

***Walking the Songlines of the Soul: A Pilgrimage Walk, Le Puy-en-Velay to St. Jean-Pied-de-Port, on the Camino Path of Stars, An Inner Journey in the Outer World***

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*How does pilgrimage help the Earth?*

*The old saying that every pilgrim leaves footprints of light that others might follow and add to, is no idle saying. The Earth can be turned into light through pilgrimage...*

*Peter Dawkins*

***Chapter Two: Pilgrimage as Imaginal Travel: The Stone Being, the Bees, and the Camino as a “path of stars”***

What does it mean to walk as pilgrimage, walking as meditation, walking in service to the earth? I discovered that pilgrimage involves four stages. (I didn't discover this until after my walk, but found that I had understood it instinctively; in other words, we all have this archetypal pattern in us somewhere. In tandem with circumstances in our personal lives, the pattern or archetype activates at a particular moment.)

*First, there is the call.* From some deep reservoir within us, beyond rational thinking or anything we can explain to others, we are simply urged to undertake this kind of effort. From this point of view, walking as pilgrimage is a kind of vocation, being addressed by a god or goddess or soul guide. Sometimes, people have a hard time trusting in this call precisely because it 'doesn't make sense' to them – it seems to arrive from nowhere. But that's part of it, being able to trust something so apparently incomprehensible – really only nonsensical to that rational side of our minds that has taken such precedence nowadays that we cease to listen to the still small voices of our soul who have other plans in store for us.

*Second, we enter into a sacred landscape.* This can be any place we feel called to. For me it was the Camino de Santiago, or as the French call it, *Le Chemin*, the Way or Path, and for reasons I've already addressed, I chose (out of several options) the ancient Le Puy route, *via podiensis*. At this stage we ask how to keep focused on our intentions for the walk. We consider *who* is walking, and *how* we are walking becomes important – are we rushing toward the goal, or being present to the moment? These

considerations, as you might imagine, effect what happens to you on your walk, what you notice, how you feel, etc.

*Third, we offer personal prayers and meditations* at various shrines and power places within the sacred landscape. We might leave a stone or crystal at these places as markers of our thoughts and intentions, hoping perhaps that the energy will radiate out into the environment.

*Fourth, we return to ordinary life* and consider how to bring what we experienced and what we learned back into the community. Keeping a journal and record of your intentions, dreams and other experiences, even before you arrive at the starting point, as well as recording your experiences and insights as you walk (I also used a recording device) helps with a further integration that happens as you reflect on the journey when you return home, or as you prepare to talk or write about your travels as an offering to your community.

On a practical level, during my first walk, I walked for almost two weeks, during the second half of September, and I walked solo, from Le Puy to Conques, approximately 234 kms or 140 miles (not including times that I got lost and wandered off course!). I arranged to spend my nights in local hotels in the villages along the route so my baggage was ferried by a taxi service each morning to my next stop. I walked through forests, across fields and farmland and open grassy rocky wilderness, up and down mountains, and along lush river valleys. Some of the walking was quite challenging and I often marveled that I was able to walk as far I did on some days. This was helped by my not carrying too much weight, walking only with a daypack – water, some snacks, extra sweater and raingear, my compass, torch, and map, journal and recording device. And I was extremely lucky with the weather as most days it was quite sunny and warm, and it only drizzled briefly on my approach to the village of Conques on my last day of walking, although there had been a tremendous thunderstorm with a great deal of rain during the previous night.

So much for practical details, important as they are! However, as this account focuses on walking as imaginal travel, engaging the visionary imagination with the spirit or spirits of nature as I mentioned in Chapter One, what I would like to focus on beyond the practical considerations are some of the key and notable experiences and encounters that I had on the path, moments when something unexpected or extraordinary happened, events that changed and taught me.

I began my pilgrimage in the Cathedral of Le Puy-en-Velay. This Romanesque Basilica houses two Black Madonnas: a 17<sup>th</sup> replica of a slightly older statue situated behind the high altar; and an older BM in a side chapel, the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, called the Mary-Isis Madonna, or Our Lady of Le Puy, the Egyptian. This more ancient Mary is a replica of a very old statue of Isis and Horus and goes back to a dolmen, that is, a Druidic stone altar originally linked to the goddess, who was thought to descend to earth via meteor rocks or was linked to a stone thought to be sacred. I made my prayers in this side chapel for protection and blessings on my walk the evening before I began, rather than with the Bishop of the Cathedral who traditionally blesses pilgrims after 7 AM mass in the early morning before they begin their pilgrimage. I preferred the Egyptian goddess as She speaks to a time when nature and our Earth were imbued with spirit, and Earth was considered to have a soul, “anima mundi.” Another symbol of this divine feminine soul is found in a beautiful painting of Mary Magdalene and her Alabaster Jar, also to be found in the cathedral.

St. Jacques, however, is considered the patron of pilgrims; he’s a more recent Christian figure. The pilgrimage paths, however, are much more ancient and have pre-Christian, Celtic origins, and are probably even older than that, going back to pre-historic times. (In fact it was the Celts and their Druidic priests that are said to have initiated the cult to the Black Madonna.) Chapels and cathedrals are often built on already existing pre-Christian sacred sites and wells once belonging to the goddess, and my imagination was engaged more with these ancient sites and stories and the paths that link them, than with the more recent Christian traditions.

As I walked, I tried to focus on my intention, to listen to the earth and to try to hear her message. I imagined the Black Madonna/Isis figure and appreciated her as a symbol or personification of the Earth, or earth spirit, remembering the time when she was honored as Protectress of the land. I was aware of how we as humans have not always been responsible custodians for our earth, our earth that we are so dependent on to sustain us. The current environmental crisis and accelerated species extinction especially draws this to our attention. I looked all around me trying to *be aware of* the landscape I was walking through and the beautiful vistas calling out to be seen and appreciated – from forests to open country farmland, grassland with grazing cows and sheep, cornfields, dry stone walls, stone and iron crosses, the green mountains of the Velay massif and the rocky Aubrac wilderness, the green lushness of the Lot river valley. I also

tried to notice what crossed my path – a cat, or tiny flowers with beautiful colors, or once a group of young students singing as they came down a slope out of a forest – and how such experiences might be speaking to me. I paid attention to the sounds I was hearing – birdsong, the rustle of the breezes through the branches of trees, the mooing of cows or the enchanting ring of bells around their necks, the mournful chime of a church bell far away, the various voices of a stream or river, thunder in the distance; and the smells all around me – the pine of the forests, the rich dark brown humus earth smell of a ploughed field.

I would also pay attention to my feelings, thoughts, and imaginings. I was often simply overwhelmed by the beauty around me as I allowed my senses to awaken – look how the Earth goes on giving in spite of what we do to her, such abundance and profusion of life. When I remembered, I tried to breathe deeply as I put one foot in front of the other, asking to let go of heaviness and any sorrow and heartbreak (as I was breathing out) and to let in more joy and gratitude (as I breathed in the energy from the earth itself beneath my feet). I tried to remind myself that nature is alive, and to be aware of the spirits of the place (as in many indigenous and shamanic cultures), and to honor them silently even if I couldn't see them. Amazingly, with this practice, that I was really making up as I went along, any feelings of loneliness or fatigue would tend to dissipate (or I could use these emotions as a doorway to deepen into my intention), and I often started to feel much happiness and inspiration, even after long and sometimes challenging and arduous days of walking.

### ***The Stone Being and the Bees***

On my 4<sup>th</sup> day of walking, it was the Autumn Equinox, September 21, the time in the year's calendar when day and night are of equal length, and we celebrate the end of summer and the beginning of Fall. I was musing on the tension of the opposites of light and dark in life as I set out from Saugues to Les Faux, a 28 km (almost 17 mile) hike. I began reflecting on this time of year that signals the long slow journey into Winter sleeping and dreaming as we appreciate what we have harvested during the year and wonder how it might be either let go of, or imagined forward to create new dreams that can sprout next Spring in the coming year. This is a day when we might remember the ancestors, and when we can begin to prepare for symbolic death and renewal.

It was a crisp blue morning with puffy clouds and the day became increasingly warm and sunny. In a focused yet relaxed way, I was engaging in my practice of breathing out fear and old patterns and breathing in new life and gratitude, when my attention became arrested by a rather large stone on the path. So, I approached ‘him’ as a Stone Being or spirit. He looked a bit like an Egyptian cone-headed figure, and also rather like an Aztec! Quite a powerful rock, I thought! He seemed to me like a guardian on that part of the path, so I rested against him for a while, asking for his guidance on my way on this special day. After a few minutes, I felt the rock Being communicating with me. He advised me to focus on the things that last – like himself that had been there for thousands of years – enduring values that we desperately need on our planet like generosity, compassion, connection with our instincts, love, wisdom, devotion to the whole of life, adding that these qualities also exist in the cosmos beyond our planet. He conveyed that we humans needed to see life here now through the eyes of eternity and aeons of time, not just this day, month, lifetime, generation, several generations, but ‘forever,’ like a stone that exists for millennia. Moreover, the passing on of this knowledge of enduring values to others is our job as we humans age. I mused that this is why the alchemists loved their Stone! The philosopher’s stone is a paradoxical symbol for that which endures and can be embodied and cultivated in ourselves as something of lasting value as we mature and age.

The Stone Being also had purple flowers and a bees’ nest at his base, with bees buzzing in and out of a small opening. He reminded me that the bees are representations of the *Melissae* (“bees”) of the Goddess, “priestesses” of the Great Goddess as Earth, and “initiates” of Demeter, Goddess of Descent and Regeneration, for bees are required for the balance of nature, for the major part of food production, and can teach us about being in service to the whole of being, to the cyclical processes of life, and to a consideration of our communities, and not just ourselves as individuals. As I later found out, the Bee Goddess and her “bee maidens” were also linked to the Pythia at Delphi, Apollo’s oracular priestess, also called the Delphic Bee. So bee priestesses were gifted with prophecy and practiced the art of divination. Their honey was used in embalming rituals and was transformed into the intoxicating mead elixir drunk as part of ecstatic rites celebrating the rising of the great star Sirius in July, the star associated with the daughter of the Goddess and the renewal of the year. Moreover, the humming of the bees was considered the voice of the goddess and even the sound of creation itself.

The bees on the path eventually led me to the current phenomenon of Colony Collapse Disorder, to the fact that large scale farming and poisonous pesticides – not to mention carting lorry loads of bee hives across the country and across the world to areas that need pollinating, exhausting bees – are threatening bee populations across the world, and hence our food supply. There is a wonderful film about this called, “Queen of the Sun,” a title that alludes to the queen and worker bees’ connection with the sun. Furthermore, the bees led me to the *Path of Pollen*, an ancient European indigenous shamanic path, and to the branch of this path called *The Way of the Melissae*, an ancient feminine oracular tradition going back to the Venus of Laussel covered in ocre at the entrance to the cave with bees; a tradition that engages the alchemical art of transformation. In the *Path of Pollen*, divination is taught and practiced as one of the honeyed arts, and a ‘humming’ mantra allows one to enter a slightly altered state of consciousness to access oracular wisdom from an invisible college of Bee Mistresses. The encounter with bees on the pilgrimage path also conveyed to me that life is interconnected on physical and non-physical levels, and this insight into the Oneness of matter and spirit is something we can experience and affirm. I thought, too, of my walks on Mt Sainte Victoire, and the sense that this ‘rock’ is also a sentient being arising out of and within the *lumen naturae* as the subtle web of light and life that holds everything together, the energy that fuels the daffodils blooming in spring as well as the planets in their orbits and the spiraling arms of the galaxies. Later I discovered that in *The Way of the Melissae*, the major symbol is an infinity sign on its side, called the lemniscate, one of whose multi-dimensional meanings is a path between worlds, which when you ‘walk’ it, takes you out of and back into time and space while remaining in the body. My pilgrimage walk increasingly took me to this in-between subtle world, while also needing to be aware of what my feet were doing!

The bees also led me (among several other writers) to Rudolph Steiner’s lectures on the cosmic significance of the bees, that a beehive is a life based on love, associated by the ancients with the planet Venus, that bees draw the love life of plants into its hive, and that we humans digest these cosmic and plant effluences in the honey we eat which creates a sensual pleasure that is also strengthening to our bodies. The bee has been considered a sacred animal since ancient times – and the extensive myths from around the world concerning bees confirm this – whose wax in burning candles support our feeling of reverence and encourage us to develop our

spirituality as well as the invisible spiritual depths of nature and the cosmos, and how these are mirrored in our bodies.

*Dream of the Bee Master showing me Venus*

It was actually a dream I had just before I joined the *Path of Pollen* for the first time that led me to Steiner's book on Bees. In the dream I was with a very loving unknown man, and we were at some event. It was as if we were on a slightly raised platform looking out into a crowd of people, and the man, with his arm around my shoulder, was pointing out something to me in the audience, in the dark between people that was hard to see. I remember saying to him, 'how can you see that?' It was a point of light – I could see it too – and he told me that the light was the planet Venus, as if conveying that that light was trying to reach the earth. He said it in such a warm and loving way, and he was smiling at me as if so happy to disclose and share this with me. I awoke with the feeling that perhaps I had been with one of the Bee Masters ....

Steiner writes that Venus consciousness as a culture based on love, will follow Earth consciousness as the next stage. Venus is the morning and evening 'star' and can be either solar or lunar, following the moon and preceding the sun. In this rising and setting 'death and rebirth' pattern, she is connected to Initiation and hence signals change. (This is especially key to me because it was through my experiences at the *Path of Pollen* that it became clear that a change in my professional life was imminent, and in fact I 'retired' from my day job that summer.) She is the waters and is thus related to emotions arising from attraction and love, beauty, sensory appreciation, and kindness. She signals the sheer pleasure in being alive, or the more refined pleasures of art and aesthetics, and so to the imagination. The lion or 'raging lion' is often her attribute, and her worship as goddess of love was associated with ancient sacred temple prostitution. Venus also makes a beautiful five-pointed flower pattern – or pentagram – every eight years as it circles the Sun. (Note: It is Venus that is associated with Mary Magdalene as the gnostic "apostle to the apostles," and Initiate of the Goddess mysteries – this link unfolded through a dream a year later, and I have written about this – see my "The Mysteries of Mary Magdalene and the Path of the Blue Rose" on my website.)

*The Camino as Path of Stars: Pleiades*

During my evenings, after dinner, I usually read for a while, falling into sleep by about 9:30pm out of physical exhaustion. I had brought along

with me a book by a Jungian analyst, Dr. Bernice Hill, titled *Emergence of the Cosmic Psyche: UFOs and ETs from the Perspective of Depth Psychology* (2012), in part because of my interest in the topic and, (together with crop circles), its relation to a new worldview, as well as my own UFO encounter and the ‘missing time’ associated with it, that I report in my book, *Songlines of the Soul*. I was especially interested in the Jungian perspective on these phenomena, as well as Jung’s own research and writing, notably in his late publication, *Flying Saucers, A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies* (1959). In that essay, among other things, Jung spoke of the collective meaning of the UFO phenomena as signaling an Initiation to a new incarnation, a New Age or new worldview as universal archetypal patterns were changing as we moved from the Age of Pisces to the Age of Aquarius. As symbols of wholeness (that include the Trickster archetype, representations of liminality and shadow) as well as the archetype of the Apocalypse or ‘unveiling,’ Jung stressed the need for a new psychospiritual-physical basis to reality, as our souls were not being fed by the current mass-mindedness and materialism of our day. But Jung also thought that we were too cosmically isolated and that we could learn from contact with ET civilizations, especially as we stood on the brink of wars and brutality that could annihilate us all (*S of S*, p. 153). He also exhorted us to try to understand such incomprehensible events (even if we don’t) so that we could reinforce their healing effects rather than allowing our narrow-mindedness or prejudices to turn their effects into poison and destruction (See, *CW 10*, par. 7331, *Songlines*, p. 133)

UFOs and ETs, then, are important not only symbolically, but also literally. We live in an age of growing awareness of our cosmic connections. So on this day of walking, Day 5, to St. Alban-sur-Limagnole, I felt inspired to ask for help and protection from the guides of the soul, and from those ETs that I had read about over the years, from Sirius, Orion, Arcturus, Pleiades, and Centauri, that have a millennial connection to our planet recorded in many cultures across the globe, and who are interested in the state and fate of our earth especially at this time of transition from one aeon to another, when outworn structures are collapsing, and climate change accelerated by human consumption threatens our very existence, and new values are direly needed as a course correction for our planet.

Walking into St. Alban, buying a picnic lunch, and searching for a quiet place to eat it, I passed a public sign that mentioned the French poet Paul Eluard who resided in Saint Alban for a winter late in WWII, and who wrote a poem titled “Saint-Alban” that was published in a poetry journal, *La Pléiade*, or, as we would say, the *Pleiades*!! (*La pléiade* is actually



translated ‘galaxy’ but I didn’t know that then; even so, ‘galaxy’ still evokes a larger cosmic connection and vision.) It seemed stunning to me *in that very moment* of reflecting on our galactic neighbors that I should, synchronistically, be reading the poem that Eluard published later in a journal that called to mind what indigenous cultures call the Star Nation peoples or the “Shining Ones” and “the way of knowing” of Star Wisdom. I got goose bumps! It was hard to escape the impression to my imagination that here was a direct expression of their presence with me, on this “path of stars,” “Compostella” as the Camino is also called, especially as the warnings of Indigenous peoples from around the world about the contamination of Mother Earth and our environmental and spiritual crisis echoed warnings received from the Star people or Star ancestors themselves from those who had experienced encounters (military, government, and personal accounts in the literature, as well as Jung’s story of Orfeo Angelucci in the Epilogue to *Flying Saucers* – please see *Songlines of the Soul*, pp. 166-169).

After my lunch on a bench near the public sign about Eluard in the square by the town’s château – whose front door is, BTW, covered in blue stars! – and feeling excited, I checked into my hotel, Le Centre, situated opposite a very old Romanesque Church with the bells of the bell tower right outside my window. Taking advantage of my first day of rest (the walk was only 7 kilometers), I sunk into a chair and continued to read Hill’s book, a chapter on Contact (Ch. 7, p. 99). Dr. Hill gives some accounts of ‘experiencers,’ from her clinical practice as well as from the literature. Some of these were new to me; their stories are deeply moving:

The Mexican, Carlos Diaz (whom I did know about), would sense intuitively the presence of UFOs, and would go outside to take pictures as they hovered over his backyard. He has some remarkable visuals of craft made of light and plasma in photographs that have been authenticated by prestigious universities and laboratories, including NASA. One craft in particular is especially beautiful, an undulating gold and rose-colored sphere like a pulsating flower. From his contact experiences (as well as his pictures), Diaz feels the importance of communicating what he learned from the visitors – for whom he feels deep love – about the subtle *web of light* that connects all life forms here and has been around for millions of years. He stresses how we need to save and protect life on earth, currently endangered by us, and that when we learn to love and respect life, contact with ETs will become inevitable. Diaz’ contact experiences over the years have been meticulously researched and his story is considered one of the most

important of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Part of his experience reveals a direct connection to the mysterious ancient Maya, as well as some of the genuine crop circles in the UK. Hill writes that Diaz glows with life and joy when talking about his experiences, and so, like Jung's account of Orfeo, the messenger himself is also the message. (Note: See the documentary, *Ships of Light: The Carlos Diaz Experience* online)

Maurizio Cavallo from Italy wrote a book titled, *Beyond the Heavens: The Story of Contact*. From his ET contact, he learned about a group from the Clarion Star system, thousands of light years from Earth, who work here with energy frequencies that interact with matter, trying to restore harmonized vibrations to stabilize the Earth as she goes through changes. We humans are limited in our ability to hear and see higher frequencies, but Cavallo was told that our "DNA code can respond to certain frequencies and could be reprogrammed through sound, color, and words." Languages (expressions of consciousness and reality via sound?) possess the codified memories of the universe; they are "DNA creation maps – multidimensional networks through which the Cosmos interacts" (Hill, p. 105). Hill notes that our own scientists are just beginning to explore this "wave genetics" whereby 90% of brain DNA frequencies, up until now considered "junk," can be altered by sound and therefore can be reprogrammed without being cut. This research comports with what spiritual teachers have known throughout history, that our body-psyche can be changed through words, thoughts, and music (consider also the 'talking cure' and sound and music therapies and meditation protocols). The Clarions use selected frequencies to alter the DNA of plants, animals, and humans and, in one case, Cavallo observed the bombardment of plants by frequencies in the form of archetypal patterns. The Clarions use plasma vortices to make the ground resonate; the surface expressions of this work, they claim, are the crop circles, geometric formations reflecting archetypal figures of single genes. Because of the strong geomagnetic and solar changes coming from both the Earth's core and the sun – who can deny that extreme weather has become the norm these days? – life forms here need help in adapting to the new conditions. Crop circles from this point of view, therefore, could be considered archetypal symbols (also to be found in our dreams) enabling us to shift our consciousness and our bodies to a higher vibration. The Clarions, according to Cavallo, are here to help us with these changes.

The Peruvian, Sixto Paz Wells, developed telepathic protocols for contacting star beings beginning in his mid-teens, and learns from ETs with

a home base on one of the moons of Jupiter – a domed crystal city on Ganymede – that there was a Cosmic Plan of Awakening to help humans mature. Through a sort of inter-dimensional portal called a “Xendra,” Sixto was able to board their space-ships and communicate with them, even visit the crystal city. He was told that there are other realities around us in different time/space dimensions and if we could awaken to these other dimensions, it could foster psychological and spiritual growth. The survival of our planet depends on our capacity to mature at this moment of great planetary change, developing our minds and psychic abilities, and bringing the true power of our loving ‘God Consciousness’ to Earth. The ETs also emphasized developing wisdom, intuitive vision, and peaceful co-operation. Shamanic traditions with a long history of relationship to the star nations also foster access to non-ordinary states of consciousness for wisdom, healing, and making the long journey from the head to the heart. NDEers similarly speak of the unconditional love and acceptance they feel in the presence of soul guides in their altered states outside time and space, and it is this message of love they seek to bring back to humanity. The ETs also said that there is an increased polarity of light and dark forces, and that we needed to become more discerning about these forces.

(See also Sixto’s book, *Tanis and the Magical Valley: A Journey through the Inca Heartland*, a beautiful story for children about UFOs and ETs, talking stones, spirit apparitions, and the wisdom traditions of the Andean indigenous healer/priests, that adults can enjoy too.)

(Don Oscar and RAMA)

(See also, *Beyond the Light Barrier: The Autobiography of Elizabeth Klarer*, a South African woman’s love relationship with Akon, an astrophysicist from Meton, a planet of Proxima Centuri, 4.4 light years away and our nearest star.) VG: Say something about this book in more detail.

All these accounts of UFOs and ETs focus on the care and concern at least some groups of ETs have for the state of our Earth and its current changes. The Earth is perceived as more than our physical ecology; the Earth and we together are the whole context of life here and are not separate from it. We Earth people also belong to the stars. In fact, some ETs reveal that they are affected by our destructiveness, and that the Earth is not an isolated planet in an insignificant arm of the Milky Way, but rather that it is valued as part of a larger, interconnected cosmic system: what occurs here impacts other planets and solar systems energetically. (See esp. *Songlines*, p. 167 “we have been under observation for centuries.....”) A South African indigenous teacher and healer/shaman called Credo Mutwa has

spoken openly about his ET contacts and how they describe Earth as a Mother Planet. Though there are many planets, mother planets are rare, and their purpose is to give birth to life. Dr. Hill writes, “Earth was known throughout the galaxy as a place of rare beauty, filled with old growth forests, snow-capped mountains, gorgeous waterfalls, rich vegetation, and oceans teeming with fish.” Now, seen from space much of this life is dying. (We know that species extinction is accelerating at a much faster pace than had been anticipated.) The importance of being able to enter altered states and open ourselves to our place in the larger universe is what indigenous people say we’ve lost the ability to do. With this loss, we rape our Earth and resources rather than living within its bounty as one among many others that share this planet. In my experience, walking as pilgrimage helps restore this lost connection, helps us attune to our Source, and connect at a deeper level.

Pilgrimage walking, too, can truly help heal the estrangement that we humans have come to feel from the sacred dimensions of life. As we put one foot in front of the other, we slowly let go of the chatter in our minds, and deepen into the present moment, the Now that allows us to surrender to the deeply loving wisdom that is our Earth’s, our cosmos’s, and our own deepest and truest essence. Conscious, mindful walking, can help us feel love and wholeness instead of fear and separation, and encourages us to go beyond our rational minds to experience the Earth as ‘celestial earth,’ as Corbin calls it, both rock and angel, stone and spirit.

Reading Hill’s book strengthened the feeling that a message was coming through from my Pleiadian star brothers and sisters. It situates the call to pilgrimage within the perspective of my UFO/ET studies, experiences of contact, and the deeper meaning of the crop circles as signaling a need for higher and more enlightened consciousness on our planet, one that is embodied here and now. I felt, too, that Dr. Hill’s book was a serious reminder to continue to bring in the ‘cosmic perspective’ in my work, that is, our Earth’s relationship to a broader galactic community, as well as the effort to bring cosmic consciousness or the Higher Self into our earth plane—in what I say, teach, and write. Furthermore, beyond Jung’s claim that UFOs signal a shift in the ages, it seems that a new awareness of the living energies of our earth, might also belong to this collective change. As above, so below; as within so without – all is interconnected. Walking on the path opens us to this Great Mystery, leads us into subtle realms, brings gratitude, encourages equanimity, and helps us to grow and mature.

In addition to ETs and indigenous nations, artists (Cézanne) and poets (William Blake, for example), have recorded their feelings about the Earth. They often seem to ‘perceive’ a mystery concealed in the landscape, one that is connected to the broader cosmos and cycles of time. Blake described the fettered landscape ‘giant,’ Albion, who would eventually arise and establish a new spiritual Jerusalem on earth, and the Irish poet and mystic, A.E. (George Russell) in *Candle of Vision*, glimpsed a luminous ‘golden age’ from the prehistoric past still alive all about him. Another artist, Kathryn Maltwood, discovered in the 1920’s, a ‘temple of stars’ in the Glastonbury area, constellations of the zodiac etched onto the natural contours of the earth, and, in a moment of disclosure, somehow linked this grounded star temple with the legends of the Isle of Avalon, Arthur and the Holy Grail (she was illustrating a book about the Grail at this time). Mr. Alfred Watkins in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century also ‘saw’ through the landscape to reveal a web of lines, ley lines that linked the holy places and shrines together. Earlier, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the scholar and cabbalist, Dr. John Dee, perceived Merlin’s secret in the Glastonbury flatlands that he also saw was ‘strewn with stars,’ just like Kathryn 400 years later.

In fact, the Cambridge educated English antiquarian and researcher into lost ancient knowledge and subtle earth energies, John Michel, notes in *The New View Over Atlantis*, how UFO experiencers often come to love the Earth more after their research and encounters and develop an interest in ley lines and geomancy - (the study of subtle earth energy lines – what biologist Rupert Sheldrake calls the morphogenetic field) - as if the ‘signs in the heavens’ related to the transitioning of the ages (Jung), lead us back down to the *sacred* history of our earth, and the discovery of some ancient underlying geometrical pattern upon which it is based. Perhaps this is what crop circles (with their complex geometry and placement) draw our attention to, that is, the possibility of the alignment of sacred sites, stone circles, holy places, and natural landmarks across the globe based on astronomical/star maps and geometrical lines, activating the serpent or ‘dragon’ energy (as the subtle earth energy is called) of the leys for some practical or spiritual purpose as, Michel suggests, in a past civilization – Plato’s Atlantis – with an advanced knowledge of science and subtle energy currents that enriched or even renewed human life. The ‘winged serpent’ was a symbol stamped all over Britain by the Druids. The ‘serpent and winged disc’ is found in Egypt too, and Avebury stone circle in the UK is considered a ‘serpent temple.’

Indigenous cultures are the only ones today – Aborigines, Hopis, Lakota, the Curandismo tradition in Peru, etc. – who preserve this complex cosmic knowledge, and the inter-relatedness of earth and sky (as in the old Lunar culture). The Aborigines call the ley line and holy places alignments the “songlines.” There are also the fairy paths in Celtic countries, and the Nazca lines in Peru. Such ‘lines’ linking sacred sites were thought to be particularly active or fertilizing according to the time of year – equinoxes and solstices, for example, or particular stellar or planet, sun, and/or moon alignments – and so, rituals with music and meditation were conducted to activate and assure the best possible raising of energy for the particular place. In this way, the human energy field entered into a conscious relationship with the electro-magnetic energy field of the earth, assuring a mutual penetration of power, support, honoring, and creativity. Shamanic traditions continue to teach these ancient subtle energy practices to this day.

In my view, the pilgrimage walk along the ley lines that link the chapels, crosses, stones, mounds, rivers, and other geographical features, is another way in which we can, with awareness, raise this energy of the serpent power for mutual benefit, for our vitality, and for the Earth’s, as in the past. (I am reminded of my serpent dream here that I tell in Chapter One.) So far on my walk, from the deeply felt departure from Mt. Ste. Victoire, the Stone Being communication here on the path, to the synchronistic connection between asking for guidance and for a felt connection with my ET guides, and finding the “Pleiades poem”, and then reading just those Hill (hill?!) chapters on beneficent stories of contact, together with the feeling of increasing joy as I walked, all fell into a kind of shared subtle space that opened a doorway to perhaps one of the purposes of my being called to this path: To remember the interconnectedness of our Earth with the cosmos so that we can be encouraged to think not only ecologically, but also spiritually and energetically in terms of the whole. Our reciprocal relationship to Earth – what the Peruvian Earth-keepers and mystics call ‘ayni’ – opens up the subtle body of the world, helps us value the rare beauty of our planet, and assists us in awakening portals in our consciousness that have been for too long shut down. We are called to once again connect with our star ancestors, with our broader galactic family, to deepen our intuition and psychic nature, and especially to open our hearts, to work in service on behalf of others, to practice self-care, and to feel gratitude for the great mystery of Life. This unfolding wisdom felt like a new emerging story.....This kind of guardianship is also the essence of the Grail Code coming alive again today (note).

One last story: Dr. Hill also recounts in *Emergence of the Cosmic Psyche*, a dream-vision in which she is given a direct experience of “cosmic kindness” by some ETs, a transmission of compassion beyond anything she had experienced before. She writes that there is a relationship between our ET visitors and the emerging depth of our being. “Some ETs know the cosmos deeply,” she writes, and they both share that knowledge and/or stimulate our desire to find it within ourselves.” She adds that in *Flying Saucers*, Jung, in looking beyond the personal equation in dreams to their collective significance, writes that we need a fundamental change in attitude, a real recognition of what it means to be a whole human being – as I read this, the church bells outside my window suddenly rang, as if emphasizing this point! They ring twice on the hour in this part of France and it was by now five in the afternoon! For Hill, the “felt energy of kindness” is part of this attitude and new sense of wholeness; it points to the constellation of *a new vibration of energy*, a new frequency coming into our world – the coming age of Venus? Or the Wisdom of the Cosmic Sophia? This realization also came in a dream later on, a dream of a Grail Chalice which led me to the hidden stories of Mary Magdalene and the Path of the Blue Rose - a tradition linking MM to both Venus and Sophia - as well as to the legends of the Grail, and to the Cathar initiates and the Templars in the Languedoc area of France that lived these mostly secret gnostic Christian teachings from the 11th - 13th centuries before they were brutally exterminated in a genocide organized by the Church in Rome. (I have a paper on my website about this titled, “The Magdalene Mysteries and the Path of the Blue Rose,” under Recent Posts.)

In the ancient Academies and Mystery Schools of Greece, Egypt, the UK and Europe, initiates were both taught about the myths and stories of the Mysteries, as well as ‘entering into them’ through direct experience. Via protocols of purification and preparation, the *mystes* would take a journey into direct apprehension of the inner truths of wisdom and love, perhaps eventually becoming seers and visionaries on the path toward illumination. Such lengthy trainings could lead to mastery and to the realization of our human-divine nature. Appropriate landscapes in which to enter into such rituals were essential and key to the process. It is this kind of knowing, *gnosis*, that we are in need of today, to match and temper our warring and aggressive natures, and pilgrimage walking along well-worn paths that mark honored subtle ley line routes linking ancient sacred sites that support our quest, can help us become more attuned to our oracular sensibilities and the

knowledge that our physical bodies, the natural world, and our spiritual essence are all inter-related to the earth beneath our feet, to the bio-sphere around us, and to the stars in the heavens above. This changes how we behave as we are opened to what truly matters. Through Pilgrimage walking we become mystics and visionaries!