

A [sample entry](#) from the

Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature

(London & New York: Continuum, 2005)

Edited by

[Bron Taylor](#)

© 2005
All Rights Reserved

Kinsley, David. *The Goddesses' Mirror: Visions of the Divine From East and West*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.

Lerner, Gerda. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Schafer, Peter. *Mirror of His Beauty: Feminine Images of God from the Bible to Early Kabbalah*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002.

See also: Christ, Carol; Daly, Mary; Ecofeminism (various); Estés, Clarissa Pinkola; Feminist Spirituality Movement; Gimbutas, Marija; Griffin, Susan; Merchant, Carolyn; Paganism – Contemporary; Reclaiming; Sea Goddesses and Female Water Spirits; Sexuality and Green Consciousness; Shakti; Shiva, Vandana; Sjöö, Monica; Spretnak, Charlene; Starhawk; Walker, Alice; Wicca; Women and Animals; Z Budapest.

Golden Dawn

The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn was founded in England on 12 February 1888 by William Wynn Wescott, Samuel Liddell Mathers, and William Robert Woodman. It was a graded initiatic magical order that based its structure on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life – a diagram purporting to show the structure of the universe and its relationship to the divine – and placed itself within the tradition of Rosicrucian spirituality. Its members included a number of prominent figures, including poet William Butler Yeats and the controversial figure Aleister Crowley. The Golden Dawn is also notable in that, from its inception, it accepted women on equal footing with men. In 1892 Mathers founded a second order, within the structure of the Golden Dawn, to teach practical magic, the *Rosae Rubeae et Aureae Crucis*. In 1900, because of a controversy over the legitimacy of Crowley's initiation into the second order, Mathers, who then resided in Paris, was expelled from the order by the British contingent. Further political conflicts over revising the constitution after Mathers' expulsion led to multiple schisms by 1903, and with the closing of the original Isis-Urania temple in London in 1914 the Golden Dawn's life as an institution ended. A number of initiates founded derivative orders, some of which remain active through their successors in the present day.

Although rooted in a Christian worldview, the Golden Dawn presented a spiritual paradigm which both affirmed engaged work with the world and approached the cosmos as a manifestation of the divine. Its course of study synthesized wide-ranging European esoteric lore, including alchemy, astrology, tarot, and the Kabbalah. One of the key rites of the Golden Dawn, the *Adeptus Minor* initiation, identified the "Great Work" of the individual as "to purify and exalt my spiritual nature that with the Divine aid I may at length obtain to be more than human." This encapsulates much of the teaching of the Golden Dawn; rather than rejecting material existence and human

will, it sought to transform them through ritual, meditation, study, and ethical living.

Although its institutional life was relatively brief, the Golden Dawn had a great influence on twentieth-century magical movements in the United Kingdom, Europe, and the Americas. It provided basic liturgical structures and esoteric assumptions for Thelema, the religious tradition founded by Crowley, as well as many of the particular symbolic systems and magical approaches for contemporary Pagan and Wiccan spirituality. A clear example is the method of consecrating a ritual space, common in most Wiccan traditions, by calling upon the Aristotelian elements in four directions, which derives from the rituals for invoking the four elements in the Golden Dawn's Ritual of the Portal and the later Watchtower Ceremony. Numerous early writers and leaders of the Pagan and Wiccan world participated in Golden Dawn-derived groups, and early twentieth-century occult writers who were members of the Golden Dawn, such as Crowley and Dion Fortune, continue to be very influential. Both traditional esoteric groups and contemporary Pagan traditions benefit from the Golden Dawn's synthesis of Western esoteric systems that revere the natural world as both a manifestation of spiritual mysteries and a key to their understanding. By synthesizing this lore and providing a context for the study of practical magic, the Golden Dawn opened the door for later magical religions, which not only used the natural world as a path to the divine, but located divinity there.

Grant Potts

Further Reading

Gilbert, R.A. *The Golden Dawn Companion: A Guide to the History, Structure, and Workings of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn*. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Aquarian Press, 1986.

Howe, Ellic. *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn: A Documentary History of a Magical Order, 1887–1923*. York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1978 (1972).

Regardie, Israel. *The Golden Dawn: A Complete Course in Practical Ceremonial Magic, Four Volumes in One*. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 2000 (6th edn).

See also: Alchemy; Magic; Magic, Animism, and the Shaman's Craft; Paganism – Contemporary; Western Esotericism; Wicca.

Goodall, Jane (1934–)

London-born primatologist Jane Goodall is most famous for her ground-breaking study of chimpanzees in Tanzania, but by the turn of the twentieth century, and into the twenty-first, she had become one of the world's leading conservationists. She founded the Jane Goodall Institute

(founded in 1977) and its “Roots and Shoots” program (in 1991) to reach out to young people and get them involved in protecting animals, vulnerable humans, and the environment. She has become increasingly open about her belief in God, in part to bring hope to those who experience despair as they learn about and cope with environmental degradation, species extinctions, and human violence.

Goodall’s fascination with animals and the natural world began early, during her childhood in Bournemouth, England, and waxed stronger as she matured. Encouraged by her mentor, the legendary anthropologist and paleontologist Louis Leakey, Goodall began her landmark study of chimpanzees on the eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, East Africa in 1960 at the age of 26. This began what would become the longest continuous field study of animals in their natural habitat.

Early in her fieldwork Goodall observed chimpanzees making and using tools by stripping leaves off twigs to fish termites out of a nest. This tool-making behavior, previously believed to exist only in humans, represented so significant a discovery that Leakey concluded: “Now we must redefine tool, redefine man, or accept chimpanzees as humans.” Goodall’s discoveries and unconventional methodology, which included living in her subjects’ habitat, distinguishing them by personality, and giving them names instead of numbers, revolutionized the field of primatology. Her methods were also criticized, however, by many scientists, as insufficiently objective.

Although not formally trained when she began her research, Goodall later earned a Ph.D. in Ethology at Cambridge University in 1965 and then returned to Tanzania to establish the Gombe Stream Research Centre. This began a lifelong pattern of establishing institutions to carry out and continue scientific and conservation work that would benefit science, humans, and the natural world. In 1971 Goodall began working as a professor at Stanford and then later at Tufts, the University of Southern California, and Cornell. She subsequently published more than sixty scientific articles and has been involved in numerous videos and films produced by National Geographic, Discovery, HBO, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), and others. She also authored more two dozen books, including *My Friends the Wild Chimpanzees* (1967), the best-selling *In the Shadow of Man* (1971), and her autobiography *Reason for Hope: A Spiritual Journey* (1999), which explored her religious and ethical pilgrimage. Her writings have been published in more than a dozen languages.

Goodall’s philosophy is expressed in one of her often-quoted aphorisms: “Only if we understand can we care. Only if we care will we help. Only if we help shall all be saved” (2000: 5). Through her work and activities she strives to foster understanding of the connection between environmental conservation and human development, while calling on people to care, take responsibility, and act

heroically for the sake of all living creatures. Goodall’s message also includes sharing some of the lesser-known characteristics and abilities of chimpanzees, such as being omnivorous, expressing violent behavior at times, and being capable of learning sign language. Some that she has encountered also enjoy painting and like to watch sunsets. By describing how chimpanzees express emotion, communicate, and share to some degree the human trait of abstract thinking, and perhaps even religious feelings, Goodall has helped change many people’s perceptions about wild animals and the acceptability of species loss as a cost of progress. In *Reason for Hope* Goodall envisioned a future of ever more environmentally sustainable human progress. She grounded this optimism in the energy, enthusiasm, and commitment of young people, in the potential of humans to solve problems and overcome great odds, and in the “indomitable human spirit.”

Goodall embodies what some have called the “civic scientist” – one who goes beyond teaching and research to educate and actively engage society in solving pressing problems. She has received more than a dozen honorary doctorates and fifty awards of distinction including, most recently, the Ghandi/King Award for Non-Violence and the Benjamin Franklin Medal, the United States’ oldest science award. In 2002 United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan named Goodall a United Nations Messenger of Peace, noting her “dedication to what is best in mankind.”

Well into the twenty-first century Goodall continued touring the world (averaging 300 days a year on the road), promoting grassroots development and conservation work in more than seventy countries. In 2002 she was appointed to a United Nations advisory panel to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. As she put it during the summit itself, she was there to bring “the voices of the animals” into that important human council (author Taylor’s fieldnotes, August 2002). She did so in part by speaking strongly in favor of the Earth Charter, as well as by participating in pilgrimages celebrating the nearby Cradle of Humanity, where ancient human ancestors were found. The comments made there by Goodall and the other luminaries constituted a kind of consecration of the Earth’s evolutionary story, and had many affinities with the so-called Epic of Evolution.

Goodall’s message and writing have broad appeal in part because they are suffused with a religiously inclusive spirituality; her theism is not sectarian and is pantheistic in tone. She believes animals have spiritual significance and are able to communicate with humans, even bringing their own messages of hope, oracle-like, into the human world. A lifelong observer of chimpanzees, she also believes that some of them may even have their own forms of nature-related spirituality. It is in such spirituality that her ethics is grounded, namely, an ethics that understands all life has intrinsic value and is related as kin in the evolutionary story. It is also from her spirituality that she

A [sample entry](#) from the

Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature

(London & New York: Continuum, 2005)

Edited by

[Bron Taylor](#)

© 2005
All Rights Reserved

finds her optimistic expectation of a significant world improvement through individual empowerment. Through numerous media and her continuing efforts, Goodall has inspired countless people at all levels of influence around the world to make wider and deeper exertions on behalf of each other, the environment, and life on Earth.

Paula J. Posas
Bron Taylor

Further Reading

- Goodall, Jane. *40 Years At Gombe*. New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2000.
- Goodall, Jane. *Reason for Hope: A Spiritual Journey*. New York: Time Warner Books, 1999.
- Goodall, Jane. *In the Shadow of Man*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1971.
- Goodall, Jane. *My Friends the Wild Chimpanzees*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1967.
- Goodall, Jane, and Marc Bekoff. *The Ten Trusts: What We Must Do to Care for the Animals We Love*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003.
- Goodall, Jane and Michael Nichols. *Brutal Kinship*. New York: Aperture, 1999.
- See also: Animals (various); Animism (various); Cognitive Ethology, Social Morality, and Ethics; Earth Charter; Epic of Evolution; Environmental Ethics; Primate Spirituality; Tree Music; United Nations' "Earth Summits".

Gordon, Aharon David (1856–1922)

Aharon David Gordon was one of the leading ideological figures of the labor Zionist movement. Born in Troyanov, Russia in 1856, Gordon received a classical Orthodox Jewish education from private tutors, while studying secular subjects on his own. He found employment for 23 years helping to manage the estate of his celebrated relative, the great banker and philanthropist Baron Joseph Guenzberg. In 1903 ownership of the estate changed hands. Gordon, 48 years old and out of a job, made the remarkable decision to leave Russia in order to join the young *halutzim* (pioneers) who, through strenuous physical labor, were creating the material basis for the Jewish return to Palestine. He was to be joined by his wife and daughter only five years later. Working until cancer drained his physical strength, Gordon died in Kibbutz Deganyah in 1922.

Although Gordon never held any official posts in the Zionist movement, his ideas, writings, and personal example made a powerful impression which still continues to influence Israeli thinking. In his single systematic treatise, *Ha'Adam ve'HaTeva (The Human Being and Nature)* and many occasional essays and letters, he

advanced a general philosophical anthropology, a critique of modernity and a theory of religion, which he constantly applied to the immediate challenges faced by the Zionist community in Palestine.

Gordon held that human beings relate to their world in two essentially different ways. Firstly, we experience the world through the intuitive, inclusive, and largely unconscious activity of *living* as integral components of the cosmos. Secondly, we critically inspect our lived experience in order to formulate limited, rational, and fully conscious *knowledge* of the world. The role of religion is to reintegrate us with the natural world, to re-establish the proper balance between life and knowledge. Agricultural work takes on tremendous religious importance. By physically working the land, people take their place as part of nature and make their uniquely human contribution to its creative organic processes. Gordon felt that the human connection to the cosmos must be mediated through membership in an ethnic national community whose culture and religion reflect the connection made to the cosmos through the experience of life in a particular geographical setting. This doctrine did not admit of any innate superiority of one group over another, but rather rejected universalistic systems (e.g., Marxism and Christianity) which eschew ethnic identity and call for individuals to see themselves purely as members of the human race.

Gordon's program for Jewish renewal in Palestine was a direct application of his broader philosophy. Judaism and the Jewish people had both been alienated from nature during their 2000 years of exile from Palestine. The Jewish people had been cut off from the natural environment which constituted their original and particular link to the cosmos. In the Diaspora, Jews had been further alienated from nature by anti-Semitic restrictions on Jewish land ownership and Jewish employment in agriculture. By returning to Palestine and working the land, Gordon hoped that the Jewish people could be revitalized and even serve as a moral exemplar to other members of the human family of nations.

Berel Dov Lerner

Further Reading

- Avineri, Shlomo. *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State*. New York: Basic Books, 1981. Chapter 15 is devoted to Gordon.
- Gendzelman, David. "What Does the Hour Demand? Environmentalism as Self-Realization." In Ellen Bernstein, ed. *Ecology and the Jewish Spirit: Where Nature and the Sacred Meet*. Woodstock, NY: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1998, 240–3.
- Hertzberg, Arthur. *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966. Pages