

*This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will...
-- William Wordsworth*

Part I

Mind control techniques honed over the past century with attempted programmatized scientific precision in classified intelligence-run platforms like Tavistock in England (the Clinic, the Trust and the Institute) and the Allan in Canada (at Ravenscrag in what is now McGill University) are only one recent chapter in a millennia-old operational pattern of civilizations' bankrupt ruling elites applying trauma (and subsequently the threat thereof) to individuals and harvesting the results by suggestion, training, manipulation and the application of triggers at points of predetermined psychological vulnerability, often themselves the product of targeted cultivation. The 'scientific' mind control approach has relied on drugs, torture and electromagnetic stimulation to reduce the protective barriers inherent in ordinary consciousness and to achieve suggestibility; it has also relied on systematic identification of nervous triggers and subliminal suggestion to help bypass rational defences and stimulate behaviour via subconscious training.

At the Allan in Montreal, with CIA and Canadian government funding, non-consenting subjects were tortured over many months with the goal of rendering them completely different people: psychically hollowed-out shells with new personas. Much information is believed to have been gleaned which was used directly by intelligence agencies and is today used softly but widely in mass psychology and advertising, such as how to increase a subject's suggestibility and optimal methods of trope repetition for brainwashing. Most of the subjects were likely too old for total domination, itself a useful lesson for those seeking to take advantage. The Canadian government opened a modest compensation fund for subjects thirty years later, with a scarcely publicized twelve-month application window, then walked away and bolted the door. The government-corporate funded Tavistock in England continues its high-budget work in applied psychology today – how to manage, control, direct, influence and change people mentally – with no apologies and much more subtlety and cosmopolitan finesse than in projects farmed out to the rawer provincial dominions, client banana republics and American friends, not to mention relative to Nazi experimentation from which data was gleaned broadly at least until the 1980s and incorporated into the global body of scholarship (see, for example on this, Kristine Moe).

Some of the most elaborate mind control schemes have inflicted multiple-personality disorder (or DID – dissociative-identity disorder) on people at young, formative ages – often only to manifest as 'split personalities' in later years – both in order to have undetected access to and influence over specific desired automatized behaviour patterns in the subject ('brainwashing' and the Manchurian Candidate syndrome are allied to these methods, but not identical) and plausible deniability should the matter ever come under scrutiny, due to the victim's obvious psychosis and of course the time lag from mental programming to onset of evident psychosis. Dissociative states in general are the hallmark of programmatic mind control, which apply to the mind the *divide et impera*

approach characteristic of so many imperial attempts to achieve unnatural domination over various subject peoples. Techniques to divide otherwise unified or at least peaceful societies on political, class, race, gender and ideological lines are deliberately fostered within an individual psyche in this context, producing division in an otherwise unified self on lines of confused, frightened and desperately rationalizing and coping aspects within one's sense of identity.

Rather than coarse 'depatterning' of the kind attempted at the Allen, the technique involves 'dividing' the psyche, typically the young psyche, shattering it into disparate shards, as it were, each able to reflect the whole (each segment of identity a plausible semblance of the whole self to an outside viewer while in performance) but not consciously linked to any of the other shards. But the self, unlike a country, population group or political organization, consisting as it does in an integrity and unity endowed by the Creator 'in his image', cannot actually be divided. This is not to allow the crafty Gnostic diversion into the idea that an object of worship resides in the person. The God-given unity of the human self is a different matter entirely, and resides within, rather than beyond nature, and although divinely privileged in many ways, is not divine.

Because of its integrity, however, for it to be undermined with any effect a mirror-like representational fabrication of it has to be posited – conjured – and then projected into the subject's self-awareness by manipulating sore-points, like fastening the new identity on with thumbtacks. It is forced into the subject's reflexive unconscious sub-awareness (I hesitate to say subconscious in this context, as I think the connotation is slightly different) using traumatic punishment, and its operation depends on the subsequent fear and avoidance thereof. It becomes a kind of garment – a reflex function supplanting moral and intuitive self-command – the victim does not know he or she is wearing.

The associated trauma may be so intense and so early that the fear and avoidance become non-specific and not linked consciously in the subject's mind to the original trauma; this is paired with gratifying reward-stimulus-response effects via subliminal and limbic-based channels which circumvent rational defences and the self-control inherent in awareness. The approach is based on a behaviorist model (especially B F Skinner's radical behaviorism, in its contention not only with externally observable reflexive responses but also with a deeper sense of self) which reduces the subject as much as possible into a pure mechanistic device in predictable stimulus-response terms, but honed subtly to an individual person through reliance on predictive typology, knowledge of existing emotional vulnerabilities, and indeed new vulnerabilities inflicted by the programmers themselves.

Those attempting to apply behaviorism are forced to admit that its predictive function does not apply to people with any awareness and will at all (in short, nearly everyone) – and yet elements of it can operate, especially on highly manipulated psyches under very directed or deliberately limited circumstances. The behaviorist model does not typically succeed for human programming absent a powerful factor inhibiting independent executive function, and that inhibition can be achieved by the infliction of trauma so that reflex feelings rather than balanced reflection dominate and determine a subject's conduct: it involves the manipulation of unconscious fears to achieve a reversion to a more animal state, with inherent animal-like motivations triggering reactions, while capitalizing on all of the higher human function which the mind-control programming has not disabled, like calm self-presentation, complex communication, a cultivated affect, and the like.

While it is not difficult to meet subjects of this manipulation in certain social circles, particularly among multi-generation elites, gangs and organized crime, senior cult members, families with deep links to military intelligence and those with long childhood

histories in foster care, boarding schools, mental asylums and unofficial homeless communities such as tent cities and occupied abandoned warehouses, it is a much greater challenge to find written studies acknowledging the existence of such activity. Next time you chat with someone in the park or on the subway who casually confides horrific childhood abuse to you without giving the impression of seeking attention or sensationalizing, or who manifests intense suspicion and visceral aversion to certain authorities (rather than simply intellectual or theoretical objection) or resignation to bizarre social compulsions – and perhaps pairs this with allegations of conspiracy, especially while otherwise remaining cool, collected and emotionally balanced – don't brush them off in your mind out of hand.

Speak to them more, and you will find enough non-psychotic commonality across their reports to discern undeniable threads and patterns, often a direct personal association with officials in positions of responsibility, and occasionally some publicly known figure in politics or entertainment for whom the intimate details provided are distinguishable from fantasy by their surprising banality and unsensational delivery. A certain intuition is needed to discount the delusional, and neuroses and psychoses such as celebrity-worship syndrome, but it is not too difficult to learn to sift truth from the more elaborate padding of fantasy or nightmare. Without overstepping their often delicately constructed conversational and behavioural comfort zones, remain clearly non-judgmental, ask them a little more, corroborate among unconnected accounts from different people, and you are liable to hear details placing beyond all doubt that their abuse suffered was coldly and systematically applied by more than one person, using very similar methodology across groups, and not the stuff of a mere troubled home, brain injury or inherited cognitive defect.

Probe a little further, and you may begin to notice that the person you are engaging with will not make any life change or take any significant step without consulting a specific person who features prominently and consistently in his or her life. This consultee will have a looming authoritative presence in the subject person's mind, and may be the source of money in hard times, career advancement and mentorship over many years, counselor, health care professional or senior family member. In all cases this authority is felt as the final support recourse when all else fails, the person's lifeline, someone with whom intimate secrets have been shared that would feel shameful if known by others, as well as the first consideration before any decision (what would X think? That sounds great and I must ask X). Every new move, every new job, must be run by the authority figure, every new friendship reported, every thought of new medication or treatment, serious relationship, vacation, spiritual direction, education: this authority figure has veto power, delivered in the way of strong counsel that the subject would not even think of discounting. In intelligence service parlance, this figure is the mind control subject's handler.

By a system of trust combined with terror, the handler runs their contree, their 'asset', who can operate as a functioning adult in most ways, via an almost childlike emotional dependency, through manipulation of known psychological vulnerabilities specific to the subject and the provision of a sense of safety. The person has been compelled to trade away independence in all important life choices and has been given in return the chance to yield all responsibility for himself to another human being. For a traumatized self, this is often a comfort so welcome it is a make-or-break dependency. My conversations have suggested that even the discarded subjects who are not considered to have utility still retain access to their handlers. Probe too far and you will notice built-in shut-down programming take hold. Otherwise uncharacteristic aggression, hostility,

retreat, intense avoidance or – for the most skilled – charismatic dominance of the interaction which lets them shift discussion back to a safe zone.

Such peoples' problems typically inhabit a powerfully emotional realm in which they are well aware of their own impaired inhibition, and they typically have a strong native moral sense but find themselves struggling under the weight of compulsions and self-defeating life patterns. It normally seems these are people who were partially but inadequately controlled, who did not matter enough socially to warrant looking after when efforts failed or were abandoned, easily discredited because of their social group but in whom some limited use was found at some time in aggregate or as part of a broader study or operation. Those control subjects inhabiting elite circles, whom I have also met, are treated differently. They are not discarded into society in the hope that they will be regarded as indistinguishable from the truly insane, but rather coddled in an abundant security net in which they never in their lives have, nor have access to the courage, to take personal moral responsibility for nearly anything. Those who show signs otherwise are silenced.

The elite subjects retain the moral integrity of young children their entire lives, with outwardly functional adult affects, and dissembling is their principal mode of living, even among their closest peers. Their access to emotion is superficial, and they cannot mix much with other societal ranks without extensive training or skill in the false projection of empathy and charisma, and even this can only be sustained for limited periods. Even for those not specifically subject to trauma-based mind control in these circles, it is a kind of learned psychosis by familial and social value absorption, and it is perpetuated by the lures (and crutches) of temporal power and material amenity. Among multi-generational elites, the habits of mind control can be so ingrained as to require very little of what we would identify as incontrovertible trauma, as mere suggestion and subtle games of approval alternating with disapproval can do the trick, establishing full subject dominance when there are no other social reference points for the child to turn to for a sense of normal and what passes for an experience of love.

The conspiracy theorist Springmeier elaborates on this mind control methodology in great specificity, with the help of Wheeler, although loses his way in oversimplification and stock conspiracism, identifying the whole enterprise as Satanic in a manner which ascribes agency to an entity or force known as Satan, unhelpfully shifting the sense of it all into a fantasy-type realm. Nonetheless, there is no better public detailed exposition of the techniques that I am aware of than in his publications. David McGowan is a good general source (especially on the serial killer and cult angle in intelligence-run mind-control projects, in which mind-control subjects are released back into the public and activated as instruments in waves of public-fear-inducing carnage), with good footnoting. I have not explored all of his sources, in which other instructive material may await. Much of my account in Part I here, however, will be unverifiable by the reader as it is based on undocumented direct personal encounters and observation over many years. You will have to consider for yourselves if it makes sense.

Daniel Estulin and Michael Minnicino, both with connections to the independent political and ideological network named for the late Lyndon Larouche, are also useful and place mind control in an interesting analytical context. Minnicino in particular identifies overlapping themes in programmatic cultural disintegration projects of the 20th century related to the Comintern's George Lukacs (of what was known as the Frankfurt School group of intellectuals) and his ideological and intelligence-linked associates in the European and American academies and the discourse of modernity (and postmodernity), including via his supposed sparring counterparts Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno. It is open history that these intellectuals and associates like Max Horkheimer were CIA-

backed, publishing in CIA-funded journals and managed by admitted CIA agent Melvin Lasky (see Gabriel Rockhill) – all collaborating on a project to redefine collective consciousness and a less openly admitted project of disintegrating, destabilizing, decentering, fragmenting and degenerating Western culture to promote cynicism and hopelessness to the point of preparing it for mass manipulation in aggregate over time.

(Note that after the 2011 mass killings by Anders Breivik in Norway, in which Minnicino was found to be a strong influence in Breivik's political writings, Minnicino publicly distanced himself from his earlier work – see Chip Berlet on this – regretting that he had apparently inspired Breivik, although he did not specifically recant the substance of his arguments. Breivik is a good example of a likely intelligence-orchestrated mind control subject, whose absence of caring family, military connections, childhood abuse and mental illness were perfect cover for trying out mind control projects with him as vehicle; his stepfather was a military officer, Breivik's own enlistment was declined for unknown reasons and he was redirected for unknown reasons towards unknown collaboration. Including Minnicino in the publicly released list of influences on Breivik is obviously an effective way, if disingenuous, to discredit Minnicino vaguely by association.)

There is self-congratulatory symbolism on 'scientific' mind-control methodology as honed by establishment-sanctioned and elite-funded covert operators throughout popular culture, hidden in plain view. Among many other examples, mirrors and shattering mirrors occur in 'psychological' films and chart-topping popular music videos hugely out of proportion to what one would expect. They are more than just a device to promote tension in the viewer, they are in some cases a methodological motif among an industry circle, a 'priesthood' of content consultants who may very well consider themselves, and their associates in intelligence mind control operations, Satanic, reveling in inside jokes which double for the uninitiated as entertainment. They live in their own bored and debauched social circles, and them too I report only from personal engagement and would be making myself legally vulnerable in sharing notes, so you will have to decide for yourselves whether to take the point on faith. The good news is that the whole of this communique, in all its parts, does not stand or fall on these notions, which are really just in the way of introduction to a broader and deeper group of topics.

The aim of these consultants in popular screen-mediated theatre is for the most part simply perpetuating themes in mass psychology developed throughout the early 20th century in a large and privatized field full of trade secrets (and deeper, off-book secrets) branching out in many directions from work in mass psychological influence begun by Edward Bernays and taken up on Madison Avenue and in no small measure at the Tavistock. These themes are distraction, including by sensational redirection, subliminal suggestion and softening by repetition, to ensure clear, independent public thought on certain subjects is replaced in most by reflex bypassing consideration. Both the industry and the covert governmental intelligence projects suggested here are engaged in mind control (influence may be too weak a word, even though the target here is the general population) aimed at promoting emotional, identity and mental destabilization, degeneracy, deconstruction and reprogramming by means and media which circumvent rational responses and instinctive psychological defences, in different forms.

Mirrors are but one form of occult, Satanic, and indeed pagan and Gnostic symbolism rampant in popular culture, and the examples one can pluck from well known TV, movies and pop music seem endless, but such diversion would be a needless indulgence here. Much of it is deliberately outright Satanic, with the apparent aim of encouraging and appealing to a rebellious and cynical impulse in the ordinary consumer of such devices that is contrary to community and constructive tradition. The Lurianic kabbalistic idea of

shevirat hakelim, which to me seems heretical and simply Gnosticism stated in Hebrew, is not an unrelated theme. It refers to an ostensible shattering of ‘vessels’ said to have occurred during an effort by God to contain chaos, a resulting dispersal of little sparks of chaos into Creation generating the material universe, including the phenomena of form and differentiation, and which are said in this rubric to be what permit choice of good and evil.

Note also the apparently necessary inclusion of at least one mention, buried, it sometimes seems, in the plot of just about every novel of every kind published by any major publishing house in recent decades, casting doubt, via a sympathetic narrator or protagonist, on God – or at least on the existence of a fair, just, good and involved God. I challenge the reader to come up with even three simple-monotheistic-faith-friendly plots among the thousands of trade and literary fiction titles published each year by global corporate publishing. This is disproportionate to the good third of even British and Americans who consider themselves to believe in one God, and even higher proportions in the non-Anglo developed world where many of these novels are put out in translation in the likes of Spanish, French, German and Italian. There is a disconnect here between what people believe in and aspire towards and the degenerate symbolic meaning embedded in their entertainment and otherwise furnished them by their respective establishments.

Insofar as the hypothetical Devil’s occupation is to obscure and distort reality and promote error such that the subject fails to make virtuous choices in spite of his higher intellect and intuition, and thus sins, or is emotionally destabilized powerfully enough to succumb to impulses born of emotional distortion, and transgresses – not entirely because he is morally faulty but also at least in part because he lacks the context in which to make a clear or autonomous choice (on a culpability continuum that does not always have clear demarcation points) – then sure, the practice may be considered Satanic. This characterization and concept, however, is itself part of the distortion allowing for the perpetuation of this post-Edenic condition, personifying (or deifying) a completely non-Creative, indeed ostensibly anti-Creative, force, when the phenomena it is supposed to manifest are better explained as resulting simply from Creative force stymied or misdirected because of perceptual and rational distortion. The resulting unsettled or imbalanced appetites and habits, in the first instance unwittingly, mistakenly or in weariness, are given precedence over our innate intuition for good, and perpetuated inter-generationally and societally in increasingly complex and sophisticated alienation or exile from an original state in which the perceptual distortion, the misguiding symbolic overshadowing the real, metaphor, abstraction and the theatre of power warping our sense of basic truth, is less prominent.

When one’s senses (or elements of reason operating in tandem with the senses) have been deceived, one’s choice flowing from representations perceived is but a weakened one, not a choice in the full sense of the word (like an immoral law is a law in the weak sense of the word, in name and form, perhaps, but not a real law in what is the essence of a law). If you trust the government science authority when they publish that green food is categorically healthier than red food, and then feed your children only green and never red apples, you have acted decisively on a very narrow point following a hazy amalgam of choices, including to trust the authority as well as the adequacy of your own grasp of the scope of the guidelines, and perhaps you have scarcely even made those choices, but rather taken them for granted, or allowed the instructions by virtue of their pedigree to override some nagging doubts based on personal experience, common sense or folk wisdom. Although you have more or less intended to do so, have you really directly and unequivocally made the choice to feed your children the healthier option? Not have you fed them the healthier option, but have you made the choice to do so?

The kind of exploitable set-up in relationships involving an information authority and its subjects implied in this example is well illustrated in Bertrand Russell's degenerate word games, which are mainly distraction jobs, especially in the area of signifiers confusing quantity and quality but also in forcing true-false conclusions to propositions which are not best amenable to true-false analysis. It is hard not to suspect, considering his education and intelligence, that Russell was being deliberately misleading, practising sleight of hand in the abstract, and rewarded for it.

Russell was a hereditary earl, one of the more senior positions in the British aristocracy. The governing British oligarchy, thrilled to have come by this philosophical affirmation dressed up somewhat respectably and in someone from their own ranks no less (although perhaps it was inevitable that such a view would only emerge there), assured that he retained an elite professorship and maintained a celebrated, legendary name in establishment circles (despite a career ostentatiously swinging from one fashionable political extreme to the other, a ridicule-free privilege reserved for the sensitive elites – in Russell's case from avowed pacifist to pro-nuclear back to anti-nuclear, all while slipping numerous international literary prizes under his belt – *NB* literary not logic or philosophy prizes).

The British-centred oligarchy of which Russell had social membership, it should be added, has proved one of the world's most successful at maintaining power, because it has so adeptly put material interests and globalist Whig sensibilities first, and everything else second, all within a shared cultural aesthetic that is very undogmatic and adaptable. It shape shifts, any sense of self irrelevant, with the sole aim of power. Latterly, it has taken satisfaction in wielding this power artfully, diversely and with great latitude. Over more than three centuries it has successfully fused with foundational British elements a finance oligarchy having continuous inherited power links traceable to the Roman Empire through the Swiss banking and Venetian doge system and prior, imported via the Netherlands in the 1689 Glorious Revolution in which their globally-oriented merchant class took the fore in British politics. This liberal, commerce-linked contingent were soon known as Whigs, and although they contended for parliamentary supremacy with more traditional elements for the next century, there is no question they represented the driving spirit in British imperial ascendancy, and that in a broader analysis relatively peaceful Whig-Tory mutual accommodation characterized the rising empire and British industrialization more than division and titular power swings within a rapidly changing society, government and modes of production.

British elites of all stripes were enjoying unprecedented material horizons, and substantial internal disruption would have seemed a shame. Economic and political success were clearly on the side of adaptability. Thus were integrated into the finance-mediated, merchant-class-dominated fusion constituting the core of British empire (1) aristocracy, with a permissive approach to the old landed guard, letting them keep an influential place in government and society, (2) religion, engaging a patriated church and its symbols in all theatrically presented matters of public importance and liberal enough attitudes to make adherents of most other religions feel at least unpersecuted, if not welcome, free at any rate to carry on business unmolested and for everyone's enrichment, at once benefitting the new governing class from the sense of public dignity and theatre of authoritative identity lent by seamless merger into the crown-integrated religious establishment and (3) a pretence of popular government casting back to idolized Athenian ideals of enforced system participation known as democracy, everyone knowing their place, as in an Indian caste system.

But in this fusion system, of which in the culturally and economically integrated West we are more or less still near enough in time, form and method to be considered a part, it is

more than knowing one's place. It amounts to enjoying one's place in a great imperial success story, adepts each and every participant in a very subtle game, the experience of which has become its own reward – from recognition for manipulative, ruthless or conformist achievements in education, career, publicity or wealth, basking in the glow of social approval and envy, to hedonistic ones in his new pool, barbecue, jewellery, air conditioner, performance tires, cosmetic treatment or down-filled parka, to satisfaction of partaking socially in shared fantasies and dreamworlds, knowing and celebrating collectively the ins and outs of the latest screen entertainment, often with more familiarity and enthusiasm than real-world details.

Government and serious affairs, however, are 'by the people' in this system only when something goes wrong and the underlying beds of power need to show the mob (if they are able momentarily to transcend their apathy about serious things long enough to care) which plant to pluck away: some hapless elected or civically appointed individual or other. It is a model of multi-interest cooperation among elite sectors, a thriving oligarchy. It also depends on soft, superficially defensible, or otherwise deniable manipulation and exploitation of billions of people, sometimes comfortably for them, often not, to keep resources and the availability of willing labour flowing in the desired direction through a multitude of allied channels like differential intellectual property dispensation and preferential resource extraction rules, exchange rate and asset price manipulation and market structuring, and sovereign debt servitude.

For its comfortable middle class, the professional and administrative mass padding its chambers, greasing its operational gears, churning through its retail turnstiles, universities, airports and resorts, it must promote social atomization, ideological and moral complacency, system dependence both perceived and actual. It must devote strong attention to maintaining very limited perceptual horizons in civic thought, ideology and motivational beliefs, ensuring publishers, media, and educational curricula at all levels are always 'on message', and that deviants are swept aside one way or another (by ridicule, discrediting, dismissal from public life, pay offs, or even orchestrated 'accidents'). This is to prevent those with access to the apparatus of power who are not themselves elites perceiving the whole of the nature of this power structure. They can thus neither coordinate against it, ignore it, escape participating in it, nor take advantage too adeptly of a realization of the corrupt system, to beat elites at their own game – although usually in the latter case an understanding can be worked out, as between high-level organized crime and intelligence agencies.

The power of the most ascendant element of this fusion, the multi-polar, globally inter-spun finance oligarchy, is itself greatly dependent on the illusions attendant in posited systems of money whose value, and ability to materialize, dematerialize, be born, die and translate into hard resources and other forms of itself, is at root a matter of proclamation by elites (dressed up as legitimate governors or via loyal or well rewarded agents). These seek to parasitize organic and ordinary commercial relations by standardizing their exchange mediation – a useful service in principle – but keeping jealous control of that standard to their own perpetual advantage, making arbitrary internal adjustments without notice to the vast majority, a control which can only be maintained by obfuscation and perceptual distortion among most of the system's participants. It depends on establishing conceptual and normative frameworks for business, politics, ideology, science and fashion and then being the first to render and declare them obsolete, always keeping the 'prescient' early adopter's advantage.

Nowadays, however, we should also be clear that the overlap in elite sectors is substantial. It is a much-intertwined power behemoth, and most definitely not confined to Britain, America and the lands of the former British empire and imperial influence. It is a

global phenomenon, as the Chatham House set sought for it to be (on whom more elaboration later), and while people with careers in finance tend to remain in finance, the global corporate-administrative-financial system is highly interdependent and requires multi-sector cooperation, shared sympathies and mutual understanding of game rules among all senior participants. This includes cross-boundary supply chain manipulation in numerous and often vertically-integrated sectors – with occasional nods to a regulatory system designed to inhibit independent business and system outsiders but let the titans through. It implies constant coordination both in the way of back-channel executive collusion and by long-term strategic planning.

Kathryn Hughes, summing up Leslie Mitchell in a review nicely, speaks well to the point of the underlying Whig sensibility which so launched British imperial success with that sense of effortlessness, and it is worth pondering her description in its gently facetious nuance: ‘They [early imperial Whigs as England’s new elite] were well-meaning and untroubled by the slightest hint that they were anything other than God’s appointed ruling class (the fact that they didn’t really believe in God but were too polite to say so barely ripples the surface of this graceful picture)... Whig principles appeared so baggy and elastic that they were able to cosy up to pretty much anyone if it meant they could lurch through the next crisis and still get home in time for dinner (prepared, naturally, by a chef specially imported from Paris)... But if the Whigs couldn’t agree on the great issues of the day... the one thing that they all shared was the overwhelming conviction that they were in charge of the past... History could be trusted to come out right in the end and that all you had to do was keep a light hand on the tiller while events unfolded in such a way as to deliver a Whiggish dreamscape in which everyone was sensible – and observant of inherited property rights.’

‘Property rights’ bespeaks the thoroughly materialist aim of these power elites and ‘dreamscape’ is an excellent word choice here, evoking perceptual distortion and the implications of controlling the image of the past. These implications include informing common perceptions and ascriptions of right and wrong, success and failure, evoking inspiration and revulsion, defining the underpinnings of collective identity, represented in the culture and institutions dominant today, and are far broader than the casually dropped sentence might at first lead one to consider. The undoing, the incoherence and unsustainability, of this approach is that within the idea of property rights in this system, which adheres to a positivistic legal account denying any underlying normativity to legal precepts, ‘rights’ too is treated as an artificial, malleable concept adapted to the ascendant power of the moment and thus ultimately meaningless in its absence of necessary content. This is one way that conceptually the finance oligarchy, if it attempts to rely too unequivocally on property rights without grounding rights in a moral definition, defeats itself.

Under that light Whig touch, however, the game can go on a long time before the system implodes. Leaders within that culture are so adept at shifting perceptions away from such inconsistencies or, more important still, using the manipulative psychological technique of matching social fit to ideological fashion, and casually brushing aside those insisting on consistency as boring, passé, rigid, deluded or self-limiting in their optimistic conviction or, bless them, just nerds. And this is a Gnostic-style inversion, a Hindu everything-is-real (including nothing being real) resort, as the rigidity and inability to roll with the flow and reality of Creation was, rather, located in the biblical Cain.

Ascribing the character of being unfashionably rigid to those who are serious about moral right is just to resort to the cheap trick of a schoolyard bully. And yet it has great manipulative effect as, at least in the short term, when complemented by the complacency of enough people of inadequate moral courage, bullying, including by disparagement,

works. (If the association between these large, apparently disparate and suddenly introduced names and concepts is confounding, I beg the reader's confidence and forbearance. They, and other apparently eclectic leaps, are to be unfolded and coloured in for coherence in the fullness of the pages to follow.)

Walt Whitman captured the spirit well, of making meaninglessness cool and leaving constancy behind for losers: 'Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself (I am large, I contain multitudes.)' Shiva has one leg. But also four. Sometimes six. Shiva is white. But Shiva is also black, and sometimes red, and sometimes blue. Every possible universe is said to exist. The multiverse concept is widely expounded in later Hindu literature, such as the Bhagavata Purana, and Hindu symbol is darling to elite-funded high-profile astrophysics projects like the Cern Hadron Collider. As declared in Freddie Mercury's battle against the godly who would detain the murderer ('*Bismillah*, we will not let him go!') who feels sorry for himself for the practical repercussions of having killed ('Life had just begun, now I've gone and thrown it all away') without mention of any moral wrong, the overwhelming self-pitying response is to relativize everything into meaninglessness, a similar kind of meaninglessness as is found when words borrowed from morality and stripped of their content are said to underpin the social order. Mercury's choice of moral outlook in refusing to face his own culpability: 'Nothing really matters.' It will all feel better if nothing matters. Anything but stand up and accept one's own fault. This too is Cain.

Russell, a good two hundred years into the flourishing of the Whig system, did not deny God, but he avoided God and spurned Creation, in Cainite fashion: 'The cosmos is like a theatre in which just once a play is performed, but, after the curtain falls, the theatre is left cold and empty until it sinks in ruins. I do not mean to assert with any positiveness that this is the case. That would be to assume more knowledge than we possess. I say only that it is what is probable on present evidence. I will not assert dogmatically that there is no cosmic purpose, but I will say that there is no shred of evidence in favour of there being one' (John Slater and Peter Köllner, 'Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell', vol 11, 2024, p547).

And if God exists, he says, like Cain and the Gnostics, who see God as mean: 'A man who, having the knowledge and power required to make his children good, chose instead to make them bad, would be viewed with execration. But God, if He exists, makes this choice in the case of very many of His children' (*Ibid*) – which is entirely to evade the point of God's bestowal of free choice and human responsibility, nor to acknowledge that all are created good and free to choose in every moment. The apparent narrowness of Russell's concept of cosmic purpose, his casual, reflexive disqualification of all of the ongoing wonders of existence, also undermines his stature as a serious or even coherent thinker. Altogether it is a revealingly juvenile argument for someone so formally erudite.

Contradicting himself in the same essay, Russell concludes that ignoring and dismissing hope of God will be for the best, for 'Man, in so far as he is not subject to natural forces, is free to work out his own destiny. The responsibility is his, and so is the opportunity' (*Ibid*, p548). The moral: knowledge and civilization are our best achievable hopes; God-preoccupation is a bit of a self-limiting, childish crutch. For Russell, it seems that exercising choice for good meant improving one's material position and enjoyment, the only limiting factor being the weak ethic: so long as it doesn't overstep others' consent. But even in that he was not consistent, discounting the consent of those violated in the name of some greater comfort for others, coming out as purely utilitarian, and mainly only so long as it benefitted his own kind (white, Occidental, socially elite, morally indifferent liberal democrats).

Russell's prose is wily, but its inner contradictions are rife and traceable with a determined read. It is challenging, but still possible, to impale a snake. Russell's Paradox, in all likelihood not developed by Russell himself but rather swiped (or possibly received as a gift) from German mathematicians not distant from the Frankfurt School mentioned earlier, is nonetheless an ideal demonstration of his methodology (or, perhaps better, his style). While serious logicians of course use such paradoxes precisely to demonstrate what is faulty in the kind of thinking and misinterpretation of signification which the paradox discloses, in popular usage this all too readily becomes the opposite: confirmation of a mystique or confounding nonsense in mathematics or the way of the universe such that the ordinary person is better off leaving such intense delving to the experts. Alternately, it is indeed to misconstrue the formulation (take it too seriously, ignoring its contextual presentation in the demonstration of error) and reference it to impart smugly or cynically that everything – the very fabric of existence – is meaningless, as even these vaunted formulas 'prove'. There is ample reason to suspect that Russell himself profited from straddling across the two realms: on the one hand presenting himself as a serious logician in the right circles, on the other not troubled if his popularity confused the public, guiding some people (who thought they understood) into morally degenerate and relativistic thinking, and for others (who did not, or did not bother to, understand) promoting an elite thinker's mystique rather than elevate our thinking generally.

For Russell's Paradox to operate, one must designate something with a name different to what it is generally known by (like calling a normal set abnormal) while pretending there is no difference between what a thing is or is generally known as and what it is called – then for the trusting or less discerning to consider operations said to be of or on the signifier to be indistinguishable from operations of or on the signified. This is the essence of Gnostic distorting method and of mind control techniques. If we give the name 'B' to the letter A, then conveniently drop the quotation marks when everyone is busy pretending they know the ins and outs of the mathematical notation used to present it all, and then say B is A, all the while insisting it is a rule that no two alphabet letters are identical, then it appears $B = A$ when $B \neq A$, and you have your silly little pretend paradox. Drop the farce, do not cross one language or signification or notation system with another (in this case, naive set theory with axiomatic set theory) and the paradox evaporates. In language, anything can be dressed up as a paradox with enough subtle adjustment of linguistic parts relative to the linguistic whole, so long as the linguistic whole is generally familiar to the audience and the adjustment is not too blatant, as red balls moving under magicians' silver cups with the right subtlety can best the observer.

'Magic', by the way, is derived from the word for Zoroastrian priest, *magush*, which in Greek plural is μάγοι or *magoi*. The magi in Matthew 2 who arrived for Jesus's birth benefit from a sanitized translation ('wise men' – preferring a Hindu-Gnostic knowledge emphasis over outright occult paganism). They were magician-priests familiar with Laban-type rites arrived from the East looking for a new king to introduce their heresies to Israel and the West; Bethlehem, Rachel's death-place, was to be the birthplace of this new order, and indeed she too, pagan daughter of Laban, is specifically mentioned in connection with the Magi story in Matthew 2.

The Persians may have failed at Marathon, and indeed never conquered Greece by force. But Eastern heresies made their way westward by more subversive, and ultimately more penetrating means, until eventually the ruling classes of Greece, seduced through transnational commercial favour and the perks of overlordship, allowed themselves, Athens and the very manipulable democratic system to become agents of oligarchical empire. This was more or less on the model of Persian satrapies, themselves but

holographic miniatures in governance of the hollowed-out Persian imperial administrative shell. Pericles dissolved the progressive Delian League, began asset-stripping Greek colonies, and undermined whatever public-spirited integrity there may have been to Greek culture (already vulnerable in its tragic predilections in paganism and abstraction). He did this by aggressive promotion of the dissipations of sophistry in education (see on this Charles Tate who, despite distancing himself from the pettier politics of the Larouche organization and testifying against Larouche at trial in 1988 over the movement's fundraising methods, did not recant his academic or ideological contributions to the movement's canonical material). In Pericles' Greece, form overtook substance in cultural priority, and the seeds were sown in earnest for the launch of oligarchical empire in the West. In a sense of the scale of its ungodly ethic, the Greece of before and after was not unlike the Egypt of before and after Joseph.

In addition to misdirection (one of the vehicles taught in Pericles' schools of rhetoric, sophistry and morality-divorced technical 'meritocracy'), Russell, grandson of the Whig prime minister of the same name, also evidenced a Cainite propensity for bloodshed, although he was too British to have carried it out directly. From personal correspondence: 'I have been merely oppressed by the weariness, tedium and vanity of things lately, nothing seems worth doing or having done. The only thing that I strongly feel worthwhile would be to murder as many people as possible so as to diminish the amount of consciousness in the world.' Amazingly, this quote is given sympathetic treatment in the publishing sphere today, going a long way to disclose where establishment sympathies really lie. David Shribman is a good example.

The 'akhnai oven' episode in Babylonian Talmud Bava Metzia 59b, *Tanur Akhnai*, relates to a serpent-shaped oven (*akhana* means serpent, stated directly in the Gemara at this locus, as well as being the Valentinian Gnostic word according to Tertullian for an aeonic divinity subordinate to the original divinity, associated with immensity or love, as well as devotion in ancient Egyptian) which has been broken into many separate pieces. When Rabbi Eliezer declared this segmented item as not capable of taking on impurity (as it would have been if whole), and is excommunicated for it, he was making far more than a dry halakhic statement. *Tanur Akhnai* may be considered code for heretical serpent-allied and serpent-symbolized systems common in Gnostic thinking in their time. It was specifically the Gnostic sophistication impulse combined with the many-pieces-shattering doctrine (transformed into a mind control technique of positing a new 'self' for a person and then breaking it up into parts) that must be referenced in this talmudic statement: 'What is Akhnai? They coiled words up around it like a snake (*akhana*).'

The multiplication of sophistry, the over-abundance of signifier, layers of distraction, not to mention its segmentation, rendered the essence of the thing itself denatured, whether argument or stove. The rabbis were by analogy suggesting with *Tanur Akhnai* (and ruled) that being functionally similar to the serpent the thing must be impure. Rabbi Eliezer, correctly, was saying that to hold thus is to have lost the essence of the serpent: it is but one more of God's creatures. The academy of rabbis had become so cowed and disoriented by the Gnostic associations in the snake while so keen to retain their own apparent separateness from it that they too lost the essence and allowed the Gnostic transposition of divinity onto the serpent to become a matter of fear, when ideally all of the nonsense projected onto it and in its allied systems of thought would simply be rejected out of hand were the confidence of intuition and a feel for the true divine permitted: access, at least in some circumstances, to the Bat Kol, to divine expression. To be clear, this was not a superstitious fear on the rabbis' part; on the contrary, it would have been a fear of the superstition they saw it as engendering. Rabbi Eliezer's position, I am suggesting, may rather have taught us to put clarity, perspective and education about the

thing and its context first. We should have trusted that demonstrating *Tanur Akhnai* as harmless would have been the more enduringly founded public information than confusingly elevating it to a level of items which could become ritually impure, giving the nonsense imagination-founded strength in spite of the rabbis' best intentions to the contrary.

In Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner', a magnificent specimen of English balladry or epic poetry, the same message is conveyed, albeit in more maudlin and romantic terms, for a very different culture. The jaded, religiously depleted mariner protagonist, weighted by tyranny of symbol and guilt-ridden at having killed an animal, letting visceral fears, superstition and a deterministic sense of doom displace his faith in God and his optimism, returns to the world of prayer and salvation the moment he ceases to see the apparently menacing water snakes trailing his boat as magically demonic, and is impelled instead to bless them as just one more example of God's creatures. Much as Dorothy's life-changing realization that the Wizard of Oz is just running a cheap hall of tricks is overshadowed by Dorothy's fixation on the disappearing Toto (the false totemic attachment), Coleridge's poem, of course, gets lost immediately in the quasi-pagan symbols of Christianity in his course of salvation. Excised from its confused attire, however, we may charitably, and probably should, find in it the same genre of moral.

We may see it as the rabbis did: Christianity is not idol worship in the Christian mind and heart, and thus it is considered to be permitted to Christians, although forbidden to Jews, for whom it would constitute idolatry because Jews have an older, deeper perspective and would not effectively suspend or explain away their intentions if engaging in such practice. (See Tosefot to Talmud Bavli, Berachot 2b on permitting a Christian oath, a position practically followed by the Rema on Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 151, and Tosefot on Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zarah 2a).

Thus Coleridge: 'Beyond the shadow of the ship, I watched the water-snakes: They moved in tracks of shining white, and when they reared, the elfish light fell off in hoary flakes. Within the shadow of the ship I watched their rich attire: blue, glossy green, and velvet black, they coiled and swam; and every track was a flash of golden fire. O happy living things! no tongue their beauty might declare: a spring of love gushed from my heart, and I blessed them unaware: sure my kind saint took pity on me, and I blessed them unaware. The self-same moment I could pray; and from my neck so free the Albatross fell off, and sank like lead into the sea.'

It is interesting that in the other major talmudic instance of the Bat Kol, the heavenly echo, in which the Bat Kol advised that both leading but often differing Tannaic rabbinic authorities Hillel and Shammai were valid but that we must follow Hillel in practice (Eruvin 13b), Jewish tradition heeds it rather than dismisses it. In this case the immediately adjacent preceding discussion also concerned not considering a snake anything special, and therefore pure. Hillel came several hundred years before Rabbi Eliezer, and certainly before Christian times, unlike Rabbi Eliezer, and perhaps was considered to have greater intuitive access to the divine. Talmud has the Bat Kol itself also warning us against the corrupting influence of translating scripture (Megillah 3a) and implicitly about all of the distortion possible by semantic shift and the risk to meaning inherent in altered signifiers relative to an originally delivered narrative and moral essence.

A deconstructed item then reconstructed, such as *Tanur Akhnai*, is, on this divinely sanctioned view, not capable of defilement like the original item. The word of God transposed into Greek or dissipated into fetishistic Gnostic cult charades and doctrine and then made the foundation of new theologies, cannot find its place again among Hebrew essentials, even if the rabbinic academy is resigned to carrying on its law and exegesis in a

working system resembling the Hellenistic in reasoning and methodology while attempting to preserve its godly essence and authentic and righteous imprint. In a sense, like the *Tanur Akhnai*, it is pure, but only because it is of such a diminished status that there is nothing there to defile.

It is a metaphor for the new Hellenified, academic world in which the rabbis found themselves and where they developed. Gnostic and Hellenistic methods of argumentation, that is to say, whether sense-based, mystical, metaphorical or rational, denature any core belief elements they might purport to reference. All the arguments in the world (which were indeed, the text tells us, adduced by Rabbi Eliezer in his own support), all the signs and wonders one might muster, can't change the fact of its rejection in the new rabbinic thinking. This could have been about anything capable of holding ritual purity – but they made it about a snake-shaped item, one which had been broken into many pieces in the manner of mind control methodology.

It is not unlike the converse of what one might regard as the unnecessary assertion of Leopold Kronecker's well-intentioned but misdirectedly zealous mathematical finitism, in which only that which is directly cardinally construable can be considered legitimate in his number theory, precluding the legitimacy of infinite sets. This implies a little too much absoluteness in numbers altogether, including in finite reference. If we allow for the positing of definite mathematical objects, positing infinitude in that realm should be no leap. Kronecker's account conceives of definite mathematical objects more absolutely than they should be. All numbers in arithmetical use are products of and resident in the imagination in being quantity signifiers, sequential reference points and computational place holders assigned and referenced by convention, which can be used elaborately and constructively in common with others in a shared language about the conceptual world of quantities – but which often line up very poorly with objects of quantification, to the point of overshadowing our unmediated perception of what is present. For instance, if I break a slice of toast in two, is it then one or two pieces of toast? If it matters that you are thirty years old, does that mean a person's life is reasonably divisible by years for observational, analytical and predictive purposes, or are years point markers, or quantities... and of what?

They may be all of these, but the line between the usages blurs much too easily in the human mind for reliable clarity. Tools are for us to command, not to confuse us, much less to confuse us without our recognizing even that we are confused. Does water freezing at zero Celsius imply an absence of something which is present at one Celsius and which increases arithmetically along with the Celsius scale? If one is divisible, how can oneness imply God's unity? In my view it cannot, but because God's unity is incontrovertible, it is the numeric application which must be misleading.

It is a false certitude which takes the kind of assertion made by Lee Smolin about intuitionism in real-world observation-based statements, which is sound in itself, and transposes it to speak on the validity of numbers: there are 'those that we can judge to be true, those that we can judge to be false and those whose truth we cannot decide upon at the present time'. All numbers fall into none of those three categories, as all must be treated as not amenable to true-false analysis except within an entirely abstracted realm, which is probably not the kind of truth and falsehood to which Smolin referred.

Abstract objects, except technically in the Platonic philosophical sense of non-material existence independent of the human mind, which is not the sense I am using here, but rather the sense of the humanly imagined, cannot be amenable to the same true-false analysis as intuitively perceived, or observed and intuitively confirmed, phenomena. There may be a realm in which numbers as ideas exist in a pure state independent of human mental mediation, but this is not a realm to which we may claim any confident access.

All numbers which we reference are products of our imagination, although they may coincidentally (and in our experience very strongly and in a widely established way coincidentally) offer practically reliable results in applied computation. They can thus be true and false with certainty only within their imagined framework. (For a more precise exposition of the unreconciled divide between the idea of numbers and how we imagine them, see Paul Benacerraf's 'epistemological problem' in his famous 1973 article). A number not being false according to certain criteria does not make it true under other criteria. Just because we do not speak of shoes or the garden rake as being dead does not make them alive. In an analogous logic, the *Tanur Akhnai* could only be impure if it is capable of purity, but it is capable of neither purity nor impurity. As it is ultimately for practical ends that the rabbis argue, for practical purposes and no more we ought to call it pure simply to enable us to use it without concern. It does not attain the threshold of 'real' for the purposes of purity and impurity in that holy realm.