The Salmon's Revolt Against a Mechanical World

The Architecture of the Whole: Platonic Transcendence, Cosmic Cycles, and the Psychology of Human Liberation

Peter De Ceuster

November 3, 2026

Abstract

Modern civilization has inherited extraordinary powers of explanation and control, yet it often struggles to describe the felt reality of belonging: the experience that a human being is not merely an isolated observer moving through a passive world, but a participant in a living web of relations. At its centre lies an older and still urgent question. The journey begins with the mind–body distinction and the mechanistic picture associated with René Descartes, then turns toward Plato's Forms, selected Australian First Nations teachings about Country and ancestral creation, the cycles of ancient Egypt, Indian reflections on the self and the senses, Persian ideas of moral and inward order, Tibetan contemplative practice, and the equilibrium of Daoist thought. These traditions are distinct, and their differences are part of their richness. Read beside one another, they nevertheless open a conversation about appearance and depth, individuality and unity, mortality and renewal, attention and freedom.

Two images guide the journey. The basket and the balloon suggest that the visible body may not exhaust the mystery of consciousness; the beads and the necklace suggest that individuality need not mean isolation. Neither image is a scientific demonstration. The possibility that the brain receives or filters consciousness rather than producing it remains a metaphysical hypothesis, while the close dependence of ordinary conscious life upon brain activity is firmly supported by contemporary evidence. The essay holds that tension open rather than pretending it has been settled.

From this metaphysical horizon, the discussion moves into the life we make together: the education of children, the centrality of care, the equal dignity of women and men, the moral failure of war, the habits that shape the psyche, and the power of focused intention. Its final image is the salmon, turning upstream against the current: not an escape from the world, but a refusal to drift passively away from the sources of life, meaning, and responsibility.

Keywords: Platonic Realism; comparative philosophy; Australian First Nations knowledge; Country; consciousness; cosmic cycles; depth psychology; education; equality; the Salmon's Revolt.

---

1 Exile in a Clockwork Universe: How the Cartesian Guillotine Severed Humanity from the Living Whole

Philosophy achieves its highest calling when it serves living human beings: when it liberates perception, heals division, and illuminates the meaning of existence. It loses its way when it becomes a

servant of abstraction alone, when the elegance of a model is mistaken for the fullness of reality, or when the language of efficiency begins to speak more loudly than the needs of life. The modern world has gained immeasurably from the disciplined study of matter, motion, and measurable processes. Yet alongside that achievement has grown a habit of seeing the universe as an immense mechanism and the human being as a spectator sealed within it.

One of the great turning points in this history is the philosophy of René Descartes. His distinction between the thinking substance, *res cogitans*, and extended substance, *res extensa*, gave enduring form to the modern mind–body problem. Descartes sought certainty in the act of thinking and developed a mechanistic account of much of the physical world. He did not simply declare the mind to be a product of matter; indeed, he regarded mind as immaterial and confronted the difficult question of how mind and body could interact. His philosophy is more subtle than the caricature often made of it. Nevertheless, the division he helped to sharpen became one of the defining problems of modern thought.[5, 6, 7]

The deeper difficulty lies not in the use of mechanism, but in the moment mechanism is mistaken for the whole of existence. Mechanical explanation is powerful precisely because it isolates, measures, and analyzes. It has transformed medicine, engineering, astronomy, and countless branches of knowledge. But a method that succeeds in describing the movement of bodies does not, by that success alone, explain the meaning of a life, the felt presence of another person, the experience of beauty, or the obligation to protect a river from destruction. A map may be exact for the journey it was designed to guide and still remain incomplete as a description of the territory.

A civilization that forgets this distinction risks confusing what can be measured with all that is real. Forests become inventories of timber; rivers become channels of extraction; animals become units of productivity; children become recipients of standardized information; and human beings become economic functions. Nothing in scientific method requires this impoverished vision. Nor does the existence of a mechanistic description prove that nature is lifeless or that human dignity is an illusion. The danger arises when one way of knowing claims the authority to silence every other way.

Across the history of human thought, many traditions have resisted the image of the person as an isolated spectator. Plato asks us to look beyond changing appearances toward intelligible Forms. Indian philosophy asks what remains when the shifting contents of experience are examined. Egyptian religion gives cosmic order and renewal a central place in the life of the individual and the community. Australian First Nations knowledge locates human life within intricate relationships among Country, ancestral presence, law, and responsibility. Persian, Tibetan, and Daoist traditions each offer their own paths into questions of inwardness, ethical action, and balance.

These traditions do not speak with one voice, and their differences should not be flattened into a single ancient doctrine. Yet they return us to a shared philosophical question: what if human beings are not detached observers standing outside reality, but participants whose very existence is woven from relationships with other people, living systems, histories, and meanings? To ask this question is not to reject science. It is to refuse the assumption that scientific description, however indispensable, must be the final word on every dimension of being.

The task, then, is not to retreat into the past or to exchange one dogma for another. It is to recover a sense of participation without surrendering intellectual honesty; to hold the measurable world and the inward life together; and to build a philosophy that can speak both to the mind's demand for truth and to the human need for belonging. The universe need not be reduced to a machine before it can be studied, nor must it be turned into a comforting fantasy before it can inspire reverence.

2 Buoyancy from a Higher Dimension: Why the Wicker Basket Cannot Fly Without the Balloon

Where the mechanistic picture can become too narrow, Plato offers one of philosophy's most enduring invitations: to consider whether the changing things we encounter are intelligible only because they participate in something more stable than themselves. In dialogues such as the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*, Plato develops the distinction between sensible particulars and the Forms or Ideas by which they can be understood. A just act may be praised or criticized because the mind can contemplate Justice itself; beautiful things change and fade, yet the question of Beauty reaches beyond any single object. The precise nature of the Forms remains debated, but the philosophical force of the distinction is unmistakable: appearance may be real without being the whole of reality.[8, 9, 10]

To grasp the relation between the visible human being and a possible deeper order, consider the image of **the basket and the balloon**. A woven basket, left to itself, rests upon the earth. Suspended beneath a great balloon, it rises into the open air. The basket is the body: a temporary and remarkable arrangement of matter, born from the elements of the Earth, subject to growth, injury, ageing, and dissolution. The balloon represents a dimension of consciousness or meaning that, in this metaphysical vision, is not exhausted by the body's material structure.

The image is simple, but it opens a profound possibility. We know the body through its weight, temperature, chemistry, and movement. We know the brain through its electrical and biochemical activity. Yet the first-person fact of experience remains intimate in a different way: the redness of a sunset, the ache of grief, the sudden presence of love, the inward recognition that one is here. A description of neural processes and an account of lived experience address the same human reality from different directions. Whether one can ultimately be reduced to the other remains a central question in philosophy of mind. The explanatory difficulty of consciousness is real; it does not, by itself, settle the question in favour of a nonphysical source.[38, 39]

The basket and balloon therefore remain an invitation rather than a proof. They allow us to imagine that the body may be a vessel through which consciousness is expressed, rather than the complete origin of consciousness. The receiver hypothesis belongs to this open metaphysical inquiry. It is not an established conclusion of neuroscience, and the image of a balloon should not be confused with a literal scientific dimension. Its purpose is to keep a question alive: might the visible person be more than the sum of the parts that can be weighed and measured?

When the basket is mistaken for the whole, mortality can appear to be the final horizon of meaning. The body is fragile; its materials return to the world from which they came. Yet the possibility of a deeper order changes the emotional landscape. It does not abolish grief, nor does it provide a guarantee about life after death. It gives the mind room to contemplate that what is most significant in a human life may not be exhausted by the body's duration. The reeds may return to the soil; the question of what lifted the basket remains open.

From this vertical image follows a horizontal one: **the beads on a necklace**. Each bead has its own contour, colour, and place. No bead needs to become another in order for the necklace to exist. Their individuality is real; so is the thread that holds them in relation. The image suggests that the deepest meaning of a person may lie neither in isolated self-assertion nor in the erasure of individuality, but in a unity that allows difference to remain.

Every human life is shaped by a thousand relations that precede conscious choice. We inherit

a language we did not invent, receive care before we can return it, depend upon food grown by others, and learn to see ourselves through the eyes of family and community. The air we breathe and the water we drink bind us to landscapes and living systems. Even the most independent person is carried by a vast network of support. The necklace is therefore not only a metaphysical image; it is an ethical one. To injure another bead is to damage the pattern of relation in which our own life is held.

Yet the thread must never become an excuse to suppress the beads. Unity without freedom becomes conformity; community without respect becomes domination. The Whole is not served by making every person identical. Its beauty lies in the fact that distinct lives can belong together without losing their particularity. This is the foundation on which the rest of the argument will stand: the person is unique, but never alone.

3 The Undulating Rhythm of Eternity: From the Dreaming Serpent to the Return of the Cosmic Seed

Nowhere is humanity's belonging within a living world more vividly expressed than in the diverse traditions of Australia's First Nations. Here, Country is not merely a tract of land or a collection of natural resources. It can hold ancestry, law, memory, ceremony, identity, obligation, and the continuing presence of life. For Añangu people, *Tjukurpa* is not simply a tale about a distant beginning; it informs relationships and responsibilities in the present. Across the continent, the meanings of the Dreaming, Country, and ancestral beings differ from one people to another. Their richness lies precisely in this rootedness: each story belongs to particular places and custodians, and no single account can stand for them all.[1, 2, 3, 4]

The Rainbow Serpent is among the best-known motifs in Australian public culture, yet it is not one universal figure with one name and one story. In the Lardil account retold by Goobalathaldin Dick Roughsey, the great serpent Goorialla travels across the land, shaping the country and confronting those who fail to uphold the obligations of their world. The force of the story is inseparable from the land through which the serpent moves. Mountains, rivers, and living beings are not detached scenery; they belong to a moral and ancestral landscape.[11, 12]

Consider **Goorialla, the Great Rainbow Serpent**. Before the country takes the shape through which people know it, the ancestral being travels, leaving the forms of the land as the trace of that journey. The serpent's movement gives the landscape a history deeper than human memory. It reminds us that place is not an empty stage upon which life happens. It is part of the story of life itself. Seen in this light, the land cannot be understood only by asking what can be taken from it. One must also ask what relationships it sustains, what obligations it carries, and what memory it holds.

The image of Goorialla's hidden beginning can be placed beside Plato's distinction between visible form and intelligible pattern, or beside the Indian image of the seed in which a future tree lies in potential. Such comparisons do not make the traditions identical. They allow the mind to approach a recurring wonder: the visible world is never just a surface. Beneath every river lie histories of water and stone; within every living thing lie patterns of inheritance and development; within every human community lie stories that shape its sense of belonging.



Figure 1: Goorialla, the Great Rainbow Serpent. Contemporary artist's impression.

The Arnhem Land narrative of **the Wägilak Sisters and the ancestral serpent Wititj** turns upon another powerful image: the swallowing and return of life. In a publicly documented Central Arnhem Land account, the sisters' journey is bound to the first monsoon, the ordering of kinship, and the transformation associated with ceremony. Wititj swallows the sisters and later regurgitates them; the movement is not merely an ending, but a passage through which a new state of being emerges. The story's ceremonial dimensions are specific to its custodians and cannot be separated from them.[14, 13]

There is a rhythm here that can be felt far beyond the immediate narrative: descent, enclosure, transformation, return. Ancient Egyptian accounts of Osiris and Indian traditions of renewal also employ images of death and restored life, though they arise from very different religious worlds. The comparison is not a claim of common origin. It is an invitation to notice how human beings have used the image of return to confront change, loss, and the possibility that life may contain forms of renewal not visible at first sight.

Another story brings the question of the Whole down to the precious substance of water. In the Gunnai Kurnai version of **Tiddalik**, the giant frog drinks so much that the rivers, lakes, and waterholes are left dry. The animals gather and try to make him laugh. At last the snake twists and dances before him until the frog's laughter breaks his grip, and the water pours back into the world. The country lives again. The story is known in different forms, but the version shared at Bunjilaka belongs to Gunnai Kurnai people of Gippsland; the details of one telling should not be made universal.[15, 16]

Tiddalik is an unforgettable image of possession turned against itself. What is taken from the common world and locked inside one swollen body ceases to nourish anyone, including the one who has taken it. The frog's release comes not through greater force but through a movement that breaks his rigidity. Laughter restores circulation. The story speaks powerfully to a world in which water, land, energy, and wealth can be hoarded until the conditions of life itself are placed at risk. What belongs to the Whole must be held with care, not swallowed by the private appetite of one.



Figure 2: Tiddalik and the returning waters. Contemporary artist's impression.

In south-eastern traditions, **Baiame** appears as a creator or culture hero associated with the ordering of land, waterways, and human life. Some regional accounts place him alongside Birrahgnooloo, associated with fertility and the life-giving waters. Their stories belong to particular communities and places, where ancestral presence is bound to the laws by which people live. In one account of the creation of the Brewarrina fish traps, Baiame's shaping of waterways is inseparable from the law governing how the river's resources are to be used. The fish traps are not merely an ingenious technology; they are part of a system of knowledge, responsibility, and sustainable relationship with water.[25, 26]

This is one way to understand the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the Whole. The source of life is not imagined as remote from the practical world. It is present in the rules by which the community lives, in the care of water, and in the wisdom that prevents abundance from becoming destruction. A sacred order that does not guide conduct is an empty abstraction; a living philosophy must find its way into the daily treatment of the earth and one another.

The Kulin traditions of **Bunjil the Wedge-tailed Eagle and Waa the Crow** show another form of relation. Among Kulin peoples, Bunjil and Waa are associated with moiety identities and kinship obligations. In Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung accounts, the two ancestral figures help establish a world in which marriage and social belonging are structured through complementary moieties. These are lived systems of law and kinship, not simply symbols of two opposing personality types.[17, 18]

The eagle and the crow can nevertheless call to mind the need for a world in which difference does not become enmity. The high-flying eagle and the watchful crow have distinct qualities; neither needs to be erased for the other to exist. Daoist language offers its own image of complementary forces in Yin and Yang. The two systems are not the same, yet each can lead the mind toward a question of balance: how can a community preserve difference while sustaining the bonds that allow it to flourish?

Across the Western Desert, the story of **the Seven Sisters, Kungkarangkalpa, and their pursuer Wati Nyiru** moves between Country and the night sky. The sisters travel together across the land, pursued by a man whose desire becomes coercive and relentless. Their journey leaves traces in the

landscape; their vigilance and solidarity allow them to escape. In the sky, the sisters become the Pleiades, while their pursuer is associated with Orion. Public works made with custodians and artists carry this story into contemporary life, while also reminding viewers that a public telling reveals only part of a much larger body of knowledge.[19, 20, 21]

The sisters' flight is more than a celestial spectacle. It is a story of women who remain alert to danger, protect one another, and refuse to surrender their freedom to predatory power. Their strength is collective without being uniform: each sister belongs to the group, yet each remains a distinct life within it. The image of seven figures rising into the stars gives the human imagination a vision of solidarity that does not depend upon submission.



Figure 3: The Seven Sisters and their pursuer. Contemporary artist's impression.

In the Kimberley, the **Wandjina** are ancestral beings associated with clouds, rain, lightning, and the renewal of life. Their great heads are surrounded by forms connected with cloud and weather, and their mouths are commonly absent. One explanation recorded by the Metropolitan Museum of Art is that painting a mouth on a Wandjina may bring continuous rain or flooding. The image therefore belongs to a particular world of ancestral power and responsibility, not to an abstract doctrine of mental energy.[22]

Still, the silence of the Wandjina carries a resonance that reaches the inner life. Not every force announces itself through noise. There is a form of attention that gathers itself rather than scattering; a form of strength that does not need to display itself at every moment. The stillness suggested by the image can remind us of the power of restraint, of the spoken word withheld until it is needed, and of an inward life made clear through discipline. The clouds remain clouds, the rain remains rain, and the contemplative lesson arises in the mind that looks upon them.



Figure 4: Wandjina figures. Contemporary artist's impression.

The story of **Kondoli the Whale** belongs to Ngarrindjeri and Ramindjeri traditions of South Australia. In a telling shared by Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri knowledge holder Kyla McHughes, Kondoli is a powerful whale man whose dancing sends sparks from his body. Others desire the fire he alone possesses. During a ceremony he is speared; fire spreads across the country, and Kondoli enters the water, becoming the whale whose breath is associated with the wound at the back of the neck. The story carries knowledge about ceremony, fire, and the responsibilities that govern its use.[23, 24]

Fire is both a gift and a danger. It can warm, cook, illuminate, and renew; it can also consume. Its value depends upon wisdom, timing, and the obligations of those who use it. The movement of fire from one powerful figure into the wider country offers a compelling image of a resource released from isolation and returned to shared life. A community is enriched not when a single person possesses all the power, but when the power that sustains life is held within a web of responsibility.

A different image, closer to a fable than to a record of any one people's ancestral teaching, may sharpen the same question. Imagine a great eaglehawk who builds his fortress high in a tree and begins to terrorize the birds below. The strongest birds challenge him directly and are driven away. The smallest see what the great ones cannot: the fortress depends upon a hollow trunk and a few narrow supports. They do not match strength with strength. They study the structure, find its weakness, and end the tyranny by changing the conditions that sustain it. The little owl, overlooked by the mighty, becomes the strategist of the flock. The fable suggests that force is not the same as wisdom, and that those pushed to the margins may see the structure of power more clearly than those who rule from its summit.

The image of a woman carrying a torch into the sky appears in more than one Australian account of the Sun. In a Wotjobaluk telling from northern Victoria, sometimes named Gnowee or Knowee in later retellings, a woman leaves her sleeping child while searching for food. When she loses her way and cannot find him, she climbs into the sky with her great bark torch, searching from above. The torch becomes the Sun, and the mother continues her journey across the heavens. Versions and names vary, but the image is unforgettable: the light that sustains the world is imagined as the

unceasing search of a mother for her child.[31, 32]

There is a great tenderness in this celestial picture. The Sun is not merely a furnace at the centre of a planetary system; in the story it is also a mother's fidelity made visible. The scientific account explains the source of solar energy, while the story gives the human imagination another way to feel what light means: warmth, care, vigilance, and the refusal to abandon the lost. The two descriptions do not need to compete. They speak in different registers, each revealing something the other was not designed to express.

Among Bundjalung and Bandjalang traditions, **Dirawong the Goanna** is remembered as a powerful ancestral being associated with the shaping and protection of Country. One account describes Dirawong's struggle with the Rainbow Serpent and connects their movements with the formation of the Richmond River and the landscape around Evans Head. The headland itself is held as the body of Dirawong, and the surrounding country contains places of deep cultural and ceremonial significance.[27, 28]

The Goanna and the Serpent can be contemplated as forces that must find a way to inhabit the same world. Unbounded energy can overwhelm; boundaries without life can become lifeless rigidity. The river requires both movement and banks. In the psyche, too, feeling needs form, and thought needs vitality. A person who suppresses every deep current becomes inwardly dry; a person carried away by every impulse loses the ground beneath their feet. The art of living lies in giving life-force a channel without extinguishing it.

The Euahlayi account of **Bahloo, the Moon-man**, collected by K. Langloh Parker, confronts the question of mortality. Bahloo asks the first men to carry his dogs across a river. They refuse because the dogs are feared; the dogs become snakes, bite the men, and Bahloo declares that human beings will remain on Earth and die. The tale gives the Moon a role in the boundary between human life and death, while the lunar presence above the world continues its own recurring journey.[30, 31]

The Moon's return each month has long invited human beings to contemplate disappearance and renewal. The body is subject to time; the Moon appears to vanish and return. It is tempting to turn that resemblance into a guarantee of personal immortality, but the image works at a deeper level even without such certainty. It teaches the mind to face mortality without allowing fear to consume the present. The body is precious precisely because it is finite; a life becomes richer when it is lived with courage rather than spent in denial.

Finally, the Noongar **Waugal or Wagyl** is associated with the shaping of the Derbarl Yerrigan, the Swan River, and the waterways and landscapes of Whadjuk Country. The river is not merely a resource or a scenic feature. It is a living connection among people, animals, plants, memory, and place. The Waugal's movement through the landscape gives the river a depth of meaning that no purely instrumental description can contain.[29]

Here the image of the salmon begins to emerge. A river can be mapped, measured, dammed, and redirected, but it is also part of a living relationship. To damage the waterway is to damage the conditions of life that gather around it. Beside this living river, the salmon's struggle upstream becomes an image of resistance to the destruction of the relationships that make a world habitable. Like the river's custodians, the salmon reminds us that the source must be protected if life is to continue.

Across these stories, the human being appears not as a conqueror standing above nature, but as a participant within a world that carries memory, law, danger, abundance, and renewal. The traditions remain distinct, and no single philosophical formula can contain them. Yet they invite us

to see that human freedom is not freedom from relationship. It is the capacity to live responsibly within relations that sustain us.

From this living landscape, the image of the seed leads us toward India and ancient Egypt. In Indian thought, the seed, *bija*, can signify latent potential and the relation between subtle cause and manifest life. The *Bhagavad Gita* describes the divine as the seed of all beings, while Indian philosophical schools offer varied accounts of self, matter, causation, and liberation. There is no single doctrine shared by every Vedic and later Indian tradition, but seed imagery remains a powerful way to contemplate the emergence of form from what is not yet visible.[33]

A seed does not resemble the tree it may become. Its promise is folded inward, waiting for the conditions of growth. The tree rises, branches, flowers, bears fruit, and releases new seeds. In this cycle, the end of one form becomes the beginning of another. The image can illuminate human development: identity is not a fixed object but a life unfolding through experience, loss, learning, and renewal. We shed old skins, not because the past never mattered, but because what has been learned must be carried into a new form.

Ancient Egyptian religion gives this rhythm another language. The solar journey through day and night, the regeneration associated with Osiris, the scarab Khepri, and the ideal of Ma'at placed order, renewal, and continued existence at the centre of religious life. These beliefs developed across long periods and varied among regions and cults; they should not be compressed into one simple theory. Yet their images are enduring: the Sun travels through darkness and returns; the dead king is joined to a pattern of renewal; order must be maintained against the forces of dissolution. The cosmic cycle and the human journey become reflections of one another.[34, 35, 36]

The seed, the river, the Moon, and the solar boat all teach the imagination to see time as more than a straight line. Life moves through departure and return, emergence and withdrawal, growth and decay. Whether these cycles reveal a deeper metaphysical order or express humanity's profound need to find pattern in change remains open to interpretation. Their psychological truth, however, is immediate: transformation is not always the destruction of what came before. Sometimes it is the way a life gathers its meaning and carries it forward.

Modern cosmology adds a vast horizon to this reflection. The standard cosmological model describes an expanding universe whose observable history includes an early hot, dense state. Measurements of the cosmic microwave background and other observations strongly support the current model, while questions about the ultimate origin and far future of the cosmos remain active areas of research. Cyclic cosmologies, bounce models, and multiverse proposals have been explored, but they are not established observational conclusions. None of them demonstrates that consciousness is immortal or that the universe is literally seeded by Platonic intelligence.[37]

Still, the thought of a universe larger than our immediate world has an undeniable power. It humbles the ego and opens imagination. Perhaps reality contains forms of order we have not yet learned to recognize. Perhaps the visible universe is one chapter in a story whose scale exceeds our present knowledge. A mature philosophy need not pretend that possibility is proof. It can stand at the edge of what is known, look outward with wonder, and keep its questions alive.

Table 1: A constellation of ideas: distinct traditions in conversation

Tradition	Image or question	Contribution to the journey
Plato	Forms and changing particulars	Asks whether appearance depends upon intelligible structures that do not change with each passing instance.
Australian First Nations	Country, ancestral beings, law, and custodianship	Places human life within enduring relationships among land, water, kin, memory, and obligation.
Ancient Egypt	Solar renewal, Osiris, Khepri, and Ma'at	Gives cosmic order and personal renewal a vivid symbolic language.
Indian traditions	Seed, self, senses, and action	Explores latent potential, disciplined attention, and the relation between the transient and the enduring.
Zoroastrian and Persian thought	Good thought, right order, and inward worlds	Connects thought with ethical responsibility and explores the depth of inner experience.
Tibetan and Daoist traditions	Clear awareness, complementary forces, and the Way	Offers contemplative disciplines and an art of action that does not depend upon constant force.

4 Symphonies Through the Biological Receiver: Luminous Inward Worlds and the Taming of the Senses

If consciousness participates in a reality larger than the visible body, how might it become expressed through the human organism? The question leads us to the borderland between philosophy and neuroscience. The brain is intimately involved in every ordinary form of conscious life. Injury, disease, anaesthesia, sleep, medication, and development can alter perception, memory, identity, and awareness. Modern neuroscience has revealed intricate relations between neural processes and conscious states. Yet the question of why these processes are accompanied by experience—why there is something it is like to be a person—remains philosophically difficult. Dependence is not, by itself, a complete account of origin; but neither does the difficulty of explanation prove that consciousness comes from beyond the brain.[38, 39]

The *Bhagavad Gita* approaches the human being through the senses, the qualities of nature, and the discipline of action. Its language of *prakriti*, the *gunas*, and the *indriyas* portrays a person whose attention can be scattered by desire or gathered through self-mastery. The chariot image in the broader Indian tradition is especially suggestive: the senses are powerful horses, the mind holds the reins, and wisdom must guide the journey. The purpose is not to despise the senses, but to prevent them from dragging the whole person toward every passing attraction.[33]

From this perspective, the brain may be imagined as a receiver or instrument. A radio does not compose the music it makes audible; it receives and translates a signal. In the same way, the receiver hypothesis asks whether the brain might filter or express a form of consciousness that is not wholly generated by its material processes. It is an evocative comparison, and it gives shape to a genuine metaphysical possibility. Yet the radio analogy cannot establish the hypothesis: electromagnetic signals can be independently measured, while no comparable external source of consciousness has been demonstrated. The brain's close dependence on conscious function remains one of the strongest facts any theory must explain.

The metaphor is still useful at the level of lived experience. A musical instrument may be finely made, yet it must be tuned; a mind may possess great capacity, yet its attention can be distorted by agitation, craving, and fear. When the senses are repeatedly pulled outward, a person becomes

reactive, scattered, and easily exhausted. When attention is trained, experience becomes clearer. Whether one understands the brain as producer, receiver, or an aspect of a deeper unity, the discipline of attention remains indispensable.

Imagine, then, a community of frog scientists living in a pool beside a great Parliament House. They decide to understand the building through careful observation. They begin on a Sunday and see no one enter. They conclude that the building is an inert block of stone. On Monday people stream through its doors; by Saturday the building is empty again. The frogs revise their theory: the walls must attract human beings on six days and repel them on the seventh. Then comes a festival, and the crowds gather outside rather than entering. The frogs invent exceptions. A procession circles the building; another exception is added. Their tables grow more complicated, their predictions less reliable, and at last they declare the building governed by an unknowable law of indeterminacy.

The frogs have not failed because they observed carefully. They have failed because they mistook the limits of their observation for the limits of reality. They can record footsteps and movement, but they cannot see the language, intentions, civic rules, and shared meanings that explain why the people gather. Their measurements are not false; their interpretation is incomplete. The parable does not overturn physics or discredit empirical inquiry. It reminds us that a phenomenon may have dimensions of meaning that are invisible to an observer who has not learned how to look for them.

The lesson applies to the study of human beings. A person can be described through anatomy, neural activity, hormones, behaviour, and social conditions. Such descriptions are valuable, but no single one should be confused with the entirety of the person. First-person inquiry adds another kind of access. Through meditation, self-observation, and disciplined reflection, one can notice the movement of thought and desire from within. This inward work does not replace measurement; it explores a dimension of experience that measurement alone cannot exhaust.

A familiar Indian parable tells of ten travellers who cross a river and count one another to make sure no one has drowned. Each counts the other nine and forgets to count himself. They mourn the missing tenth man until a passer-by asks them to count again, this time including the person doing the counting. The tenth man was never lost. He was present throughout, hidden only by the direction of attention.

The parable turns the gaze back upon the one who sees. Human beings search the world for certainty, identity, and lasting happiness, yet often overlook the fact of awareness through which the search takes place. The point is not that all ignorance is unreal or that knowledge of the self removes every difficulty. It is that the subject cannot be treated merely as one more object among objects. The person who studies the world is also part of the world being studied. A full account of reality must make room for both sides of that encounter.

In the Indian traditions, the distinction between knowledge and action is not always a conflict. The insight of *jnana* and the discipline of *karma yoga* can be brought together: one acts in the world without allowing the ego's hunger for ownership to dominate every action. Freedom is not achieved by refusing to act, but by acting without imagining oneself to be an isolated island. The individual contributes a particular movement to a larger life, and the quality of that contribution depends upon clarity, restraint, and care.

Persian thought offers another path into the relation between inwardness and the world. In Zoroastrian tradition, *Vohu Manah*, the Good Mind, is closely associated with right thought and ethical choice; *Asha* names truth, order, and rightness. Thought is not treated as an excuse to withdraw from the world. It is bound to the responsibility of choosing what is true and beneficial. In the later Persian philosophy of Suhrawardi, the language of illumination and the imaginal world opens a

different inquiry into the relation between sensible experience and forms of inward reality. These are distinct historical traditions, yet each reminds us that thought has a moral as well as an intellectual dimension.[40, 41]

A disordered inner life casts a shadow on the world around it. Fear can turn a neutral encounter into a threat; resentment can make every difference appear hostile; generosity can reveal possibilities that suspicion conceals. We do not literally project a measurable field of thought-forms into the street, but our inward condition does shape our conduct, our attention, and the emotional atmosphere we create with others. A calm mind can become a source of steadiness; a disciplined mind can act without spreading its agitation into every room it enters.

The contemplative traditions of Tibet deepen this inquiry through practices of attention and mind training. In Dzogchen, *rigpa* names a form of pristine awareness, while ordinary conceptual activity is often discussed through the language of mind and thought. The distinction is subtle and belongs to a specific contemplative lineage; it should not be reduced to a simple opposition between a bad thinking mind and a good silent mind. The practical discovery is that thoughts and emotions can be observed without being obeyed. Anger may arise without becoming an action; fear may be felt without being allowed to govern the whole future.[42]

The Daoist tradition offers a related but distinct image of balance. Yin and Yang do not describe a war between good and evil; they describe interdependent tendencies whose movement gives rise to change. Through *wu wei*, often translated as non-forcing or effortless action, the person learns to act in accordance with the grain of a situation rather than exhausting strength against every current. This is not passivity. Water yields, yet wears down stone; a reed bends, yet survives the storm. The wisdom lies in knowing when to advance, when to wait, and when a different path will accomplish what force cannot.[43]

When sensory discipline, inward illumination, contemplative awareness, and Daoist balance meet in a human life, the result is not escape from the world. It is a more lucid way of inhabiting it. The mind becomes less captive to every impulse; attention gains direction; action becomes more deliberate. Whether consciousness is ultimately generated by the brain or expressed through it remains an open question. The art of tuning the instrument, however, is already before us.

5 The Fledgling's Wings, the Concentric Hearth of Woman, and the Suicidal Madness of War

A philosophy that speaks of the Whole must eventually leave the sanctuary of metaphysics and enter the classroom, the home, the public square, and the battlefield. If every person is a distinct bead upon a shared thread, then our institutions should help each life unfold without severing the relationships that make life possible. A society is judged not only by the knowledge it stores or the wealth it produces, but by the human beings it allows to become.

Consider the young bird. It emerges into a world it did not build, sheltered by a nest it did not make alone. Its markings and song are its own, yet it shares the wider destiny of the flock. It needs nourishment, protection, practice, and open air. No wise parent bird demands that every chick become identical to the strongest bird in the tree. The young must grow into the form of life that is theirs, and the work of care is to make that growth possible.

Human childhood deserves the same patience. Every child carries a distinct pattern of curiosity, ability, temperament, and promise. Education should offer knowledge and discipline, but it should

also discover what gives a particular child energy and purpose. When schooling becomes a one-way street, when it rewards compliance more than curiosity and treats difference as a fault to be corrected, it risks clipping the very wings it was meant to strengthen. The child learns to reproduce answers without learning how to ask a question; learns to seek approval without discovering an inner direction.

This does not mean abandoning shared standards or leaving children without guidance. A fledgling needs a nest before it needs the open sky. Children need language, mathematics, history, science, moral boundaries, and the experience of working with others. But these foundations should open the world rather than close it. Education becomes most alive when teaching and discovery move in both directions: the teacher offers accumulated knowledge, while the student brings questions and capacities that change the encounter. A flourishing school helps each child develop competence, confidence, and a sense of belonging. Research on educational interventions grounded in self-determination theory likewise emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in learning.[44]

The image of the nest leads naturally to the hearth. In many human communities, women have been central to the daily work of sustaining life: bearing and raising children, preserving knowledge, maintaining relationships, organizing care, and holding together the rhythms of family and community. The village gathers around its hearth; the city depends upon networks of care; the nation depends upon the often unseen labour through which life is renewed. In this sense, woman can be understood as a centre of concentric circles: from the intimate life of the household outward toward the wider human world.

This is not a claim that every woman must be a mother, that care belongs exclusively to women, or that women possess one unchanging nature. Such claims would turn an image of dignity into another cage. The deeper principle is that the work of care, continuity, and relationship belongs at the centre of public life rather than at its margins. Women must be free to shape the institutions of their communities and nations, not merely to sustain them invisibly. A society that honours women does not confine them to the hearth; it recognizes that the wisdom formed in care has a rightful place wherever collective decisions are made.

From the hearth we arrive at democracy. A true democracy is more than a procedure for counting votes. It is a recognition that every person possesses equal dignity and that political power must answer to those whose lives it shapes. The beads may differ in colour and form, but none is entitled to claim that the thread belongs to it alone. Equality is not the denial of difference; it is the refusal to turn difference into a licence for domination. Economic power, gender, ancestry, class, and education must never become measures of a person's basic worth.

When this sense of shared dignity is lost, war becomes one of the clearest expressions of collective blindness. A nation may describe its violence as necessity, honour, revenge, or security. Sometimes force is used to defend people from aggression; the moral reality of conflict cannot be understood through slogans alone. Yet war always carries a terrible contradiction: human beings destroy the lives, homes, histories, and futures of other human beings whose hopes are not fundamentally different from their own. It is as though one hand of a body were persuaded to mutilate the other and call the act victory.

The image of the Whole does not remove the need to resist tyranny or protect the vulnerable. It changes the measure by which resistance is judged. The purpose of power should be to preserve the conditions of life, not to glorify destruction. A mature civilization would treat war not as a theatre for national vanity, but as a human catastrophe to be prevented wherever possible and ended as swiftly

and justly as circumstances permit. Peace is not weakness. It is the demanding work of building institutions in which fear, humiliation, and domination do not become the only languages people understand.

A small fable may illuminate the difference between strength and wisdom. Imagine an eaglehawk that grows so proud of its power that it terrorizes every creature below. The larger birds attack it in open battle and are driven back. A little owl watches from the edge of the forest. It sees that the eaglehawk's strength depends upon a fortress built around a single weakness. The owl brings the smaller birds together, and they find a way to deprive the fortress of its power. The great bird is not defeated by a greater display of force, but by patient perception and cooperation. The overlooked become decisive because they see what the mighty have ceased to notice.

The fable is not a promise that every conflict can be solved without force. It is a warning against meeting every act of domination on the terms chosen by the dominator. Wisdom asks what sustains the violence, what alliances can be built, what pressure can be applied, and how the lives of the vulnerable can be protected. The strongest response is not always the loudest. Sometimes it is the one that restores a future in which fewer people need to fight.

6 Unmasking the Shadow Theatre: The Magnet of Intention, the Chameleon Ego, and the Ocean Beyond the Subconscious

To empower a human being in daily life, philosophy must illuminate the subtle forces that shape behaviour. We can understand the architecture of the cosmos and still remain prisoners of resentment, fear, distraction, and the need for approval. The great questions of existence are not separate from the small decisions through which a person spends a day. They meet in the movement of attention: what we notice, what we avoid, what we pursue, and what we allow to define us.

There is a powerful psychological principle in the discipline of focused intention. When a person gives sustained attention to a clear and constructive goal, perception begins to organize around it. Opportunities become easier to notice; effort becomes more consistent; distractions can be judged against a chosen direction; and the person becomes more likely to persist through difficulty. A goal held clearly in the mind can act like a magnet, not because thought bends the external world through an invisible physical force, but because intention changes what we notice and how we act. Research on implementation intentions shows how linking a goal to specific plans can help translate intention into behaviour.[45]

This inward magnetism becomes stronger when joined to the power of the Whole. The isolated ego seeks achievement only as proof of its own superiority. It may gain possessions, followers, or status, yet remain surrounded by rivalry and fear. A person who aligns personal development with a wider good discovers another source of energy: cooperation. The solitary oarsman who fights the rhythm of the crew exhausts himself in circles; the crew that rows together can cross a sea. Collective effort does not erase individual talent. It gives talent a direction and a field in which it can become useful.

Why, then, do people so often sabotage the very aims they consciously desire? Much of human behaviour is shaped by patterns that operate before reflection has a chance to intervene. We are drawn to certain people and repelled by others; sometimes the attraction reveals an unacknowledged longing, while rejection exposes a quality we cannot yet accept in ourselves. This is not a universal rule, and another person's behaviour should never be treated as a simple mirror of our own wounds.

Still, relationships can reveal parts of the self that remain difficult to see alone.

Out of fear of exclusion, many people develop a **chameleon persona**. They alter their opinions, tone, and values to fit the atmosphere around them. Adaptability is not a flaw; social life requires us to listen, compromise, and read a situation. The danger comes when adaptation becomes self-erasure, when a person changes colour so often that the original pattern is forgotten. The chameleon learns to survive the room but loses the feeling of being at home within himself.

The same fear can produce **black-and-white thinking**. The mind divides the world into pure allies and pure enemies, absolute success and total failure, all good and all bad. Such divisions offer temporary relief because they simplify a complicated reality. But they also make learning difficult. A person who cannot tolerate ambiguity cannot recognize mixed motives, partial truths, or the possibility of change. The opposite of rigid thinking is not the absence of judgement. It is the capacity to judge carefully without turning every disagreement into a war between absolute good and absolute evil.

The image of Yin and Yang can help us contemplate this movement of opposites, provided it is not used to excuse cruelty or erase moral distinctions. Light and darkness, rest and activity, receiving and giving, firmness and flexibility are interdependent aspects of life. Yet not every action is balanced by its opposite, and some forms of harm demand clear boundaries. True balance is not moral indifference. It is the ability to respond to reality without becoming captive to an extreme.

A person's view of the self also shapes the world that seems available to them. Chronic negative self-perception can become a prison: every difficulty confirms inadequacy, every success is dismissed as luck, and every new opportunity appears dangerous. A grounded positive self-perception is different from vanity. It is the recognition that one's worth does not depend upon perfection and that ability can develop through effort, support, and experience. The mind becomes more willing to attempt what once seemed impossible when it is no longer required to prove its worth before it begins.

This brings us to the difference between **natural possession and clinging**. Human beings need homes, resources, tools, money, and personal space. There is nothing inherently wrong with possessing what allows a person to live and fulfil responsibilities. Clinging begins when the possession becomes the possessor: when the fear of losing an object governs the mind, when accumulation becomes a substitute for self-worth, or when protection of property takes priority over relationships and life itself. To hold something well is to use it, care for it, and understand its place. To cling is to be held by it.

The social mask, or *persona*, is familiar in Jungian psychology. It is the face through which a person meets the world: the professional, the parent, the friend, the citizen. The mask is not necessarily false. Social roles can express real parts of a person and make shared life possible. Trouble begins when a role becomes so rigid that no other part of the person is permitted to appear. The mask that once protected the self can become a prison that prevents the self from growing.[46]

Beneath the mask there may arise an **idealized self**: a perfect image of who one believes one must become in order to deserve love, approval, or safety. Karen Horney explored how such an idealized image can become a demanding inner authority. It promises worth in the future while making the present self feel permanently inadequate. A person may become highly accomplished and still feel that the achievement is never enough, because the imagined standard keeps moving beyond reach.[47]

When warmth and recognition are absent, some people seek attention through disruption or

conflict. Negative attention can feel preferable to the experience of being unseen. Yet behaviour has many possible causes: distress, fear, learned patterns, unmet needs, impulsivity, or deliberate strategy. The important question is not to label every disruptive person as secretly seeking attention, but to ask what need or history may be expressed through the behaviour. Compassion does not mean abandoning boundaries; it means looking beneath the surface before deciding what a person is.

Even birth order can become part of the stories people tell about themselves. The **middle child** may feel positioned between the authority of the firstborn and the special attention sometimes given to the youngest. In one family, this position may encourage diplomacy and independence; in another, it may mean little at all. Family size, temperament, age gaps, culture, parental attention, and economic circumstances matter. Large-sample research has not supported many popular claims that birth order determines broad personality traits. The middle child's vantage point is therefore best understood as a possible experience, not a fixed psychological law.[48, 49]

Beneath these personal adaptations lies the deeper territory of archetype and the unconscious. Jung's language of the Hero, the Mother, the Shadow, the Wise Guide, and the Trickster has proved powerful in the interpretation of dreams, stories, art, and collective imagination. These patterns can help us recognize recurring dramas through which people understand themselves and one another. Their status as universal structures of a collective unconscious remains debated; they are most useful here as interpretive images rather than as independently demonstrated entities inhabiting the mind.[46]

The word *subconscious* can suggest one vast underground chamber, but the human mind is more complex. Memory, emotion, habit, implicit learning, automatic perception, and attention operate through different processes. The ocean remains a beautiful metaphor because it expresses the depth of what is not immediately visible. Beneath the surface of a person's conscious explanation may lie old fears, forgotten associations, inherited patterns, and imaginative forces that influence behaviour without announcing themselves.

Yet the deepest person may not be identical with any of these patterns. The **Transcendent Self** names the possibility that awareness is more fundamental than the roles, memories, and thoughts that pass through it. In some Indian and contemplative traditions, the task is not to manufacture a new identity but to recognize what remains when the changing contents of experience are observed without attachment. Whether this points to an immortal consciousness, a distinctive structure of experience, or a powerful form of self-understanding remains a metaphysical question. Its practical invitation is clear: you are not only your social mask, your childhood wounds, your fears, or the story you tell about your past.

The ego is a wave upon the surface; the deeper mind is an ocean of memory and possibility; awareness is the space in which both can be noticed. A person who learns to observe the movement of thought gains a little freedom from being carried by every thought. In that freedom, the self becomes less brittle, relationships become less defensive, and action can be guided by something more enduring than immediate reaction.

7 The Salmon's Revolt: Swimming Upstream Beyond the Mortal Horizon Toward Our Cosmic Destiny

What, then, is the meaning of a human life? Perhaps it lies in the gradual movement beyond the narrow identity we first inherit: beyond the mask, beyond the fear of difference, beyond the belief that possession is the same as fulfilment. The deepest self may be more mysterious than the ego can imagine. The world may be more interconnected than the isolated mind can see. Even without certainty about what consciousness is or what awaits beyond death, a person can grow toward a wider form of life.

Radical acceptance is one of the conditions of that growth. It does not mean surrender to injustice or passive submission to whatever happens. It means seeing reality clearly enough to respond without wasting the whole of one's strength in denial. Acceptance of mortality can make the present more precious. Acceptance of uncertainty can make inquiry more honest. Acceptance of another person's dignity can restrain the impulse to dominate. And acceptance of one's own limitations can become the beginning of development rather than the end of possibility.

Now look at the salmon. When the time comes to migrate, it turns upstream, against the river's current. It meets waterfalls, rocks, and the pressure of moving water. It does not choose the easiest direction; it follows the deep instruction of its life. Its journey is demanding, exposed, and full of obstacles, yet it moves toward the source from which renewal becomes possible.

The salmon becomes an image of the human spirit refusing to drift with every current of convention. There is a downstream movement in modern life: the pressure to consume without reflection, to measure worth by productivity, to repeat inherited opinions, to trade inward freedom for the comfort of belonging to a crowd. The current is powerful because it is familiar. It asks little of us beyond surrender. The salmon reminds us that life sometimes requires resistance, and that the path toward renewal may lead directly against the direction in which the world is rushing.

Be the salmon—revolt. Revolt against the lie that you are merely an isolated biological machine. Revolt against the school that confuses obedience with intelligence. Revolt against the culture that asks you to worship your mask and fear your own depth. Revolt against the politician who turns human beings into enemies for the sake of power. Revolt against the habit of treating the natural world as a warehouse of objects rather than the living ground of every human future. And revolt against the ego's own temptation to become the very thing it condemns: rigid, certain, possessive, and blind to the Whole.

This is not a call to despise the material world. The body is not an enemy; it is the vessel through which we love, work, think, and create. The Earth is not a prison; it is the ground of our existence. The river is not an obstacle to transcendence; it is the living path through which the salmon travels. A philosophy that speaks of higher consciousness while neglecting the conditions of life contradicts itself. To protect the source is to protect the world that makes the journey possible.

Nor should humanity imagine that it has reached the final measure of intelligence. The universe is vast, and the possibility of life elsewhere remains open. Other forms of intelligence may exist beyond our knowledge; the future of our own species may contain transformations we cannot yet foresee. These possibilities are not guarantees of a predetermined cosmic destiny. They are reasons for humility, curiosity, and a refusal to mistake the present limits of human understanding for the limits of reality.

The task closest to us is already immense. We can raise children without clipping their wings,

give women an equal voice in the shaping of the world, build institutions that honour every person's dignity, protect the rivers and forests that sustain life, and learn to act with courage without surrendering to hatred. We can become more fully ourselves while remembering that no self is made alone.

The basket may be temporary, yet the question of the balloon remains open. The beads are distinct, yet the thread is shared. The salmon swims upstream, not to escape the river, but to reach the source from which life continues—and to protect that source for all who follow.

References

[1] Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). "First Peoples of Australia." https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/first-peoples-australia.

[2] Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). "Welcome to Country: What is Country?" https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/welcome-country.

[3] Parks Australia. "Tjukurpa." Uluṟu-Kata Tjuṯa National Park. https://uluru.gov.au/discover/culture/tjukurpa/.

[4] Western Australian Museum. "Tjukurr(pa) – The Dreaming." https://museum.wa.gov.au/explore/wa-goldfields/first-peoples/tjukurrpa-dreaming/.

[5] Descartes, R. (1641/1984). *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Vol. II. Translated by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, and D. Murdoch. Cambridge University Press.

[6] Robinson, H. (2025). "Dualism." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dualism/.

[7] Wilson, M. (2023). "René Descartes." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/descartes/.

[8] Plato. *Phaedo*. In J. M. Cooper (Ed.), *Plato: Complete Works*. Hackett, 1997.

[9] Plato. *Republic*. In J. M. Cooper (Ed.), *Plato: Complete Works*. Hackett, 1997.

[10] Fine, G. (2024). "Plato's Middle Period Metaphysics and Epistemology." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-metaphysics/.

[11] Roughsey, G. (1975). *The Rainbow Serpent*. Angus & Robertson.

[12] National Centre for Australian Children's Literature. "The Rainbow Serpent," by Dick Roughsey. https://www.ncacl.org.au/atsi_resource/the-rainbow-serpent/.

[13] Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. "Wagilak Sisters" collection record. https://collections.maa.cam.ac.uk/objects/550724/.

[14] National Museum of Australia. "Central Arnhem Land: The Wägilak story." https://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/old-masters/central-arnhem-land.

[15] Museums Victoria. "Tiddalik the Frog." Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre. https://museumsvictoria.com.au/childrens-week/look-and-listen/tiddalik-the-frog/.

[16] Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation. "Stories & Songlines." https://gunaikurnai.org/our-culture/stories/.

[17] City of Whittlesea. "Wurundjeri-willam People." https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/Services/Support-for-people/Aboriginal-community/Local-Aboriginal-history-Wurundjeri-willam-people.

[18] Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. *Whole of Country Plan 2025–2035*. https://www.wurundjeri.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Wurundjeri-Woi-wurrung-Whole-of-Country-Plan-2025-2035.pdf.

[19] Art Gallery of South Australia. "The Seven Sisters (Pleiades) and the man Nyiru (Orion) (Kungkarangkalpa munu wati Nyirunya)." https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/collection-publications/collection/works/the-seven-sisters-pleiades-and-the-man-nyiru-orion-kungkarangkalpa-munu-wati-nyirunya/23402/.

[20] Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council. "Kungkarangkalpa (Seven Sisters)." https://www.npywc.org.au/blogs/stories/kungkarangkalpa-at-the-national-gallery-of-australia.

[21] National Museum of Australia. "Seven Sisters." https://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/kaninjaku-canning-stock-route/stories/seven-sisters.

[22] The Metropolitan Museum of Art. "Waigan Djanghara: Wanjina." Collection record, 1990/2019. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/778892.

[23] Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC News) (2026). "Kondoli Dreaming brings Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri knowledge to firefighting." 25 January 2026. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-01-25/kondoli-dreaming-ramindjeri-ngarrindjeri-firefighting/106219126.

[24] South Australian Whale Centre. "The Story of Kondoli," as told by Elders from the Ramindjeri Heritage Association. https://sawhalecentre.com.au/the-story-of-kondoli/.

[25] New South Wales Department of Planning and Environment. *Our Water Our Country: An Information Manual for Aboriginal People and Communities about the Water Reform Process* (2012). "How Baiame's Ngunnhu came to be." https://publications.water.nsw.gov.au/watergroupjspui/bitstream/100/1811/1/Our_Water_Our_Country_-_An_Information_Manual_for_Aboriginal_People_and_Communities_about_the_water_reform_process_-_February_2012.pdf.

[26] NSW Government. *Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment*, Appendix C. https://www.resources.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/appendix-c-aboriginal-heritage-impact-assessment.PDF.

[27] Minyumai Land Holding Aboriginal Corporation. "The Dirawong." https://www.minyumai.org.au/our-history.

[28] NSW Government. "Goanna Headland." https://www.nsw.gov.au/visiting-and-exploring-nsw/locations-and-attractions/goanna-headland.

[29] City of Swan. "Aboriginal History." https://www.swan.wa.gov.au/city-and-council/city-history/aboriginal-history.

[30] Parker, K. L. (1905). *The Euahlayi Tribe: A Study of Aboriginal Life in Australia*. London: Archibald Constable. Digitized edition: https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3819.

[31] Hamacher, D. W., & Norris, R. P. (2016). "Australian Aboriginal Astronomy and Navigation." *Publications of the Astronomical Society of Australia*, 33, e038. https://doi.org/10.1017/pasa.2016.25.

[32] Massola, A. (1968). *Bunjil's Cave: Myths, Legends and Superstitions of the Aborigines of South-East Australia*. Lansdowne Press.

[33] Easwaran, E. (Trans.) (2007). *The Bhagavad Gita*. 2nd ed. Nilgiri Press.

[34] Dosoo, K. (2018). "Ancient Egyptian Religion." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.013.246.

[35] Kamrin, J. (2017). "Telling Time in Ancient Egypt." The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. https://www.metmuseum.org/essays/telling-time-in-ancient-egypt.

[36] Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. "The Netherworld." https://egymonuments.gov.eg/en/collections/the-netherworld.

[37] Planck Collaboration; Aghanim, N., et al. (2020). "Planck 2018 results. VI. Cosmological parameters." *Astronomy & Astrophysics*, 641, A6. https://doi.org/10.1051/0004-6361/201833910.

[38] Wu, W., & Morales, J. (2024). "The Neuroscience of Consciousness." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consciousness-neuroscience/.

[39] Mashour, G. A. (2024). "Anesthesia and the neurobiology of consciousness." *Neuron*, 112(10), 1553–1567. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2024.03.002.

[40] Narten, J. "Bahman i. In the Avesta." *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bahman-vohu-manah/bahman-i-in-the-avesta/.

[41] Marcotte, R. (2019). "Suhrawardi." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/suhrawardi/.

[42] van Schaik, S. (2016). "Dzogchen." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.013.178.

[43] "Daoism." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/daoism/.

[44] Wang, Y., Wang, H., Wang, S., Wind, S. A., & Gill, C. (2024). "A systematic review and meta-analysis of self-determination-theory-based interventions in the education context." *Learning and Motivation*, 87, 102015. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lmot.2024.102015.

[45] "The when and how of planning: Meta-analysis of the scope and components of implementation intentions in 642 tests." (2024). *European Review of Social Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2024.2334563.

[46] Jung, C. G. (1968). *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. 2nd ed., translated by R. F. C. Hull. Princeton University Press.

[47] Horney, K. (1950). *Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Toward Self-Realization*. W. W. Norton.

[48] Rohrer, J. M., Egloff, B., & Schmukle, S. C. (2015). "Examining the effects of birth order on personality." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 112(46), 14224–14229. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1506451112.

[49] Ashton, M. C., & Lee, K. (2025). "Personality differences between birth order categories and across sibship sizes." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 122(1), e2416709121. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2416709121.