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cultures. Wilber considers these nostalgias to be instances of the pre/trans fallacy (i.e., to mistake regression toward pre-personal developmental levels for growth toward transpersonal stages). Thus, from his “evolutionary” point of view, the Traditionalist School within perennial philosophy also looks back to less evolved cultures to solve problems of a relatively more evolved culture, and Wilber asserts it is no help to attempt a return to a culture where myth reigns, no matter how it might be symbolically reinterpreted today.

As one step toward the healing of modernity’s dissociative consciousness, Wilber advocates a marriage of science and religion. But he means religion denuded of all the myths, dogmas and rituals that fail the truth tests of empiricism. He proposes a “perennial religion” comprised of essential truths held in common by the world’s religious traditions. Traditionalists would point out that Wilber’s “perennial religion” is limited by its dependence on an empirical search for common beliefs, doctrines, and transformative practices. They would doubt that it could succeed in the absence of discernment that proceeds from intellect and must inform any comparison among traditions that will properly value the distinctive importance of their myths, doctrines and rituals. Traditionalists are convinced that the return to orthodoxy and its esoteric paths is a necessary if not sufficient condition for attaining the level of consciousness at which human behavior could and would change with respect to nature and ecology.

Wilber, who rejects the myths and dogmas of orthodoxies as obstacles to the evolution of consciousness beyond modernity, claims that human consciousness must evolve beyond modernity in the same way that all evolution happens, by transcending and including the prior stages. To transcend modernity would be to include the best of modernity while healing the dissociations. He believes that can happen if humanity is guided by an adequate reality-map, which he claims to provide, and will use tools from traditional paths, which may no longer function as a whole for those who can no longer inhabit a traditional religious worldview, but nevertheless can serve as tools for transformation without the mythic, dogmatic accessories. Tools from transpersonal theory as well as a whole host of therapeutic modalities can be integrated in such a way as to replace the traditional paths that were so interwoven with the metanarratives of the traditions.

Some environmental activists criticize mystical approaches to the environmental crisis as other-worldly and useless, but they have yet to respond to the claim of perennial philosophers that every form of activism is based on metaphysical assumptions and that if the assumptions are inadequate, then the activism will be inadequate. For perennial philosophy, participation on a path of spiritual evolution is an absolute prerequisite to

having access to the intellectual vision that can enable discernment of the spiritual dimension and significance of the planet.

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- See also: California Institute of Integral Studies; Huxley, Aldous; Nasr, Seyyed Hossein; Transpersonal Psychology; Wilber, Ken.

**Permaculture** – See The Farm; Findhorn Foundation/Community (Scotland); Genesis Farm; Paganism in Australia; Radical Environmentalism; Re-Earthing; Steiner, Rudolf – and Anthroposophy; Urban Reinhabitation.

### Peyote

When the Spanish conquistadors first arrived in what is now Mexico, they discovered that the native inhabitants attributed sacred qualities to three plants: a mushroom (*Teonanacatl*); a vine belonging to the Morning Glory family (*Ololuqui*); and a small, spineless cactus (*peyotl* or *Lophorora williamsii*). The Aztecs referred to the last of these, *peyotl* or peyote, as “the flesh of the gods.” This carrot-looking cactus produces small “buttons” that contain at least nine alkaloids known to have psychoactive properties when ingested by humans in either their green or dried state. Together, these alkaloids (of which mescaline appears to have the most profound effects) induce an altered state typically characterized by initial nausea,

general stimulation, inability to fix attention, and visual hallucinations – particularly kaleidoscopic displays of color.

Peyote has historically been ingested in structured, ceremonial settings. Although the precise meaning of peyote ceremonies varies from culture to culture, peyotism (the ritual ingestion of peyote) is thought to bring persons in touch with power – both natural and supernatural. First and foremost, peyote is regarded as a potent medicine. Tribal shamans use the power of peyote to divine the causes of illness. Shamans frequently have their patients ingest peyote to bring them the power necessary to effect a cure. Peyote has also been used to obtain visions and the supernatural power that comes from close connection with guardian spirits. Peyote-induced visions are also helpful for various forms of divination such as determining a prey's location, predicting the outcome of a battle, or finding lost objects. And, too, peyote is used to induce a trance that facilitates tribal dancing rites. Although the power obtained through peyote ceremonies can be put to many uses, it invariably reinforces social understandings of the ideal relationships between humans and both the natural and supernatural orders of life.

Peyote use has continued in many parts of Mexico up to the present day, most notably among the Huichol who live in the central Mexican states of Jalisco, Nayarit, Durango, and Zacatecas. The Huichol's ceremonial use of peyote begins with the "peyote hunt" for suitable plants. This is an annual pilgrimage under the strict direction of an experienced *mar'aakame*, or shaman, who has special relations with Hikuri, the Peyote-god. Rituals of confession and purification prepare pilgrims for the hunt. Throughout their quest they must be celibate and form a cohesive and classless community. Pilgrims must renounce all ego, pride, resentment, or hostility. The arduous trek (though in more recent times pilgrims travel in cars) to the ancestral regions where peyote is bountiful further prepares participants for their quest to forge closer relations with the spirit world. Under the *mar'aakame's* direction, pilgrims collect peyote buttons and ritually ingest them in a fire-lit ceremony. The peyote elicits beautiful lights, vivid colors, and visions of peculiar animals. The meaning of these sensations is provided by the *mar'aakame* who integrates them into the layers of belief that comprise the Huichol worldview. The peyote experience is said to effect a total unification at every level, to kindle communal love, to bond persons to the way of their ancestors, and to give participants a direct experience of a spiritual realm that surrounds the everyday world. In this way Huichol peyote ceremonies structure a return to a mythic past of purity and spiritual power.

Peyote was rarely used north of the Rio Grande prior to 1890. But the forced segregation of Native Americans onto government reservations strained tribal cultures in a way that fostered the rapid spread of peyotism in the United

States. Between 1890 and 1920 the use of peyote became more prevalent in the United States, but its meaning varied depending on the tribal context. In the Southwest, with the Mescalero Apache being the prime instance, peyotism remained fairly close to its Mexican roots. Shamans assumed responsibility for directing participants' experience with the powers unleashed through the ceremonial ingestion of peyote. Peyote ceremonies were principally used for ceremonial doctoring, although they might occasionally be used for divination purposes such as locating an enemy, predicting the outcome of some undertaking, or finding lost objects.

Plains Indians in Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wisconsin gradually altered the peyote ceremony in such a way as to shift the focus from the shaman to every participant's quest for power. The peyote ceremonies that continue to this day throughout the western United States typically follow this pattern and seek to help persons establish harmony with supernatural power. These all-night ceremonies are held in a traditional tipi, with the door facing east. Preparation for the ceremony begins with rituals pertaining to the acquisition of peyote, either by sending individuals to Mexico or, in more recent times, by purchase and delivery through the U.S. Postal Service. Once acquired, the peyote is blessed through prayer and consecrated for use in bringing health to all who will ingest it. Any member of the peyote cult may rise to the position of ritual leader, often known as the "roadman." The leader is assisted by a drummer, a fireman, and a cedar man.

The precise order and content of the ceremony varies by tribe and the idiosyncratic preferences of the leader, but invariably begins with the leader's prayer to the power of peyote. The other participants follow the leader's lead and begin praying silently to the "earth-creator" or "earth-lord." Following these initial prayers, participants begin to eat the dried buttons of the peyote plant, followed by drumming and singing. The leader's initial song, chanted in a high nasal tone, implores "may the gods bless me, help me, and give me power and understanding." Throughout the night more peyote buttons are eaten (while most members eat about twelve buttons throughout the night, some may consume as many as thirty) and prayer intensifies. Ceremonial dancing is usually an integral part of the ceremony, particularly in Mexico and the American Southwest. Quiet meditation, prayer, and the quest for personal visions predominate in the Plains.

The principal purpose of the peyote ritual is to obtain power. The use of peyote thus overlaps considerably with other traditional methods of obtaining power such as the medicine dance or the vision quest. The power generated by ingesting peyote is therefore often understood to be capable of curing illness. Typically the leader will offer prayers that petition God to cure participants in need of healing. Cures of almost every kind have been attributed

to the power generated in peyote ceremonies. Other participants seek to use the power of peyote to procure a personal vision. Still others eat peyote to increase their powers of concentration and introspection.

Peyote rituals also emphasize preaching and moral instruction. Moral lectures are commonplace. Participants admonish one another to forgo vices, particularly in regard to abstaining from alcoholic beverages. Weston La Barre observed that it is typical for participants to

pray aloud, with affecting sincerity, often with tears running down their cheeks, their voices choked with emotion, and their bodies swaying with earnestness as they gesture and stretch out their arms to invoke the aid of Peyote. The tone is of a poor and pitiful person humbly asking the aid and pity of a great power, and absolutely no shame whatever is felt by anyone when a grown man breaks down into loud sobbing, during his prayer (1975: 48).

This emphasis upon preaching and moral repentance escalated when Christian elements were incorporated into the peyote ceremony in some tribal settings (particularly among Plains groups). The Bible was introduced to the liturgical format of the peyote "singing" as early as the 1890s. Prayers once made to Indian spirits were redirected to the Christian God. Although most of the formal characteristics of the peyote ceremony persisted, their meaning changed in ways reflecting Native American cultures' progressive accommodation to white Christian culture: the fire in the peyote tipi became associated with the Light of Christ; the water drunk at midnight became associated with Christ's alleged midnight birth; the roadman's gestures to the four directions became a way of announcing the birth of Christ to all the world; and the meal eaten in the early morning became a sacrament for all those who are saved in Christ. In essence, the Christianized peyote rituals synthesized the religious heritages of Native Americans and Europeans. Peyotism thereby fostered the belief that the Great Spirit and the God of Christianity are one and the same. This Great Spirit created the universe and controls the destiny of every person and all events. The Great Spirit put some of his supernatural power into peyote which can have the same redemptive or sacramental power that other Christians avail themselves of when consuming bread and wine. In this way peyotism sustains fundamental Indian concepts about powers, visions, and native modes of doctoring while yet permitting eclectic appropriation of Christian teachings. To be sure, however, many versions of peyotism have eschewed any connection with Christianity. For example, peyote use among the Mesalero Apache has led to an intensification of native values and traditions. And, as many Native Americans have in recent years become more concerned with preserving their cultural heritage, the appeal of

Christianized versions of peyotism has weakened somewhat.

Peyotism never lacked for critics. The most persistent opposition came from white officials who viewed it as contrary to the goal of assimilating Native Americans into white, middle-class culture. One major line of argument against peyote use was that it was allegedly injurious. Despite evidence to the contrary, peyote was said to be both physically and morally debilitating. A more important objection was more political in nature. The rapid spread of peyotism reinforced traditional culture and amplified nativistic tendencies among American Indian populations. Both Christian missionaries and officials in the Bureau of Indian Affairs were disturbed by the cultural threat posed by this overt continuation of native tradition (and the pan-Indian solidarity that it celebrated and fostered). By 1907 BIA officials began orchestrated attempts to pass anti-peyote legislation. Native Americans responded by organizing small religious organizations that claimed peyote use should be tolerated as part of America's time-honored commitment to protect the freedom of religious practice. In 1918, the "Native American Church" was incorporated in Oklahoma and soon developed into an intertribal peyote church that stretched throughout the western and central United States. Subsequently reorganized as the "Native American Church of North America," this group has been largely successful at influencing state courts to respect their legal right to use peyote in religious ceremonies.

The Native American Church eventually obtained religious exemption from drug laws in 27 states. In 1990, however, the United States Supreme Court ruled against the exemption of peyote from the government's "war on drugs." By a narrow 5-4 margin, the Court emphasized the need to safeguard society from the chaos that could conceivably erupt if individuals are free to act however they please simply by claiming that these actions are part of their personal religion. Writing for the four dissenting members of the Court, Justice Blackmun noted that there is no evidence that the religious use of peyote has ever harmed anyone. He noted that the Native American Church's use of peyote is so ritually structured that there is no real concern for health and safety. In sum, Blackmun maintained that "peyote simply is not a popular drug; its distribution for use in religious rituals has nothing to do with the vast and violent traffic in illegal narcotics that plagues this country."

In a series of legislative acts including the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, the federal government has put statutes in place that specifically permit the Native American Church to use peyote in its religious ceremonies. This legal protection is not, however, afforded to non-Indian groups. Many Anglo-Americans have sought to emulate Native American spirituality and have

consequently come to believe peyote is essential to their spirituality since it helps them establish harmony with nature. The Peyote Way Church of God is an example of a group of approximately eighty (and largely non-Native American) persons who pursue experiences of the Holy Spirit through the sacramental use of peyote. State and federal courts have ruled against such groups, maintaining that their use of peyote does not qualify for an exemption from the government's drug-enforcement laws.

In more recent years, peyotism has been instrumental in reinforcing commitment to environmental activism. Peyotism is a sacrament. The ceremony thus heightens awareness of the spiritual beauty residing within nature and consequently fosters a commitment to protecting nature from human defilement. Furthermore, peyote itself is an endangered species. The popularity of peyotism, particularly among white, Euro-Americans who have harvested large quantities of the cactus, has threatened both Huichol culture in Mexico and the cactus species itself. While there is considerable irony in the fact that a sacrament resulting in greater connection to nature has created an environmental threat, it remains a fact that peyotists are acutely aware of the plant kingdom's precarious situation. It should also be pointed out that while Native American peyotists speak of their sense of connection to nature, they now generally receive their peyote from the United States government. The traditional ritual of gathering peyote has thus been thoroughly severed from the ceremony in which it is ingested. Many Native American peyotists have therefore lost some of their traditional Earth connection. It is thus not uncommon for white, Euro-American "converts" to peyotism to evidence more environmental concern than their Native American counterparts.

In sum, peyotism has performed a variety of religious, cultural, and environmental functions over the past hundred or more years. Religiously, peyotism helped sustain native ritual traditions amidst the encroachments of white Christianity. The peyote cult offered to heal and to protect its members through the worship of a supreme "earth-creator" who for all intents and purposes is identical with the God of Christianity. The peyote button – like sacramental bread and wine – provided a material vehicle for availing oneself of regenerating power. Peyote is understood as a "medicine," a "power," a "protector," and a "teacher." The peyote ceremony deepens subjective feelings of personal relationship to a sacred power, yet does so in a carefully orchestrated ritual that ultimately assists individuals to subordinate their personal desires to group goals and values. And although peyote is combined with almost as many theologies as it has users, it has almost universally fostered such culturally valued ethical traits as love, hope, charity, ambition, and honesty. And, finally, peyotism is frequently a catalyst for intensified concern for the environment. The entire peyote ceremony

reinforces a sacramental view of nature, leading participants to care for the healing of Earth.

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#### Further Reading

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- See also: Ayahuasca; Castanada, Carlos; Entheogens; Ethnobotany; Ethnoecology; Psychonauts; Yoeme (Yaqui) Ritual.

## The Philippines

There are at least seventy traditional culturo-linguistic groups in the Philippines Islands. Their languages belong to the Malayo-Polynesian group of languages, which have spread from the Indian Ocean right across the Pacific Ocean. Extensive religious change has occurred during modern times in lowland regions, and although the populations there fall into large groupings with customary and language distinctiveness (Tagalong, Cebuanos, Ilocanos, Illongros, etc.), these are now overwhelmingly Catholic Christian (and accepting the label Filipino).

There is a sizable Muslim population in Mindanao composed of three major ethnolinguistic groups – the Maranao in Lanao, the Magindanao in Cotabato and the Tausug in Jolo. The current Christian-Muslim conflict goes right back to the beginning of the Spanish colonization of the Philippines: when Lopez de Legazpi undertook the conquest of Luzon in 1570 his chief opponent then was Rajah Soliman who had settled in Manila.

Mountain peoples apart from the Maranao in Mindanao were little impacted by either the process of Islamization or Christianization. The reason is fairly simple; they lived in inaccessible places both in Northern Luzon and in the forested highlands of Mindanao. Over almost three and a half centuries of conquest Spanish rule was never established in these areas.

Today these tribal people (or *lumads*) usually live in