

Book Review:

# Religious and Spiritual Anarchy?

Spiritual Destinations of an Anarchist

By Peter Lamborn Wilson.

<http://creativecommons.org>

(Berkeley: Audent Press, 2015)

(New York: Autonomedia.org) ①

Reviewed by Jennifer Rose (of FireAnt).

In this book, Spiritual Destinations of an Anarchist, Peter Lamborn Wilson has confirmed so many questions and ideas i've had over the years as both an anarchist and spiritual student. Over the past decades of my life, i've explored the many spiritual traditions and religious doctrines in the world. As a teenager who was raised by Christian parents and attended church/Sunday School at Calvary Chapel of Riverside (now Harvest Christian Fellowship) and Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa, i delved into Satanism and Wicca, fascinated by Nature and the Darkness of the Shadow World.

In the 1990's, i studied and practiced the Celto-Germanic Pagan paths of Old Europe — i.e. Druidry and Asatru/

Odinism, until 1998 when I became a Siddha Yoga student. Since then, I've studied the Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu, (Taoism), Neterianism (Egyptian polytheism), the Gallae (transgender priestesses/devotees of the Goddess Cybele), and Native American spirituality (i.e. Mother Earth pantheism or Nature worship).

As a post-Native, white-identified anarchist, I've never allowed myself to succumb to the "crypto-authoritarian" anarchist tendency to denounce and exclude each other over questions of atheism/agnosticism versus potential spiritual/religious concepts. (as Wilko notes in "Anarchist Religion?", page 47). I've always been attracted to the Mother Earth and Nature spirituality of my Native ancestors who were pantheists.

As a transFeminist and bisexual queer woman, I've always identified with the Goddess-worship of my Amazonian ancestors, like Queen Hippolyta — who were devoted to Artemis - the divine Huntress, and Hecate Dark Moon.

As a graduate student of Siddha Yoga and Taoism, i've always been attracted to the Goddess Shakti (aka-Kali-Durga, Kundalini, the Devi, Parvati, Lakshmi, Radhrani, Saraswati, and so many other names). This is known as "Shaktism" (Goddess-worship), a third sect beside Vaishnavism and within Shaivism.

As a current student in the Church of the Larger Fellowship - Unitarian Universalist, i continue my own spiritual path via self-help and self-study, spiritual correspondence courses, and books like "Spiritual Destinations of an Anarchist".

In the first article, "Chaos, Eros, Earth, and Old Night: Radical Neo-Hermeticism and Ecological Resistance", the author discusses Nietzsche (The Will to Power), and "the role played by Hermeticism in the complex struggle for paradigm Hegemony in seventeenth-century science" (p.4).

{ "The proposal: to revive Hermetic myth  
of the living Earth as an effective  
means toward the radical trans-  
formation of scientific, technological,  
and indeed social paradigms;  
to counter utilitarianism, 'progressism',

{ capitalism, and other destructive }  
{ tendencies based on classical }  
{ modern science (loosely defined }  
{ as knowledge of the material }  
{ world). " (p.10).

The idea is based in large part on  
Hermetic theorist Charles Fourier, who  
"experienced in 1799 his own vast vision  
of the animate universe". According to,  
"Fourier enthroned Eros as the reality  
principle, and on this basis deduced the  
need for the eradication of civilization  
and the inevitability of Utopia" (p.18).

"In The Temporary Autonomous  
Zone it was suggested that  
'disappearance' — meaning the  
driftlike avoidance of all  
Categories — could be considered  
a tactic for radical liberatory  
action. Here, in counterbalance,  
it is suggested that there  
may also exist tactics of  
reappearance? (p.25).

In the next and following articles  
Wilson explores "Spiritual Anarchism"  
Topics for Research" and "Anarchist

Religion?" (the first which challenges "the philosophical weakness of anarchism sorely lies somewhere near the fault line between meaninglessness and ethics," (pp. 39-40). The second which, besides challenging the aforementioned "crypto-authoritarian" anarchist atheist, notes quite aptly:

{"Oscar Wilde was first to notice {  
the profound likeness of anarchism  
and Taoism which structurally  
is an acephalous congeries of  
polytheist (pagan) sects with a  
tendency toward heterodoxy and  
non-authoritarian social values"  
(p. 50).}

In "Quantum, Chaos, & the Oneness of Being: Meditations on *Kitāb al-Alef*" presents Islamic concepts of *al-wahdat al-wujūd*, or the oneness of being, based on spiritual studies of the Qur'an by the Great Sheikh Ibn 'Arabī, and the Grand Unified Theory ("GUT") of Stephen Hawking, in relation to Chaos Theory.  
↳ "Those who see in the principle  
of chaos not a fearful void, but  
the unfolding of what Ibn 'Arabī

{ calls continual creation, will seek  
and demand of this new paradigm  
that it express itself not in  
violence and Armageddon, but in  
liberation and self-realization." }  
(pp. 86-87).

Next, in "Anarchy & Ecstasy," it takes these early discussions a step further. "Both fields now view chaos as more than merely violent disorder or entropy." (p. 87). It mentions "the American 'chaos' school of anarchism (such as Discordian Zen, anarcho-Taoism, 'Ontological Anarchy', etc.)" (p. 92). It reviews John Moore's pamphlet Anarchy & Ecstasy: Visions of Halcyon Days.

In "The Evil Eye" . . . "the Evil Eye — mal ochen — truly exists, & modern ~~western~~ culture has so deeply repressed our knowledge of it that its effects overwhelm us..." (p. 101).

"The Secret of the Assassins" and "Secular Antinomian Anabaptist Neo-Luddism" both explore versions of spiritual or religious anarchism within an obscure Sufi sect of Shi'a or "adherents", a minority sect within the Islamic Ummah (community).

and within Old Order Amish, Mennonites, Brethren... Quakers, Bruderhof, etc., who are descended from the original Anabaptists who were "out-and-out" antinomian anarchists"! (p.132).<sup>③</sup>

"Spiritual Destinations of an Anarchist" by Peter Louborn Wilson concludes with "Interview with Moto-Goi", "Moto Interview (Jacob Erhart)" and, "Storm Your Prayen Carpet with Wine", with "Some Other Titles You Might Like". It's a much needed and welcome addition to the advancement of modern anarchist theory, and particularly welcome among insurrectionary anarchists of praxis like myself!

Long Live the Spirit of Anarchy!



### Notes

1. Ardent Press, PO Box 3920, Berkeley CA 94703; [ardentpress.com](http://ardentpress.com) — Autonomedia, P.O.Box 568, Brooklyn, NY 11211-0568; [autonomedia.org](http://autonomedia.org)

2. Hakim Bey. T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism. (New York: Autonomedia, 1985, 1991).

3. I have one criticism, and must dispute

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wilson's statement: "But in the USA now, anarchism has no economic institutions capable of providing livelihoods for its adherents. No food or craft coops, no farms or Community Supported Agriculture. This is incorrect! There are many such examples of an anarchist economy, including the food and craft coop, or autonomous community spaces listed in every issue of Slingshot. There are Community-gardens, such as the one run by Fireant Collective member in the North Woods of Maine!"



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