

Daily Meditation 02/17/22

The Black Madonna Makes It To Times Square

Good morning.

We continue to meditate on the Black Madonna and to celebrate that she's made it to Times Square, which is quite ironic since Amazon is paying for her presence there, and she's just not exactly a champion of patriarchal capitalism.

But here are some more dimensions to the Black Madonna story. Henry Adams wrote a very iconic book on Mont-St.-Michel and Chartres. And he talks about how the role that Mary played in the Middle Ages: that she was, he says, "the Buddhist element in Christianity. For with her, as with Buddha, compassion is the first of all the virtues."

Well, I think that's true of Jesus too. But he says that compassion included the idea of "sorrowful contemplation,"... sorrowful contemplation.

So the role of grief is part of the Black Madonna, though not the only part.

"But above all, Mary was a friend of outlaws."

... Mary was a friend of outlaws.

"She appealed to the masses who longed for power above law --"

Maybe we would say today, beyond lawyers...

"or above the contorted mass of ignorance and absurdity, bearing the name of law."

These are the words of Henry Adams in his classic book.

"And this power had to be more than human: it required the Goddess."

So the Black Madonna, the goddess, provides a room with the universe as a cosmic lab, where all creatures gather. That's my reading, not his words. This is on page 239 of my book on the sacred masculine, where I'm talking about the wedding of the Green Man and Black Madonna.

Now, the word "Isis" and the Black Madonna comes from Africa, and she is the reincarnation, if you will, of the person of Isis. Eric Newman, the Jungian psychologist says of course that "Isis" means "throne" in an African language, in Egyptian I guess. And he says,

As mother and earth woman, the Great Mother is the 'throne,' pure and simple, and, characteristically, the woman's motherliness resides not only in the womb, but also in the seated woman's broad expanse of thigh, her lap on which the newborn child sits enthroned. To be taken on the lap is like being taken to the breast, a symbolic expression for adoption of the child, and also for the man, by the Feminine.

...adoption of the child and the man by the Feminine. So you can see how the Black Madonna is an alternative to patriarchy.

"It is no accident that the greatest Mother Goddess of the early cults was named Isis, the 'seat,' the 'throne.'"

Well, all Christians, too, call Mary the throne of God and the seat of wisdom.

"...The symbol of which she bears on her head; and the king who 'takes possession' of the earth, the Mother Goddess, does so by sitting on her in the literal sense of the word."

And of course, the word "throne" in Latin is "cathedra" -- there's the word "cathedral." So what the cathedral really means is not a place where the bishop sits. That's anthropocentrism. It's the place where the goddess sits ruling over the city and the land with justice for the poor, with compassion for those who suffer.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.