

Seizing the Underlying Unity of Science, the Arts and the Sacred



Pari Center



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Pari, Italy / Aug.29-Sept. 5, 2023

with **Mary Attwood**
John Cleese (via Zoom)
John Krakauer
Mervat Nasser
Melissa Nelson
John Pickering
Jordi Pigem
Mark Vernon

Curated and chaired by **Àlex Gómez-Marín**



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There was a time when understanding was unified and spoke to our inner wholeness. This initial vision was lost, leading to a bifurcation of nature that has impeded human flourishing.

In the medieval hilltop of a Tuscan town, we will seek to explore and experience the underlying wholeness that was initially present in the spirit of the arts, the scientific mind, and the sense of the sacred.

SEIZING THE UNDERLYING UNITY OF SCIENCE, THE ARTS AND THE SACRED

Dates	August 29 – September 5, 2023
Location	Pari, Tuscany, Italy
Presenters	Mary Attwood, John Cleese (via Zoom), John Krakauer, Mervat Nasser, Melissa Nelson, John Pickering, Jordi Pigem, Mark Vernon
Curated and chaired by	Àlex Gómez-Marín
Event	The event starts with a welcome dinner on Tuesday August 29 at 19:00 and ends after lunch on Tuesday September 5.
Fee	1975.00 euros, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ a 7-night stay in private accommodation;▪ breakfast, lunch and dinner at the local restaurant featuring locally sourced produce and traditional dishes;▪ the water, wine, and coffee provided with meals;▪ programmed activities and materials;▪ refreshments provided at mid-morning and mid-afternoon coffee breaks.

The event

There was a time when understanding was unified and spoke to our inner wholeness. This initial vision was lost, leading to a bifurcation of nature that has impeded human flourishing. At the Pari Center, we will seek to explore and experience the underlying wholeness that was initially present in the spirit of the arts, the scientific mind, and the sense of the sacred.

The 20th century composer of devotional music, John Tavener, has written of the 'one simple memory,' a deeply buried sense of a time when understanding was unified and spoke to our inner wholeness. In that period the artisan, miner, metal worker and artist alike were considered as the midwives to nature, aiding her in her striving to perfection.

The physicist Wolfgang Pauli believed that this spirit was still alive in the 17th century when the quantitative science of Kepler and Galileo coexisted with a more deeply symbolic approach to nature and matter—each complementing the other. This later vanished in the hands of the followers of Descartes and Newton and, for Wolfgang Pauli, the 'spirit in matter' was banished for over two hundred years.

Particularly in the twentieth century, physics (and subsequently other major disciplines) had lost its initial vision and become obsessed with a 'will to power' as it sought control over nature. A 'bifurcation of nature'—the harsh separation of reality as conceived by science and as experienced by humans—in the words of mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead is one of the greatest fallacies of modernity and a major impediment to human flourishing.

However, a 'resurrection' of spirit within matter may be at hand today. Such wholeness can be explored in the medieval hilltop town of Pari, Tuscany, for in the Middle Ages nature, beauty, and the sacred were seen as one. We will discuss, and hopefully experience, the underlying unity that was initially present in the spirit of the arts, the scientific mind, and the spiritual quest. We shall seek to 're-member' this one simple memory. In the words Carlo Levi: 'Il futuro ha un cuore antico.' *The future has an ancient heart.*

What a typical day looks like

8:30 - 9:30	breakfast
10:00 - 13:00	formal presentation (including a half-hour break)
13:00	lunch
16:00 - 19:00	interactive/workshop session (including a half-hour break)
20:00	dinner
21:00	free time (retire to your accommodation for quiet time, engage in informal discussions, or, if there is a village event such as music in the piazza, join in)

For those seeking opportunities for interaction between participants and presenters (ratio around one to four!), these occur not just in the more formal presentations—which will allow time for discussion and Q&A—but also at the workshops, mealtimes, and during the free time.



‘The future has an ancient heart?’

CARLO LEVI

Our founder David Peat compared Pari to an alchemical vessel—a place where transformation can come about—as well as an opportunity to pause for a moment and re-assess one’s life. Participating in an event at the Pari Center means not only meeting with scholars and experts but living for a week in a medieval village, mingling with the local population, eating local dishes and drinking local wines. It also means being able to view the beauty of the surrounding countryside, and participating in a very gentle way of life far from the frenzy of work and city living.

Pari today continues in a remarkable state of preservation. In the 1950s Pari’s population began to drop from 1500 to the present 100 as people left to find work in the cities. The Pari Center maintains a close relationship with the village people and supports the local economy by renting accommodation—furnished apartments—on behalf of our participants, by having the local restaurant provide meals, and by supporting the local businesses.

Pari is located a few kilometers from the main superstrada that connects Siena to Grosseto. The nearest airports are Rome, Florence and Pisa. Once you have arranged your flight, we can guide you on the best means of travelling to the village.



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