

SECTION II: FIELDWORK

Having laid out the parameters of this thesis in Section I, I now turn to my fieldwork. Section II begins with an autoethnography which gives a embodied sense of what life on the road protest sites was like. The second and third chapters of this section present my fieldwork findings and analysis of urban and protest site Eco-Paganism. Section II concludes with a discussion of all of my fieldwork in the context of a unifying model of embodied knowing in Eco-Paganism.

Between Protest Site and Urban Life

Letcher classifies Eco-Paganisms into two non-exclusive groups; those who are part of a given Pagan Tradition and more eclectic "detraditionalized" Eco-Pagans (Letcher, 2005: 556). Letcher's model is useful, but as not all protest site Eco-Pagans are detraditionalized, I distinguish between protest site and urban Eco-Pagans to provide a second axis, although boundaries between all these categories are fluid. Many Eco-Pagans will always live an urban life simply because of their temperament or circumstances, while some may occasionally visit protest sites for a few days, as I did for many years. Very few - if any - Eco-Pagans live entirety on protest sites. All activists occasionally need time off site simply to avoid 'burning out', so will occasionally return to an urban environment to recuperate from illness, have a bath, visit family or friends etc. Protest site activists typically spend a few months or perhaps years living on one or more sites and then settle into a somewhat more conventional existence, although often not an especially urban one. Some choose to return to the protest site life occasionally and this cycle can go on for decades.

Combining Letcher's categorization with my own urban to protest site distinction provides a useful typology for understanding how my participants lived and practised over the period covered by my fieldwork.

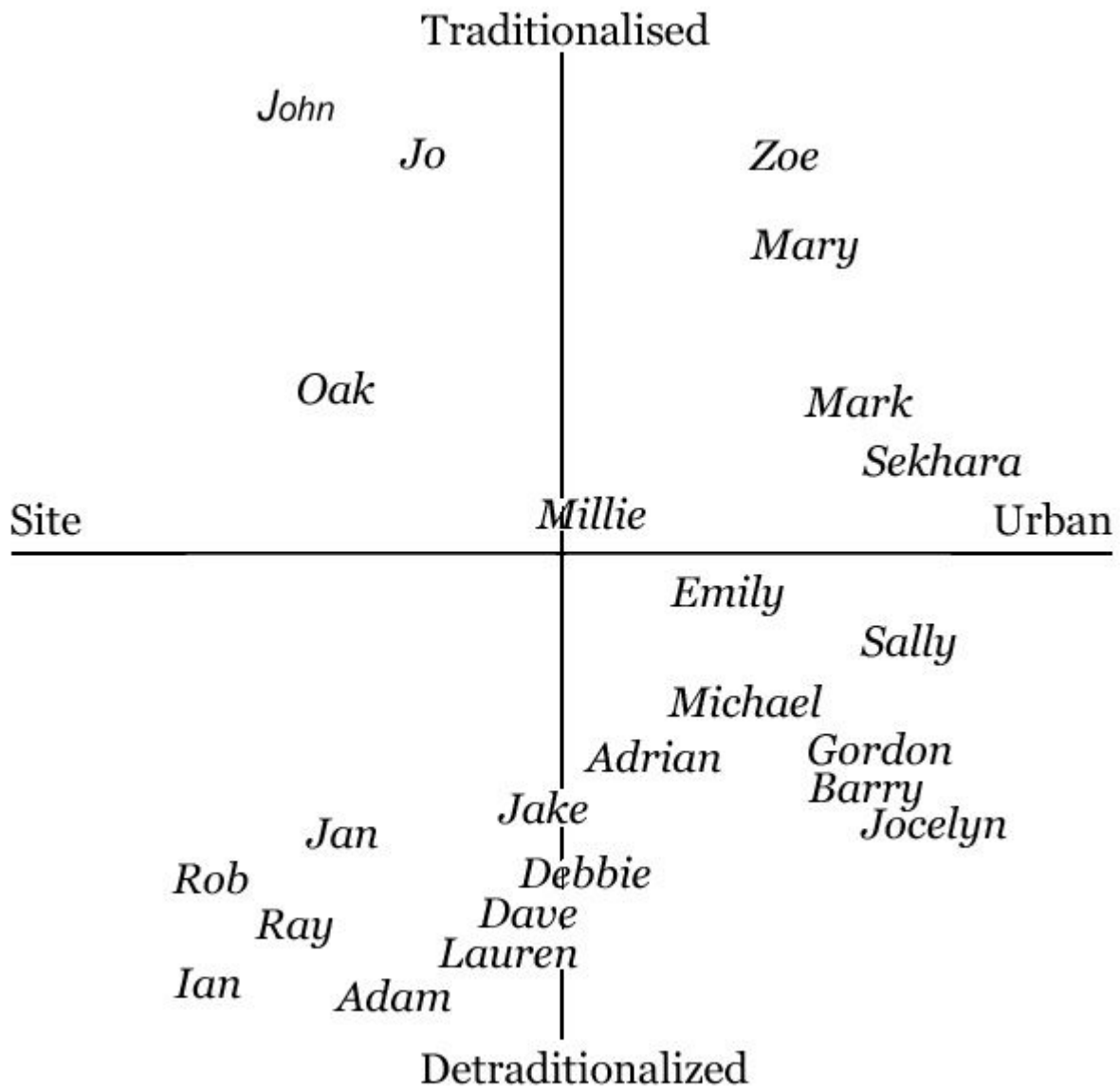


Fig. 7: A Typology of Eco-Paganism

Although the scale is not intended to be precise, this accurately maps my respondents lifestyle at the time I interviewed or knew them. Those further to the Urban side have had less experience of protest site life: Sekhara, Sally and Jocelyn had never visited a site, Mark, Gordon and Barry had, while Emily and Michael had stayed briefly at a site. Millie, Jake, Debbie, Dave and Lauren spent a significant amount of time in conventional homes during my research period, Jan and Oak lived in woodland away from a protest site some of the time, while John, Rob and Ian were nomadic. John, Jo and Zoe were members of Druid orders, while I placed Ian and Adam at the opposite end of the Traditionalized - detraditionalized scale for reasons that become obvious. Sally and I were probably the clearest examples people who had become more detraditionalized over time, while John was a paradigm case of a move in the opposite direction.