

NATAKA Research Institute

Wone Press

Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 20 (2026)

Gilgamesh and Enkidu

Participatory Extinction and the Seduction of the Cosmobian Being

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First edition: June 2026

Second revised edition: July 2026

Third revised edition: 12 August 2026 (Current version)

ABSTRACT

This paper contributes to the theoretical framework of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies by providing a philosophical interpretation of the Epic of Gilgamesh as an early example of participatory extinction. This concept describes the process by which an organic, cosmically integrated way of life (the cosmobian) is not merely destroyed by external civilisational forces, but rather is gradually seduced, domesticated and compelled to participate in its own displacement. The paper argues that the Epic of Gilgamesh offers one of humanity's earliest records of this process, as illustrated by the story of Enkidu. His transition from a wild, cosmobian existence to civilisation reveals a recurring pattern of separation, incorporation and loss. Drawing on the concept of the Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV), the analysis examines the so-called Shamhat Mechanism: the use of counterfeit transcendence — symbolic, social and spiritual substitutes for cosmic connection — to detach the cosmobian being from its original world while presenting this detachment as fulfilment. Through a close philosophical analysis of Enkidu's encounters with Shamhat and Humbaba, and his wasting death, the paper identifies three interrelated phases of psycho-cosmocide: the splitting of the self from its origins; the self-turning against the conditions of its own existence; and the grief that follows the recognition of irreversible loss. These phases are not interpreted as a singular historical sequence, but as a recurring structure that reappears across societies and generations. The paper concludes by returning to the silence of Enkidu at the end of the epic. This silence is not merely treated as a literary device, but as evidence of a deeper philosophical problem: once a world has been abandoned and its voice extinguished, what remains is not recovery, but the memory of a voice that, having once spoken from the Underworld, can no longer speak for itself.

Keywords: Psycho-Cosmocide; Participatory Extinction; Cosmobian Being; Civilisational Seduction; Civilisational Capture; Shamhat Mechanism; Counterfeit Transcendence; Epic of Gilgamesh; Enkidu.

Enkidu's journey into Uruk is humanity's oldest record of participatory extinction through civilisational seduction. Four thousand years later, Cosmobian peoples are still being persuaded to abandon their worlds through new Shamhats carrying the seductive promises of progress, development and salvation— luring them into planetary participatory extinction through the civilisational logic of extraction, production, and consumption.

Gilgamesh's grief at Enkidu's death is humanity's oldest record of civilisational demise through the loss of the cosmobian bond — the death of the wild companion who tethered him to a world beyond the walls of Uruk. Four thousand years later, cosmobian peoples still watch their Enkidu die within them, each act of Shamhat-seduction severing another thread to Cosmobian Reality, until what remains is a Gilgamesh-figure haunted by mortality, wandering the earth in search of a world that civilisation itself destroyed and can never restore.

INTRODUCTION

The Problem of Participatory Extinction

There is a reading of human history so disturbing in its implications that civilised thought has collectively refused to entertain it. It is not the familiar critique that civilisation has been destructive, exploitative or environmentally catastrophic — these charges have been made so often that they have become neutralised through institutionalisation. The reading proposed here is more fundamental: civilisation not only destroys the organic, cosmically integrated world from the outside, but also creates the desiring subjects who actively and enthusiastically participate in that destruction. The violence here is not merely conquest. It is seduction that leads a people to actively participate in their own destruction. This is the claim of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, and it is not a new one. In the most precise sense, it is the oldest claim — encoded in the oldest surviving literary document in human history.

Composed in ancient Sumer over four millennia ago, the Epic of Gilgamesh is not an adventure story. Rather, it is a philosophical account of the first recorded psycho-cosmocidal operation: the seduction of Enkidu, a cosmobian being; his domestication within the temple of civilisational pandemonium; his conversion into an agent against the natural order from which he emerged; and his slow, grief-stricken death within the walls of Uruk. The fact that humanity's first written story is precisely this story is of major philosophical significance: it is a story about the capture and killing of the wild, integrated self by an artificial system of desires and monuments.

Throughout this paper, the term 'cosmobian' designates a way of being rather than a historical epoch. It refers to a way of being characterised by non-dualistic integration with natural and cosmic systems, where the individual's interiority and the surrounding world are continuous, time is cyclical, and existence is sacred.

The cosmobian is not a primitive state of being, culture or society, nor a prehistoric stagnant species, in the condescending sense in which civilisational anthropology has deployed that term. The cosmobian is a philosophical category within the psycho-cosmocide paradigm. It is the term used to describe what we are before and beneath the civilisational process, and what the civilising process is fundamentally committed to destroying.

The paper is divided into five sections. The first section establishes the existential divergence between cosmobian reality and the civilisational world. It posits these as two incompatible ways of being, whose collision is necessarily destructive to one of them. The second section analyses the mechanics of capture, which the paper terms the Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV), and its use of counterfeit transcendence, through the figure of Shamhat and the domestication of Enkidu. The third section examines participatory extinction, the catastrophic turning point at which the captured Cosmobian being becomes an agent of destruction against its own origin. The fourth section traces the psycho-cosmocidal climax through Enkidu's illness, dreams and death. The final section concludes by examining Gilgamesh's return to Uruk — the

most uncomfortable moment in the text — as an instance of civilisational self-justification, and considers the silence left behind by the cosmobian voice.

This paper draws extensively on the Epic of Gilgamesh, not as a literary text to be interpreted, but as a philosophical archive to be read philosophically. Interpretation often seeks to situate a text within established historical, literary or cultural frameworks. The approach adopted here is different. It treats the text as a site of philosophical production, capable of generating insights that exceed the authors' intentions and the original context's horizons. Activating a text involves allowing its internal philosophical logic to reveal implications that may remain only partially visible at the narrative level. In this sense, the Epic of Gilgamesh is approached throughout as a document that knows more than it reveals. Beneath its narrative of kings, heroes, monsters, forests, gods and mortality lies a deeper record of a civilisation in the process of transformation at the time of its composition. What appears as myth and adventure can also be interpreted as an account of seduction, domestication, ecological transgression, grief and loss. This paper argues that these elements, when considered together, offer one of humanity's earliest reflections on the processes by which a cosmobian mode of being becomes captured, redirected and drawn into participating in its own extinction. This paper operates at the intersection of continental philosophy of culture, environmental philosophy, and philosophy of history. It is intended as a founding contribution to the field of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, rather than a survey of existing literature.

This reading joins a smaller body of scholarship that has already identified a colonial logic within the Enkidu narrative itself. Ekaputra Tupamahu has argued that Gilgamesh's response to Enkidu — seduction and cultivation rather than direct confrontation — enacts a “civilizing mission” structurally continuous with later colonial practice, drawing on Homi Bhabha's account of colonial mimicry to describe the result (Tupamahu 2014; Bhabha 1994).

What the present paper adds to that reading is not a sharper postcolonial vocabulary but an ontological one. The claim developed here, and across the wider Psycho-Cosmocide Studies corpus, is that what Enkidu loses in his domestication is not merely political voice but a cosmobian mode of being — a category defined against the general mechanism of the Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV) elaborated elsewhere in this Working Paper Series (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 1(B), 2026).

TWO WORLDS: COSMOBIAN REALITY AND CIVILISATIONAL REALITY

Cosmobian Reality: Being Within the Living World

The first depiction of Enkidu in the epic portrays him as a being in total environmental immersion.¹ He runs with the gazelles. He drinks from waterholes alongside wild animals. He knows nothing of cities, hierarchies or the production of surplus value. He is not primitive in any meaningful sense of deficiency or incompleteness. Rather, he is complete in a way that the civilised imagination finds almost incomprehensible, precisely because civilised subjectivity is constituted by its incompleteness — by the gap between what it is and what it desires to be. This is a gap that the system continuously produces and promises to fill.²

The condition of unified consciousness that the epic encodes in the figure of Enkidu's early existence can be articulated philosophically as the absence of the subject-object split that civilisational ontology establishes as its foundational operation. In the cosmobian mode of being, the mind, body and habitat exist in a continuous, non-exploitative feedback loop. The self is not experienced as a bounded entity of skin and will, standing over against a world of objects to be used or dominated. Rather, the self is a particular expression of the same living system that produces gazelles, water, wind and cedar forests.³ This is not mysticism, though civilisation will eventually classify it as such — a gesture that is itself an act of psycho-cosmocide, since classifying a mode of existence as a subjective feeling converts a philosophical claim into a psychological symptom.

Cosmobian temporality is equally foreign to civilisational experience. The cosmobian being inhabits what might be termed 'organic time': the cyclical temporality of the seasons, tides, birth, death and regeneration. This relationship to time is not simpler than the civilisational one; it is more complex because it requires continuous attunement to a living system whose rhythms are never identical and cannot be reduced to the mechanical regularity that civilisation substitutes for them. By contrast, civilisational time is linear, progressive and extractive. It converts the living

¹George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet I, lines 101–115. The description of Enkidu's initial existence in the steppe constitutes the text's foundational image of cosmobian being: a mode of life organised entirely around participation in the living system of the natural world, without hierarchy, accumulation, or the separation of subject from environment.

²Paul Shepard, *Nature and Madness* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1982), 3–26. Shepard argues that ontogenetic development in the human animal requires specific environmental contexts—chiefly wild, multi-species ecologies—that civilisation systematically destroys, producing what he calls a culturally normative psychopathology.

³Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 1–34. The Frankfurt School's analysis of enlightenment reason as domination provides partial structural analogues to the CPCV framework, though Adorno and Horkheimer remain within an epistemic rather than ontological register.

present into a resource for a perpetually deferred future, producing chronic anxiety in beings who are always becoming but never arriving.⁴

Finally, cosmobian reality is characterised by intrinsic value: a worldview in which existence itself is sacred and requires no external validation. The gazelle does not need to justify its existence. Nor does the cedar forest need to demonstrate its productivity. Being is not subject to disprovement or improvement in the cosmobian world. Only in the civilisational world must every form of existence — human and non-human — continuously prove its worth within a system of instrumental exchange. This shift from intrinsic to instrumental value is not an ethical choice that civilisation makes; it is an inherent condition of its existence. After all, a system that does not convert living beings into exploitable resources cannot sustain itself.⁵

What this section calls the cosmobian and the civilisational corresponds, at the level of general architecture, to a distinction drawn elsewhere in this Working Paper Series between the Given — the biological and existential circumstance into which every being is born without consent — and the Constructed — the symbolic, metaphysical and institutional worlds through which that circumstance is subsequently interpreted, organised and, eventually, colonised (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 29, 2026). Enkidu running with the gazelles is the Given lived directly; Uruk's walls, gate and monuments are the Constructed in its mature, self-concealing form. That the land itself — the steppe, the waterhole, the Cedar Forest — functions as the canvas upon which both orders are painted is developed at length elsewhere in the corpus (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 23, 2026).

Civilisational Reality: The World Built Against the Living

In contrast to the unified consciousness of the cosmobian being, civilisation instils what the present framework terms 'fragmented consciousness': the psychic split required to separate 'human' from 'nature', 'self' from 'world', 'master' from 'resource', 'rich' from 'poor', 'slave' from 'master', 'civilised' from 'uncivilised'. This split is not an intellectual error that could, in principle, be corrected by better reasoning. It is a fundamental requirement of the civilisational system. A being that experienced itself as part of the natural world could not execute the operations civilisation requires, such as clearing forests, mining mountains, domesticating animals and enslaving other human beings. This psychic split is not incidental to civilisation's project; it is a precondition of it.⁶

⁴Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard Trask (New York: Harcourt, 1959), 68–113. Eliade's phenomenology of sacred space illuminates the temple as the spatial centre of what this paper terms "civilisational pandemonium"—a manufactured axis mundi that substitutes for the organic sacred.

⁵David Graeber and David Wengrow, *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021), 7–19. Graeber and Wengrow's deconstruction of the "agricultural revolution" as a smooth transition challenges linear narratives of civilisational progress, though their politically democratic orientation leads them to different prescriptive conclusions than the present framework.

⁶The psychic split required by civilisational production—what Adorno and Horkheimer identify as the domination of nature as the precondition of the domination of human beings—is analysed in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 1–34. The present framework extends this analysis by locating the split not in Enlightenment rationalism but in the foundational moment of urban civilisation.

The walls of Uruk — the first thing the epic invites us to contemplate, even before the introduction of Gilgamesh — encode this operation spatially.⁷ The walls are not merely military fortifications. It is a philosophical statement: this is the limit of humanity, and everything outside this boundary is wild, threatening and open to exploitation. In the cosmopolitan reality, space is experienced as a continuous living field, but the wall converts it into property: a bounded domain within which the law of the civilisational system applies. Outside the walls lies the Cedar Forest, the domain of Humbaba and the sacred territory, all of which civilisation will eventually require to destroy.⁸

As noted above, civilisational time is linear and extractive. However, it is also, crucially, anxious. The construction of walls, the inscription of names on bricks and the creation of monuments are responses to a profound anxiety about mortality within the civilised psyche. By contrast, the cosmopolitan being is not free from the reality of death, grief or loss. However, because its existence is integrated within the broader cycles of life, death, regeneration, ancestry and the cosmos, it experiences mortality differently. What appears in civilisation as a problem to be conquered, postponed, memorialised or transcended is experienced within the cosmopolitan world as part of a wider living continuum.

Gilgamesh's tyranny in the early parts of the epic — his oppression of the people of Uruk and his insatiable demand for glory and conquest — is not an example of individual pathology. Rather, it is the logical behaviour of a consciousness that has lost its cosmic integration and must therefore compensate through increasingly frantic acts of self-assertion.⁹ The concept of counterfeit transcendence describes the civilisational substitute for the genuine cosmic connection severed by the split psyche. These substitutes — monuments, gold, institutional status and technological surrogates — are experienced as profound and valuable by the civilised subject because, within the terms of its own formation, the civilised subject has no access to what they counterfeit. The bread and beer that Shamhat offers Enkidu are not inferior to what he had in the wild. Within the civilisational world, they are genuinely nourishing and pleasurable and are a genuine marker of human belonging. The tragedy lies not in their worthlessness, but in the fact that they are purchased at the cost of something for which no price can be set. This is because the cosmopolitan being has been altered to the point where it can no longer clearly remember what was lost.¹⁰

⁷George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet I, lines 9–21. The opening lines of the epic famously direct the reader's attention to the walls of Uruk before introducing any character. This structural priority is itself philosophically significant: the monument precedes the subject; the system precedes the individual.

⁸Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Scribner, 1958), 181–183. Weber's "iron cage" metaphor, though developed in relation to rationalized capitalist modernity rather than ur-civilisation, is structurally cognate with the temple of civilisational pandemonium as a self-perpetuating and ultimately imprisoning system.

⁹Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1961), 11–21. Freud's account of the "oceanic feeling"—the sense of boundless cosmic connection that civilisation requires the ego to repress—is the closest psychoanalytic approximation to what the present paper identifies as the target of the psycho-cosmocidal operation. Freud, however, reads this repression as a condition of civilisation rather than a crime against being.

¹⁰Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 1–42. Baudrillard's concept of the simulacrum—a copy without an original—accurately describes the condition of counterfeit

The same concept, arrived at independently through the analysis of contemporary Papuan material rather than the ancient text, appears elsewhere in this Working Paper Series as a “logic of counterfeit transcendence” operating through four ideological formations — religiosity, development, progress and success — each inducting the colonised subject into an aspirational framework that promises ascent while severing the subject from the ontological ground of its own existence (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 21, 2026). That the same structure recurs independently at both ends of the corpus, in the Bronze Age temple and in the twenty-first-century church, school and development office, suggests the Shamhat Mechanism names something closer to a recurring civilisational operation than a period-specific literary device.

The Architecture of Capture: CPCV and the Shamhat Mechanism

The concept of the Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV) designates the instruments by which civilisation dominates the cosmobian world, as well as the underlying logic of that dominance.¹¹ It is the persistent tendency of civilisation to identify, target and convert cosmobian beings into instruments of civilisational expansion. The CPCV is not a conspiracy, a policy or a conscious strategy. Rather, it is the automatic operation of a system whose survival depends on continuous expansion into and conversion of the non-civilisational domain.¹² The CPCV's most significant feature is that, in its primary mode of operation, it does not proceed by force. Force is expensive, unreliable and generates resistance. A more efficient — and therefore more characteristic — mode of the CPCV is seduction: offering something that the cosmobian being genuinely desires, or can be made to desire, in exchange for their participation in the civilisational system. This distinguishes participatory extinction from simple conquest: the cosmobian being is not overpowered, but convinced. More precisely, its desires are restructured so that it comes to want precisely what the civilisational system wants.¹³

This capture mechanism is theorised at the level of general architecture elsewhere in the Psycho-Cosmocide corpus (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 1(B), 2026): Psyche as the human interior structure through which the primordial ordering principle, Wone, is received and enacted; Psycho as the disturbance that structure suffers under the systematic imposition of an alien symbolic

transcendence: the civilisational substitutes for cosmic connection are a self-referential system that has foreclosed access to any alternative.

¹¹Yamin Kogoya, *Psycho-Cosmocide: A Theoretical Framework for the Systematic Destruction of Indigenous Cosmologies, Consciousness, and Metaphysical Order*, Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 1 (2025). The CPCV was first introduced there as the general theoretical mechanism of Psycho-Cosmocide; the present paper applies and extends that concept through a sustained philosophical reading of the Epic of Gilgamesh.

¹²The concept of the CPCV draws on, while extending beyond, existing frameworks of structural domination. See Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 35–106; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 195–228; and Shiva, *Monocultures of the Mind*, 1–45. Each of these frameworks identifies a component of what Psycho-Cosmocide Studies synthesises into the broader concept of civilisational capture.

¹³Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 97–140. The civilisational operation described here differs from Derrida's "arche-writing" in that it is not a universal condition of signification but a historically specific and geographically locatable technology of capture.

system; and Cosmocide as the resulting collapse of the ordered, relational world that such disturbance produces at collective scale. Enkidu's transformation supplies, in miniature, the individual case from which that collective process is later generalised: a single psyche captured before any cosmos can be said to have been destroyed.

This mechanism operates across multiple domains simultaneously. At the bodily level, it works through pleasure: food, warmth, shelter and erotic satisfaction. At the social level, it operates through a sense of belonging: community membership, recognition by others and the status that comes with participating in shared institutions. At the existential level, it operates through the promise of transcendence, offering the possibility that, through civilisation's monuments, narratives and achievements, the individual can, in a sense, conquer death. All three areas are engaged in the CPCV's primary operation simultaneously, which is why resistance is so difficult. To refuse civilisational capture is to refuse not just discomfort, but also pleasure and belonging, as well as the only form of transcendence that civilised consciousness recognises as real.¹⁴

The Shamhat Mechanism: The Domestication of Enkidu

The Shamhat episode is the most concentrated passage in the Epic of Gilgamesh and the most important for psycho-cosmocide studies.¹⁵ Enkidu cannot be conquered directly by Gilgamesh; their initial encounter ends in a stalemate that produces mutual respect. This is the epic's first significant observation: the cosmobian being, in its full integrity, is equal to civilisational force. The CPCV must therefore proceed differently.

Shamhat is sent not as a warrior, but as a seductress. In the original Akkadian, the word translated as "sacred prostitute" or "harlot" carries connotations of both erotic power and sacred mediation. Shamhat represents not only female sexuality, but also the civilisational order in its most attractive and transformative form.¹⁶ She embodies everything civilisation has to offer: pleasure, convenience, comfort, intimacy, recognition and the warmth of human company. In this sense, she is genuinely giving. The seduction of Enkidu is not a swindle; what he receives through her is genuine.

The tragedy is not that he is deceived about what he receives, but that he is not told the full cost of what he is paying.

¹⁴The three-level operation of the CPCV—bodily, social, existential—is structurally cognate with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, though the present framework inverts its teleological orientation: rather than a ladder toward self-actualisation, the CPCV offers a counterfeit version of each level's satisfactions as a mechanism of capture. See Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 35–58.

¹⁵George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet I, lines 162–202. The description of the encounter between Shamhat and Enkidu remains one of the most philosophically dense passages in ancient literature, encoding within its erotic surface a comprehensive account of existential transformation.

¹⁶The figure of Shamhat is identified in the Akkadian as a *harimtu*, a term whose full semantic range encompasses both sacred and erotic dimensions. George's commentary notes the cultic associations: see George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, 147–149. Within the CPCV framework, what matters is the structural function Shamhat performs rather than the precise nature of her cultic role.

This occurs in several simultaneous phases. First, his desire is restructured: he comes to want what Shamhat offers because she makes it genuinely desirable through the authentic power of what she embodies, not through deception. Secondly, there is a rewriting of the psychic code: after the prescribed period with Shamhat, Enkidu returns to the gazelles, who flee from him.¹⁷ This is the most chilling moment in the process of domestication. He has not changed his appearance. He has not acquired weapons. However, he has acquired a different mode of being — a different relationship with the world — and the natural world recognises this immediately. The gazelles flee not from the individual, but from what he has become: a creature of civilisation. Thirdly, the emergence of language: Enkidu learns to speak in the full civilisational sense — not just to communicate, which he could already do, but to produce and receive meaning within the symbolic order that civilisation creates and maintains.¹⁸

Read in its philosophical depth, the Shamhat story is not an ancient myth about sexual temptation. Rather, it is a precise account of the transformation that the CPCV performs on the cosmobian being: the reorganisation of desire; the severing of organic relational bonds; and the induction into the symbolic order of civilisation. The fact that this account was inscribed at the very origin of writing, and that the first use of alphabetic technology was partly to record its own production, is a fact of major philosophical significance in itself.¹⁹

Contemporary psychoanalytic theory offers partial illumination here. The Lacanian account of the mirror stage — the infant's entry into the symbolic order through a misrecognition that constitutes selfhood at the expense of a more primal state of being — is closely parallel to the Shamhat story.²⁰ However, Lacan universalises what is historically specific by treating the symbolic order as a transcendental condition of human subjectivity rather than as the product of a particular, destructive historical process. The Shamhat account does not represent the universal condition of human development; rather, it depicts the capture of a pre-existing mode of being by civilisation.

In the present framework, what Freud calls the 'oceanic feeling' — the primal sense of boundless connection with the cosmos that civilisation requires the ego to repress — is not a regressive

¹⁷George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet I, lines 197–202. Enkidu's recognition that the gazelles have fled from him marks the structural completion of the Shamhat mechanism. He has become legible to civilisation and illegible to the natural order simultaneously.

¹⁸Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977), 1–7. The Lacanian mirror stage offers a partial analogue to the Shamhat mechanism: the subject's entry into the symbolic order through a misrecognition that constitutes "identity" at the cost of a more fundamental form of self-relation.

¹⁹The coincidence of writing's invention with the recording of the Shamhat mechanism is not, from the perspective of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, merely coincidental. The earliest cuneiform tablets record administrative transactions—the accounting of surplus production—and literary texts concerned with civilisational capture. Writing, in this sense, is the archive of the CPCV's first operations. See Andrew Robinson, *The Story of Writing* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1995), 64–88.

²⁰Lacan, *Écrits*, 1–7. The mirror stage's structural parallel to the Shamhat mechanism lies in the role of an external mediating other—the mirror, Shamhat—in constituting a form of identity that is simultaneously a misrecognition of something more primary. Both operations produce a subject who is, in an important sense, not at home in the identity they have acquired.

fantasy, but a memory of the cosmobian state.²¹ This feeling is not something that must be overcome on the way to mature subjectivity. Rather, it is something that the CPCV systematically eradicates, as a being that retained it in full could not participate in civilisational production. The repression of the oceanic feeling is not a developmental achievement. It is an act of violence against being itself. While Lévi-Strauss's structural anthropology frames the transition from 'raw' to 'cooked' as a universal cultural operation, it fails to acknowledge the existential violence involved — the destruction of a mode of being that, once the binary of nature/culture is established, becomes literally unthinkable.²²

PARTICIPATORY EXTINCTION

The Slaying of Humbaba: When the Captured Being Destroys Its Own World

The term 'participatory extinction' refers to the most devastating aspect of psycho-cosmocide. It is not the case that the cosmobian being is destroyed by an external force; rather, it becomes an agent of its own destruction, as well as the destruction of the cosmobian world more broadly. This is the philosophical crux of the entire framework. Decolonial critique, ecological activism and most forms of anti-civilised thought correctly identify civilisation as predatory and destructive. However, they generally fail to consider the extent to which the most effective agents of this destruction are beings that were once cosmobian, but have been captured, domesticated and turned against the world from which they came.²³ This pattern is fundamentally identical to Frantz Fanon's account of colonial internalisation, whereby the colonised subject adopts the values and perspectives of the coloniser, directing aggression towards fellow colonised persons rather than the colonial structure itself.²⁴ However, psycho-cosmocide is more profound than colonial internalisation because it does not merely redirect existing desires and aggressions; it restructures the subject at the deepest level, resulting in different desires, fears, and values to those of the original cosmobian being. The captured being is not a colonised person pretending to be a

²¹Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 11–21. Freud's account of the oceanic feeling as a regressive state to be overcome by the mature ego reflects the civilisational bias of psychoanalytic theory: what Freud reads as infantile undifferentiation is, within the present framework, the residue of a cosmobian mode of experience that remains more complete, not less developed, than the ego-state that replaces it.

²²Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, trans. John and Doreen Weightman (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 1–32. The binary of raw/cooked as a cultural universal is relevant here, though the present framework insists that the transformation from cosmobian to civilisational subjectivity is not structurally neutral but ontologically destructive.

²³Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 35–106. Fanon's analysis of colonial internalisation, in which the colonised subject adopts the values and perspectives of the coloniser, provides the closest existing parallel in postcolonial literature to the psycho-cosmocidal mechanism described here.

²⁴The distinction between colonial internalisation, as Fanon describes it, and psycho-cosmocide lies in the depth of the transformation. Colonial internalisation redirects existing desires and aggressions within a subject whose fundamental mode of being remains intact. Psycho-cosmocide restructures that mode of being at its foundation. The colonised subject retains access, at least in principle, to a pre-colonial identity; the psycho-cosmocided subject has had the very framework of that identity dismantled and replaced.

coloniser; it is a being whose cosmopolitan selfhood has been substantially dismantled and replaced with a civilisational one.

Foucault's account of disciplinary power is useful here.²⁵ According to Foucault, in the modern age, power does not work through external repression, but rather through the production of subjects who regulate themselves according to internalised norms. The Panopticon works not because the guard is always watching, but because the prisoner has internalised the gaze to the point where the guard need not be present. In this sense, psycho-cosmocide is the Ur-form of disciplinary power: a technology of subject formation that renders the captured being not merely compliant with the civilisational system, but actively invested in its perpetuation. Enkidu does not merely tolerate Uruk; he fights for it. He suggests to Gilgamesh that they go on an adventure to the Cedar Forest. The captured being does not wait to be directed; it volunteers.

This is the structure named elsewhere in the corpus as the Paradox of Papuan Extinction (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 19, 2026): not that a people is destroyed by direct violence, which however brutal is not paradoxical, but that the mechanisms of destruction cease to appear as destruction, and the colonised come to be gradually formed, redirected and institutionally conditioned to participate in the processes that diminish them. Enkidu volunteering for the Cedar Forest expedition is the mythic register of the same mechanism the companion paper documents in Papuan parents who send their children into detaching educational systems, and in communities that dismantle their own ecological relationships, out of what they experience as love, opportunity and duty rather than defeat.

The Slaying of Humbaba: Ecological Destruction as Collaborative Act

The journey to the Cedar Forest and the slaying of Humbaba constitute the philosophical and narrative centre of the participatory extinction thesis, and deserve to be considered in the context of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies.²⁶

Humbaba is usually depicted as a monster or demon, and in the context of the heroic genre, this portrayal is fitting. However, the epic itself is more nuanced: Humbaba is explicitly identified as the guardian of the Cedar Forest, appointed by the god Enlil.²⁷ He is not opposed to the divine order; rather, he is a functionary of it, charged with maintaining the integrity of the sacred forest. Within the theological cosmology of the text, killing Humbaba is not an act of heroism, but a

²⁵Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 1977), 195–228. Foucault's core insight—that power works most efficiently when the subjected body becomes an agent of its own regulation—is structurally homologous to what the present paper calls "weaponisation of the captured self."

²⁶George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet V, lines 1–87. The Cedar Forest episode, read through the lens of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, transforms from an adventure narrative into a philosophical document of the first order—one in which the cosmopolitan being actively engineers the destruction of the wild order from which it emerged.

²⁷George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet V, lines 295–302. Humbaba's final speech invokes the sacred charge given to him by the god Enlil, transforming his death from the defeat of a monster into a deicide—the killing of a divine custodian by the very beings the divine order sustained.

transgression — the violation of a divine injunction by beings who are simultaneously within and outside the divine order. The subsequent anger of the gods at his slaying confirms this. Humbaba's death sets in motion the chain of events that will culminate in the decree of Enkidu's death. The philosophical significance of Enkidu's role in the slaying cannot be overstated. Gilgamesh, the avatar of civilisation, could not have accomplished the task alone; the epic makes it clear that it was Enkidu's knowledge of the wilderness, his familiarity with the forest's paths and the guardian's habits, that made the slaying possible.²⁸ The intimate knowledge of the natural world that constitutes the cosmobian being's selfhood becomes the instrument of that world's destruction once the being has been captured and reoriented. This is the participatory trap at its most complete: the forest cannot defend itself against the being that knows it best once that being has been turned.

The felling of the cedar trees that follows the slaying extends this logic into the physical realm. The trees of the sacred forest are cut down to build a gate for Uruk — to construct, in other words, the very boundary structure that separates the civilisational domain from the cosmobian world it is destroying.²⁹ The monument of civilisation is built from the body of what civilisation has killed. This pattern of extracting the substance of the natural world to produce artificial structures that replace it is not incidental to civilisational production. It is civilisational production. The Cedar Forest episode is not an episode within an otherwise progressive narrative; it reveals the underlying logic of the entire enterprise.

Contemporary ecological destruction follows this pattern faithfully, which would be remarkable if this pattern were not, as this paper argues, the foundational logic of civilisation itself.³⁰ Those who operate the machinery of ecological destruction do not generally hate the natural world. In fact, they frequently love it — they grew up in it, take recreational pleasure in it and are, in some residual sense, cosmobian. However, their captured and reoriented selfhood turns this residual cosmobian knowledge into an instrument of extraction. They know where the fish are, where the largest trees are and where the deepest minerals lie. The intimate knowledge that the cosmobian individual has of the natural world becomes the most efficient tool for its exploitation within

²⁸George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet V, lines 88–137. The epic's account of Enkidu guiding Gilgamesh through the cedar forest—identifying paths, interpreting signs, reading the forest's interior logic—demonstrates with unusual precision the mechanism by which indigenous ecological knowledge becomes the instrument of ecological destruction once the bearer of that knowledge has been captured and reoriented.

²⁹Vandana Shiva, *Monocultures of the Mind: Perspectives on Biodiversity and Biotechnology* (London: Zed Books, 1993), 1–45. Shiva's analysis of the destruction of indigenous ecological knowledge as a form of epistemic violence provides contemporary empirical instantiation of the Humbaba pattern.

³⁰The pattern identified here—cosmobian beings deploying their ecological knowledge in the service of extraction—is documented across contemporary contexts. In West Papua, indigenous Papuan knowledge of forest resources, river systems, and mineral deposits has been systematically solicited by Indonesian state agencies and transnational corporations as intelligence for extractive industries, while the Papuan people themselves bear the costs of environmental destruction without receiving its benefits. See John Ondawame, *One People, One Soul: West Papuan Nationalism and the Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (Adelaide: Crawford House, 2010), 87–134.

civilisation. Vandana Shiva's documentation of the destruction of indigenous ecological knowledge provides a contemporary archival record of this pattern.³¹

Elsewhere in this Working Paper Series, this same conversion of intimate knowledge into an instrument of extraction is modelled through structural homology with biological parasitism, under the concept of cascading incapacitation (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 18, 2026): disruptions introduced at foundational layers of a cosmopolitan society — land, language, ceremony — propagate cumulatively into its transmissional and archival layers, so that the very capacities that once sustained the society's continuity become the channels of its dismantling. Enkidu's felling of the Cedar Forest he alone knew how to navigate is the mythic prototype of that cascade.

The Agency of the Captured Self

A critical feature of the participatory extinction mechanism is the subjective experience of agency that it provides to the captured being. Enkidu does not experience himself as enslaved. Instead, he experiences himself as a hero and a companion to the great king. He believes that his participation in the civilisational adventure has elevated him beyond his previous condition. The pleasure and pride of genuine, heroic achievement are among the most powerful tools in the CPCV's arsenal because they align the captured being's self-understanding with the requirements of the civilisational system.³²

Baudrillard's concept of the simulacrum is useful here, though it must be modified to preserve the deeper dimension that his framework tends to dissolve.³³ The heroic agency that Enkidu experiences in the Cedar Forest is not simply a copy of an original agency. Rather, it is a civilisation-produced form of selfhood that satisfies many of the same desires as the original cosmopolitan selfhood — the desire for significance, adventure, and the exercise of power and skill. However, the difference lies in the cost of these satisfactions: the cosmopolitan form of significant action maintained and enhanced the living system of which the acting being was a part, whereas the civilisational form of heroic agency destroys it. The pleasure is similar enough to mask the price.

The resulting infrastructure — the walls, gates and monuments of Uruk — is experienced by Enkidu, as by all participants in civilisational production, as a genuine human achievement and

³¹Shiva, *Monocultures of the Mind*, 1–45. Shiva's documentation of the destruction of indigenous ecological knowledge as a form of epistemic violence—what she terms the "monoculture of the mind" imposed by the Green Revolution—provides the most systematic contemporary empirical record of the Humbaba pattern: the replacement of diverse, cosmically integrated ecological knowledge with a single, extractive rationality.

³²The subjective experience of agency within the civilisational capture is a critical component of what makes the CPCV so effective and so difficult to resist or even identify. See Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 24–26, on the legitimation of domination through the subject's own belief in its validity.

³³Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 1–42. The concept of the simulacrum applies to civilisational agency in the sense that the heroic selfhood Enkidu experiences in the Cedar Forest is not simply false—it genuinely satisfies many of the desires that cosmopolitan agency also satisfied—but it substitutes for, rather than constituting, the original form of significant action.

evidence of what collective effort and individual heroism can produce. In the most literal sense, it is the infrastructure of his own confinement: the material embodiment of the system that has captured him and will eventually demand his life as payment for a transgression he committed in its service. It is within these walls that he will die of grief. Weber's 'iron cage' is not completed by the captor alone, but by the active, invested labour of the captive.³⁴

THE WASTING OF ENKIDU: GRIEF, DREAM, AND DEATH

City as a Psychic Condition

Here, the city is understood as a condition of civilisational pandemonium. It is not merely a spatial organisation, but a psychological environment with specific pathological properties.³⁵ Once inducted into this environment, the cosmobian being finds that the very perceptual and relational capacities that constituted its selfhood — the attunement to natural rhythms, sensitivity to living systems and capacity for non-dualistic environmental immersion — become sources of friction and distress within the civilisational context. These capacities are not merely suppressed, but maintained in a state of permanent, low-level frustration. This produces the chronic existential unease that civilised subjects come to experience as normal.

Weber's 'iron cage' metaphor captures something of this dynamic, though it is limited by a framework that cannot recognise the full depth of what has been lost.³⁶ From the perspective of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, the bureaucratic rationalism that Weber identifies as the defining feature of modern civilisation is not a late development, but rather the elaboration of a logic present from the beginning: the conversion of living processes into measurable, manageable and exchangeable units, and the creation of a subject whose relationship to reality is entirely mediated by this system of conversion. Eliade's account of the sacred and the profane is also relevant here. The urban order is not profane in the sense of being devoid of the sacred; rather, it has replaced organic sacredness with manufactured sacredness — an institutional holiness that necessitates the destruction of wild sacredness to establish its own authority.³⁷

Paul Shepard's analysis of civilisation's psychopathology is most similar to the present framework's: civilisation produces beings that are developmentally arrested at a stage requiring

³⁴Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 181–183. Weber's iron cage metaphor is completed, in the present framework, by the recognition that the cage is built by its own inhabitants: the "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart" of Weber's conclusion are not merely the passive products of rationalisation but its active engineers.

³⁵The concept of the city as a manufactured sacred space—a substitute for the organic cosmic order it has displaced—draws on Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 20–65, and Mumford, *The City in History*, 3–102. Both accounts, however, fail to recognise the degree to which the manufactured sacred is constitutively dependent on the destruction of the organic sacred it replaces.

³⁶Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 181–183.

³⁷Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 20–65. Eliade's distinction between sacred and profane space illuminates the civilisational city's paradoxical character: it is the most intensely sacred space that civilisation produces—a manufactured axis mundi—while simultaneously being the most thoroughly profane in the sense of having evacuated the organic sacred that preceded it.

wild, multi-species ecologies for completion.³⁸ The restless dissatisfaction, compensatory acquisitiveness and chronic anxiety experienced by civilised subjects, which civilisational medicine pathologises and treats as individual disorders, are, according to Shepard, the predictable psychological consequences of an environment that fails to provide what the human organism requires for healthy maturation. Denied its native ecological context, the psyche turns in on itself and generates the proliferating symptoms of civilisational distress.

Enkidu's Dreams: The Vision of What Has Been Lost

Enkidu's dreams in Tablet VII are the most significant psychological document in the epic and one of the most important in the entire Psycho-Cosmocide Studies archive.³⁹ In the most precise sense, they are diagnostic: they reveal the truth of what has happened to the cosmobian being and the fate determined for it by the civilisational system in the form of visionary experience.

In the first dream, Enkidu descends to the underworld — the House of Dust, where the dead dwell in darkness and consume clay. This image is significant because what awaits the cosmobian being at the end of the psycho-cosmocidal process is not individual death in the organic sense — the kind of death that is part of the natural world's life cycle — but civilisational death: the reduction of living consciousness to dust and clay, the raw materials used to build the civilisational monument.⁴⁰ The underworld of the epic is not a natural afterlife, but a civilisational one — a realm organised around the same hierarchies and deprivations that characterise civilisational life, but without even the counterfeit pleasures that temporarily make civilisational existence bearable. Ariès's study of the civilisation's management of death — its progressive removal from the realm of organic processes into the legal and medical apparatus — illuminates the underworld's structure as the civilisation's projection of its own values onto the realm of the dead.⁴¹

The dreams provoke not philosophical resignation in Enkidu, but a fury of grief that the epic renders with extraordinary psychological accuracy. He curses the cedar gate that he helped build — the monument to his own domestication, constructed from the body of the forest that he helped

³⁸Shepard, *Nature and Madness*, 3–26, 85–130. Shepard's clinical argument—that civilisational environments produce a form of arrested development that civilised psychology has normalised as maturity—constitutes the most direct precursor in existing literature to the psycho-cosmocidal analysis of the urban environment as a pathological system.

³⁹George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet VII, lines 37–64. Enkidu's first dream of the underworld transforms the text from heroic narrative to existential elegy: the cosmobian being has understood, at last, the terminal cost of its participation.

⁴⁰George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet VII, lines 168–195. The House of Dust's description—where former kings eat clay, where robes of feathers cover the dead, where light is replaced by permanent darkness—encodes a civilisational thanatology: death as the logical terminus of civilisational existence, stripped of the counterfeit satisfactions that made that existence temporarily bearable.

⁴¹Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Knopf, 1981), 1–28. The civilisational management and suppression of death—its removal from the domain of organic process into the juridical and medical apparatus—constitutes a crucial dimension of the psycho-cosmocidal operation.

destroy.⁴² He also curses Shamhat, but then, persuaded by the god Shamash, he retracts his curse. This withdrawal is significant because, even at the moment of his most lucid recognition of the psychocosmocidal trap, the captured being cannot completely reject the civilisational seduction. The pleasure, belonging and substitute transcendence were all real enough that, even in dying, Enkidu cannot entirely repudiate them.

Benjamin's angel of history is the most fitting modern philosophical representation of Enkidu's position at this moment.⁴³ The angel faces backwards towards the accumulating wreckage of the past, while the storm of progress blows it helplessly forwards. In his dying moments, Enkidu faces backwards towards the Cedar Forest that he helped to destroy, towards the gazelles from whom he was separated and towards the waterholes where he once drank alongside the animals. The storm of civilisation has blown him to this place of wasting death, and he cannot return.

The Fatal Realisation: Enkidu's Wasting Death

Enkidu does not die in battle. He does not die from a wound received in heroic combat. He dies slowly of a wasting disease inside the city walls, in a deterioration that the epic renders with deliberate and terrible patience.⁴⁴ This manner of death is not incidental; it is the precise embodiment of the psycho-cosmocidal thesis. The cosmobian being, captured and reoriented by civilisation, does not perish in the moment of its capture. Rather, it perishes in the aftermath: the slow organic failure of a living system that has been severed from its native conditions and is unable to sustain itself within its new, artificial environment.

The analogy with the ecological destruction of the contemporary age is structural, not merely metaphorical. Rivers, forests and species are not generally destroyed in dramatic, single acts of conquest; rather, they are subjected to the slow degradation of a system that continuously extracts more from them than they can regenerate. This produces the deterioration that ecologists record in indices of biodiversity loss, soil depletion and oceanic acidification. Enkidu's wasting death is a template for the wasting death of the living world.⁴⁵

⁴²George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet VII, lines 77–82. Enkidu's curse of the gate of cedar—the very architecture he helped construct—represents the diagnostic moment of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies: the captured being turns at last against the monument of its own domestication.

⁴³Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 257–258. Benjamin's angel of history, blown helplessly forward while facing backward toward the accumulating wreckage, figures an inverted analogue to Enkidu's position: the cosmobian being looks backward toward the cedar forest it helped destroy.

⁴⁴George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet VII, lines 1–8 and Tablet VIII, lines 1–42. The manner of Enkidu's dying—slow, organic, interior—is the text's most precise statement of the psycho-cosmocidal thesis: the cosmobian being does not perish in the moment of its capture but in the long deterioration that follows, as the living system maintains itself with diminishing success in an environment for which it was not formed.

⁴⁵The structural analogy between Enkidu's wasting death and contemporary ecological collapse is not metaphorical but follows a common underlying logic: in both cases, a living system capable of self-regeneration within its native conditions is subjected to extraction and displacement that exceeds its regenerative capacity, producing the characteristic pattern of accelerating decline.

Kübler-Ross's stages of grief map with disturbing accuracy onto Enkidu's final trajectory.⁴⁶ Initially, he denies the reality of his death; he is a hero, a companion of the great king, a being of extraordinary vitality. He then rages against his fate, cursing the gate, Shamhat, and the circumstances of his domestication. He then tries to bargain, offering to withdraw the curse of Shamhat if Shamash intervenes. He falls into the profound melancholy of his descriptions of the underworld. Finally, he accepts — not with resignation, but with such profound grief that the narrator of the epic seems barely capable of containing it. This is not the acceptance of a natural death within an organic cycle. It is the acceptance of a defeat at the deepest level of being that cannot be undone.

Unlike Gilgamesh, Enkidu does not gain wisdom from the fatal realisation that the promise of transcendence is a trap. It produces grief. It is this grief, rather than any argument or evidence, that constitutes the primary focus of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies.

The grief experienced by a dying cosmobian being is not an emotional reaction to an otherwise comprehensible situation; rather, it is a form of knowledge — a felt understanding of what has been lost, what has been done, and why neither can be recovered.⁴⁷ For all its genuine emotional force, Gilgamesh's subsequent lament over Enkidu's body cannot avoid being an act of civilisation translation, whereby the surviving civilised subject interprets and memorialises the dead cosmobian being in the only terms available to him: the terms of the civilisation that killed that being.⁴⁸

This is the condition named elsewhere in this Working Paper Series as Chromatic Tragedy (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 12, 2026): a form of suffering that surpasses classical tragedy not merely in degree but in kind, because it dismantles the very conditions — language, memory, perception, cosmology — through which the destruction could otherwise be recognised as such, and because its most significant effect is not the oppression of the grieving but their transformation into active participants in reproducing the system consuming their world. Enkidu's grief, unlike Gilgamesh's later lament, is not translated into a civilisational monument; it is the one moment in

See the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (Bonn: IPBES Secretariat, 2019), 12–29.

⁴⁶Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying* (New York: Macmillan, 1969). The stages of grief Kübler-Ross identifies—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance—map with disturbing precision onto the final trajectory of Enkidu's interiority in Tablets VII–VIII, suggesting that what civilisation calls "dying" is ontologically indistinguishable from the psycho-cosmocidal process.

⁴⁷Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013), 3–10. Kimmerer's Potawatomi concept of "reciprocal maintenance"—the obligation of human beings to the living systems that sustain them—constitutes an extant philosophical articulation of cosmobian being that has survived within the interstices of civilisational dominance.

⁴⁸George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet VIII, lines 47–56. Gilgamesh's lament over the body of Enkidu is the emotional apex of the text, but from the perspective of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies it is also an act of further erasure: the surviving civilisational subject interprets and memorialises the dead cosmobian being, producing a monument in his own terms.

the epic at which the tragedy briefly becomes legible on its own terms, before the civilisational archive closes back over it.

THE CPCV IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD: ECOLOGY, EXTRACTION, AND RESISTANCE

This paper's argument would be philosophically incomplete if it confined the psycho-cosmocidal operation to the ancient world. Every major industrial and technological city on the planet today — from Jakarta to São Paulo, Lagos to Los Angeles, Mumbai to Shanghai — is, in the most precise structural sense, the most advanced contemporary replica of cities such as Ur, Nineveh, Babylon, Jerusalem, the Mayan city of Tikal, the Inca city of Cuzco, Angkor Wat, and the great Hindu polities. While the surface forms have changed and become more elaborate — the clay tablets are now data centres, the temple precincts are now financial districts, the garrison walls are now airport perimeter fences and border checkpoints, and the tributary agriculture is now a global supply chain — the underlying logic remains the same. But the underlying logic is identical. Almost without exception, every modern industrial city is a system that sustains itself entirely through the extraction and consumption of the cosmobian world — its forests, oceans, soils, rivers, animals, atmospheric capacity and the living bodies of the people who inhabit and service it. The city is on life support, drawing its sustenance from the very world it is destroying. Like Uruk, it memorialises this destruction as progress, development and civilisational achievement.

In this context, every campaign to defend the living world — every effort to combat deforestation, ocean acidification, atmospheric destruction, species extinction, soil depletion, river pollution and the exploitation of human and non-human animals for industrial purposes — is part of the same narrative that this paper has identified in the Epic of Gilgamesh. The ecological movements of the 20th and 21st centuries, indigenous land defenders, river protectors, anti-pipeline campaigners, climate scientists whose data is systematically ignored, animal liberation advocates and water protectors at Standing Rock, in the Amazon basin and the Niger Delta are not separate political causes. From the perspective of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, they are a single, ongoing story about the cosmobian world's resistance to the CPCV. The most tragic dimension of that story is not the violence of the extraction itself — terrible as it is — but the extent to which the most effective instruments of that extraction are beings who were cosmobian themselves, who carry the residual memory of the living world, and who have been captured, fragmented and turned against the world from which they came. This is not a failure of resistance. It is the participatory trap operating on a planetary scale.

West Papua provides the most concentrated contemporary example of what this paper has described at a philosophical level. The Papuan peoples of the Bird's Head and the Highlands represent one of the last large-scale cosmobian societies in full ecological relationship with their world. This is a world of extraordinary biodiversity and forest systems that constitute some of the planet's most complex living archives. It is a world of cosmological and ecological knowledge accumulated over tens of thousands of years. The Indonesian state's incorporation of West Papua

in 1969 — itself an act of civilisational expansion enabled by Cold War geopolitics and transnational corporate interests — initiated a psycho-cosmocidal operation of textbook precision.

The physical destruction of Papuan cosmobian life through military violence, displacement and ecological devastation is not the only thing that has happened, is still happening and is likely to continue. Rather, it is the more insidious operation of the CPCV: the systematic fragmentation of Papuan society along its social, ecological, political and cosmological fault lines, and the targeted seduction of different communities through the specific rewards that the civilisation can offer each one. Those with access to land are offered extraction royalties, while those with education are offered bureaucratic positions and those with traditional authority are offered institutional recognition by the state. Each seduction is calibrated to the particular form of social and cosmological capital that each community possesses (compare the four differentiated inducements of religiosity, development, progress and success analysed as a single coordinated system in Kogoya, Working Paper No. 21, 2026). The result is not unified Papuan resistance to psycho-cosmocide, but rather a fragmented landscape in which Papuan people are increasingly turned against each other and their own cosmobian world by the differential distribution of civilisational rewards. This is the CPCV's most sophisticated operation: not the crude conquest of the Cedar Forest, but its conversion into a space where the forest's own guardians compete to authorise its destruction.

The Melanesian case extends this analysis across a broader sociological and geographical field. Melanesian societies in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji represent a diversity of cosmobian formations, all of which share a deeply relational cosmology. In this cosmology, the boundaries between the human, non-human, ancestral and ecological domains are porous and constantly negotiated. These are not static or prehistoric formations; they are living, adaptive and philosophically sophisticated systems for maintaining the kind of non-dualistic integration with the natural world that this paper has identified as the defining characteristic of cosmobian being.

The psycho-cosmocidal pressure on these societies does not come from a single external force, but from the fragmentation that the CPCV achieves by entering societies through their own relational networks. For example, kin groups are offered material rewards for collaborating with extractive industries, church communities are given infrastructure in exchange for land alienation, and political leaders are given recognition and institutional legitimacy in exchange for their communities' cosmobian sovereignty. This seduction is not identical for everyone, but is precisely calibrated to the form of social, ecological and cosmological capital that each relational network possesses. Once the first community accepts the offer tailored specifically for them, the fragmentation of cosmobian solidarity follows the same terrible logic encoded in Enkidu's turn against the Cedar Forest in the epic. The person who knows the forest best becomes the instrument of its destruction. Those who were once Enkidu become the hunters of the gazelles.

This convergence between the mythic and the contemporary is not confined to this paper. A companion paper in this series identifies the same Cedar Forest episode as a mythological

precedent for a broader hierarchy of value running through five and a half thousand years of civilisational history, in which sacred or living things are converted into monuments and resources by a logic the Epic of Gilgamesh already renders explicit at humanity's literary origin (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 17, 2026).

THE RECURSIVE TRAP: THE RETURN OF CIVILISATIONAL SEDUCTION

The Psycho-Cosmocide Studies framework would be philosophically incomplete if it presented the capture of the cosmobian being as a one-time historical event — something that happened once in ancient Sumer and whose consequences have played out ever since. The framework's deeper and more disturbing claim is that the trap repeats itself: each generation of human beings re-enters it, re-enacts the seduction and participates anew in the extinction of the cosmobian world.

This repetition raises the central diagnostic question of the framework: what in the deep structure of the human psyche makes counterfeit transcendence so compelling? If the seduction has been enacted and its consequences have been understood for four thousand years, and if the evidence of its destructive consequences is available to everyone who has ever lived in a civilisation, why is it still accepted? Why does each new generation encounter Shamhat and follow her? Several partial answers are available within existing philosophical frameworks.

One area of explanation is Freud's account of the compulsion to repeat destructive patterns.⁴⁹ Girard's analysis of mimetic desire — the tendency of human beings to desire what others desire, irrespective of the object's intrinsic value — offers another.⁵⁰ Baudrillard's idea that simulacra have the capacity to replace reality rather than merely supplement it offers a third explanation.⁵¹ However, none of these accounts is fully adequate because they all operate within a framework that is itself a product of civilised thought and therefore cannot grasp the full extent of the impact of psycho-cosmocide on the theorist.

The most promising approach to this question is the concept of residual cosmobian memory. This is the trace of cosmobian being that persists within the civilised subject as a deep longing that the

⁴⁹Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1961), 7–64. Freud's account of the compulsion to repeat, particularly in its relation to the death drive, is relevant here in the sense that the repeated re-entry into psycho-cosmocidal capture may constitute a form of unconscious re-enactment of a primal loss that the subject cannot consciously name.

⁵⁰René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 1–38. Girard's account of scapegoating as the founding mechanism of social cohesion has structural resonances with the psycho-cosmocidal operation, though Girard remains within an anthropological framework that cannot accommodate the cosmological dimension of the present thesis.

⁵¹Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 1–42. The simulacrum's capacity to replace reality is relevant here in the sense that counterfeit transcendence does not merely supplement the cosmobian connection it has displaced; it actively forecloses access to any alternative, producing a subject for whom the counterfeit has become the only available real.

civilisational system can never fully satisfy and therefore must continuously promise to fulfil. The chronic dissatisfaction of civilised subjects — their restless pursuit of more, better and further — is not evidence that the substitute for transcendence has failed; it is evidence that it is functioning exactly as intended. A system that satisfied the cosmopolitan longing would no longer generate the productive activity that sustains civilisational expansion. The seduction must be perpetually renewed, the promise perpetually deferred and satisfaction perpetually incomplete — and the cosmopolitan residue, the memory of what genuine connection felt like, must be perpetually available as the raw material for the next iteration of the offer.⁵²

Kimmerer's account of reciprocal maintenance, drawn from Potawatomi ecological philosophy, suggests that the cosmopolitan memory persists not only as a neurological trace, but also as an active form of relational knowledge that the natural world extends towards human beings.⁵³ According to this account, it is not only human beings who remember the cosmopolitan connection; living systems around the world also remember it and continue to offer it. Psycho-cosmocide must therefore continuously work against this offer to prevent its acceptance. The Flood Narrative embedded in the Epic of Gilgamesh — Utnapishtim's account of a civilisation-ending deluge — may itself be a memory of the pre-civilisational cosmos persisting in the deep unconscious within the civilisational archive: a story that the text cannot quite suppress because, at some level, it knows that the flood was not entirely unjustified.⁵⁴

Gilgamesh at the Walls: Self-Justification as Final Crime

The most productive and uncomfortable passage in the entire Epic of Gilgamesh is its conclusion — or rather, what passes for a conclusion in the Standard Babylonian version. Gilgamesh, having returned from his unsuccessful quest for immortality, stands before the walls of Uruk. In some translations, he is depicted reading an inscription, perhaps recounting his own exploits, carved into the walls. In others, he simply contemplates the walls themselves, their extent, solidity, and beauty.⁵⁵

⁵²The concept of perpetual deferral as a mechanism of systemic reproduction has parallels in Frankfurt School critical theory. See Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 120–167, on the culture industry's operation of perpetual promise and systematic disappointment as a mechanism of social control.

⁵³Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 3–10, 115–127. Kimmerer's account of the ongoing relational address of the natural world to human beings—the capacity of living systems to extend recognition and invitation toward human beings who have not entirely lost their cosmopolitan sensitivity—constitutes one of the few existing philosophical frameworks capable of accounting for why the cosmopolitan memory persists even under the most severe conditions of civilisational capture.

⁵⁴George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet XI, lines 1–328. The Flood Narrative embedded in Utnapishtim's account constitutes a crucial counter-text within the epic itself: a memory of the pre-civilisational cosmos persisting as structural unconscious within the civilisational document.

⁵⁵George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet XI, lines 321–328, and the Prologue, Tablet I, lines 1–28. The structural relationship between the prologue's invitation to contemplate the walls of Uruk and the epic's conclusion at the same walls is one of the most carefully constructed elements of the Standard Babylonian version, suggesting a deliberate architectural design in which the monument frames both the beginning and the end of the civilisational narrative.

The traditional interpretation of this moment as the resolution of the epic—the chastened king finding meaning in his city's monuments after failing to find immortality elsewhere—is, from the perspective of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, not a resolution, but rather a completion of the crime. Gilgamesh does not find wisdom by standing before the walls; he finds civilisation's self-justification. The monuments built from the cedar that he and Enkidu felled, the walls that enclose the space in which Enkidu died of grief and the city constructed through the labour of oppressed subjects are the objects before which Gilgamesh discovers life's meaning. The meaning he discovers is that of civilisational achievement. This is the final act of the psycho-cosmocidal system: the surviving civilised individual finds solace in the monument, which is constructed from what the cosmobian being died for.

The question that the present framework must honestly confront is whether this moment represents civilisational self-awareness — a dim recognition of the crime encoded within the consolation — or simply the most complete form of civilisational self-justification. The walls do not speak of Humbaba or Enkidu. They speak of Gilgamesh. The architecture of the memorial excludes what has been destroyed. The cosmobian world, having been destroyed, is not commemorated within the monument; rather, it becomes the material used to construct it. This is not wisdom. Rather, it is the final absorption of the crime into the record of civilisation's achievements.

Derrida's observation that every archive simultaneously preserves and destroys — that to record is also to exclude, to make the recorded thing manageable and therefore dead — is applicable here.⁵⁶ The walls of Uruk are an archive. They preserve the name of Gilgamesh and the memory of his achievements. However, they do not preserve Enkidu's voice except as it was interpreted and recorded by a narrator of civilisation who viewed Enkidu's death as a stage in Gilgamesh's education. The voice of Enkidu that appears in Tablet XII — the supplementary tablet in which he reports from the underworld — is admitted into the civilisational archive only posthumously and as supplementary evidence of his own extinction.⁵⁷ Girard's analysis of the scapegoat is pertinent here: the social cohesion of Uruk is maintained by the sacrifice of the cosmopolitan being in the aftermath of the epic, and the monument built over that sacrifice is the most enduring form of cover-up.⁵⁸

⁵⁶Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 1–23. Derrida's account of the archive as simultaneously preservation and destruction—"archiviolithic" in its very operation—applies with particular force to the walls of Uruk as an archive that preserves the name of Gilgamesh while destroying the cosmobian voice of Enkidu.

⁵⁷George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet XII, lines 1–154. The appended twelfth tablet presents Enkidu's voice from the underworld. Its very existence as a supplement figures the status of the cosmobian voice within civilisational discourse: admissible only posthumously, only as evidence of its own extinction.

⁵⁸Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 1–38. The scapegoat mechanism Girard identifies as the founding act of social cohesion—the community's expulsion or sacrifice of a designated victim as the price of collective unity—maps closely onto the psycho-cosmocidal operation: Enkidu's death is the sacrifice on which the social coherence and monumentalising energy of Uruk depends.

The walls of Uruk that speak of Gilgamesh but not of Humbaba or Enkidu perform the same function this Working Paper Series identifies in Plato's allegory of the cave (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 8, 2026): an architecture that structures perception so completely that what it has replaced cannot appear within it at all. Where the cave sustains itself through shadow figures — the colonised elite projected back as models of realised humanity — the walls of Uruk sustain themselves through silence: an archive that admits the fact of Enkidu's existence while excluding what his existence, before capture, actually was.

In this context, Siduri's advice to Gilgamesh during his wanderings is worth mentioning. She counsels him to enjoy food, family and the pleasures of daily life — to accept mortality and find satisfaction in the ordinary textures of human existence. Gilgamesh famously rejects this advice in favour of his quest for immortality, but it has been interpreted as the wisdom of the epic: accepting limitations as a sign of maturity. However, from the perspective of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, Siduri's counsel is more ambiguous. Is she offering a genuinely cosmobian form of wisdom — attentiveness to the present, relational satisfaction and the intrinsic value of ordinary living? Or is she offering a domesticated, privatised version of that wisdom — one that accepts the civilisational frame and counsels contentment within it? The epic does not resolve this ambiguity, and it is productive in that it marks the point at which cosmobian wisdom and its civilisational simulacrum become almost indistinguishable.

CONCLUSION

The Silence Of Enkidu

Enkidu's silence at the end is the argument. Through a philosophical analysis of the Epic of Gilgamesh, this paper has traced the complete architecture of psycho-cosmocide: the initial condition of cosmobian being; the mechanics of capture through the CPCV and its use of counterfeit transcendence; the catastrophic transformation of the captured being into an agent of their own world's destruction; and the terminal grief that follows the fatal recognition of what has been lost and can never be recovered. In the wake of this analysis, what remains is not a programme of recovery — the paper is under no obligation to produce one and would be dishonest if it claimed to — but rather a set of coordinates for understanding our current situation and how we arrived here.

A fuller answer to what follows diagnosis — not a programme of recovery, but an orientation framework for one — is developed at length elsewhere in this Working Paper Series, under the name Wonesis (Kogoya, Working Paper No. 16, 2026). The present paper does not attempt that construction. Its task ends at the point Wonesis begins: with the fact of what has been lost, honestly named.

The first coordinate is that psycho-cosmocide is not merely a late development of modernity or a product of industrial capitalism, European colonial expansion or digital technology, though all of

these continuously update and intensify it. Rather, it is a deeper civilisation-wide operation, already evident when human societies began to establish themselves through cities, temples, states, empires, writing systems, priesthoods, legal codes, cosmologies and monumental architecture. The source code was written in Sumer, but it did not remain there. Instead, it has been reconfigured throughout history by Egyptian sacral kingship, Mesopotamian statecraft, Greek rationalism, Roman imperialism, the Hindu cosmological order, Chinese bureaucratic civilisation, Buddhist and Confucian ethical systems, Abrahamic eschatology, Islamic imperial and theological formations, African kingdoms and sacred polities, Mesoamerican and Andean cosmologies, the European Enlightenment, the accumulation of capital, and techno-utopian transhumanism. These traditions differ profoundly in terms of language, religion, metaphysics, political form and moral imagination. Yet each has contributed to the long civilisational movement by which human beings have learned to organise reality through systems that capture, classify, discipline, monumentalise and redirect life. The forms have changed, but the underlying logic remains.

The second coordinate, the participatory dimension of extinction, is not an aberration or failure of resistance, but the primary mechanism by which the system perpetuates itself. The most effective agents of destruction in the cosmobian world have always been, and continue to be, beings in whom cosmobian being persists as residue — beings who know the forest, love the river and feel the pull of the ocean, but who have been captured and reoriented so that this residual knowledge and love become instruments of extraction. In West Papua and across the Melanesian world, this mechanism operates with particular intensity. The CPCV enters societies through their own relational networks, offering different communities calibrated rewards according to their specific ecological, social and cosmological capital. This produces the fragmentation of cosmobian solidarity, turning people into instruments of their own world's destruction. Some are poisoned, some are hunted and some are corrupted or tricked. Some become collaborators in the extraction of their own cosmobian world in exchange for short-term material benefits, which the civilisation system has carefully calibrated according to their particular vulnerabilities. The result is a landscape of participatory extinction, devastating in its effectiveness, which derives from the exploitation of the very relational structures — the kin networks, ecological knowledge and cosmological authority — that constituted cosmobian life. From the perspective of Psycho-Cosmocide Studies, the green economy, sustainable development and ecological modernisation are the contemporary planetary iteration of the Shamhat account: a seduction that promises to reconcile civilisation's production with cosmobian life while requiring the surrender of what makes a being cosmobian.

The trap's repeating nature means that Psycho-Cosmocide Studies' diagnostic task is not completed by a single analysis. The Shamhat mechanism operates continuously in every generation on every residue of cosmobian life that persists within the civilised subject. Describing the mechanism does not enable us to escape it. To name the counterfeit transcendence is not to dissolve its allure. Analysis can clarify, but it cannot liberate by itself. If liberation is available at all within the terms of the present philosophical framework, it must pass through the Enkidu grief — the fatal recognition and the knowledge of what was lost and what was done — and not around it.

Civilisational thought, including most of its critical variants, has consistently sought to bypass the grief. Psycho-Cosmocide Studies insists on passing through it.

The fourth and final coordinate is the most challenging: the silence at the end. In the twelfth tablet, Enkidu speaks from the underworld in a passage that was almost certainly appended to the original text, and which the critical tradition has often treated as an inferior addition. From the perspective of the present framework, this judgement represents the final act of the civilisational archive's operations: marginalisation, supplementation and diminution of the cosmobian voice, even when that voice has been admitted to the record. The twelfth tablet exists; Enkidu speaks; and then the text ends. Enkidu's voice is not heard again in the four thousand years of civilisation's literature that follow. This silence is not a gap in the archive. It is the archive's most precise content. The cosmobian being has been seduced, captured, turned against itself and killed. It has been memorialised in the terms of the civilisation that killed it as a hero and a friend. Its death becomes the occasion for the education of the civilised subject, after which it falls silent. The walls of Uruk still stand, but the Cedar Forest has disappeared and the gazelles have fled. The text that records all this continues to be read, translated, analysed and taught in universities where civilisations are enacting the same sequence at an exponentially accelerated pace.

Enkidu's silence, on this reading, is not incidental to the argument but structurally comparable to what Gayatri Spivak identifies as the condition of the subaltern (Spivak 1988): not simply unheard, but constituted by an archive that makes hearing structurally impossible, however sincerely later readers, translators and scholars intend to listen. The twelfth tablet does not correct this condition by admitting Enkidu's voice; it confirms it, since even there Enkidu speaks only as a report from the dead, already absorbed into the record of the civilisation that killed him.

What remains is the silence of Enkidu. This is not just the silence of a character, but the silence of the cosmobian voice itself: a voice that was seduced, captured and turned against its own world, and drawn ever closer to its own disappearance. In this sense, Psycho-Cosmocide Studies is an attempt to listen within that silence, not in the hope of recovering a lost world in its original form, but to understand the process by which that world transformed into absence. Confronting Enkidu's silence therefore means facing not just the fate of a character in humanity's oldest epic, but a pattern of civilisation that continues to unfold wherever the living world is reorganised in terms of its own destruction. The silence remains. The question is whether we are still capable of hearing what it contains.

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About the Author

Yamin Kogoya is a Papuan philosopher, writer, and independent researcher from the Central Highlands of New Guinea (West Papua), currently based in Australia.

His work investigates one of the most enduring questions of human existence: how worlds are created, transformed, and destroyed. He is the originator of the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm, an interdisciplinary philosophical framework that examines the destruction of human worlds not only through physical violence, occupation, or ecological devastation, but through the systematic reorganisation of perception, memory, meaning, and reality itself. Within this framework, he argues that words, images, symbols, signs, colours, institutions, and technologies do not merely represent the world—they participate in creating, reorganising, and erasing the conditions through which human beings inhabit it.

Kogoya introduced the concepts of the Cosmobian World and the Synthobian World to distinguish two fundamentally different modes of human existence. The Cosmobian World refers to forms of life constituted through reciprocal relationships with land, ancestry, kinship, memory, ecology, language, and the cosmos. The Synthobian World refers to synthetic, engineered systems of existence organised through abstraction, institutions, technology, production, and civilisational processes. The relationship between these two worlds forms the central philosophical architecture of his research.

Drawing upon Indigenous cosmologies together with philosophy, anthropology, history, religion, mythology, and civilisation studies, Kogoya develops original conceptual frameworks for interpreting the contemporary human condition. His work re-examines humanity's foundational myths, epics, tragedies, religions, and philosophical traditions as enduring civilisational architectures through which societies organise reality, negotiate meaning, confront mortality, remember the past, imagine the future, and participate in their own survival or extinction. Although grounded in the historical experience of West Papua, his research addresses broader philosophical questions concerning civilisation, consciousness, memory, belonging, power, and the future of human worlds.

He holds a Master of Applied Anthropology and Participatory Development from the Australian National University. His academic background also includes Religious Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Asia-Pacific Studies, and he undertook advanced study in epistemology at the University of Oxford. His research and commentary have appeared in *SBS News*, *RNZ Pacific*, *Asia Pacific Report*, *The Fiji Times*, and *The Jakarta Post*.

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Published by Wone Press | An imprint of the NATAKA Research Institute
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