



## **Reflections on Religion and Exopolitics**

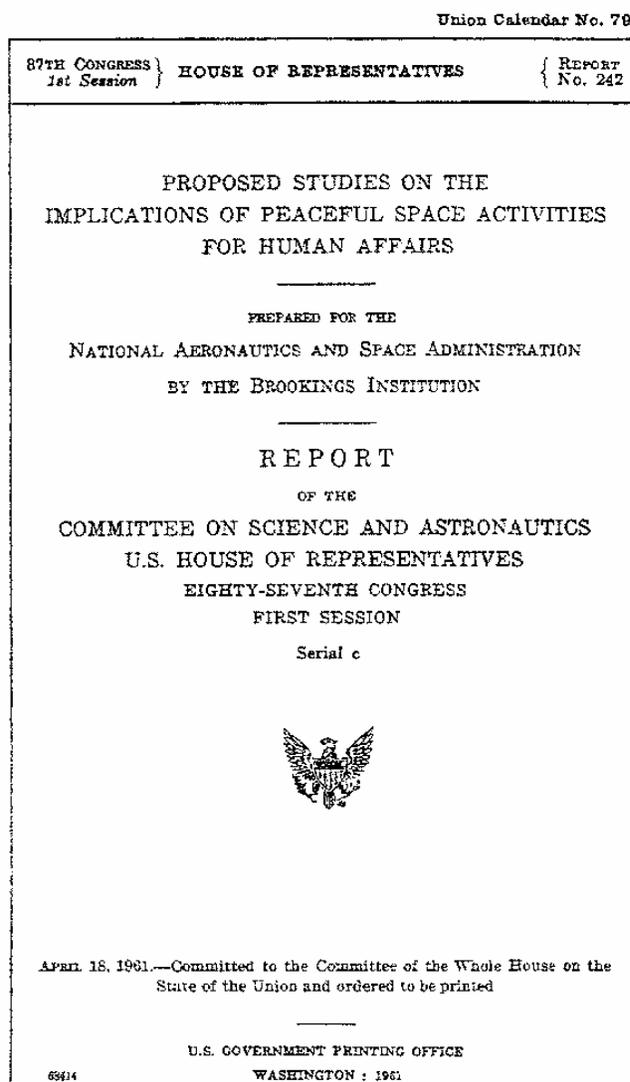
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### Abstract

*It is time for Exopolitics to consider the impact of disclosure on religious institutions. In a fast changing world recent trends, especially in the United States, show major perceptual shifts that are affecting all public sectors including religion. Growing multiculturalism, liberalization of thought and interfaith communication (particularly stimulated by terrorist attacks) are pushing for a more open, flexible and socially conscious perspective. These movements suggest that Exopolitics could now begin to consider strategies for intervention.*

1. Introduction

One of the main reasons given for the lack of disclosure of the reality of extraterrestrials during the Cold War was that it was essential to protect the technological advantage held by the West. While this is no longer the case, disclosure has continued to be blocked for the fear of cultural chaos. What is often sighted to support this is the 1961 Brookings Institute Report commissioned by NASA. This Report said:



Evidence of extraterrestrial existence might also be found in artifacts left on the moon or other planets. The consequences for attitudes and values are *unpredictable*, but would vary profoundly in different cultures and between groups within complex societies; a crucial factor would be the nature of communication between us and the other beings.

*Devastating societal effects could result from contact with more technologically advanced off world societies.*

Anthropological files contain many examples of societies, sure of their place in the universe, which have *disintegrated* when they had to associate with previously unfamiliar societies espousing different ideas and different life ways; others that survived such an experience usually did so by paying the price of changes in values

and attitudes and behaviors.<sup>1</sup>

One can imagine the cultural pressure felt by the North American Indians with the advent of the white man and his relentless expansion. As they watched their land being claimed, the buffalo being slaughtered and their people hunted, they certainly experienced the disintegration of their old ways of knowing. Similarly in Meso-America, with the arrival of the Spanish, a culture that had existed for hundreds of years collapsed in a few decades. The Brookings Report is correct, such encounters can be destructive and threaten the very coherence of a people.

No where in a culture is the issue of coherence more sacred than within its religious institutions. They provide stability and identity and their beliefs set the tone for community membership and personal meaning. Religion can define a person's reality. If disclosure puts all our social structures at risk, our religious institutions will be particularly vulnerable. However, perhaps its time for an examination of this premise. We already live in a fast changing world: a pluralistic modern world, made smaller by our planes and our communication systems. Many of our old world views are dying; new understandings and perceptions are beginning to emerge.

Recently, Neil Freer sent out a strong note to the Exopolitics community which included these comments:

*Clearly the enabling and promotion of intelligent, confident, mature, peaceful and expansive participation in stable society is the goal and vision of exopolitics. If we truly wish to qualify for stellar society by becoming an evolved, peaceful, unified species beyond tribe, national culture, civilization, we are going to have to deal with the religions. Is there some sort of exopolitical incorrectness in even re-inspecting and questioning the religions?"<sup>2</sup>*

This is a worthy challenge. It raised for me these questions: What are the issues that Exopolitics needs to understand about religious institutions at this time? And what is the potential for evolution in religions that Exopolitics' could benefit from when considering policy issues?

**2. The Global Overview**

Currently the distribution of world religions is as follows:

Christianity	2.1 billion people	33%
Islam	1.5 billion	21%
Secular/Non religious	1.1 billion	16%
Hinduism	900 million	14%
Chinese Traditional	394 million	6%
Buddhism	376 million	6%
Primal-Indigenous	300 million	6%
African Traditional	100 million	2% <sup>3</sup>

The fastest growing religion in the world to-day is Islam. In part, this is attributed to the high birth rate in third world countries, many of which are Islamic. It is projected that by 2025 there will be 2 billion Muslims and 3 billion Christians. Muslims will surpass Christians by 2200.<sup>4</sup>



Across the world there is a steady increase in multiculturalism, especially in the West. This movement will provide increased opportunities for people to encounter, dialogue and understand those of other religions. There will also be an

increase in polarization as some people hang on more tightly to their boundaries and identifications.

One could speculate that the growing populations of China and India will be more at ease with disclosure, not having the monotheistic religions found in the West. Oriental philosophies (i.e. in India: Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism) are, by their nature, open to ideas of reincarnation and multidimensionality.. Extraterrestrial stories, such as the vimanas aircraft and cosmic conflict, are buried in Vedic mythology. Those of secular beliefs in China would probably be most convinced by

the abundance of “nuts and bolts” evidence gathered by whistleblowers and those with scientific credentials.

Given the potential for growth of the Muslim faith the impact of disclosure on this faith needs to be explored. There are great variations within the Muslim religion; it is often colored by the underlying beliefs of the countries in which it is found. Bassett has noted that disclosure may be particularly difficult for Islam as well as Judaism.<sup>5</sup> The increasing importance given to human consciousness in the overall reaction to disclosure and its relationship to power-politics makes such a study especially important.<sup>6</sup>

The predominant world religion at this time, however, is Christianity. In all its various forms it is the bulwark behind the major Western social structures and it is this worldview, which will bear the brunt of disclosure. Of the Christian population in the world, 60% are non-white and living outside Europe and America. The growth of Christianity in these areas is attributed to the evangelical Protestant movement in Africa, Asia and Latin America.<sup>7</sup>

While the attitudes towards extraterrestrials may be constrained by traditional Christian religious views in these countries they will also be informed by their earlier indigenous cultural beliefs. The indigenous cultures around the world (6%) find within their mythology an acceptance of the star visitors. For example, it is well known that those in Mexico are quite open to the extraterrestrial reality and there have been numerous sightings there by thousands of people.

The Vatican position on extraterrestrials would also support this acceptance. Bassett has pointed out that for centuries the Catholic Church has been gathering information on extraterrestrials: from its archives, its astronomers and its priests.<sup>8</sup> Harris’s interviews with Monsignor Corrado Balducci, (former Vatican Nuncio to Washington, DC) and then with Father Gabriel Funes, (Director of the Vatican’s observatory in Castel Gandolfo) confirms this. Father Funes (2008) is quoted as saying that ruling out the existence of aliens would be like putting limits on God’s creative freedom.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. United States:

#### 3(i) Cultural liberalization

The powerful position of the United States in blocking disclosure is well known. Considering the warning issued by the Brookings Report how would disclosure affect religious institutions in the United States? America has been dominated by those of Christian faith from its inception. As recently as 1947, 95% of Americans called themselves Christian and a mere 5% would term themselves *secular*: (i.e. atheist, agnostic or of no religion.)



After the World War II, however, there has been a steady moderation in interest in religion. A 2007 Pew Research survey of the American public's religious attitudes, beliefs and practices reports the following changes: those now calling themselves *secular* in the Boomer generation, (those born between 1946-1964) has increased to 11%; the percentage for Generation X, (those born between 1965-1972), is 14% and for Generation Y (those born after 1977) it is now 19%.<sup>10</sup>

In short, one in five of the modern generation, no longer hold any particular religious perspective. This suggests that the blockage thought to be coming from the religious institutions may be softening as increasing numbers of young people release traditional beliefs. In addition, over half of those attending such institutions have changed affiliation during their life-time. American churches are not solidified in their beliefs, but immersed in a restless and dynamic process.

The United States is also becoming more religiously diverse. A number of factors have contributed to these changes. In 1960, America embarked on a more open immigration policy. Many Muslims and Buddhists entered the country and there are now more Muslims in the U.S. than there are Jews. Different faiths are common in neighborhoods, which have had to accommodate to this in their

schools and workplaces. As noted in one report, people are also practicing their faith in different ways; often switching houses of worship, blending practices of more than one religion and increasingly expressing their faith outside religious institutions.<sup>11</sup>

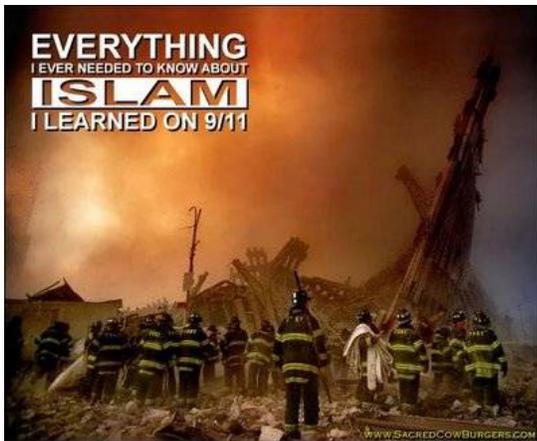
This growing diversity has stirred anxiety for some Christians because it has threatened their sense of a clear Christian identity. Americans are generally living in a time of increased polarization and vocal fundamentalism. While the United States was founded on the strict separation of church and state, that line has become more clouded in recent decades. Evangelical Christians, in particular, have forcefully entered the public debate on issues of abortion, end-of life, stem cell research, and same sex marriage.

This is of interest to those in Exopolitics for a recent poll shows that while an increasing number of adults in the United States believe in UFOs and life on other planets, Evangelicals do not. Of a survey conducted by Scripps in 2008, 62% (Protestant), 60% (Catholic), and 66% (No religious preference) believed in UFOs but only 38% Evangelicals held this belief.<sup>12</sup> However, for the majority of the population, there has been a gradual liberalization of social values. This is seen in the greater acceptance of racial differences, roles for women, homosexuality, and affirmative action for the disadvantaged.

### *3 (ii) Growth of interfaith dialogues*

Liberalization has also been spreading to the forefront of religious thinking. It has been expressed in the steady increase in ecumenicalism. The ecumenical movement in the U.S has its roots in Europe in 1846; and with the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1961.<sup>13</sup> This Council was a forum, both internationally and nationally, for increased dialogue between the Christian churches, searching for the beliefs they had in common. They found that they were very diverse in terms of cosmology, rules and rituals. The one principle they all held to, however, was the Golden Rule (the Eros of ‘do unto others as one would do unto oneself’).

There was also a steady increase in dialogue between Christian, Muslims and Jews. In 1989, The Pluralism Project was started at Harvard Professor of Theology, by D. Eck who recognized the need for religious institutions to broaden their co-operation. The Project has produced numerous publications and continues to develop national and global programs. In 1995, the United Religions Institution was established at the Presideo complex in San Francisco. In Wichita, Kansas (a city which has over 20 places of worship for Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Bahai's) the Interfaith Ministries organization has also generated numerous social action programs. Many of the national interfaith organizations have now expanded programs into global and sustainability issues.



The advent of the terrorist strike of Sept 11, 2001 brought the issue of fundamentalist Islam sharply to the mind of Americans. Religion had become dangerous - polarization deepened. Paradoxically however, this has created even greater effort on the part of Christians, Muslims and Jews to communicate. Their common root in the biblical Abraham has been emphasized and study groups have been set up to explore their similarities and

differences.

In 2005, the third Congress of World Religions was convened in Montreal. Over 1800 people from 80 nations attended. Although earlier Congresses had been held (The Parliament of World Religions, in Chicago 1893 and in 1993) this one was specifically stimulated by the rise of fundamentalist terrorism. Fundamentalism can be found in any of the world religions. Its simplistic and concrete thinking comes from fear. It is expressed as “My God is better than your God!”. The religious leaders stressed the growing need to move beyond this rigid identification. They spoke of how the alienation, and demonizing of the Other which arises from this belief, is counter to spirituality itself.<sup>14</sup>

While the greening edge of religious thought expressed in Montreal is well ahead of those in the more traditional churches, synagogues and mosques it is of interest to those of us in Exopolitics. It points to an opening in the collective psyche...an opening, which will require greater flexibility from our religious institutions and greater internal tensile strength from us as individuals. While retaining loyalty to our spiritual preference we are being asked to respect another's path to meaning. The growing interfaith impulse to reach out and understand "the Other" has wider potential; it has implications for disclosure.

Religion is a remarkable platform for public education. Through the mounting pressure for interfaith dialogue we are being moved to think of things beyond "this *or* that" to the more inclusive "this *and* that." This shift from dualistic to integral processing is a step towards greater personal maturity. It represents balancing left brain discernment with right brain holistic considerations. It is one more catalyst in our development.

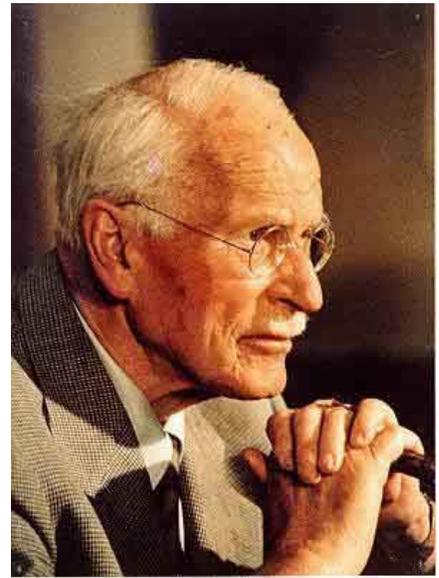
### *3 (iii) Religion and Spirituality*

While this interfaith ferment has been going on in American religious structures, there is also the overall trend within the general population of less interest in religion but more in spirituality. This has been defined as "*the web that holds one's life together and connects it to something larger. It is both the way we understand who we are in relationship to the world and others and the practices we engage that allow us to feel connected, part of something beyond us, a sense of inner coherence.*"<sup>15</sup> So there is a growing appreciation of the commonality and subtleties of spirituality.

With the internet, new perspectives from quantum theory, advances in cloning and rising climate change, the religious beliefs in America are being strongly challenged. In the remarkable DVD series *Beyond Theology*, the forerunners of contemporary religious thought (Huston Smith, Karen Armstrong, James Forbes, Sister Joan Chittister, Bishop John Shelby Spong and others) are presenting a new vision. They state that if religion can be viewed as the cultural finger pointing to God, then preoccupation with the finger (i.e. the rites, rituals and rules of the religious institutions) may now present a danger; it has now become too concrete. At times of crisis and cultural change,

flexibility is essential. This fixation on “the finger” could also become an obstacle for actual spiritual experience.<sup>16</sup> In the *Beyond Theology* series, those interviewed say we need to go deeper and focus on the basic quest for truth about the ultimate notion of reality. The *perennial wisdoms* (those found anywhere and at any time) need to be reconsidered in the face of all the modern issues.

The work of Carl Jung is particularly important here. Jung, in his extensive studies of world religions and practices, said that religion was one of the most universal expressions of the human mind. This inner dynamic agency has touched all of our historical, political and social expressions. It is inherent, real and neglected at our peril.<sup>17</sup> Jung wrote that it was important to separate this spiritual agency from any particular creed for it would get codified in many forms. Mankind would be continually dismantling one form in the effort to find this inner essence. Thus, Protestants renounced Catholicism, but then sought security in biblical scriptures. The more literal forms of the bible have now been bypassed by those looking for the essential meanings in this historically constructed work.



Evolution continues in America. In early colonial days the Christian churches were focused on God the Father; however this shifted around 1830 to the more relational teachings of Jesus. In recent years this has changed again for some denominations to greater emphasis on the Holy Ghost.<sup>18</sup> This concept is conceived as the living creative pulse within the Universe. The image of the supernatural parent father is fading and being replaced by a more abstract sense of Presence throughout the Universe.<sup>19</sup>

Similarly, individuals go through stages in their spiritual evolution. Scott McLennon, the University chaplain at Stanford University, notes that many young people are spiritual seekers but looking for a new conception of God, either in Nature or through personal experience. They intuitively reject the

exclusivity of religion and are seeking a deeper truth. Many are accessing the personal God through meditation, a practice that has seen a steady increase since the 1960s. The expansion of deep personal inquiry in the country is remarkable and is leading many of the young toward the multidimensional worlds.<sup>20</sup>

The leading spiritual thinkers cited in the *Beyond Theology* series point to this continuing evolution in spiritual thought. It is summed up in the words of Sister Joan Chittister... “Religion wakes us up to the consciousness of the Universe. We have a role to play in its on-going evolution. We are seeking a spirituality of co-creation.” (20)

#### **4. Extraterrestrial Aid: Helpers and Watchers**

Is there any convergence between the evolving ideas of the religious, spiritual and philosophical leaders and what we have received from the helper and watcher extraterrestrials? Salla and Lamiroy have described the “helper” extraterrestrials as those who show respect for humans, do not abduct, and share information through telepathic communication. The “helpers” support a spiritual earth culture and are concerned with the environment and global transformation. The “watcher” extraterrestrials, on the other hand, are more removed and provide a perspective of the larger picture of evolution within the solar system and the galaxy. They are also concerned with the spiritual evolution of mankind and our need for greater awareness of the political, financial, and spiritual challenges that we face. They bring knowledge of the many levels and frequencies of life here and the great sweep of galactic movements. While the evidence for this information is less convincing than other ET material, both authors feel that it is worth considering.<sup>21</sup>

Salla and Lamiroy want us to discern whether the activity of these ETs is prescriptive or catalytic.<sup>22</sup> If these visitors are here to help us grow and bring ourselves into balance with the earth how directive are they? The danger in the extraterrestrial prescriptive approach is that we could project too much authority on them and lose our capacity for discrimination. We would dis-empower ourselves and make a god of the extraterrestrials.

This concern ties directly to the questions on religion. Jung, notes that the inner spiritual agency (which is innate though not always developed in mankind) arises because in the psyche there lives a more *impersonal* Other. He called it the Self. In the process of maturing, our ego develops communication with this aspect. It is the “still small voice in the night”; it is that which prompts our mission in life, our choices and stirs the challenges by which we become the person we were meant to be. It also has access to the values of eons of human experience, the Golden Rule and the perennial wisdoms. This inner relationship of our ego to the Self steadies the psyche.

Symbols of the Self often appear in dreams as the old wise man/ woman or other images that are lighted or numinous. This ego-Self dialogue is the place where our power issues become connected to our moral perspectives; where Logos meets Eros. It is the place where we find our *right use of will*. The challenges we face will require a high degree of personal responsibility. This theme is echoed in both the evolution of our own psyche and the emerging thought from the liberal religious institutions. It is also present in the most thoughtful messages we have received from the helper and watcher extraterrestrials.

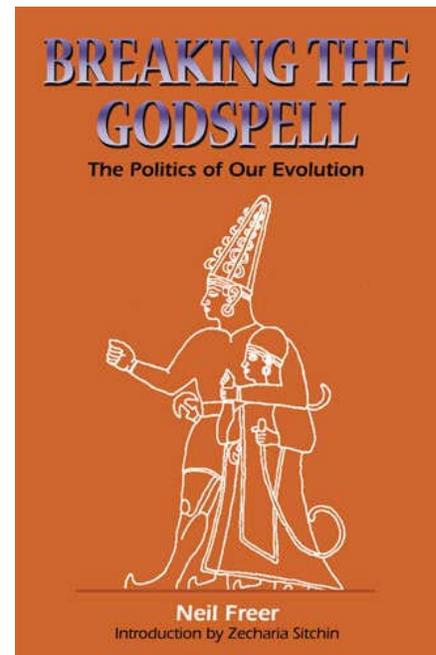
We will also need to have a high degree of personal awareness to distinguish the messages from this inner essence (the Self) and those we may receive from extraterrestrials. We will have to be conscious enough to hold to our own truths and not project them onto any visitor. That being said, we can examine the information we receive to decide whether it is valuable. Some information feels right, whether it is prospective or catalytic. For example, here are a few of the Pleiadian principles of spirituality reported by Meier:

- (1) Through deep mediation one can connect to a spiritual essence, from which all things can be known. This essence is to be found in all other humans. Evolution requires that one attune to Source and its principles through one’s essence which is of the same quality.
- (2) There is no split between the worldly and the spiritual. Consciousness is in everything, enlivens everything. The physical plane of existence and the fine matter plane of existence exist simultaneously in the same place, but in different dimensions, by virtue of vibration.
- (3) Earth’s religions, which were originally helpful as guidelines for daily living, are now a hindrance to man’s spiritual growth. For the majority of humans they deepen a belief in an

external authority. Many are “following the lamp not the light.” Projecting all value on an external image inhibits one from finding the spiritual essence within.<sup>23</sup>

There is coherence here, both with Jung and the greening edge of religion. All are pointing to our over-identification with “the lamp” or “the pointing finger” within our religions. Our psyches become strongly invested in the symbols, imagery and rituals that have been created. While these need to be honored, it is the essence behind them that is important. Because we are so attached to these, however, anything which challenges them will be experienced as attacking the human inner spiritual agency itself and strongly resisted.

Freer in “*From Godspell to Godgames*” has stressed that a huge blockage to disclosure will be the issue of our genetic origins, interwoven as it is with extraterrestrials.<sup>24</sup> There is a big difference between the idea of being designed genetically by aliens and the biblical picture... “So God created man in his own image and gave him dominion over the earth...” How can Exopolitics find a wise strategy within the highly sensitive and dynamic field of religion?



### **5. Implications for Exopolitics**

- (i) **Planning:** Exopolitics needs now to engage in some thoughtful planning about how disclosure will be received by religious institutions, particularly in the West. This should be done in the light of the recent trends of increased secularization, increased liberalization, greater polarization, and a trend toward interfaith communication.
- (ii) **Timing:** With the growing pressure for disclosure, we can anticipate at some time in the next five years public awareness will be tipped towards this issue. When this happens the religious institutions will begin asking questions.
- (iii) **Entry:** There is an old adage that says when you are discussing a heated subject start where the other is “at” (Eros). This suggests one doesn’t begin with all the

implications of extraterrestrials. It does suggest that one validates the fundamental reality of mankind's deep desire for spiritual connection with the Other (whether that be termed the Source, God, Allah, or Universal Mind).

- (iv) **Focus:** There is emerging a contingent of liberal thought in a number of religious and philosophical movements. Within these organizations there are "cultural creatives" who can be identified. These are people who are the "trim tabs," points of effective change. The openness of Generation X and Y also needs to be kept in mind.
- (v) **Programs:** The Exopolitics Institute could prepare a DVD (45-60 minutes maximum) which might be used in small group discussions. This DVD would contain the best possible synopsis of evidence from the most credible UFO witnesses. It would then be available to those in liberal, ecumenical and interfaith organizations who have been previously identified.

A cadre of individuals within the Exopolitic community could also be found who would search out local community contacts. Effort could be made to offer a one-time workshop on spirituality and extraterrestrials to these local churches, synagogues and mosques. Hopefully, this intervention might stir interest for further discussion and the need for an awakened citizenry, making informed choices, would become evident.

### **Conclusions**

It's time for Exopolitics to begin the discussion on extraterrestrials and religions; Freer is right. The UFO community is continually deepening its own education, or, as Moulton-Howe as said, filling in the dots of the pointillism painting. However, given the increasing world-wide interest in the topic we must now find a way to broaden the discussion.

When the liberal religious institutions realize that the basic spiritual dynamic within humankind will be acknowledged and valued, perhaps they will be more receptive. This could be especially true if they are presented with the role that higher consciousness can and needs to play in 'the real world if you can take it.' Drawing on their natural interests, strengths and potential would be the wise way to go.

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The banner has an orange background on the left with a small photo of Luis Fernando. The rest of the banner has a blue background with a landscape of mountains and a lake. A yellow oval on the right contains the dates and event name.

ENDNOTES

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- <sup>17</sup> Jung, C.G., *Psychology and Religion*, in Vol. 11, *The Collected Works* (Bollingen Foundation, Princeton University Press, 1969).
- <sup>18</sup> Prothero, S. *Beyond Theology* series, op cit.
- <sup>19</sup> Spong, J.S., *Beyond Theology* series, op. cit.
- <sup>20</sup> McLennon, S., *Beyond Theology* series, op. cit.
- <sup>21</sup> Chittister, J., *Beyond Theology* series, op. cit.
- <sup>22</sup> Salla, M. and Lamiroy, M. Lecture 13, Exopolitics Institute-101-spring 109.
- <sup>23</sup> Andrade, G. *Star Wisdom, Principles of Pleiadian Spirituality* (Gilliland Printing, Arkansas City, Kansas, 1997).
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