

Introduction

One Earth, Many Worlds

A Klee painting named *Angelus Novus* shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.

—Benjamin (1968): 257–58

Today, in what has come to be called the Anthropocene Age, we feel a bit like Walter Benjamin's angel, moving ever forward while contemplating the ever-accumulating wreckage we leave behind us on the planet, in a multitude of signs that the Anthropos (the human species) has indeed left his mark on the entire ecosphere. Like Benjamin's angel, our future seems always to be shrinking, becoming ever-more apocalyptic. And if blame for the climate catastrophe is so difficult to adjudicate, it is for the reason Benjamin mentions: because such a catastrophe was created in the name of a certain conception of progress.

In his *Theses on History*, where Walter Benjamin mentions this angel, he also mentions that if the future appears apocalyptic, the messiah is always

behind us, ready to appear to the angel who has turned back to seek him out. In this way, Benjamin, who was also living an end-time, that of Nazi fascism, tells his readers to look to the past to find the possibility of an open future. Because his present life under National Socialism was intolerable, he knew that such a present could only determine an equally oppressive future. Hope, if hope there could be, could only be found in the possibilities of the past that had been buried from view by the hegemonic forces of the present. Excavating these pasts could allow for future potentials, lost from view in a hopeless present, to once again become possible.

Though we have known for hundreds of years that we are polluting our planet and destroying its ecosystems, and that the detritus of carbon isotopes and radionuclides as well as artificial molecules (due to plastics) are a health hazard, we continue to go about our affairs as though infinite capitalist growth by means of extracting and appropriating resources could continue forever. In addition to rising CO₂ levels and thus world temperatures, the sixth great mass extinction of animal species, sediment shifts, sea-level rise, and nitrogen and phosphorus fluxes due to fertilizers, the consequences on humans and the ecosphere have been made abundantly clear by scientists, again and again and again. Yet we are doing very, very little. It seems that thinking of alternatives to a capitalist ideology of infinite growth and private gain at the expense of ecosystems, communal solidarity, and indigenous peoples is something we don't want, or have become unable, to consider. The best future we can hope such a present will create is that of enhanced geoengineering and a managerial "stewardship" of the entire planet that often takes the form of requiring all humans to live in cities, and all nonhuman environments to be transformed into mass-industrial globalized food production units. Welcome to the Anthropocene!

If hegemonic powers bury other potentials in the name of the one norm that becomes a univocal present, perhaps we should follow Walter Benjamin's lead in turning to other ontologies that have been buried from view, and digging them up to see if they might provide messianic potential for envisioning a different and open future. Digging deep into the layers of the past to uncover these ontologies can allow for a future different from the one the hegemonic present has made inevitable.

Today, these pasts are not entirely buried from view. They struggle on, they continue to resist the unicity of one hegemonic world, and allow other potentials to be seen. But they are well-nigh invisible, never mentioned when policymakers consider solutions, and usually considered remnants of a past that "progress" has superseded and made redundant. By positing such pasts

as hopelessly outdated, inferior, and primitive, we have deprived ourselves of the human plasticity intrinsic to our nature, and of the possibility of becoming other, and thinking otherwise.

This book will reveal the ways that the modern ontology has become untenable today in the Anthropocene Age, and will need to be replaced with a relational ontology. There were many relational ontologies prior to the development of modernity, and many struggle to persevere in and against the globalization that threatens their existence. In looking at some of these other ontologies, we will notice that they are better suited to life on planet earth as opposed to the modern ontology, which has aptly been called a thanatology. Such a thanatocene (Bonneuil and Fressoz 2013), bent on destruction and ecocide, cannot ensure a future for life on planet earth. Philosopher and anthropologist Peter Skafish is one among many scholars who are seeking such alternatives in “nonmodern variations of thought” in the hope that these might “render humans cohesive among themselves and with other beings, rather than working at all of their expense.”¹

This book will develop the anthropological thesis that the climate crisis is part of a larger crisis enabled by certain ontological presuppositions, those associated with Western modernity. This thesis was advanced in the work of anthropologist Philippe Descola when he formulated the fourfold ontological presuppositions intrinsic to different cultures. Descola’s world ontologies are those of naturalism, the ontology of Western modernity; animism, adhered to by indigenous hunting peoples of South and North America as well as Siberia; totemism, adhered to by aboriginal cultures of Australia; and analogism, as represented in the cosmologies of China, parts of inner and southern Asia, Polynesia, West Africa, Mesoamerica, the Andes, and Europe during the Renaissance, as well as in Western esotericism and New Age traditions. In naturalism, each animal self is dissimilar, whereas bodies are the same. This contrasts with totemism, where both selves and bodies are similar; animism, where selves are similar but bodies are different; and analogism, where both selves and bodies are dissimilar. Only the naturalist ontology ascribes value only to human selves, understood as somehow not coevolved as part of nature and having value to the extent that they are somehow bodiless souls, constituted by culture as opposed to nature. Only naturalism has pitted culture against nature and humans against the natural world that created them and continues to sustain them. In this book we will privilege analogical and animistic ontologies, but the same could and has been done elsewhere with totemism.² It is therefore time to replace the dualisms of naturalism with a fluid and relational understanding of life on

planet earth, one that is based in plural ontologies, capable of liberating different human potentials in order to avoid an apocalyptic future.

In his article “Towards a Fifth Ontology for the Anthropocene,” Clive Hamilton has claimed that instead of gaining inspiration from these non-modern ontologies, we should invent a new, fifth ontology, since for him the Anthropocene is without ontological precedent. He writes:

I’m suggesting that the conditions of life will be transformed in a way that renders all existing ontological understandings anachronistic, and we will be groping towards the elements of a fifth ontology beyond the four described by Descola, one rooted in the radically new dispensation brought by the Anthropocene rupture, a dispensation that destabilises all previous understandings of the human, of nature and of the relationship between the two. And I will suggest that by entering a state never before experienced in its 4.5-billion-year history, the Earth is now something without ontological precedent. (112)

Hamilton maintains that ontological pluralism is a mistake, and thus that we need one single (Western) solution. For him such a solution involves retaining the dualisms of naturalism; he repeats that nature has become an “untamed beast” that must be “confronted” and “calmed” by means of “technology and management practices.”

Hamilton’s fifth ontology is problematic in three very Western ways. First, it is not at all new; it is simply more of the same naturalist Western ontology. Second, he takes for granted the temporality of Western progress, implying that the earth moves from one hegemonic ontology to the next, and thus that the multiple ontologies of different nonhegemonic cultures cannot survive and should not be revived. But the earth is inhabited by multiple ontologies, and reducing such ontologies to one was the goal of universalizing modernity and its colonial conquest, and thus one of the things Westerners should be seeking to redress. The thousands of societies practicing the other three ontologies described by Descola cannot be relegated to the past, no matter the extent that their populations and cultures have been desecrated by Western colonialism.

Lastly, Hamilton seems to take for granted the modernist presuppositions of the ecomodernist movement,³ namely, that technological innovations are necessarily progressive and that they are somehow objectively neutral

rather than embedded in neoliberal political ideologies. Tied as it is to belief in modern progress as universally beneficial, the signatories of the *Ecomodernist Manifesto* call for what they call a “good Anthropocene,” the result of decoupling human beings from the natural world when humans are “liberated” from the land and forced to live in cities. Because it squarely places responsibility in the hands of humans, the Anthropocene is taken by these scholars to represent the potential for total human mastery of the earth and of their own destiny in what these scholars understand as a future where market growth, when tied to ecological sustainability, can lead to the end of hunger and want and the beginning of a utopian synthetic human future decoupled from nature. This is what biologist Donna Haraway calls “cosmofaith in technofixes” (2016b:3) and economist Joan Martinez-Alier calls “the Gospel of eco-efficiency,” which seeks to create a happy marriage between capitalism and ecology and thus is rendered immune to any critique of infinite growth and industrial overproduction.

Relying upon capitalist techno-fixes is counterintuitive, however, since as Einstein once pointed out, you cannot solve a problem with the faulty premises that created the problem. Mary-Jane Rubenstein explains this point well: “After all, such technologies—which reliably promise to deliver profit as well as a habitably hacked planet—are the product of the colonially and genocidally fueled white-industrial capitalism that created the disaster they now endeavor to fix” (2018:129). Such a vision of infinite growth requires separating economics from both politics and ecology, both of which replace the concept of infinite growth with contingent limits. In calling for a continuation of the modern capitalist paradigm, these authors ignore the role played by power, politics, and inequality, preferring to replace actual human beings and their systems of meaning with abstract economic calculation and algorithms. Yet, as Sundberg, Dempsey, and Collard make clear in their response to the manifesto, “any indicators of human flourishing, even those mentioned in the manifesto (life expectancy, resilience to infectious disease, disasters), are distributed in deeply uneven ways, not only between nations but also along class, race, and gender lines” (2015:228). Ignoring such uneven semantic lines allows the manifesto to recommend the abstract mapping of nature as an external resource grid, a tactic that has indeed proved to be an excellent means of capital accumulation. And it is such abstraction that leads both Hamilton and the authors of the manifesto to claim that the earth can continue to feed an ever-increasing human population that has now exceeded 7.8 billion (January 2021). As sociologist Eileen Crist’s response

to the manifesto makes clear, the premise of the manifesto is correct, but only if one takes for granted that the entire nonhuman world has no value and can be pushed to extinction. She writes:

What makes it true that there exist no limits to human growth is that one percent of the temperate zone remains as temperate grassland ecologies, half or more of Earth's life-rich wetlands are gone, and the rainforests are falling. What makes it true that no limits to growth exist is that glyphosate is everywhere and almost one billion monarch butterflies are missing; that freshwater biodiversity has suffered massive losses and there seems so little hope for what remains. What makes no-limits to human growth true is that the zoomass of wild vertebrates has become "vanishingly small" in comparison to the combined weight of humans and domestic animals, while the once enormous abundance of living beings in the ocean is gone—and who remembers? What makes it true is that the great animal migrations are disappearing, wild animal populations are plummeting, and so many beings (wild and domestic) are deprived of the freedom to move, enjoy life, or even exist. We live in a time of extinctions and of mass extinction exactly because there are "no limits" to human growth. (2015:250–51)

Since Hamilton ignores the particular historical and cultural specificities of such a capitalist ideology, he and the authors of the manifesto speak in the name of all of "humanity," of general "human progress," and of undefined "better" or "worse" strategies, the "best" strategies always entailing "more" of something, never "less": more urbanization, more aquaculture, more agricultural intensification, and more nuclear power.⁴ Andreas Malm has clearly indicated the problems involved in such a generalization: "If humanity as a whole drives the locomotive, there is no one to depose. A revolt against business-as-usual becomes inconceivable" (Malm 2016:389).

Many responses to the *Ecomodernist Manifesto* have pointed to its contradictions, dangerous elisions, and unfounded premises, and have proposed alternatives, from degrowth solutions to anarchist reconstructions of the commons (Crist 2015).⁵ In his address to the ecomodernists entitled "Fifty Shades of Green," presented at the Breakthrough Institute in 2015, philosopher Bruno Latour focuses on the danger of their seemingly apolitical stance and on the way the ecomodernists reinforce the modern dichotomy

between archaic past and future progress and thereby elide the very real dangers and risks that inhere in the Anthropocene.

For Latour, “ecomodernism” “sounds much like the news that an electronic cigarette is going to save a chain smoker from addiction” (2015b:220). Looking at the key concept of modernism, Latour problematizes the connotations of this word, which has come to mean an emancipation from the past, often understood as a dependence on nature that stunted human growth. But as Latour emphasizes in his address to the ecomodernists, such an emancipation never occurred, and we have continuously “entangled ourselves in the fabric of nature” (221). And now that the Anthropocene has given us a name for this entanglement, being modern in the sense of a separation from these interdependencies constitutes what Latour calls “inauthenticity” or “an imposture” (221). By beating those who remain backward “into submission” the ecomodernists use terms such as *modern* and *ecological* for political ends, while at the same time ignoring all explicit politics. This is the major insight of Latour’s address to the ecomodernists. If politics can occur only when there is “no referee, no arbiter, no providence, no court of appeal” (224), the ecomodernists will need to sacrifice what Latour calls their “uchronist” stance, “as if they were living at a time when they alone were in command” (223). If Hamilton and the ecomodernists claim they have no enemies and are only tracing “the inevitable path of progress and reason,” then, according to Latour, they are following religious ideology and avoiding all politics. If, on the other hand, they want to do politics, then they will need to define their friends and their enemies, and explain how their manifesto can chart a path toward political consensus building that includes all of the nonhuman agencies that are entangled with human agency. Latour asks: “How do you invent the political constitution that is able to absorb the Anthropocene, namely the reaction of the earth system to our action, in a way that renders politics again comprehensible to those who are simultaneously actor, victim, accomplices and responsible for such a situation?” (224). But for such a political attitude to grow, ecomodernists must face the facts of the Anthropocene and cease their New Age “positive thinking” attitude that scorns the devastating scientific predictions, and by which “they seriously believe that nothing will happen to them and that they may continue forever, just as before” (224).

Not only will human animals continue to die, but they will probably begin to do so at an alarming rate if no political solutions to the Anthropocene are found. By ignoring politics and universalizing their position as “modern” as opposed to archaic environmentalists and indigenous pastoralists, Latour

thinks the ecomodernists have let Frankenstein loose and “abandoned their creature” rather than taking responsibility for the monster they have created.

This book believes that “good Anthropocenes” can ensue from rejecting modern ontologies of progress founded in economic growth linked to the expropriation of natural resources, and seeking multiple ontological alternatives. Following the work of Arturo Escobar, we will seek alternatives *to* modernity, rather than the more common alternative modernities proposed by Hamilton and other ecomodernists (2016:17). In order for such alternatives to exist, we must exit the ideology of there being one world and seek to promote a decolonial ideology of multiple worlds. I write *decolonial* and not *postcolonial* because there are many peoples, and thus many worlds, that have not been directly colonized and that therefore provide valid alternative worlds to that of Western modernity. It may be difficult for many Westerners to accept an ontology of many worlds, trained as they are in centuries of scientific and philosophic justifications of one universal world, reachable by means of transcendent reason. Yet this is what this book will advocate as absolutely necessary if we are to seek solutions to our current climate crisis. There is one earth, inhabited by multiple worlds, only some of them human.

If we study the solutions to our climate crisis proposed by Western scholars, we can see that the unitary world that is presupposed leads to solutions that have been contested for their inability to leave behind the dichotomies that are held to be the causes of the current crisis. Carolyn Merchant (1990:66–67) argues that what she calls “egocentric ethics” is rooted in the seventeenth-century philosopher Thomas Hobbes’s notion of nature as a common resource for which everyone competes. As anthropologist Bruce Albert has pointed out, both exploitation and preservation presuppose a reified and objectified nature cut off from human culture and subjected to its anthropocentric will.⁶

When Lynn White Jr. published his article “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis” in 1967, he famously traced the techno-scientific regime of Western modernity back to innovations in the Middle Ages, and sought the ideological causes for such a regime in the anthropocentrism of the Christian worldview. For White, a change in the West would require the transformation of this ideology and the replacement of anthropocentrism with a relational ecology.

Central to his critique was the anthropocentrism intrinsic to the Christian worldview. By stating that man is made in God’s image, the Hebrew Bible gave man dominance over all other animals to exploit and control

them. Such anthropocentrism led Westerners to think of their identity as somehow transcendent (like God) and hence, rather than empathizing with other animals, to think of themselves as ineffable souls rather than mortal animal bodies. Made in God's image, humans could not only contemplate God's creation but imitate God in seeking to understand it, and to control the natural world with God-like powers developed by techno-scientific means. White writes: "Hence we shall continue to have a worsening ecologic crisis until we reject the Christian axiom that nature has no reason for existence save to serve man" (1967:505).

According to White, more techno-science will not resolve our ecological crisis. Rather, he contends, we need an ideology that involves more than pure reason. For White such a change would require the assistance of religions, since religions typically involve the human in a cosmology that involves the whole person. Though he respected Buddhism and the Zen tradition that have become so popular in the Western world, he thought that the West could not adopt a foreign tradition but rather had to develop its own traditions in ecological ways by eschewing anthropocentrism and the objectification of nature for human ends. "Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious, whether we call it that or not. We must rethink and refeel our nature and destiny. The profoundly religious, but heretical, sense of the primitive Franciscans for the spiritual autonomy of all parts of nature may point a direction. I propose Francis as a patron saint for ecologists" (1967:506).

Though White maintained that the transformation had to come from within, and therefore from a transformation within Christianity itself, both paganism and animism are also traditions that are autochthonous to the Western world, albeit from earlier periods. And just as becoming Christian entailed adopting and transforming a religion from without, that of a Jewish carpenter from Palestine, so have peoples ever since borrowed, adopted, and transformed religious traditions from across the globe. This book therefore agrees with White that religions have the power to transform cultural ideologies and that such a change is necessary, but will look at traditions both within the West and outside it for inspiration.

White is not alone in blaming anthropocentrism for our current predicament. Arne Johan Vetlesen has similarly shown the causal relationship between anthropocentrism and the Anthropocene:

If the Anthropocene is the historical product of anthropocentrism, it is also what forces us to abandon it and search for

alternatives—alternatives whose first assignment is to be less destructive to the natural world that humanity depends upon: to help us learn, finally, to appreciate that world for what it is in itself. . . . Indeed, in keeping with the urgency of the situation, to be worth its salt a philosophy for tomorrow’s world needs to rethink the relationship between humans and the rest of nature in a way that helps us recognize the manifold of agents and agencies in beings other than humans. This undertaking is no less normative than the one it seeks to replace. Only its normativity is explicit not implicit, and—what matters most—it’s of a substantially different kind in acknowledging value as well as agency in so many different beings and forms of life in nature. In rejecting the thesis of human exceptionalism on which anthropocentrism is premised, humans are a part of nature, not apart from nature. Not only have we been wrong about all those “others,” taking them to be what we are not, and vice versa, but we have been wrong about ourselves as well. (2019:9)

Though such an ideological change is the work of philosophy proper, the difficulty of abstract reasoning among the general public points to the limitations of philosophical arguments in enacting change. For this reason I will focus here on religion, which, contrary to the theories of the great sociologists of the twentieth century, has shown no sign of ceding its place to secularism, and instead has begotten many new movements as well as reviving many that had been deemed moribund. Because academic responses to climate change have proved so inadequate in the transformation of minds and actions, we will turn to religious approaches that have successfully deconstructed the nature–culture divide and provided ecological alternatives to replace it. If dogmatic monotheistic responses have been considered inadequate by many scholars and practitioners, many alternatives have been developed in order to find a healthier religious relationship to the nonhuman world. Indeed, the authors of an article entitled “Climate Change and Religion as Global Phenomena” claim that religions will indeed play an essential role in the global response to climate change for the following four reasons:

1. Religions influence the worldviews or cosmologies of believers, motivating them to climate activism or to quietism or denial.
2. Many people respond to the moral authority wielded by religions.

3. Religious institutions have institutional and economic resources, which can be channeled into or against sustainability.
4. Potential to provide social connectivity and collective action. Religions create social cohesion and overlap civil society in many ways. (Veldman, Szasz, and Haluza-DeLay 2014a:309)

We will therefore look at the ways different religious traditions have been transformed by the Anthropocene and have sought to understand what it means to be human, not over and against the natural world but as a codependent and relational part of it. By focusing on how worlds can be made rather than destroyed, we will study how different religious traditions provide an ethos in harmony with the nonhuman world. Studying Christian, pagan, animist, and Buddhist approaches to environmental collapse will show how these traditions reveal potential lifeworlds that replace modern dichotomies with symbiotic survival strategies that could provide the necessary resistance to the end-times enabled by techno-industrial capitalist growth.

The last two chapters of the book develop the philosophical foundations of the many conclusions drawn from these different religious traditions. With a chapter exploring panpsychism as a metaphysics to ground the different religious beliefs within systematic philosophical truth claims, and a final chapter that sets forth new values for an interdisciplinary ecosophy, the book seeks to demonstrate that the different worlds portrayed in its different chapters all fit together, like pieces of a puzzle, on a single earth.

Chapter Contents

The first chapter will elucidate the growing apocalypticism toward a future life on the planet earth, looking at media responses to the devastating scientific reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that chart the repercussions on planet earth of anthropogenic destruction of ecosystems. As we transform the earth into a “no-go zone for human beings” by placing industrial profit above ecosystem flourishing, many people are feeling so disempowered that they are privileging narratives of escape over narratives of transformation of the status quo. Thus chapter 1 will chart the movements of escape to live in vivariums on Mars, in underground bunkers, or off-grid in the wilderness, as different responses to apocalyptic fears. Depicting the strategies of indigenous peoples who have already survived the end-time when colonial powers destroyed their lives, cultures, and

environments, chapter 1 will propose “preemptively apocalyptic thinking” in order to seek out the surviving interspecies and lichen cyborgs proliferating in the ruins. Using the work of biologist and consciousness-studies scholar Donna Haraway, this chapter will seek alternative ontological presuppositions for the Anthropocene Age that can overcome the ontological foundations responsible for the climate crisis, and celebrate the many worlds, both human and nonhuman, that co-inhabit our earthly home and allow for pluralism to reinforce ecosystem interdependence and solidarity.

After elucidating White’s (1967) ecological critique of Christianity in terms of anthropocentrism and the exploitation of the natural world for human purposes, chapter 2 considers different responses to this critique that have attempted to make Christianity more ecological. The chapter first looks at apologetic responses, focusing on those of Pope Francis and the Orthodox tradition, both of which retain the transcendental as superior to the immanent. We then look at more audacious sacramental responses that have attempted to render immanence itself sacred, such as those of Fox and of Wallace, as well as feminist approaches (of Peterson and of Primavesi) that decry the “violence of God traditions” and seek to replace them with an embodied theology focused on life on earth rather than the afterlife. Finally, the chapter considers ways of transforming Christian foundations in line with science and ecology, focusing on the work of scientists Kaufman and Abrams.

The third chapter turns to Buddhism, an example of an analogical ontology, which has the advantage of being founded in dogma that is inherently in harmony with both science and the environment. Though Lynn White Jr. acknowledged that Buddhism was more ecological than Western approaches, he nonetheless claimed that the West could not borrow ecological solutions from foreign traditions. Yet many scholars disagree with him, asserting that if it is the very presuppositions of Western ideology that are to blame, a solution cannot be founded on these premises. Because Buddhism does not adhere to the Cartesian separation of the body from the soul, and of the material world from the truth discovered by reason, it can be of assistance in developing an ecocentric, rather than anthropocentric, understanding. The first section of this chapter thus details some of the fundamentals of Buddhist dogma that are deemed essential for ecocentrism, namely interdependence, the Buddhahood of all beings, interspecies kinship intrinsic to the idea of reincarnation, and the lack of inherent existence (*śūnyatā*) necessary for interdependence. Yet how are we to borrow these tenets without appropriating Buddhism and disembedding it from the context in which it

has meaning? To avoid these pitfalls, this chapter will focus on the Japanese theory of *fudo* developed by philosopher Tetsuro Watsuji in the mid-twentieth century. In this theory, Watsuji maintains that we become human by means of acclimatization, influenced by the physical forces of nature that constitute weather as milieu (*fudo*). The human being, then, cannot be separated or abstracted from this milieu. We cannot universalize human nature nor focus on intrinsic essences at the expense of relationality, as Western culture tends to do. These changes are enough to radically shift the way we understand and relate to the environment and to ourselves, and could help us to take to heart the symbiotic relations between self and milieu (*fudo*).

Chapter 4 traces several of the growing pagan forms of spirituality that have rejected many of the claims of monotheism in order to provide spiritual sustenance that is earthly rather than heavenly, feminine rather than male, and material rather than transcendent. Neopaganism is a diverse and pluralistic tradition that belies definition, since it requires neither scripture nor deities, creed nor hierarchical authority. Yet neopagans all share veneration for and celebration of the living earth, a belief in the immanence of the divine, and the conviction that they can communicate with the energies of the universe. Tracing these characteristics back to goddess worship, Druid traditions, and northern shamanism, neopagans seek to retrieve and revalorize these traditions that were destroyed and oppressed by Christianity. Providing structure to organize religious rituals focused on veneration of nature, neopaganism has developed into many different traditions that practice this devotion to nature in different ways. Chapter 4 focuses on two of these traditions, that of Wicca (involving the worship of a mother goddess and a horned god during Sabbat ceremonies marking equinox and lunar events) and the tradition of religious naturalism as expressed in the Gaia tradition (in which the earth is considered a living organism, regulating the conditions for the thriving of life on earth).

The fifth chapter turns to indigenous animism, focusing particularly on the animist ontology of tribes living in the Amazon basin of South America. If philosopher Bruno Latour has famously claimed that “we have never been modern,” religious-studies scholar Graham Harvey has recently added that “perhaps we have always been animists.” If we have repressed and unlearned how to share our world with nonhuman others, today it is our Cartesian dualisms that cause us shame, and we are seeking as best we can to decolonize our thought and reclaim animism in order to develop a more sustainable ontology. This chapter elucidates animism by focusing on the characteristics of personhood, relationality, location, and ontological

boundary crossing. If all living beings are persons with souls, then our communication must expand to include the indexical and the iconic, allowing us to develop a cosmopolitics for the Anthropocene Age. After clarifying indigenous animism, this chapter uses the thought of philosopher and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari to develop what he called a “machinic animism.” Guattari thought that we should “pass through animist thought” so as to develop the solidarity and kinship that is so sorely lacking in modern culture. Ontological boundary crossing is already available to us in literature when we imagine ourselves as women and men, beggars and emperors, Maggie Tulliver and the Princess de Clève. But it is also required in order to do politics, since it is essential to developing the moral judgments necessary for democratic governance. It should thus not be too difficult to develop an animist cosmopolitics that includes other animals and ecosystems.

Chapter 6 will develop the philosophy of panpsychism, which provides an organic monism in line with the ecological religious traditions to be studied. In this chapter we will propose a philosophy that respects contemporary science and the relational ontologies set forth in the previous chapters, while providing a necessary metaphysical framework to overcome the mind–body divide and give to matter the respect that it deserves. Rather than insensate matter driven by mechanical forces, panpsychism claims that matter itself possesses subjective mental properties and is capable of experience, self-regulation, and relationality. Using the research of anthropologists Tim Ingold and Eduardo Kohn, and the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, this chapter will differentiate between different forms of matter so as to avoid the conflation between animate and inanimate matter that have become widespread in the work of philosophers like Mathews and Bennett. Such a conflation leaves us unable to make ethical assessments that adjudicate between a rock and an indigenous Yanomami person, between a washing machine and an endangered jaguar. As Kohn makes clear, life is semiotic and semiosis exists only for selves. Such a Peircean semiotic definition allows Kohn to include ecosystems as living forms, but it is Whitehead who assigned material forms into six separate categories allowing us to differentiate between aggregative and nonaggregative forms of matter. A panpsychist understanding of the earth can have important ethical consequences, since sharing mind with the earth can overturn human exceptionalism and replace it with empathy for other configurations of matter. Panpsychism could go far in replacing dualism with an organic monism capable of reintegrating mind into matter, culture into nature, and value into the nonhuman world. If matter is enminded, then sentience, awareness, and relationality can be

extended to the nonhuman world and with them, the values and rights attributed to the human person.

Finally, chapter 7 will make use of the ontological presuppositions from the preceding chapters to develop an ecosophy (an ecological philosophy) capable of correcting some of the central errors of modernity and replacing the modern dualistic ontology with a relational one. Borrowing the term *ecosophy* from Guattari, we will place together the spheres of subjectivity, sociology, politics, ecology, and religion, thereby showing that thinking these disciplines transversally is the only way to understand the relational nature of the living world of which we are a part. This last chapter will formulate several new values for the Anthropocene Age, thus replacing the dualisms of modern naturalism with ecological values. We will propose moral egalitarianism instead of perfectionism, relational instead of autonomous selves, individuation instead of individuals, a pluriverse instead of a universe, and finally, we will replace the dogma of truth with ethical consequences, because although truth matters, it cannot give value to mountains, rivers, and polar bears. Only the consequences of their annihilation can allow them to be defended and can reveal the poverty of human existence without them.