curiosities of a leisurely & more cultivated past. They whirl around so fast that they seem to meld together... can they somehow have become one thing, a Siamese twin, a Janus, a freakish unity? "The sleep of Reason..." ah! most desirable & desirous monsters!

Ontological Anarchy proclaims flatly, bluntly, & almost brainlessly: yes, the two are now one. As a single entity the anarch/king now is reborn; each of us the ruler of our own flesh, our own creations -- and as much of everything else as we can grab & hold.

Our actions are justified by fiat & our relations are shaped by treaties with other autarchs. We make the law for our own domains -- & the chains of the law have been broken. At present perhaps we survive as mere Pretenders -- but even so we may seize a few instants, a few square feet of reality over which to impose our absolute will, our *royaume. L'etat, c'est moi*.

If we are bound by any ethic or morality it must be one which we ourselves have imagined, fabulously more exalted & more liberating than the "moralic acid" of puritans & humanists. "Ye are as gods" -- "Thou art That".

The words *monarchism* & *mysticism* are used here in part simply *pour epater* those egalito-atheist anarchists who react with pious horror to any mention of pomp or superstition-mongering. No champagne revolutions for *them!*

Our brand of anti-authoritarianism, however, thrives on baroque paradox; it favors states of consciousness, emotion & aesthetics over all petrified ideologies & dogma; it embraces multitudes & relishes contradictions. Ontological Anarchy is a hobgoblin for BIG minds. The translation of the title (& key term) of Max Stirner's magnum opus as *The Ego & Its Own* has led to a subtle misinterpretation of "individualism". The English-Latin word *ego* comes freighted & weighed with Freudian & Protestant baggage. A careful reading of Stirner suggests that *The Unique & His Own-ness* would better reflect his intentions, given that he never defines the *ego* in opposition to libido or id, or in opposition to "soul" or "spirit". The Unique (*der Einzige*) might best be construed simply as the individual self.

Stirner commits no metaphysics, yet bestows on the Unique a certain absoluteness. In what way then does this *Einzige* differ from the Self of Advaita Vedanta? *Tat tvam asi*: Thou (individual Self) art That (absolute Self).

Many believe that mysticism "dissolves the ego". Rubbish. Only death does that (or such at least is our Sadducean assumption). Nor does mysticism destroy the "carnal" or "animal" self -- which would also amount to suicide. What mysticism really tries to surmount is false consciousness, illusion, Consensus Reality, & all the failures of self that accompany these ills. True mysticism creates a "self at peace", a self with power. The highest task of metaphysics (accomplished for example by Ibn Arabi, Boehme, Ramana Maharshi) is in a sense to self-destruct, to identify metaphysical & physical, transcendent & immanent, as ONE. Certain *radical monists* have pushed this doctrine far beyond mere pantheism or religious mysticism. An apprehension of the immanent oneness of being inspires certain antinomian heresies (the Ranters, the Assassins) whom we consider our ancestors.

Stirner himself seems deaf to the possible spiritual resonances of Individualism -- & in this he belongs to the 19th century: born long after the deliquescence of Christendom, but long before the discovery of the Orient & of the hidden illuminist tradition in Western alchemy, revolutionary heresy & occult activism. Stirner quite correctly despised what he knew as "mysticism", a mere pietistic sentimentality based on self-abnegation & world hatred. Nietzsche nailed down the lid on "God" a few years later. Since then, who has dared to suggest that Individualism & mysticism might be reconciled & synthesized?

The missing ingredient in Stirner (Nietzsche comes closer) is a working concept of *nonordinary consciousness*. The realization of the unique self (or *ubermensch*) must reverberate & expand like waves or spirals or music to embrace direct experience or intuitive perception of the uniqueness of reality itself. This realization engulfs & erases all duality, dichotomy, & dialectic. It carries with itself, like an electric charge, an intense & wordless sense of *value*: It "divinizes" the self.

Being/consciousness/bliss (*satchitananda*) cannot be dismissed as merely another Stirnerian "spook" or "wheel in the head". It invokes no exclusively transcendent principle for which the *Einzige* must sacrifice his/her own-ness. It simply states that intense awareness of existence itself results in "bliss" -- or in less loaded language, "valuative consciousness". The goal of the Unique after all is to *possess everything*, the radical monist attains this by identifying self with perception, like the Chinese inkbrush painter who "becomes the bamboo", so that "it paints itself". Despite mysterious hints Stirner drops about a "union of Unique-ones" & despite Nietzsche's eternal "Yea" & exaltation of life, their Individualism seems somehow shaped by a certain *coldness toward the other*. In part they cultivated a bracing, cleansing chilliness against the warm suffocation of 19th century sentimentality & altruism; in part they simply despised what someone (Mencken?) called "Homo Boobensis".

And yet, reading behind & beneath the layer of ice, we uncover traces of a fiery doctrine -- what Gaston Bachelard might have called "a Poetics of the Other". The *Einzige's* relation with the Other cannot be defined or limited by any institution or idea. And yet clearly, however paradoxically, the Unique depends for completeness on the Other, & cannot & will not be realized in any bitter isolation.

The examples of "wolf children" or *enfants sauvages* suggest that a human infant deprived of human company for too long will never attain conscious humanity -- will never acquire language. The Wild Child perhaps provides a poetic metaphor for the Unique-one -- and yet simultaneously marks the precise point where Unique & Other must meet, coalesce, unify -- or else fail to attain & possess all of which they are capable.

The Other mirrors the Self -- the Other is our *witness*. The Other completes the Self -- the Other gives us the key to the perception of oneness-of-being. When we speak of being & consciousness, we point to the Self; when we speak of bliss we implicate the Other.

The acquisition of language falls under the sign of Eros -- all communication is essentially erotic, all relations are erotic. Avicenna & Dante claimed that love moves the very stars & planets in their courses -- the *Rg Veda* & Hesiod's *Theogony* both proclaim Love the first god born after Chaos. Affections, affinities, aesthetic perceptions, beautiful creations, conviviality -- all the most precious possessions of the Unique-one arise from the conjunction of Self & Other in the constellation of Desire.

Here again the project begun by Individualism can be evolved & revived by a graft with mysticism -- specifically with tantra. As an esoteric *technique* divorced from orthodox Hinduism, tantra provides a symbolic framework ("Net of Jewels") for the identification of sexual pleasure & non-ordinary consciousness. All antinomian sects have contained some "tantrik" aspect, from the families of Love & Free Brethren & Adamites of Europe to the pederast sufis of Persia to the Taoist alchemists of China. Even classical anarchism has enjoyed its tantrik moments: Fourier's *Phalansteries*; the "Mystical Anarchism" of G. Ivanov & other fin-de-siecle Russian symbolists; the incestuous erotism of Arzibashaev's *Sanine*; the weird combination of Nihilism & Kali worship which inspired the Bengali Terrorist Party (to which my tantrik guru Sri Kamanaransan Biswas had the honor of belonging)...

We, however, propose a much deeper syncretism of anarchy & tantra than any of these. In fact, we simply suggest that Individual Anarchism & Radical Monism are to be considered henceforth one and the same movement.

This hybrid has been called "spiritual materialism", a term which burns up all metaphysics in the fire of oneness of spirit & matter. We also like "Ontological Anarchy" because it suggests that being itself remains in a state of "divine Chaos", of all-potentiality, of continual creation.

In this flux only the *jiva mukti*, or "liberated individual", is self-realized, and thus monarch or owner of his perceptions and relations. In this ceaseless flow only desire offers any principle of order, and thus the only possible society (as Fourier understood) is that of lovers.

Anarchism is dead, long live anarchy! We no longer need the baggage of revolutionary masochism or idealist self-sacrifice -- or the frigidity of Individualism with its disdain for conviviality, of *living together* -- or the vulgar superstitions of 19th century atheism, scientism, and progressism. All that dead weight! Frowsy proletarian suitcases, heavy bourgeois steamer-trunks, boring philosophical portmanteaux -- over the side with them!

We want from these systems only their vitality, their life-forces, daring, intransigence, anger, heedlessness -- their power, their *shakti*. Before we jettison the rubbish and the carpetbags, we'll rifle the luggage for billfolds, revolvers, jewels, drugs and other useful items -- keep what we like and trash the rest. Why not? Are we priests of a cult, to croon over relics and mumble our martyrologies?

Monarchism too has something we want -- a grace, an ease, a pride, a superabundance. We'll take these, and dump the woes of authority & torture in history's garbage bin. Mysticism has something we need -- "self-overcoming", exalted awareness, reservoirs of psychic potency. These we will expropriate in the name of our insurrection -- and leave the woes of morality & religion to rot & decompose.

As the Ranters used to say when greeting any "fellow creature" -- from king to cut-purse -- "Rejoice! All is ours!".