

*No road to Damascus: the Glass Floor as
metaphorical barrier to post-epiphany
adoption of sustainable consumption*

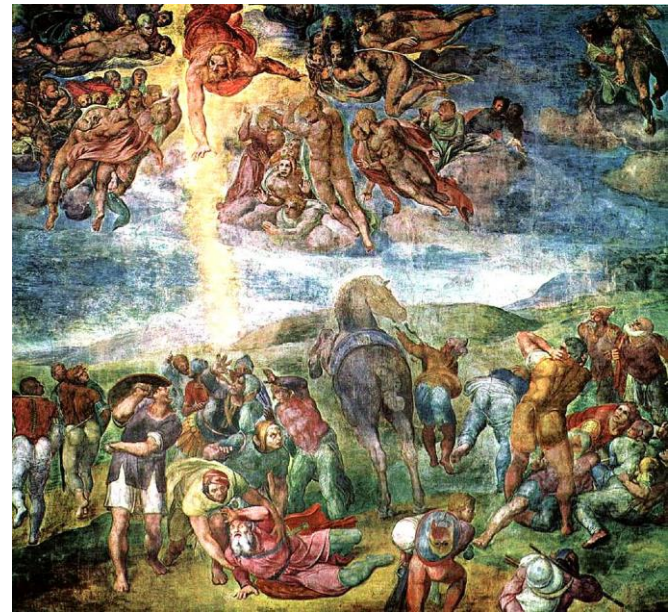
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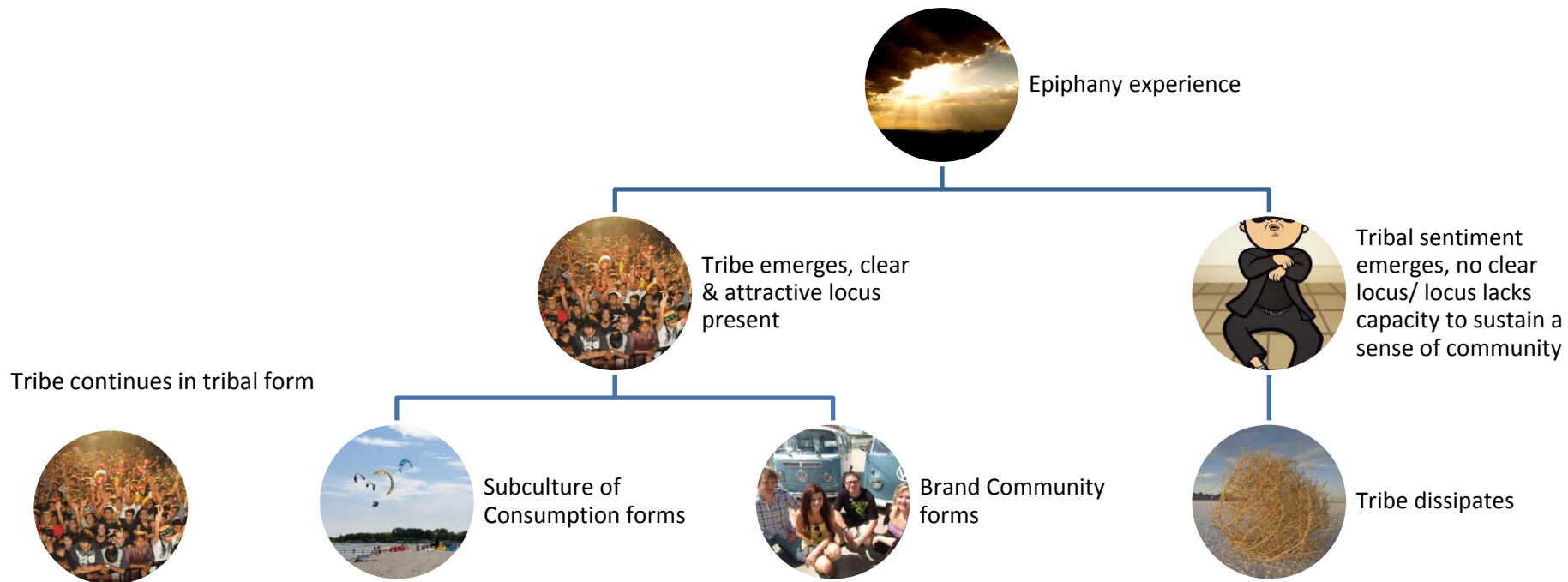
Multiple metaphors

The Road to
Damascus/Pauline
conversion

Consumer conversion
experience (Belk et al,
1989)



Emergence / dissipation of consumer community



ethical epiphany/ conversion experience

Cherrier (2005) found that the desire to consume ethically/ sustainably emanates from what she defines as a **triggering event** (these can sometimes be traumatic)

These 'trigger' experiences have parallels with other forms of consumer conversion experience/ consumer epiphany

Ethical/ sustainability-related epiphanies do not typically lead to membership of a sustainability-focused consumption community – why not?

The Glass Floor (Cherrier et al, 2012)

Negative perceptions of sustainable consumption practices contribute to a **'glass floor' effect** whereby it's difficult for consumers to practice modes of sustainable consumption when criticized or questioned by friends, colleagues, or family members.

The resulting 'glass floor' is so-called because of the **invisible nature of structural forces** that compel individuals to maintain a **socio-culturally acceptable** level of greenhouse gas emission.



Can we break the glass floor?

Feeling a sense of assurance with regard to the social attractiveness/ acceptability of one's behaviour is **not easily attained**, post sustainability-related conversion experience

Unless sustainability-related epiphanies receive social affirmation, the glass floor undermines personal capacity to adopt sustainable practices

Sustainable consumption needs to be de-stigmatized/ non-sustainable consumption may need to be de-normalized!

Sample promotional ad for public transport -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75F3CSZcCFs>