Ways of the Spirit

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PERSONS, COMMUNITIES, SPIRITUALITIES

M. Darrol Bryant

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To the future generation:
Ethan, Sloane, Kayla, Zoe, & Sydney

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Acknowledgements

More Ways of the Spirit: Persons, Communities, Spiritualities is the third volume in the "Ways of the Spirit" project. As before, I want to thank Renison University College where I spent thirty-four years teaching as a Professor of Religion and Culture. When I retired in 2007, Renison allowed me to establish a Centre for Dialogue and Spirituality in the World Religions. The mandate of the Centre includes a public forum, research, and public education. When asked if I wanted a "festschrift," I said no, but I would like to ask former students, colleagues, and friends to write about their areas of study and passion for a general audience. Thus was born the Ways of the Spirit project.

Three of my former students – Dr. Vic Froese, Dr. Doris Jakobsh, and Ms. Val Lariviere helped me to gather the more than sixty contributions to the Ways of the Spirit project. I thank them and the contributors from around the world who have shared their expertise and passion with me – and with the readers of the three volumes that have come from this project. I am immensely grateful.

I want to also thank those who commented on my selections for each volume. You know who you are. Especially important was Susan Hodges Bryant whose editing magic was invaluable, and Christian Snyder at Pandora Press in Kitchener, who always gives sage advice. It is always a pleasure to work with such a gifted and helpful editor, designer, and publisher.

Introduction

My journey into the many paths of living spirituality began in the late 1970s. At that point I began to realize the need to deepen my textual and book knowledge with experiential encounters with the many and diverse traditions of spirituality. Thus when I now reflect on these traditions of living spirituality, my mind is filled with memories of those people I have encountered over the years. People rather than abstractions have become the bearers of these many pathways of the spirit. Hindus like Shivamurthy, Shrivatsa and Sandhya, Muslims like Syed, Naheed, and Abdul, Buddhists like Doboom, Nishiyama, and Chungkey, Sikhs like Mohinder and Mona, Thomas Christians like Paulos and Father Albert, Jews like Alon and Miriam, Zoroastrians like Homi, Jains like Swamiji at Shravanabelagola these and many others have become part of my inner images of the world of spirituality. They have been my guides into this wonderfully diverse world. It is these friends, colleagues and former students who have written the essays you will find in this volume.

Ways of the Spirit celebrates the dialogue and diversity of global spirituality. It brings together many voices from the astonishing dialogue of men and women from around the world over the past half century. The writings included here lead us into the kaleidoscope of spirituality in our time, with each turn of the page bringing that world into a new configuration.

The volume opens with a poem by Pam O'Rourke entitled "Gratitude." It comes from one of the diaries she kept during a group study tour of India with me. In fact, Pam has been to India with me four times. Each time, she creates wonderful photo diaries with a poetic commentary. I couldn't find a way to include her whole diary, so we included two of her poems here, one at the beginning and another at the end. When not traveling in India, Pam is involved in teaching the elderly.

It is followed by a wonderful piece on the "Way of Wisdom" by Huston Smith, the renowned author of *The World's Religions*. He has been the much loved guide into the world religions for more than 50 years. Here, he

returns to the beginnings of Western philosophy and offers a remarkable view of those origins in the life of Socrates as seen by Plato. Smith argues that Plato is the "lodestone of Western Philosophy" and that he gave us a way to "see into the truth of things." It is a stunning account of the Western Way of Wisdom.

Enes Karic offers a moving account of growing up as a Bosnian Muslim in Yugoslavia prior to its break-up in the 1980s and the Balkan wars of the 1990s. Prof. Karic is part of a central European Muslim tradition that is 500 years old. He endured life in Sarajevo during the war. He has served as a Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport for the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and is now a Professor of Qur'an Studies in Sarajevo. His contribution opens the reader to the little-known world of Bosnian Muslims.

Clinton Gardner takes into the life of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (1888-1973), a remarkable but little known figure. Born in Germany, Rosenstock-Huessy resigned his position in the university when Hitler came to power. He then came to the USA, first teaching at Harvard before moving to Dartmouth. It was at Dartmouth in 1940 where Clinton Gardner first encountered Rosenstock-Huessy. In the "Way of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy," Gardner takes us into the heart of ERH's teaching. His essay explicates the "cross of reality," an understanding of the human condition that discloses the miracle of speech.

In India, a new spirituality emerged around Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and nine subsequent living Gurus or teachers. This was the Sikh tradition. In the "Way of Guru Nanak," Mohinder Singh, a prolific scholar of the Sikh tradition and my guide into the Sikh Way, takes us into the founder of this community in India. Unlike religions that privilege the renunciate or the priest or the celibate or radically separates the sacred and the secular, the Sikh tradition emphasizes the way of the householder. Singh notes that Guru Nanak taught that "this world is the abode of God, and the True One lives therein." The Sikh does not withdraw from the world. Rather he practices the remembrance of God, works for his daily bread, and serves the community.

Bob Chodos recounts his becoming aware of the gifts hidden in the Jewish calendar in the "Way of the Jewish Year: Beginning with the 17th of

Tammuz." The 17th of Tammuz commemorates "the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 BCE." Though Bob had been raised in the Jewish tradition, it was only later that he realized the significance of "reliving these events" as one observes the ritual calendar. It is a fascinating walk through the calendar, one in which Bob finds surprising parallels with elements of pagan practice and even how "some courageous Jews and Muslims have shown that our calendars can also be a source of reconciliation." Imagine that!

It is always a challenging task to find effective ways to introduce students to the study of religion. Christopher Queen has taught an extension course on World Religions at Harvard University for years. We discussed his course when we met at an event in New York City several years ago. I was so impressed that I immediately asked him to write something on the "Way of Religion Appreciation 101." The result is this fascinating account of his course, one that attracts students from across the world and from many of the world's religions. He charts a way that is at once critical and appreciative, engaging and challenging. It sounds like a course I would love.

Long before the prophets of Ancient Israel or the philosophers of Ancient Greece there was Zarathustra (c. 1500 BCE), the prophet of Ancient Persia. Dr. Homi Dhalla, a contemporary Parsee living in Mumbai, India, tells the story of the founder of the Zoroastrian Way. Known as Parsees in India, Zoroastrians migrated to India in the 7th century of the Common Era. They are now a vital but diminishing community in India. Homi gives us an historical account of the Prophet Zarathustra and clarifies some of the misunderstandings concerning his tradition. He especially emphasizes the ecological elements of the Zoroastrian Way.

We then jump from an ancient Way to a contemporary movement that began in the early 20th century in multiple centers in Wales, England, India, and the USA: Pentecostalism. Dr. Adam Stewart is a young Canadian scholar of this movement that has swept across the world in the past century. One finds huge Pentecostal churches in Korea and Latin America, in Africa and Los Angeles, often with different names but all sharing a common sense of the active presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst. Here experience – the experience of divine immanence – rather

than doctrine is central. This movement is changing the global face of Christianity.

Another development that characterizes the contemporary situation is the emergence of spiritual teachers outside the bounds of traditional spiritual pathways. This is clear in relation to the contribution of my good friend, Lauri Siirala, in the "Way of the Inner Compass: Life With & Within." Lauri found traditional religious pathways rather toxic. He then happened upon some spiritual teachers, one from India, another from Australia, who opened up ways of speaking of the deeper dimensions of life that spoke to him. In his 40s he returned to his native Finland and began to offer lectures, workshops, meditation retreats, and readings. He has recently completed twenty-five years of sessions above the Arctic circle in complete darkness. Here, he articulates his understanding of that interior spiritual compass that can be our guide on the "pathless path" to "that something that cannot be named…but is the all of all." Can you grasp his dream?

Christopher Ross's passion has long been the interface of psychology and spirituality. Here, he unfolds the "Way of Personality Types" drawing upon the insights of Carl Jung, the great Swiss psychiatrist and founder of "analytic psychology." There are eight types in all: either extroverted or introverted ways of sensing, intuition, thinking and feeling. Each has its gifts and limitations. Keeping these types straight may be confusing at first but Christopher feels that "the more conscious we become of all eight cognitive processes in our psychological life," the more "our relationships with intimates and seeming strangers will improve." See if you find it helpful.

A complementary perspective is found in the "Way of Nonduality and Psychology" by Rob Menning McRae. Now a practicing counselor, Rob has long been interested in the relationship between Eastern and Western psychology, the subject of his undergraduate degree in Independent Studies at the University of Waterloo. He then pursued an MA in Spiritual Care and Psychology. Now as a counselor, he brings together the nondual as "the universal ground of being or the field upon which all other motions of life take place" and transpersonal psychology. The result is a healing modality that he is finding rather effective.

Dr. A. K. Merchant, whom I first met at the Baha'i Lotus Temple in India in the late 1980s, invites us into "The Baha'i Way." Founded by Baha'u'llah (1817-1892), he saw a new era beginning to dawn in his time, one that would lead to the "unity of the human race." Although imprisoned by Ottoman authorities, Baha'u'llah's writings were preserved and provided the basis of this new path. With its Universal Hall of Justice in Haifa, the Baha'i is now international. Merchant emphasizes the educational program of the Bahai's as key to its future. The educational aim is to create "a conscious basis for a life of service to humanity."

Of a similar age, but smaller than the Baha'i faith, is a community known as the Mennonite Brethren (MB). Dr. Vic Froese, now the Library Director at the Canadian Mennonite University, tells us that "Mennonites come in many varieties" and that his MB denomination emerged in the Ukraine late in the 19th century. It happily identifies itself as "evangelical" and emphasizes conversion as the foundation for living a Christian life. Unlike some other Mennonite groupings, MBs do not live in separate communities nor do they ride in horse-drawn buggies. There are more MBs in India and the Democratic Republic of the Congo then in Canada. As Vic explains here, the Mennonite Brethren are all part of the mosaic of global Christianity.

Professor Roland Boer is a prolific scholar and teaches in the School of Humanities and Social Science at Newcastle University in Australia. Roland's recent, award-winning volume is *In the Vale of Tears: On Marxism and Theology*. His essay on the "Way of Jesus and Marx" looks at "five points of contact" between Jesus of Nazareth and Karl Marx. Both, in their own distinctive terms, argues Boer, address "From Each…To Each, Private Property, From Below, Metanoia, and Miracles. This leads to an interesting tour of the New Testament, the writings of Marx and, surprisingly, of Lenin. His piece will be challenging to some readers but fascinating for others.

"Music is mysterious and unbounded…" are the opening words of Michael Purvis-Smith's "Way of the Composer." This long-time Professor of Music at Wilfrid Laurier University then takes us into the world of the composer. The composer, writes Michael, is one who "creates a string of musical vessels to shine, hopefully through repeated performances, in the

musical firmament." But the composer is "dependent on the collaboration of performers and audience." Thus he takes us on a fascinating journey as he explores compositions ranging from Handel's Messiah to a k.d. Lang song to Puccini's Madame Butterfly and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. In this way he opens us to the collaborative trinity of composer, performer, and audience.

Titles for Martin Brokenleg include doctor, professor, priest, canon, and founder, but most important is another designation: Lakota, the name of his people. In his "Way of the Lakota" Martin takes us into the "living tradition" of his people. It is a culture that values, above all else or in all else, "good relationships," a "balanced and harmonious state." In *Wolakota* the good relationship extends to "all plants, animals, stars, winds, celestial bodies and the things of the spirit world." Martin elaborates the centrality of kinship in relation to all aspects of Lakota culture: ritual, hunting, medicine, family relationships, respect for the land, and ways of thought. "What matters most to us Lakota is the power and sacredness of kinship."

Long regarded as the most important thinker of colonial America, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) is masterfully presented in Richard Hall's "Way of Jonathan Edwards." Richard and I first met at the University of Toronto, when he was doing a dissertation on Edwards. Here Hall shows Edwards to be at once an inquisitive young naturalist ("Of Insects"), philosopher ("Of Being") and theologian ("Religious Affections" and "God's End in Creation"). Edwards Way, Hall concludes, "was one shaped by an affective love of God and creation."

You are in for a surprise when you turn to Daniel Moaz's "The Way of a Jewish Mystic: Recycling Creation." The surprise is that Daniel has chosen to focus on Bob Dylan, whom he regards as "a Jewish mystic poet of our own times." A Jewish Scholar in Residence at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Daniel is at home in the dialogue of the Abrahamic traditions – Jewish, Christian and Muslim. His contribution is as illuminating of the way of the Jewish mystic as it is surprising.

When I came across this title – "Ways of Imperfection: Spiritual Disciplines for the Healing of the World" I knew I wanted this essay for this volume. I met David J. Goa at a conference at a Muslim University in Turkey, though his home base is closer to home in Canada. He is the

Director of the Chester Ronning Centre for Religion and Public Life in Edmonton, Alberta. His piece focuses on the spiritual disciplines of the Muslim scholar Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1877-1960) and Goa's own Orthodox tradition. Specifically, that means "impotence, poverty and compassion." These, Goa argues, are the gifts that lead to the reclaiming of our created nature and to the healing of the world. This article too contains many surprises.

Jonathan Wells holds a PhD in theology from Yale and a PhD in biology from the University of California (Berkeley), and yet he has been caught up in mean-spirited controversy. Why? He has challenged the reigning orthodoxy of "Darwinism." Indeed, he holds the view that there is design in creation. To read his critics, you'd think that all you need to know to dismiss him altogether is that he is a follower of Rev. Sun Myung Moon, a controversial Korean religious leader. I have known Jonathan since the late 1970s when a group of university professors formed Canadians for the Protection of Religious Liberty. We sought to provide informed opinion concerning the so-called "cults." In Jonathan's "Way of Intelligent Design" you have an opportunity to hear his story.

There are many stories coming out of the People's Republic of China concerning the persecution of Chinese Christians but few about the stunning growth of Christianity in China. When I visited China, I witnessed the welcoming of 400 new members into the Catholic Church in one service and attended Protestant churches full to capacity and adding hundreds of new members monthly. It is, of course, true that there are on-going issues with "House-Churches" that refuse to register with the government. In Professor Wentu Xie's "Way of the Chinese Christian" you have a glimpse into the teachings that inspire the recent growth in the numbers of Chinese Christians.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-45) was a Lutheran pastor and theologian widely known for his courageous opposition to Adolf Hitler and was executed just months before the end of World War II. Peter Frick was born and educated in Germany before coming to Canada where he pursued the study of religion. Here he explores the theological perspectives on grace and faith that were central to Bonhoeffer's remarkable life. As he wrote to a friend shortly before his execution, it is "Only by living completely in this

world that one learns to have faith."

Wendy Fletcher opens her "Way of the Artist" with these words: "Art as a spiritual pathway lends itself to…healing the self, mending the world, and imaging a future." She then shares a personal crisis that led her into art, her own healing, and new ways of relating to others. Her art, influenced by German expressionism, is rich in colour, unlike the black and white image of the "Raven" included here. She was surprised to learn that her colour and shapes spoke to others, opening a dialogue between the viewer and the future. Art became a "pathway into life," and echoed the Celtic notion of "thin places" where "the now and the not yet meet."

We often speak of the "world religions" in numbers less than 10. But the actual number is in the thousands when we look at the variety of streams that we find within the major traditions. And there are new varieties emerging all the time. In the 1960s and 70s, we saw the emergence of many "new religions" in the West, the "cults" as they were labelled in the news media. They were groups like 3HO, Hari Krishna, Scientology, Unification, Brahma Kumaris, African Independent Churches and hundreds more. Some, like Hari Krishna, were hundreds of years old but new in the West. Frank Kaufmann, in the "Way of a Unificationist," takes us into a movement that formally began in Korea in 1954 as the "Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity." It emerged around the teachings of Sun Myung Moon, whose family had become Christian in the 1930s. Moon believed he had been called by Jesus to continue his work. As you can imagine, this claim offended many in the evangelical-fundamentalist wing of American Christianity and secularists. Here, Frank takes us inside the movement and shares his story of following the Unification Way.

Hinduism tells us that there are different ways to the divine – the way of the mind or Jnana Yoga, the way of the heart/devotion or Bhakti Yoga, the way of selfless action or Karma Yoga, and the way of physical/spiritual disciplines or Raj Yoga. In Shrivatsa Goswami's "Way of Krishna and Radha," we encounter a tradition of devotion that is centered on Krishna, the "blue god," and Radha, the *gopi*. The Goswami family is central to this stream of Krishna/Radha devotion. When Chaitanya (1486-1533) revived Krishna devotion in the 1500s, he sent six of his followers to Vrindavan in northcentral India, the playground of the young Krishna. Here, these

families established the Radharama Temple and wrote the stories of Krishna. Music and dance are immensely important in this tradition. So, to visit Vrindavan, especially during festival times, is to be drawn into this ecstatic devotional Way.

Do professions have a "spiritual" dimension? The etymology of the word "profession" suggests that they do. The word comes from Old French and refers to the "vows taken upon entering a religious vocation." In the longer Catholic tradition, there were only two "vocations:" the religious life and marriage. Both were understood as sacred callings, other pursuits were simply jobs. At the Reformation, Martin Luther rejected this view and argued that all social roles were "callings" or "vocations" and had a spiritual dimension, and Jean Calvin, one of the other great Reformers, agreed with Luther. This shift was obvious in the term used for teachers who were called professors, and it was extended to the way Protestants saw all social roles, from printers to professors.

In this vein, you read about the "Way of the Composer" and the "Way of the Artist." Now you will read about the "Way of the Computer Programmer," written by my oldest son, Benjamin Bryant. He writes of early being "inspired" by the recognition that he could "build things," and this passion continued into the world of the computer. The desire to create placed demands on Ben as he learned the "languages" of the computer programmer, and spent hours playing games and working at what he was learning. He took a break from computers while in college, but was lured back to this new frontier in human knowing and doing, making computers and programming his career and calling.

In 2011, I made my first trip to the People's Republic of China. I looked forward to encountering the great religious and spiritual traditions of China: Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, as well as the smaller traditions of Islam and Christianity. I knew these traditions had suffered greatly during the Cultural Revolution (1964-74) and I wondered what I would find. I was there for the annual meeting of the Confucius Institutes, an initiative by China to promote worldwide the study of Chinese language and culture. We have such an Institute Renison University College headed by Yan Li, a Chinese writer and immigrant to Canada. We had worked together on a book – *Along the Silk Road: Essays in Chinese Literature,*

History & Culture – that was to be presented at the annual meeting. On the final day we heard an address by Jialu Xu, a Confucian scholar and founding head of the Confucius Institute initiative. To my surprise, he shared his views on religion. Yan Li said there had not been any mention of religion in earlier annual meetings. I was struck by his candid and interesting views. I later wrote him, via Yan Li since I do not know Chinese, and received permission to include his address here. I trust you will find it as interesting as I did.

In 2013, Kurt Johnson and David Robert Ord published *The Coming Interspiritual Age*, bringing a new perspective on what was happening in the religious world. They argued that there was a "new trend" in the world of religion and spirituality, emphasizing "the experiential heart and consciousness-raising qualities of the world's many spiritual traditions." This new emphasis takes precedence over the "specific creedal and dogmatic claims of the religions." One of the pioneers, Wayne Teasdale – the first to coin the term "interspirituality" – wrote that "Interspirituality is the foundation that can prepare the way for a planet-wide enlightened culture, and a continuing community among the religions that is substantial, vital, and creative." In their contribution, you are introduced to this new vision of "spirituality of the heart" for our globe. It is a fitting last essay in this volume.

The volume concludes with two poems by Pamela O'Rourke. They are called "Pebbled Thoughts I & II," a good place to end this journey into the many ways, many voices, and many paths in global spirituality.

In Gratitude

Where shall I go
When the clouds of night
Close out the day?

(You plucked the strings of my heart –
I heard and was drawn in)

I shall fly to
Shantivana
Where palms clatter
bananas leaves rustle the air
seedpods click and chatter …

background music
for the hooting owl
in the darkening…
as bird calls
fly over the land.

Your pillars are strong
pillars of light by night
Shantivana shines
like Dharva in the heavens
lighting the way

Taralabalu Shantivana
where the weak are strong and
the strong are gentle…
all have a place
within the circle

from one trunk
different branches
all reaching up to the light …
each supports not hinders
the reaching the rustling
in the breeze…

When we come together
we are a fruitful symphony

We are Shantivana
a forest of peace laughter joy
rooted in
dance and song and honest labour.

***

Yes the lilies of the field…but
who shall care for this child
watching uniformed children
walk into the future

Our children
so small and delicate
But deeply rooted -
nourished
in the faith of our soil
in the soil
of our faith

red iron soil
fill people of clay
with strength and hope
reaping friendship.
Like grasses,

waters bend
go separate ways
but flow - joined
in a vision of hope and unity
that flows from the heart.

We flood the earth
with the fruits of our living.

Shantivana –
rain on dry land
island in the waters
fruit of the tree…
soil of life
waters of hope… flowing

In the night
Shantivana is a star that shines
sweet memories
contentment

I will remember you with sweetness
Remember me in kindness
As a simple Ajji
over the moon
as we keep each other tight
in our hearts
Shanti shanti shanti

"To undertake whatever is to come
That is a vow."
Basavanna #231

"To live in the hearts
we leave behind
is not to die."
Joseph Campbell

"I touched and joined
my lord of the meeting rivers.
How can I talk to anyone
of that?"
Basavana

Way of Wisdom

Huston Smith

Without wisdom a human life is wasted. –*Bhagavad Gita*, 2:63

It goes without saying that the West has no monopoly on wisdom. If the *Upanishads*, the *Qur'an*, the *Dao de Ching*, and the *Analects of Confucius* are not wise books, the word has no meaning.

However, the concern of this piece is the wisdom of the West whose trajectory was set in place by Socrates and his pupil, Plato. Alfred North Whitehead attested to the importance of the latter by asserting that "the simplest way of describing western philosophy is to say that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato," and Plato passed the compliment on to his mentor Socrates by making him the oracle – the spokesman for truth in all Plato's *Dialogues*.

Christianity provides an interesting parallel to this. In Christianity, Judaism's long, God-guided history culminates in Christ, and everything that follows flows from him. In western philosophy, the centrepiece is Socrates and everything that follows flows from him – the parallel is exact.

What I have thus far said is contextual, and now I will turn to what it is the context for. Proceeding chronologically, I shall begin with Socrates, about whom everything we know comes to us through Plato. The essence of Plato's depiction of Socrates is placed in the mouth of Alcibiades' toast to him in *The Symposium*. It is too long to quote here in full, so I must paraphrase it.

> *What Socrates reminds me of more than anything else is the* ***silenti*** *that are sold in stalls. They have pipes and flutes in their hands, and when you open them down the middle there are gods inside. That simile is exact, for you, Socrates, have gods inside of you, and you are a more wonderful piper than Marsyas (the Satyr of Lydia) who had only to put his flute to his lips to bewitch mankind. The*

divinity of your piping is also a lodestone – those who respond to it are fit subjects for divine initiation, others are not. But there is a flaw in this simile, for you can get the same effect as Marsyas did without using a flute. All you need to do is the say a few simple words. And even though they are not even poetry, we are absolutely staggered. The moment we hear you speak, our hearts jump into our mouths and tears begin to flow. Not even Pericles, or other great orators, affects us like that turning our souls upside down and making us feel as if we were the lowest of the low. You make me feel that I simply cannot continue to squander my life on politics while neglecting all the things that are crying for attention in myself. No one else makes me feel ashamed of myself the way he does.

Now that I've started, I will continue. He gives the appearance of liking good looking men, but that's just his outer casing. It seems to be agreed that I'm the best looking man in Athens, but when I offered myself to him one night, after we had wrestled naked, he wasn't even interested. And to return to those little gods inside of him, they look so godlike. So golden, so beautiful and so utterly amazing that there was nothing for it but to do exactly what he told me.

To continue, people fear snakes because of their poison, but I've been bitten by something worse. I've been bitten in the heart by Socrates' philosophy which clings like an adder to any gifted mind it can get hold of and does exactly what it wants with it.

To switch to a different front, when we were both sent into active service he withstood the hardship of the campaign far better than any of the rest of us. But on the other hand, when we had plenty to eat, no one seemed to enjoy eating as much as he did, and though he never chose to drink, if we pressed him to drink he always beat the lot of us, yet no one has ever seen him drunk.

Again, the winters are severe in the place we were ordered to

go, and when we went out we bundled up and wrapped clothes around our shoes. But he wore only the old cloak that he always wore and walked barefoot across the ice and made less fuss about our predicament than the rest of us did.

Well, so much for that. And I must tell you about something else that occurred during that campaign. One morning at sunrise he started to wrestle with some question or other and when the answer didn't come he stood there lost in thought and when the answer didn't come he continued to stand there thinking and refused to give in to it. Time went by and about midday the troops noticed what was happening and began spreading the word that Socrates had been standing there thinking since daybreak. And at last toward nightfall some of the Ionians brought out their bedding and supper – it was summer – to see whether he would stand there all night. Well, there he stood until morning, and when the sun rose he said his prayers to it and went on his way.

And now I expect that you would like to hear what kind of a show he made when we went into action. I was decorated for bravery after one battle, and would you believe it, he saved my life single-handed. I had been wounded and he refused to leave me and got me out of it. When we were safe I went to the general and told him that Socrates deserved the decoration, but they insisted on giving it to me because of my family connection and Socrates stood right behind them in their insistence.

And gentlemen, you should have seen him when we were retreating in great disorder from Delium. He was on the front line retreating with Laches when I happened to catch sight of him. He was walking along coolly, as if he were simply out for a stroll, yet you could tell that if anyone attacked him he would give as good as he got and this resulted in both of them escaping.

Well, there's a lot more that could be said about all of Socrates' little ways, all very peculiar and much to his credit. But I think

that most important thing to say is that he is absolutely unique; there's no one like him and I do not believe that there ever was. Many of the great men in history have one or two of his traits, but no one comes close to having all of them, or to having his ideas.

Which reminds me of something I forgot to say at the beginning. Anyone, hearing him for the first time might easily find him laughable, for he talks about pack asses and blacksmiths and shoemakers and tanners, and he seems to be saying the same old thing in the same old way which is senseless. But when you really get into his arguments you find that they are the only arguments in the world that make any sense at all, and that nobody else's are so godlike, so rich in images of virtue, or so peculiarly and so entirely pertinent to the inquiries that help the seeker on his way to the goal of true nobility.

And there, gentlemen, you have my eulogy of Socrates with a few complaints about how he treated me thrown in.

I said at the start that I would confine my presentation of the wisdom of the West to the two figures that set its trajectory. Having dealt with Socrates I will now turn to Plato. And I again recall the words of Alfred North Whitehead: *the simplest way to characterize Western thought is to say that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato.*

Plato's philosophy was the product of his life-long effort to conceive of Reality as consonant with the life and death of his mentor, Socrates. Socrates' life was Reality encapsulated, Reality-writ-small, so to speak. Plato could see no hope for society unless it could be shown that this was the nature and character of Reality.

That paragraph contains the gist of the matter, but it is so condensed that it must be spelled out.

Socrates was alive, so if macrocosm mirrors microcosm, it follows that the world is a living organism. (Platonically speaking, 'dead matter' is a modern, *scientistically,* not scientifically inspired heresy.)

This leads directly to Plato's rationalism, for odd though it may sound, organisms are rational beings. The reason that this sounds odd is that

we tend to assume that reason presupposes consciousness, or better self-consciousness, and there is no reason to think that vegetables or simple organisms like earthworms are self-conscious. But Plato is reaching for *generic* rationality, which comes down to knowing what to do; and it's obvious that vegetables *do* know what to do. They know how to grow, how to flesh themselves out and not shoot up like elongated slivers that look like church steeples. And when they sprout leaves, those leaves are more or less symmetrical and two-dimensional – they do not fill themselves out three-dimensionally the way turnips and radishes do.

However, Plato's argument that the world is rational doesn't stop with pointing out that it is intelligible and knows how to behave. He means also that the world is *as it should be.* When something is as it should be we rest our case and do not ask for further explanations; in fact, there is no more generic definition of an adequate explanation than that it satisfies us. Plato rounds off his argument for the world's rationality by saying that actually the point doesn't need to be argued. All we need do is open our eyes and *observe* the world's beauty and orderliness. It is at the furthest remove from a junk yard.

Thus far Plato has been describing the Big Picture, the world in its entirety. Inasmuch as backgrounds influence foregrounds that was necessary, but having argued that the world is structured by *logos,* Reason, Plato turns to the foreground – human beings themselves. Inasmuch as we are a part of a rational world, it follows that we too must also be structured by Reason. And we *are* thus structured *fore* we are Truth-Beings who have Truth built into us. A caveat must immediately be entered, however. All the truths about the world, such as the distance from New York to London aren't built into us. But remember: since we are Truth-Beings, the fundamental truths that we need to know about life are built into us.

It is at the heart of Plato's strategy that he does not tell us what those truths are – he forces us to discover them for ourselves. Why? Because if we were *told* those truths we could easily forget them. Whereas, if we have to struggle to attain them we are much more likely to remember them.

Enter the Socratic Method. The teacher does not abdicate his responsibility, for he is passionately concerned that the student *learn*. However, he wants the student to *learn*, not be taught. There is a huge

difference between giving a man a fish and teaching him how to fish. The same distinction is at work here – don't give the student the answer; make him 'fish' for it himself. The role of the teacher is to teach students how to fish. Put differently, the dialectician is a midwife attending us in the 'labour' of giving birth to ideas. Or like a gardener who tends his plants but cannot do for them what they must do for themselves. The essence of Platonism is that we must come to know, not through trial and error (which yields too little too late), but in coming to see what is possible and impossible in the world in which we live.

I may have belaboured that analogy, and every analogy is a leaky bucket that can carry water only so far. So let me drop the analogy and speak literally and forthrightly.

Plato believed that human beings have Truth inside of themselves, but it is so deeply buried that they are not consciously aware of it. Therefore they need teachers – midwives – to help them bring truths to surface awareness, so to speak. They provide this help (as we have seen) by posing leading questions, which has come to be known famously as the Socratic method; but it could also be called 'the dialogical method,' for Plato uses dialogue as the embracing term for his corpus, *The Dialogues of Plato.* As the saying goes, the media is the message.

What has been said thus far sketches the human landscape, the environment in which human beings live, so to speak, and I turn now to how they should comport themselves in that environment. They should educate themselves, and that word, *educate,* is worth dwelling on for a moment. *E* stands for 'out' as in *exit,* and *duco* for 'to lead,' as in its cognate, con*ductor.* For Plato, philosophy is an educational curriculum designed to lead humanity out of the confusing hubbub of everyday life, and to save them from that hubbub.

Two questions at once arise: why should we undertake philosophy's curriculum, and how do we accomplish its mission? Plato's answer to *why* is charged with motivation and incentive; the study will tell us who we are, and the revelation will be almost overpoweringly exciting and thrilling. We will discover that we are gods in human disguise. This is so far beyond and above our normal self-estimate that it is hard to believe that Plato was absolutely serious in the claim, which he clearly was.

We come here to why Plato is the lodestone of Western philosophy and why Whitehead could character that philosophy as a series of footnotes to Plato. The reason is that Plato set his sights sky-high and argues that human nature is little short of divine. Obviously human beings didn't fashion the world or create themselves, but short of that they are living miracles. Shakespeare could have had his eye on Plato when he exclaimed, "What a piece of work is a man!"

However, manhood is not simply a gift that is given; it is something which in its full stature must be achieved. Infants must learn – this is obvious – but the question is *what* they should learn. Skills of various sorts, to be sure – reading, writing, and how they should do and make all sorts of things. But we don't come to Plato until we see that what heads his list of what needs to be learned is virtue – how to be good. We need to learn to be kind, caring, considerate, helpful and compassionate. It goes without saying that this isn't what our schools and universities take to be their mission today, and with good reason, for virtue cannot be broken down into fragments and then organized into grades and curricula, for virtue is holistic. The wholes can be larger or smaller – one can increase in virtue – but divisions and relationships don't enter.

Learning brings knowledge – we are still tracking Plato – but knowledge of virtue is different from knowledge *about* virtue. We can read the lives of saints, but can we imagine how life would *feel* to a saint? This is no idle question, for Plato believed that we *are* saints, or better, saints-in-the-making, for as has been said, virtue is not bestowed, it is an opportunity that can be realized and achieved. And its achievement is the supreme opportunity life affords.

What has been said stands, but it is lopsided in presenting only half of the picture, the head but not the heart, so to speak. We can know, and we can also love, which means that in addition of being truth-beings, we are also love-beings. And – this is important – Plato's word for love is virtue. The virtuous man interacts with everyone as if each individual were himself – his desires and aversions are equivalent to one's own.

Now come back to education, the lifelong human curriculum. It is to escalate reason by exercising it, and also to escalate compassion, the capacity to feel with, *pass* (feel as in passion), *com* (with, as in company).

With that point in place, we can move on to another of Plato's concerns – his reservations about the printed word. He would not have written the enormous corpus that he did had he not thought the written word served a purpose. But he went on to say, most explicitly in his Seventh Epistle but by implication elsewhere, that [and I paraphrase] 'if anyone thinks he understands what I think by reading what I have written, it is proof positive that he has not understood me at all.'

Why? How so?

For two reasons: first, printed words are static, frozen, whereas thinking is fluid and forever on the move. But the second reason is the decisive one. Plato was a visionary. He *saw* something, the way things really are, in comparison with what un-regenerated people see is – as he put it in his famous Allegory of the Cave – but shadows on the wall. Everything he wrote was an agonizing attempt to intimate, suggest by 'likely tales,' and coax people into catching a fleeting glimpse, 'like light from a leaping flame' of what he, Plato, held in steady view. And sometimes his readers would see through his dialectic prose and actually **see into the truth of things**.

This is the beginning of the Way of Wisdom in the West.

To conclude: Cornell West of Princeton has confessed that when he writes something significant, time and again he is haunted by the feeling that he is simply rehearsing something Plato said, and said better than he is saying it.

This, too, is the Way of Wisdom.

Way of a Bosnian Muslim

Enes Karić

I. Praying in the Meadown/Remaining a Child Before the Commands of Ritual Faith

As years go by I often remember that I was born in 1958, thirteen years after the Second World War, during the time of Tito's Socialist Yugoslavia. Today, even though I am a 54 year old, I can say that I am younger. For the years that have passed do not belong to me anymore.

The more I move in time away from the year of 1958, the more I find a child appearing in me, then a boy, who awoke in his faith of Islam in his native village of Višnjevo, near the town of Travnik, in central Bosnia.

Indeed, how did I as a child and then as a boy learn that I was a Muslim.

On many occasions I spoke the following words to Egyptian students in Cairo, where I spent a semester in 1983 for specialist training in Arabic. What would happen was that whenever my fellow students spotted me with my "European" features and learned that my name was Enes, the students would ask me: "Enes, when did you accept Islam?" And I would briefly tell them the story that follows.

Let me say at the outset that it was Islamic rituals which gave me the gift of an awareness of my religious origins and belonging.

Even today the religion of Islam for me has the meaning, first of all, of careful and dedicated performance of Islamic daily rituals: uttering the Testimony of Faith or *Shahadah* (*Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh* – I bear witness that there is no god but God!), performing five daily prayers, fasting, giving *zakat*, going to Mecca on *hajj*, etc. I acquired this recognition that Islam was always based on its rituals from my grandfather Husein and grandmother Hanīfa (my father Emin's parents).

Husein and Hanifa gave the gift of their peasant lives to the rituals of Islam. They adjusted the clock of their life obligations in accordance with those rituals. When mowing hay in the summer, at exactly noon the *adhān* (call to prayer) would be heard over our meadow. In the next half hour,

the noon prayer would be performed. On the meadow on the hillsides of Mt. Vlašić we would all be standing facing Mecca. All around us the hills were silent, the expanses of the seething summer disappearing on the horizons.

I never forgot the light of Islamic faith which shone on the faces of those peasants praying in the meadow.

II. Early Memories

I clearly remember the great snows which would start falling in my village at the end of November in 1962 or 1963, for example.

I can also remember Ramadan, the month of fasting, which used to fall in February before moving into equally cold months of January and December in 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, and so on.

Ahead of Ramadan our village house would be thoroughly cleansed and whitewashed. All its rooms would be scented with a plant that my mother Sabiha called *beyturān*.

During the month of fasting, mother Sabiha cooked fine meals for all members of the family. With the advent of *iftār* (breaking of fast), all of us, the members of grandfather Husein's family, would sit on our knees, legs folded, around the big *sofra* (traditional Bosnian low, round table) and eat in peace and silence. We children did not fast, of course. But we did join in eating with others. And we did rejoice in Ramadan.

That *sofra* was the centre and we sitting around were its "periphery" unified by the ritual of *iftār*. The silence was exceedingly beautiful.

Children were equal to adults, and meals were served in the middle of *sofra*. At the end of each Ramadan dinner all of us would turn our bare palms towards the sky and my father Emin would recite the *yemek dova* in Arabic (thanking God for water, food, grain, fruits, and vegetables and for making us *Muslims*, "the people who have surrendered to God.")

For me the month of Ramadan then was like an invisible and at the same time a beautiful person of completely unspecified features. After all, the Qur'an does not allow that something of God should appear in a form or image! Ramadan was like a guest made of brilliant light coming into our house and spending time with us in a rather special and unforgettable time.

It was as if Ramadan was smiling at us children through the windows studded with winter ice, while outside it was cold and thick snow was falling!

It was as if the month of fasting, our dear Ramadan, had commanded my mother Sabiha how to lay *sofra* with a lot of meals and how to tidy up the house! And how all of us should be joyful and happy.

Before each Ramadan dinner or *iftār* grandfather Husein would recite the Qur'anic words: *Bismi allāhi ar-Rahmān ar-Rahīm* (In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful). Then we would perform the evening prayer, in Bosnian known colloquially as *akšam-namāz.*

We would turn our faces towards Mecca, standing in straight lines. (I recall an evening prayer in 1969. After the prayer we were listening to Radio-Sarajevo news when they reported that al-Aqsā Mosque in Jerusalem had been burnt! My grandfather Husein cried for a long time, sighed deep breaths, stayed silent and fingered his rosary (*tespīh*) made of the Bosnian hazel bush. I remembered well his sobbing.

III. The Miracle of Ramadan

During Ramadan (but also outside it) every Thursday and Sunday evening, as the dusk spread its wings over my village of Višnjevo, the eldest daughter-in-law of my grandfather Husein (and my mother Sabiha) would light a lamp, the so-called *petrolejka*, because electricity had not yet arrived in the village.

(Electricity arrived later, in the early 1970s, together with *Socialist progress* and the *creation of the new man*).

The light poured out of the petrol lamp onto the faces of all children and adults, as if we were being created anew in that light!

We would all sit down in a circle with our knees folded, in the large room. Grandfather Husein sat in the middle, my father Emin to his right, and in front of them there was a pretty little table made from the wood of a walnut tree.

On the table there was a white cotton towel embroidered with Bosnian floral motifs and on the towel there was an opened copy of the book of Qur'an.

My father would recite aloud sura *Yā Sīn,* the 36th chapter of the Holy

Book of Islam. (Later, when I performed *hajj* in December 2007, I noticed that the central position of the Ka'ba in the courtyard of al-Haram al-Sharif resembled the central position of the Qur'an during the ritual of *Yā Sīn* recitation in that dear room of my childhood).

Each evening the recitation was conducted (Friday and Monday eve) for about half an hour only the clear voice of the Qur'an in Arabic would be heard in our house.

It was as if our holy book of Qur'an was also entering our home, as if it, too, was a guest or traveler who quietly stepped inside and, with its right foot, crossed over the threshold of our home. And as if we were all hosts receiving the Qur'an, and joyful that it came by to greet us and to make us happy on its journey through This World.

Father would be reciting sura *Yā Sīn*, whose words I found endlessly beautiful, even though I could not understand them, or know the meaning of hardly a single word.

At the end of each of those evenings we would all present the reward (*thawab*) of the act of recitation of sura *Yā Sīn* to our dead.

Father Emin would ceremoniously pronounce their names as if our deceased were also present, having come to life and arrived in that large room of ours. As if they came briefly from the Hereafter to express their gratitude for our warm remembrance of them through *Qur'an* recitation!

Then we would perform the evening prayer.

I remember as if it were yesterday how reciting the Qur'ān encouraged our household to give *zak*ā*t* and other forms of wealth distribution and support for the poor.

Grandfather Husein would decide which sheep, or a couple of sheep, were to be set aside from our flock and be donated the poorest in the village.

He would also measure grain (barley, wheat or oats) before sending the right quantity of kilograms to the poor.

It was customary to distribute everything under the cover of night, or discreetly, so that he who was giving should not take pride in his act, and he who was receiving would not feel embarrassed.

IV. The Rituals of Islam as the Heart of Islam

Although I have spent all my adult life studying Islam and the Qur'an (I spent time at various universities in the world, from UCLA and UCSB in California, to al-Azhar in Cairo and Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut) for me the rituals of Islam have always remained the core of the religion of Islam and its great spiritual treasure. Islam takes care of itself and keeps its freshness through its rituals.

Many years later I realized the following: throughout history Islamic rituals have kept the unique spiritual tone of Islam.

That is an enduring thing in Islam. Many systems have passed through the Islamic world: caliphates, sultanates, emirates, kingships, czars, totalitarian regimes, colonial administrations, neocolonial regimes, etc. All those came and went. But the rituals of Islam have outlived them all and stayed for good!

Daily rituals of Islam teach man how his arm should move morally, how his foot should walk morally, how not to say a bad word, how to defeat the evil inside himself.

And how to keep silence, for hours on end.

I remember many elderly men and women of my village of Višnjevo as courageous people. I remember how they experienced their faith earnestly in every way, in their intentions, in their decisions, in their shame and in their anxiety.

I remember how they accepted mortality with calm.

This was noticeable by the boldness with which ordinary, everyday words were being said.

They always gladly followed the commands of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and they were aware of the long list of forbidden (*harām*) things: do not use swear words, do not steal, do not commit adultery, do not drink alcohol, do not bear false witness, do not joke excessively, do not talk behind other people's back, do not spy on people, love your neighbor, etc, all that was the ritual plane of Islam for these ordinary, traditional people.

With a passage of time, as I set out into the world looking for a better living, I remembered these ordinary people and the fact that for them the

rituals of Islam were a safe anchorage in stormy times and a turbulent world.

Also, Islamic rituals serve a strong social function in Muslim societies throughout the world. As we know, for over a century now Muslim states have been largely weak, impoverished and without ordered social institutions. I do declare this: if it was not for Islamic rituals and their social function, millions in the Muslim world would be starving.

V. A Turning Point

But, the first important event to happen in the world of my ritual faith occurred in the school year 1969/1970.

I had just started the fifth grade in the primary school.

Since no higher grades were offered in my native village of Višnjevo, I moved to another village, called Podovi, where I lived with my grandfather Ahmed and grandmother Fatima (my mother Sabiha's parents)

From there it was easier for me to go to the village of Han Bila and its large primary school.

That was the first time in my life that I became aware of the fact that, right there, about 10-20 kilometers around, there lived a lot of Catholics. I saw their churches, watching with interest how, each Sunday, they would go in large numbers to attend the mass, dressed in smart white shirts.

(I remember how my granny Fatīma would warn me that Catholics were about to walk the roads on the way to church, in the village of Brajkovići, and she would sternly command me that I had to be watchful not to say a bad word to *anyone of them*!)

It was then that I first started associating with Catholic kids.

The great primary school in Han Bila could have more than a thousand pupils. In accordance with educational programs of the prevailing Socialist ideology, all children from the surrounding villages - be they Catholic, Orthodox or Muslim - were to attend the school together.

At the time schools were "Socialist workshops of brotherhood and unity" of our state of Yugoslavia! In our classrooms we were all "Tito's pioneers" and we were mixed. It was not desirable to stress one's religion.

But in spite of Socialism and the atheist atmosphere of our school, this is where I first heard about Catholic Christmas, Orthodox Easter and

other Christian festivals.

I learned that these festivals were quite important to Catholic children. I became aware of yet another religious universe, in addition to my own Islamic one.

As religious festivals were working days in Socialist Yugoslavia, unless they fell on Sundays, all children would go to school normally. Catholic children would wear smart often new clothes. They would bring gifts to us, Muslim children, and would give us colourful Easter eggs, etc.

I was glad that Catholic children believed in God. I was glad that they followed their religion.

It was also then, in the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade, that I became aware of religious differences.

We vs. *they*, *ours* vs. *theirs*, the *close* vs. the *distant* – this binary position determined my silence about faith in God in my early teenage years.

It was then that I learned, though not quite clearly:

What is Jesus Christ to *them*, seemed too much for us Muslims!

What was Isa, peace be upon him, to *us*, was too little for Christians!

Later in life I learned many explanations for the plurality of religions.

But I always remained deeply and respectfully silent about the great fact of every systematic theology: God is one, of religions there are thousands.

VI. Learning the Way of ritual

After I finished primary school (in Socialist Yugoslavia it lasted eight years), I enrolled in the prestigious Islamic college in Sarajevo, the celebrated Gazi Husrevbegova madrasa (founded in 1537).

There I spent ten semesters (or five wonderful years).

I have to admit with some embarrassment that the education I received there between 1973 and 1978 was marked by multiple "theoretical attacks" on that solid and perfect ritual Islam, the Islam of evenings on the eve of Islamic festivals in my village of Višnjevo.

As a teenage student in Gazi Husrevbegova madrasa I learned that Islam included belief, not just acts of worship.

I came to know this: Islamic rituals are there for you to do something for the sake of God and do it for God, for yourself, your parents, your

marriage partner, for other people, for animals, for plants, for stones!

And Islamic belief was there so that you might not think wrong of God, let alone to say of him something wrong!

Believe that God is one and only (*tawhīd*), that is the first article of faith.

Believe that there are angels (*malāhikah*, who are right there, around us, invisible, and talking us into good deeds and whispering to us good thoughts, that is the second article of Islamic faith).

Believe in the books of God (Qur'ān, revealed to Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, is like a shining star on the beautiful heavenly vault of God's books) and that is the third article of Islamic faith.

Believe in God's messengers, that is the fourth article of Islamic faith. (In the madrasa I was told that there were many messengers of God in the history of mankind, but that the most important ones were Ādam, Noah, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, 'Īsā and Muhammad).

Believe in the Last Day and the Day of Judgment (when the whole of mankind, each person individually, will answer before God for his bad deeds; or be awarded for his good deeds), was the fifth article of Islamic faith.

Believe that God decrees everything! This sixth article of Islam was interpreted to us in the madrasa as belief in Fate, i.e. that in the final analysis Fate comes from God. God is above Fate and it is precisely for that reason that Muslim should do good, strive to do good, but, at the end of the day, he must reconcile himself with the final outcome of things. For, if we rely on God, God will chose what is best for us. Whoever believes that, believes also that he/she gets the best possible outcome. For him/her Fate is the *modus operandi* of his/her human freedom!

As a madrasa student in Sarajevo for five years I studied a quite broad theoretical *apologia* of Islam through various subjects (both secular and religious).

Of course, I continued to perform regularly all the rituals of Islam which I learned in front of my father and grandfather in my native village of Višnjevo.

In a way, to me the rituals of Islam are above any Islamic theory.

For me the rituals of Islam have, in principle, contained a theory of

Islam or Islamic belief.

In a way, the rituals of Islam imply Islamic monotheism, belief in angels (*malā'ikah*), belief in God's books, God's messengers, Day of Judgment and God's Decree.

I strived for the rituals of Islam to remain sacred to me, to remain inexplicable, to remain for me an unopened chest of an inexhaustible spiritual treasure.

Hence, I never rationalized the rituals. As if they were axioms for me, even though some of my madrasa professors interpreted our bending positions during prayer as *beneficial body gymnastics*, etc.

There were also professors in the madrasa who explained Ramadan fasting from a medicinal point of view, as something *beneficial for human health*.

Of course, I need to mention that there were also professors who were telling us how *Islam and its teachings were really close to Socialism* and encompassed Socialist ideals, etc.

VII. Maturing in the Rituals of Faith

The years that followed (1978-1992) were those in which I graduated from the Faculty of Islamic Studies and the Faculty of Political Science. I received a Master's Degree in Philosophy and a PhD in Philology. I pursued post-doctoral studies at Yale and spent some time at al-Azhar in Cairo.

I was becoming increasingly aware that the rituals of any faith, just as beliefs of any faith, have their context. But they also create a context for themselves.

In our age of technology Islamic rituals and beliefs address me with the task of feeling as a creature of God again. And also with keeping awake that happy feeling for others that they, too, are – creatures of God!

That status, to be a creature of God, is what makes me rich, gives me tranquility, and makes me even more committed to experience Islamic rituals and beliefs from that angle also.

For me it is an immeasurably great message of Islam that only God is God, that there is no god beside God.

From that Islamic position there follows a clear message: everything other than God has the status of being a creature of God.

Through that status – that we are all creatures of God – we have a great chance. A stone is a creature of God, a tulip is a creature of God, a sparrow is a creature of God, a Buddhist is a creature of God, a Christian is a creature of God, a Jew is a creature of God, a Muslim is a creature of God, an atheist is a creature of God, and so on and so forth.

In that are being unveiled for me the joys I can share with others, give to others from the great symbolic treasure of Islam.

For, the God of the Qur'an is not a Muslim God!

The God of the Qur'an is a universal God, the Creator of us all.

We are His slaves, we are His devotees.

VIII. The Treasures of Islam

This unveiling of the symbolic treasure of ritual Islam helped me to find my way in this turbulent world of machines and technology.

According to a rigid Scientism, nature, including human nature, is not explained as God's creation and a magnificent sign and gift of God, Who Creates Everything. But it is explained as an item on the list of industrial resources, a source of human wealth, or as Descarte's corporeal substance (*res extensa*). It is, then, on nature's corporeality that man can exercise his insatiable desire to control and mold all things encouraged by his unbridled and "liberated" reason.

With machines man has turned to appropriating and *privatizing* nature; he has become a being whose hands are full of this world's treasures.

We, the present day descendants of *homo sapiens*, have for a long time now been waving with millions of tons of coal, steel and oil in our fists.

Our hands are full of various bombs: atomic, neutronic, what not! Although this is a crude picture, it carries a lot of symbolism, and a bitter truth in the present day ecologic catastrophies.

During the frequent moments of my Bosnian pessimism an Islamic message teaches me: those simple, empty human hands, bare human palms are one of the greatest achievements of Muslim daily prayers, supplications and other forms of prayer, and also of prayers found in other traditional world religions.

When man, male or female, complets a daily prayer (*salāt*/*namāz*) and supplication (*du'ā*) and then, in a solemn ending, raises his or her empty

palms to the level of his face, he and she should look at his or her empty hands.

And then, male or female, he and she should understand and bring home to himself or herself exactly the fact that the hands in prayer possess nothing.

And yet, they possess – everything! Can there be anything more precious for man than reliance on God?!

That is why we should keep looking at that sublime emptiness of our hands and whispering prayerful words from holy books.

That is an important ethical and moral aspect of rituals, supplications and prayers in Islam. (I often thought about this in the besieged Sarajevo, between 1992 and 1995: how many millions of tons of arms does the modern man hold in his hands!? And he should really take at least one look a day at his empty palms and ask himself: God, what is the task you have commanded me to carry out with these hands, here on earth?!)

These, then, are the messages Islam gives me as a gift and which I try to share unobtrusively in conversation with other people.

Primordial traditional religions (Islam, Christianity, Judaism and others) matter to us today, in this world of technology.

For, religions do not babble to man, do not seek to ingratiate themselves to him.

In front of man religions do not pass in silence over anything.

Nothing makes us face our border situations so sincerely as do the Bible and the Qur'an.

On the other hand, the problem is not what scientism and the terrible noise of frenzied machines preach today, but what they pass over in silence.

That is why the world needs Islam (and other traditional religions, of course.)

The rituals of Islam are necessary as consolation, too.

And God will not turn His Mercy away from a humble and dedicated man.

The Way of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy

Clinton C. Gardner

Introduction

I began keeping journal notes in the fall of 1940, when I first attended a Rosenstock-Huessy course at Dartmouth.[1] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (1888-1973) was a remarkable German scholar who left Nazi Germany when Hitler came to power and taught at Harvard and Dartmouth until retiring in the late 1950s. He wrote many books including *Out of Revolution: The Autobiography of Western Man*, *The Christian Future, Or the Modern Mind Outrun*, and the multi-volumed *Sociologie*. I was bowled over by his impassioned lectures. Then, in the spring of 1941, I heard his friend Dorothy Thompson deliver a Dartmouth lecture urging us to quit college and join Camp William James, a volunteer service project that had just lost it government funding. Half the members of Camp William James were from the regular CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) and half were recent graduates of Dartmouth and Harvard. Rosenstock-Huessy had been a key figure in the founding of that project during 1940, and had told us about it in class. After hearing Dorothy Thompson, I decided to quit college and joined the camp in June.

I remember how we'd explain the camp to our many visitors (one of whom was Eleanor Roosevelt). We would say that our main goal was to provide an example of how work-service could be integrated into one's college education. If most colleges and universities, around the globe, would include in their curriculum a year (or at least 6 months) of such service, that would enrich their students' other years, in college and beyond. More specifically, it would overcome academia's tendency to focus on abstract ideas and overlook the pressing issues of our times, ones that can lead to such breakdowns of society as a depression, revolution, and war. We believed, with William James, that young people must learn how

to mobilize their energies in peacetime, so that war will no longer "have its way."[2]

I can still remember how I'd spend many a Sunday afternoon at the camp, sitting in a high field, and reading Rosenstock-Huessy's just-published magnum opus, *Out of Revolution*. A unique mixture of history, philosophy, and theology, it ended with a call for a higher sociology, a unifying discipline which he called "metanomics."[3] I especially liked his put-down of Descartes, with his *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am). Instead of that self-centered and objectifying motto, which marked the rise of natural science, Rosenstock-Huessy proposed that we should now live under the banner of a new motto: *respondeo etsi mutabor (I respond although I will be changed).*[4] I had just responded to Dorothy Thompson, so I knew what that meant.

In1942 Camp William James closed down, as most of us entered military service.[5]

After four years in the army, including a role in the liberation of Buchenwald, I returned to Dartmouth.[6] There I majored in philosophy, partly because I wanted to take all four of Rosenstock-Huessy's courses.

In my senior year, I took a Philosophy Honors course with Rosenstock-Huessy, meeting with him almost weekly at his home. Those meetings launched me, quite surprisingly, into graduate studies on the Russian Orthodox Church, about which Rosenstock-Huessy had written provocatively in *The Christian Future*.[7] Even when I began those studies, at the Sorbonne in 1948, I remained in touch with Rosenstock-Huessy—and the circle of former students which had formed around his work.

Eventually, in 1969, with help from Rosenstock-Huessy's friend Freya von Moltke, I founded a little publishing house, Argo Books, to keep his books in print—and bring out unpublished essays. Sometimes I'd write an introduction for one of our books.[8] In 1977 I founded The Norwich Center, an organization concerned with advocating and implementing transnational volunteer service projects, in the spirit of Camp William James. Then, in 1981, I published my first book on Rosenstock-Huessy's prophetic thought, including a chapter about planetary service: *Letters to the Third Millennium*.[9] Trying to keep up with the times, in 1996 I introduced Rosenstock-Huessy to the nascent audience of the world-wide

web (http://www.valley.net/~transnat/erh.html). Here I want to focus on a teaching of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy's that is central to his work.

THE CROSS OF REALITY

Rosenstock-Huessy's introductory course was Philosophy 9, which I audited in 1940 and took in1946. It focused on the core of his thinking, his new model of the human condition, which he described as a "Cross of Reality."

He presented that cross not only as a model but also as a *method* for healing society's ills. He often referred to Camp William James in his lectures, having seen the camp as embodying many of his ideas and goals.

While it was not assigned reading for the course, many of us profited from reading his latest book, *The Christian Future*, published in 1946. A closing chapter in that work provides this succinct description of the Cross of Reality:

> Man's life, social as well as individual, is lived at a crossroads between four "fronts": backward toward the past, forward into the future, inward among ourselves…, and outward against what we must fight or exploit…. Hence both mental and social health depends on preserving a delicate mobile balance between forward and backward, inward and outward trends. Integration, living a complete and full life, is accordingly not some smooth "adjustment" we can hope to achieve once for all, as popular psychology imagines; it is rather a constant achievement in the teeth of forces which tear us apart on the Cross of Reality.[10]

My journal notes on the Cross of Reality, when I first audited Philosophy 9 in the fall of 1940, were quite similar:

> Rosenstock-Huessy says we are all crucified in a Cross of Reality on which we have to face backward to the past, forward to the future, inward toward our selves, and outward toward the world. He brings this cross image to life, not as an abstract idea, not as *his* idea, but as a new model of the human reality, a model which he invites us to discover with him. When he diagrams the cross on a blackboard, he makes a horizontal line for its time axis, then a vertical line to represent the space axis. This visual

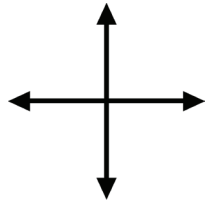
depiction becomes an icon for all his students, an icon of our human predicament – and our potential.

Since each of us lives at the center of this cross, our lives are crucial, not only for ourselves but for all humankind. We are constantly torn between the need to be true to the achievements of past time and the need to respond to the new callings of the future. Similarly, on the space axis of our lives, we are constantly trying to relate our personal, subjective inner space to the objective demands of the outer world, the space around us.

The Cross of Reality, showing that times are as important as spaces, corrects the scientific subject-object model of reality, the Cartesian model, which is merely spatial, and enlarges on its limited method. All these relationships become clear when Rosenstock-Huessy diagrams the cross on the blackboard:

Inner Space - *Subjectivity*
The Inner Person
(romantic-poetic)

Past Time
(history, tradition)



Future Time
(imperatives, dreams)

Outer Space - *Objectivity*
The World
(rational-scientific)

Just a little later in my journal, at Camp William James in 1941, I reflected on how that cross was embodied in the life of the camp:

First, we came to Camp William James because we heard a calling toward the *future.* We wanted to create a new institution, a period of all-out service as part of all young people's education. It would be the CCC plus Dartmouth and Harvard, an entirely new combination. It's a break

from the ivory tower of academe into the problems and life of a real community, Tunbridge, Vermont. Another calling, our sending a group to Mexico, to help rebuild the town of Colima – recently flattened in an earthquake – shows a second way we're looking to the future, and makes clearer that we're engaged in a "moral equivalent of war," not just planting trees or helping some farmers.

Second, we're creating our own *inner space* within the farm building which is our headquarters. Of course it's also the inner space of our group, the community we've formed here. The fact that most of us have memorized some verses from Chesterton's "Ballad of the White Horse" emphasizes the poetic nature of this orientation. In one stanza, Chesterton attacks academic objectivity with these wonderful words:

Not with the humor of hunters
Or savage skill in war,
But ordering all things with dead words,
Strings shall they make of beasts and birds,
And wheels of wind and star. [11]

Third, we have the experience of being connected with *past time*, with the ongoing life of a rural town with roots going back for many generations. We go to square dances where the calling is in an Elizabethan style that's died out in England. Our time at Tunbridge was quite a contrast with the rootless suburbs of New York, or the slums of New Haven, both places where many of us grew up.

Fourth, we are getting national publicity through stories in the *Boston Globe* and the *New York Times.* This makes our little inner group known to the outer world, objectively, with both good and bad consequences. It's helped recruiting but it's also what led to our losing federal funding. In Congress we were attacked as just another New Deal boondoggle – and had to close our CCC camp in Sharon.

To sum up, the camp has provided each of us with a more intense experience of life, a more crucial experience, than we'd get in any ordinary college year. We've come to see that a period of such service, when integrated into one's education, would show its participants how we all live historically, drawn toward the past and the future.

Planetary Service & Society's Ills

Rosenstock-Huessy, and the rest of us at Camp William James, envisioned a time when volunteer service camps might be spread all over the earth. Toward the end of *The Christian Future*, Rosenstock-Huessy wrote, "our peacemakers and planners must be supported by camps all over the globe, where youth, recruited from every town and village all over the globe, serves. This service must implement the global organization as the young must experience what the old are planning before the old can have any authority."[12] The volunteers recruited for such service would become global citizens, ones whose first-hand experience of society's ills would give them the "survival knowledge" needed to avoid such social breakdowns as revolution and war.[13]

In a book devoted to this theme, *Planetary Service,* Rosenstock-Huessy wrote "we have no hope for abolishing war until we accept the framework of a universal planetary method of crossing borders between all peoples and all countries."[14] He went on to suggest that this method could not be discovered or implemented by governments. Rather, he saw planetary service as able to bring peace only if it were conducted "under the pirate's flag."[15] I think he would have been delighted by the story told in Greg Mortenson's *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace.* And I think he would have welcomed the main project launched by our Norwich Center: US-USSR Bridges for Peace.

In one of his most convincing analyses of our social ills, Rosenstock-Huessy described how peace in society is constantly threatened by a breakdown on one of the fronts delineated by the Cross of Reality. We always face four primary threats:

> 1. *Revolution* – A breakdown on the *future* front; loss of respect for the past;[16] expressed as an excess of *imperative* or future speech. The antidote for revolution is to create respect, a loyalty to the past that enables a future to be created.
>
> 2. *Anarchy* – A breakdown on the *inner* front; loss of respect for objective, exterior order; an excess of inward or *subjective* speech. The good that cures this ill is unanimity, unity or harmony.

> 3. *Decadence* – A breakdown on the *past* front; loss of faith in the future; an excess of *backward-looking* speech, narrative speech, related to the past. Decadence is the inability of one generation to communicate future imperatives to the next. The corrective for decadence is faith, which is not a belief in the past but a belief in the future.
>
> 4. *War* – A breakdown on the *outer* front; loss of any interior agreement; an excess of speech that *objectifies* the other. The good that counteracts it is government, the efficient organization of territory.

The preceding analysis will give the reader a hint of why Rosenstock-Huessy often described his work as leading to a "grammatical method." The Cross of Reality depicts that method, showing that we live under the pressure of four kinds of speech: imperative, subjective, narrative, and objective; we are structured, as it were, by those four basic kinds of language. We are more interesting – and challenging – than Descartes realized. We are creatures of the living Word, in all its forms, and through all of history, not the isolated and objective observers of the world outside us, the natural world revealed by *cogito ergo sum*.

The Spirit as Speech

During the early 1960s I met almost weekly with Rosenstock-Huessy at his home in Norwich. A perennial topic was the issue of getting his numerous unpublished works into print. He showered me with manuscripts, eight of them on the subject of language. As I read them, I recalled how, in *The Christian Future*, he'd despaired of ever getting these into print.[17]

I also recalled that his Dartmouth courses had never covered this subject. And I was enchanted by such lines as these:

> *Man's language aims at something not aimed at by apes or nightingales: it intends to form the listener into a being which did not exist before he was spoken to. Human speech is formative and it is for this reason that it has become explicit and grammatical.*[18]
>
> *All speech is the precipitation of the intensified respiration which*

> *we experience as members of a community, and which is called the Spirit.*[19]

> *Everybody who speaks believes in God because he speaks. No declaration of faith is necessary. No religion.*[20]

> *Speech is nothing natural; it is a miracle*.[21]

> *Speech is the body of the spirit*.[22]

I never asked Rosenstock-Huessy why he had not included a course on language in his offerings at Dartmouth, but my guess was that he thought his work in this field was more appropriate to graduate students. In any case, I soon concluded that the eight language essays in English – and others in German – were critical to a full appreciation of his work. For example, his model of the Cross of Reality becomes much richer when one sees how we live through any significant experience as four different "grammatical persons." Here is his concise and beautiful formulation:

> The soul must be called "thou" before she can ever reply "I," before she can ever speak of "us," and finally analyze "it." Through the four figures, thou, I, we, it, the word walks through us. The word must call our name first. We must have listened and obeyed, before we can think or command.[23]

This four-fold image of how the word walks through us, *in a particular order*, stands in stark contrast to the well-known formulations of Rosenstock-Huessy's friend Martin Buber (1878-1965). Of course it was Buber who first attracted wide attention to a philosophy based on the grammatical persons of *I* and *thou*.[24] Thus, one of the best ways to approach Rosenstock-Huessy's insights on language is to contrast them with Buber's.

Buber said that any person, an independent *I*, can choose to have either warm dialogical *I-thou* relationships or cold objectifying *I-it* relationships, with others or with God. One does not become a fully-realized person until one chooses the *I-thou* relationship. As Buber put his key insight, "as I become *I*, I say *thou*."[25]

Rosenstock-Huessy, by contrast, said that there is no such thing as an

independent *I*. One becomes an *I* only as one is addressed by others, and by God, as *thou*. The proper grammatical order is *thou-I,* not *I-thou.* It is when we hear imperatives, when we hear ourselves addressed *personally* as *thou* that we enter into the human story. As Rosenstock-Huessy put it, "The first form and the permanent form under which a man can recognize himself and the unity of his existence is the Imperative. We are called a Man and we are summoned by our name long before we are aware of ourselves as an Ego."[26]

In further contrast with Buber, Rosenstock-Huessy said that, after hearing oneself addressed imperatively (or vocatively) as *thou*, and then realizing oneself as *I*, one then goes on to become two further grammatical persons: *we* and *he (or she).* In other words, Rosenstock-Huessy describes us as living in a four-fold reality, a Cross of Reality, while Buber describes our condition as two-fold.

The Law of Motion of the Spirit

The Cross of Reality is best understood as a dynamic model of just how high speech – intentional, relational, and dialogical speech – works in us. It shows us that we live in an infinitely richer realm than that described to us by natural science or by most traditional theology. We are neither the cold observers of the world outside us nor the faithful children of a God above. Instead, we live at the heart of reality.

There are only four basic kinds of speech, and they move us through the four stages of any significant experience:

1. Imperative (vocative) speech is what calls us to the future. We hear ourselves addressed as *thou.* Such speech wakes us up and inclines us to respond. *Go thou!* Fulfill what you are called to do.

2. Subjective (poetic, prayerful, and philosophical) speech is what we use to address our inner self, our *I*. Now the grammatical mood becomes subjunctive. *What if I were to go?* Inner questioning arises in response to the pressure of imperatives.

3. Narrative (historical) speech enables us to recall past time or tell the current history of our lives. *We* becomes our grammatical

person because creative action requires more than one person. *We went, or we are going.* Learning from what has happened in the past, we start interacting with others.

4. Objective (scientific) speech makes it possible for us to analyze the world outside us. Now we can see ourselves as *he*, *she* or *they. She went; they went.* No longer "moved" by speech, we step back and assess what is going on.

We can now sum up Rosenstock-Huessy's insights on high speech in the following nine theses including the points made above.

1. There are four basic types of speech: (a) imperative, (b) subjective, (c) narrative, and (d) objective.

2. In any significant human experience we experience all four of those kinds of speech in just that order.

3. Each kind of speech relates to a different personal or group orientation toward times and spaces: (a) imperative toward the future; (b) subjective toward our "inner space," (c) narrative toward the past, and (d) objective to the outside world.

4. Each kind of speech also relates to a particular person of grammar: (a) the imperative to *thou*; (b) the subjective to *I;* (c) the narrative to *we*; (d) the objective to *he, she* or *they.*

5. When we examine the pattern of those speech orientations and grammatical persons, we see that they form a Cross of Reality, at the center of which any person or group finds itself.

6. A corollary to the axiom of the cross is that its future orientation is the most important; as we hear vocatives or imperatives, we are moved to respond.

7. What we call the human psyche, or soul, is formed as it lives through the "crucial" speech experience posited by the Cross of Reality.

8. When we realize that the Cross of Reality shows the essential patterns of language in the human mind, we can also perceive that it makes visible a 'dialogical method' for the human sciences. It tells us that any question should be examined in the light of all four orientations, and especially we should take into account the *tensions* among each. Below you will see "The Complete Cross of Reality," a depiction of how each of its four orientations relates to speech, times, spaces, kinds of literature, persons, disciplines, and social breakdowns.

9. The Cross of Reality depicts the action of high speech in any person or group; such speech *establishes relations with others, creates peace, and tells the truth.* And such speech can be recognized as the way spirit is present and active in human beings. Thus, we can call speech the body of the spirit.

All nine of those theses, when taken together, establish the dialogical method as a fundamentally new way of thinking about human reality. From elementary observations about language and grammar, and about the inner person and the outer world, they proceed to the realization that high speech is the embodiment of spirit.

In Conclusion

At Camp William James we sought to plant a seed which might grow into a new institution for the third millennium. We envisioned a time when such camps might be found over all the earth. While our little effort was nipped in the bud, today there are volunteer service activities, like the U.S. Peace Corps and the German *Aktion Sühnezeichen* (Action Reconciliation), flourishing round the globe. There are even hints that our little seed helped inspire both those projects.

At Camp William James we also hoped that one day a period of volunteer service might be integrated into one's college education. And again, a degree of service learning has taken hold on many a U.S. campus.

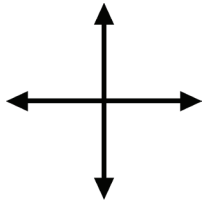
While I don't recall discussing it with others at the camp, I'm sure there were other Dartmouth students there who saw our experience, as I did; the camp seemed to validate Rosenstock-Huessy's teachings about

the Cross of Reality. We were living with an "all-out" commitment to the future, one that we had to balance with the other orientations in our lives. It was a crucial experience, a heightened sense of living in the Cross of Reality.[27]

The Complete Cross of Reality

Language: Subjective Speech
Orientation: The Inner Person ("inner space")
Literature: Lyric
Person & Mood: I – Subjunctive
Fields: Literature, the Arts, Philosophy, Psychology
Religious Aspect: Personal redemption – Son
Stage in experience: Second
Social Breakdown: Anarchy

Language: Narrative Speech
Orientation: Past Time
Literature: Epic
Person & Mood: We - Narrative
Fields: History, Anthropology, Law
Religious Aspect: Creation – Father
Stage in experience: Third
Social Breakdown: Decadence



Language: Imperative Speech
Orientation: Future Time
Literature: Dramatic
Person & Mood: Thou – Imperative
Fields: Politics, Religion
Religious Aspect: Revelation – Spirit
Stage in experience: First
Social Breakdown: Revolution

Language: Objective Speech
Orientation: The Outer World (outside space)
Literature: Prosaic
Person & Mood: He, She, They, It – Indicative
Fields: Natural Science, Mathematics, Economics
Religious Aspect: The world's redemption
Stage in experience: Fourth
Social Breakdown: War

Endnotes

[1] Ed. Note: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (1888-1973) was a remarkable German scholar who left Nazi Germany when Hitler came to power and taught at Harvard and Dartmouth until retiring in the late 1950s. He wrote many books including *Out of Revolution: The Autobiography of Western Man*, *The Christian Future, Or the Modern Mind Outrun*, and the multi-volumed *Sociologie*.

[2] See William James, "The Moral Equivalent of War" in *The Writings of William James*, ed. John J. McDermott (New York: Random House, 1967."

[3] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Out of Revolution: Autobiography of Western Man* (New York: William Morrow, 1938; Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1969, and Providence, RI: Berg Publishers, 1993),

[4] ERH, *Out of Revolution*, op.cit., pp. 741, 751-53.

[5] Jack J. Preiss, *Camp William James* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1978) pp. 201-218.

[6] Buchenwald Concentration Camp, Weimar, Germany; liberated by U.S. Third Army, April 13, 1944; as a member of the U.S. military government team put in charge of Buchenwald, I became Acting Commander of the camp on May 1, 1945.

[7] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *The Christian Future* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp.138-164.

[8] See the introductions to Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *I am an Impure Thinker* (Norwich,VT: Argo Books, 1970) and ERH, *Speech and Reality* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1970).

[9] See Clinton C. Gardner, *Letters to the Third Millennium: An Experiment in East West Communication* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1981).

[10] ERH, *The Christian Future*, op.cit., pp. 168-169.

[11] See Gilbert K. Chesterton, *The Ballad of the White Horse* (London: Methuen & Co., 1911), Book VIII.

[12] ERH, *The Christian Future*, op. cit., p. 238.

[13] ERH, *Out of Revolution*, op.cit., pp. 757-758.

[14] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Planetary Service: A Way into the Third Millennium*, trans. Mark Huessy and Freya von Moltke (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1978). p.13.

[15] ERH, *Planetary Service: A Way into the Third Millennium, op.cit.,p. 77.*

[16] ERH, Speech & Reality, op.cit., pp. 11-16.

[17] ERH, *The Christian Future*, op. cit., p. 128.

[18] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *The Origin of Speech* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1981) p. 14.

[19] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts* (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider; Bd. I, 1963; Bd. II, 1964), p. I,573.

[20] ERH, *Speech and Reality*, op.cit., p. 181.

[21] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Der Atem des Geistes* (Frankfurt: Verlag der Frankfurter Hefte, 1951), p.37.

[22] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Practical Knowledge of the Soul* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1988). Originally published as *Angewandte Seelenkunde* (Darmstadt: Röther-Verlag, 1924), p. 63.

[23] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, ed., *Judaism Despite Christianity* (University AL: University of Alabama Press, 1969), p.70..

[24] Martin Buber, *I and Thou* , trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958).

[25] Ibid., p. 11.

[26] ERH, *Origin of Speech*, op.cit., p. 746.

[27] For further writings of Clinton Gardner see *Beyond Belief: Discovering Christianity's New Paradigm* (White River Jct., VT: White River Press, 2008) and *D-Day and Beyond: A Memoir of War, Russia, and Discovery* (Philadelphia, PA: X-Libris, 2004).

Way of Guru Nanak

Mohinder Singh

Introduction

An adventurous and colourful community, the Sikhs number nearly twenty seven million and constitute less than two percent of India's population. In spite of their small numbers, the Sikh faith has emerged as a world religion because of the universality of the Sikh teachings and worldwide dispersal of the members of the Sikh faith. Though mainly concentrated in the Indian state of Punjab, the Sikhs live in almost all parts of the world. Hardworking and with a spirit of entrepreneurship, the Sikhs have done well for themselves both in India and abroad. While they display tremendous spirit for adjusting to challenging situations, what distinguishes them as a community is the fact that they have carried with them distinct symbols of their cultural and religious heritage wherever they have gone.

Defining Sikhism

The word "Sikh" is derived from the Sanskrit word *Shishya* or the Pali word *Sekha* both meaning "disciple" or "learner." Thus those who followed the path shown by Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the founder of the new faith, came to be known as the Sikhs. They were also known as *Nanakpanthis*, meaning those who constituted the *panth* (order) founded by Nanak. However, it was not till 1925 that a legal definition of a Sikh was provided by the Sikh Gurdwaras and Shrines Bill passed in the Legislative Council of the undivided Punjab. According to the Act, "Sikh means a person who professes the Sikh religion." The Act further clarifies that in case of doubt, a person shall be deemed to be a Sikh if he/she subscribes to the following declaration: "I solemnly affirm that I am a Sikh, that I believe in the *Guru Granth Sahib*, that I believe in the ten Gurus and that I have no other religion."

The Founder and the Message

Born in 1469 in Talwandi, later renamed Nankana, (now in Pakistan), Nanak was a precocious child with a deeply meditative cast of mind. His father soon despaired as all attempts to engage him in worldly pursuits failed. Sent to the fields to mind the cattle, he would enjoy sitting under a tree lost in his own thoughts. Complaints of the cattle trespassing provoked the wrath of his father but his mother Tripta and his sister Nanaki would intercede on his behalf and save him from the worst. Nanaki saw clearly that there was something special about Nanak whereas his father could see him only as a wastrel. In school he was good at figures and quick to learn though he liked best to wander and be alone and sing the glory of the Lord. A story is told that his father gave him some money and sent him to a neighbouring town to do some profitable business. On the way, Nanak met some *sadhus* who had not eaten for many days. He purchased food with the money his father had given him and fed the hungry *sadhus*, forgetting all about the business plan. He returned home empty-handed. When Nanak's father asked him what he had done, he replied that he had made a "most profitable bargain."

His marriage was arranged in the hope that he would settle down with his new responsibilities, but it made no difference. Ultimately, it was arranged through the good offices of Nanaki's husband that he be employed by Daulat Khan Lodhi, the Muslim Governor of Sultanpur in Kapurthala district of Panjab, to look after his stores. He discharged his duties honestly and diligently but his heart wasn't in it. Mardana, the Muslim rebeck player, his friend from his birthplace, Talwandi, also joined him and became his constant companion. When the spirit moved him, Nanak would urge Mardana to play and he would sing. That is what he best liked to do. The hypocrisy prevalent in the name of religion was often the butt of his songs.

Guru Nanak's Enlightenment

It was during his stay in Sultanpur that Nanak attained Enlightenment, at the age of thirty-six. Gripped by an increasing restlessness, he wondered what he was doing with his life after he had worked for about two years for

the *nawab*. According to popular accounts, when Mardana and he went for the customary dip in the river Bein flowing nearby, absorbed in thoughts of God, Nanak mysteriously disappeared. Mardana raised an alarm and they searched for him everywhere. The *nawab*, who was very fond of him, even had the river dredged. For three days there was no sign of him and they feared he was dead. His biographers state that on the third day he reappeared, changed in appearance, glowing with an unusual radiance. Nanak said that he had been ushered into the Divine Presence, blessed by the Almighty and told to go forth and preach the Word, the holy name of God. It was to be the mission of his life thenceforth.

The first words Guru Nanak uttered after his enlightenment were "There is no Hindu, there is no Musalman."

At a time when Hindus and Muslims were engaged in sectarian conflicts, these words formed a major plank in Guru Nanak's evangelism. He spared neither group. His evident disdain for obsolete practices and the unthinking performance of rituals, was obvious to all. Usually the statement – "There is no Hindu, there is no Musalman" – is interpreted as a mission of reconciliation between the two. But his real meaning was much deeper. He was pointing out that differences among various groups had overshadowed the underlying principle of all religions – that the supreme power is One, all else its manifestation. Ram and Rahim to him were not different; they were the same Reality merely expressed differently. The trouble arises when the manifestation is taken literally to be the Reality, favouring some while rejecting others.

Accompanied by Mardana, Nanak the Guru set out on long spiritual journeys to preach his message and his gospel of love and truth. He travelled to different parts of India and neighbouring countries, visiting the religious centres of the Hindus and the Muslims. Through dialogue, he convinced people that good actions, morality rather than rituals, alone could ensure salvation. His travels in India took him to Banaras, the holy city of the Hindus, and further east of Assam. He travelled to the north as far as Tibet where Buddhism was practised. And he travelled west to the holiest place of the Muslims. While in Mecca, he was asked who was superior, a Hindu or a Muslim. The Guru's answer was, "Without good actions, neither was of any consequence."

Message of Guru Nanak

Guru Nanak preached a strict monotheism and described the Creator as *Ikk*, the One without a second. Guru Nanak's philosophy of God is best described in the *Japjee*, the primal creed of the Sikh faith. In his teachings there is no room for the worship of any deity or human teacher other than the Formless One. Contrary to the medieval Indian practice of renouncing the world for spiritual elevation, Guru Nanak believed that the world was the gift of God and life is worth living. "This world is the abode of God and the True One lives therein."

> Guru Nanak believed that it was possible to live pure among the impurities of life. "As the lotus liveth detached in waters, as a duck floateth carefree on the stream, so doth one cross the Sea of Existence, his mind attuned to the Word. One liveth detached, enshrining the One Lord in the mind, shorn of hope, living in the midst of hope."
>
> (Guru Granth Sahib, p. 938)

Two stories illustrating the way of Guru Nanak may be told here. In Banaras he found priests offering water in the direction of the rising sun which was intended to reach the spirits of deceased ancestors. He joined the group, but scooping the water in his hands, threw it vigorously in the opposite direction. When questioned, he replied that surely by the same logic it should reach his fields in the Punjab which lay west. And in Mecca, he was berated for being disrespectful because his feet pointed in the direction of the Ka'aba. He apologised and asked that his feet be turned away to whichever direction where God was not present.

Laying the Foundation for the New Order

Towards the last phase of his life, Guru Nanak settled on the banks of the river Ravi (now in Pakistan) on the piece of land donated by a disciple. A small village grew up there and he called it Kartarpur, the Abode of God. He worked tilling the fields, leading a band of disciples in prayer and devotion, and sharing all that the land produced. His family consisted

of his wife, two sons and a handful of disciples both Hindu and Muslim, including Lehna, a rope maker, who proved himself to be the most devoted among the disciples close to Nanak and was named as the next Guru.

The community of disciples at Kartarpur was not by any means a monastic order but a fellowship of ordinary men and women from different traditions engaged in the normal occupations of life, earning their livelihood through honest means and sharing the fruit of their labour. Guru Nanak's life for the period of twenty years at Kartarpur was an example of community living, a model which became the basis for the development of Sikh society and the Sikh value system over the years.

The Guru and his followers got up before dawn and after their ablutions said their prayers, as has been the custom among travellers on the spiritual path since time immemorial. The next step, however, was revolutionary. The Guru and his followers then partook of the sacred food from the community kitchen *together* before they attended to the day's work. In the evening, they again assembled at a common place and collectively recited their evening prayer and shared food. Before going to bed, they all recited the *Kirtan Sohila*, songs of acclaim.

The twin institutions of *Sangat* and *Pangat* derive from this routine. All are expected to assemble in a congregation (*sangat*) and partake of food from the community kitchen, sitting in one line, at one level, ensuring that there was no distinction between high or low, nor between rich or poor (*pangat*). There was only the fraternity, the brotherhood of man, and in the eyes of God, all were equal. We find people from different walks of life partaking in food from the community kitchen, popularly known as *Langar*, attached to the Gurdwaras all over the world.

Because the emphasis of Guru Nanak's teachings was on good actions and transcended the boundaries of colour, caste or creed, he attracted a following from among both the Hindus and Muslims of his time. A story is told that when the Guru's end was near, there was a dispute among the followers whether he should be cremated according to the Hindu practice or buried according to the Muslim tradition. The Guru advised them, "You place flowers on either side, Hindus on my right, Muslims on my left. Those whose flowers remain fresh tomorrow will have their way." So saying, he asked them to pray. When the prayer was over, Nanak pulled the

sheet over him and went to his eternal sleep. The next morning, when they raised the sheet, they found the body had disappeared. The flowers of both communities were fresh. The moral of the story given in the *Janamsakhi* is clear. Guru Nanak is still fondly remembered as:

> *Baba Nanak Shah Fakir and Hindu ka Guru and Musalman ka Pir.*

The Sikh Scripture

The catholicity of the Sikh faith and its ecumenical spirit are best demonstrated in the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the Sikh scripture. While the hymns of Guru Nanak and of his successors – Angad Dev, Amar Das and Ram Das – were already in circulation in some form or the other, Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru, thought it proper to prepare an anthology of the hymns. It was intended that the collected hymns could become the focal point for the emerging community of followers. For this purpose, Guru Arjan Dev acquired the *pothis* containing the hymns from Baba Mohan, son of the third Guru, Guru Amar Das, and also invited compositions from various other Hindu Bhaktas and Muslim saints who were on the same spiritual wave length as the Sikh Gurus. After having collected the required material, Guru Arjan Dev began to dictate the hymns to Bhai Gurdas at Ramsar in the holy city of Amritsar. The volume was completed in 1604, and the Guru formally installed it as the *Granth* in the *sanctum sanctorum*, Hari Mandir Sahib, at Amritsar. Another devout Sikh, Baba Buddha, was appointed the first *Granthi*, or reader of the scripture.

The hymns of the *Guru Granth Sahib* are not arranged authorwise but are divided into musical modes indicating how they should be sung. The scripture has now been standardised to a format of 1,430 pages. It contains nearly 6,000 hymns, the largest number being those of the fifth Guru, Arjan Dev, at 2,218, followed by those of Guru Nanak (974), Guru Amar Das (907), Guru Ram Das (679), Guru Tegh Bahadur (115) and Guru Angad Dev (62). Besides the hymns of the Gurus are those of the Hindu Bhaktas and Muslim saints belonging to different regions. Jaidev of Bengal, Namdev, Trilochan and Parmanand of Maharashtra, Sadhna of

Sindh, Bene, Rama Nand, Kabir and Ravidas from Uttar Pradesh, and the famous Sufi saint Sheikh Farid from Pak Pattan (now in Pakistan), and also some hymns of the Bhatts or bards.

It is important to mention that the Sikhs do not worship any idol or human teacher. Since the *Guru Granth* itself has the status of Guru, it occupies a central place in a Sikh Gurdwara. It is installed on a platform with a canopy covering it as a mark of respect while an attendant generally fans it with a whisk, standing behind the *Granthi*, while reading is in progress. On entering the Gurdwara, the followers bow before the Book and make a ceremonial offering of money as a mark of respect. Then they sit, with heads covered, in a silent posture to listen either to the hymns being recited by the *Granthi*, (reader of the scripture) or to the *kirtan*, (singing of hymns) rendered by the musicians known as *Ragis*.

Sikhism and Other Religions

Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith, had cordial relations with both Hindus and Muslims. He was born at a time when there was a conflict between the two major religious traditions in India – Hinduism and Islam. Guru Nanak seems to have played the role of reconciler by giving the message to transcend the narrow religious boundaries. He talked of higher values in which religiosity had no role.

During his long spiritual journeys, Guru Nanak's constant companions were Bala, a Hindu, and Mardana, a Muslim. In the popular calendar art, we see a picture of Guru Nanak flanked by these two companions, thereby conveying a message that the Guru acted as a bridge between the two major religious communities of his time. Guru Nanak's affinity with the two traditions has led some historians to believe that his was a syncretic religion with some ideas borrowed from Hinduism and others from Islam. Guru Nanak's belief in one God – Ek Onkar – was seen as Islamic and his emphasis on loving devotion to God as Bhakti or Hindu influence. However, a careful study of the teachings of Guru Nanak reveals that he had an independent message of his own. According to Sikh tradition, Guru Nanak during his meditation on the Kali Bein was called to the Court of God where he was made to drink the cup of divine Name and asked to preach the new religion revealed to him which was of a transcendental

nature. Beside the belief in One God, Guru Nanak taught that God had no garb or attachment by which one could call Him to be a Hindu God or the Muslim God. "My Master is one, the One alone exists."

The spirit of ecumenism is at its best in the *Guru Granth Sahib* where the fifth Guru included hymns from Guru Nanak and his successors as well as those of the Hindu Bhaktas including some of the so-called low castes and the Muslim saints. In Sikhism, when a devotee bows before the Holy Book, he bows before the corporate body of the *Guru Granth Sahib* and not before the hymns of any particular Guru, Bhakta or Saint. *Ardas,* the Sikh prayer, ends on this altruistic note:

> *Nanak nam charddi Kala tere bhane sarbatt ka bhala.*
>
> (Thy Name, Thy Glory, be forever triumphant, Nanak, and, in Thy Will, may peace and prosperity come to one and all.)

The 17th of Tammuz and the Way of the Jewish Year

Bob Chodos

For fifteen years, I worked closely with the Jesuits of English Canada, first as editor of *Compass: A Jesuit Journal* and later as biographer of a prominent Canadian Jesuit, Bill Ryan. This association with the Jesuits was a great privilege and a rich learning opportunity for me, and one of the things I learned about was the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. The Exercises, an integral part of every Jesuit's formation, have in recent years been offered more broadly to laypeople as well. Entering imaginatively into the life of Jesus in a thirty-day retreat (in the Exercises' fullest form), exercitants are called on to discern the "movement of spirits" that takes place during prayer. They are taken through various moods: desolation and consolation, awareness of sin and awareness of God's love. In this way, they endeavour to rid themselves of "disordered attachments," attain a state of spiritual freedom and deepen their relationship with God.[1]

Based as they are on the life of Jesus, the Exercises are really appropriate only for Christians. However, the idea of a spiritual exercise intrigued me, and I wondered whether my own Jewish tradition contained anything that could fit that description. Over time, I have come to understand the Jewish calendar as being that spiritual exercise, one that lasts all year, every year. But that understanding did not come easily, for the Jewish calendar has many dimensions, with an intricate web of subtle rhythms and connections that give each point multiple layers of meaning.

* * * * *

Some years after my association with the Jesuits, I was given the task of chairing a meeting of Interfaith Grand River (IGR), the interfaith group in Ontario's Waterloo Region of which I am a member, on the topic of the

seasons. Each monthly meeting of IGR begins with a discussion of a topic of broad interest to the various religious traditions represented around the table, and it is the chair's responsibility to speak first and set the tone for the discussion. This was the July meeting.

As it happened, the date of the meeting on the Jewish calendar was the 17th of Tammuz, a minor fast day commemorating the anniversary of the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 BCE. I had never thought much about the 17th of Tammuz; it doesn't register very strongly on the radar screen of a Jew such as myself whose observance is selective. And yet once I did start thinking about it, it turned out to have dimensions and connections beyond anything I had imagined. I compiled an elaborate chart with the 17th of Tammuz as the pivotal point,[2] copied it and handed it out at the IGR meeting. I doubt that many people at the meeting understood the chart, but it was an important step in my own education.

The two basic dimensions of the Jewish calendar are a seasonal dimension and a story dimension, or a dimension of nature and a dimension of collective memory – with subdimensions to each. On the level of nature, the Jewish calendar is lunisolar, so any date represents a specific point in the cycle of both the sun and the moon. On the level of collective memory, there may well be more than one story going on at the same time, as I found out when I looked closely at the 17th of Tammuz.

The 17th of Tammuz is one of four fast days that together tell the story of the Babylonian capture of Jerusalem and the subjugation of the kingdom of Judah. One of these, the 10th of Tevet, falls in early winter and marks the beginning of the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem. The other three all occur in summer or early fall: the 17th of Tammuz, when the walls were breached; the 9th of Av, when the Babylonians destroyed the Temple and sent a large portion of the people into exile; and the 3rd of Tishrei, when Gedaliah, the official appointed by the Babylonians to govern the remnant in Judah, was assassinated and the last vestige of Jewish autonomy came to an end.[3] Observing the fast days is a way of reliving these events, which as I write took place 2,600 years ago: we Jews have long memories. The 9th of Av – Tish'a b'Av in Hebrew – is the most important of the fast days, and it became the paradigmatic date for catastrophic events throughout Jewish

history, from the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 CE to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492.

The three weeks between the 17th of Tammuz and Tish'a b'Av are a sombre period, in which weddings and other joyous celebrations are prohibited, as are haircuts. The *haftarot*, or prophetic readings, for the Sabbaths during this period are harsh prophecies, culminating in the *chazon*, Isaiah's vision of the punishment of Judah for its sins. After Tish'a b'Av the mood changes, and the seven weeks between Tish'a b'Av and Rosh Hashanah – the New Year – are a period of consolation. The prophetic readings, all from Second Isaiah, are prophecies of redemption, beginning with the ringing declaration in the first verse of Isaiah 40: *Nachamu, nachamu ami* – "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people."

But that's not all there is to the 17th of Tammuz, as I discovered when I looked backward from that date to the 6th of Sivan, forty-one days earlier. The 6th of Sivan is Shavuot, a major holiday commemorating the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. Now you may remember that when Moses went up on Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, he remained there for forty days. By the end of that period the people were growing impatient. Was their prophet ever going to come back? Was the invisible god they were supposed to worship real? They badgered Aaron, Moses' brother, into making them an idol, a golden calf. This took place on the forty-first day after the giving of the Torah – the 17th of Tammuz. The same date has meaning within a completely different story.

Both God and Moses explode in anger at the people's open defiance of the covenant they have just agreed to. Moses smashes the tablets God has given him, the people are severely punished, and God's anger is traditionally reckoned as lasting for forty days, taking us to the end of the month of Av. Moses then ascends Mount Sinai and stays for another forty days, making another pair of tablets and reaffirming the covenant with God, while the people atone for their sin. These forty days take us from the 1st of Elul to the 10th of Tishrei. The first thirty days of this period, the late-summer month of Elul, are a period of study and introspection. With the beginning of Tishrei (in September or early October) – which is also the beginning of the new year – the self-examination intensifies. The first ten days of Tishrei are the *aseret y'mei t'shuvah*, the Ten Days of

Repentance (also known as the Days of Awe), culminating in Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, a major fast and the most solemn day of the year.

* * * * *

The seasonal dimension of the calendar began to open up when I inserted a short arrow in my chart to connect the 9th of Av with the 15th of Av six days later. The 15th of Av, or Tu b'Av in Hebrew, is not observed much these days (it is not dead, only dormant), but in Second Temple times it was a day of celebration, marking the waning of the scorching summer heat. The young women of Jerusalem would go out to the vineyards in white dresses to dance and sing, calling to the young men, "Lift up your eyes and see whom you choose for yourself."[4] A week that begins in the deepest sorrow ends in joy.

Tu b'Av has a twin in midwinter, Tu biShvat, the New Year of the Trees, when the sap begins to stir and winter begins to turn towards spring. Unlike Tu b'Av, Tu biShvat is very much alive in modern Jewish practice, a time for planting trees in Israel and for a ceremony called the Tu biShvat seder (modelled on the Passover seder), based on a mystical interpretation of the holiday.

Of course, many religions celebrate the cycle of the seasons in some way, but nowhere is this celebration more central than in the various Wiccan and Pagan traditions. My exposure to those traditions began some years ago when I was called on to edit an article on Wiccan ritual for a feminist spirituality journal I was involved with, *Vox Feminarum*,[5] and has continued through Interfaith Grand River and conversations with a Pagan friend I met through IGR, Kimberley Williams. An important part of Wiccan and Pagan ritual is the observance of the eight sabbats or high days. Four of these days are the solstices and equinoxes. The other four are the midpoints between them, the cross-quarter days: Samhain (beginning of November), Imbolc (beginning of February), Beltane (beginning of May) and Lúghnasadh (beginning of August).

Despite the frequent and spirited denunciations of Pagan worship in the Hebrew Bible, there is a deep underlying affinity between the Jewish and Pagan traditions, of which their common rootedness in the cycles

of the earth, sun and moon is an important part. This element of Jewish tradition has not always been fully appreciated, even though, as Rabbi Arthur Waskow writes, it was "deeply understood by the biblical Israelites, who were an indigenous people celebrating their cycles of rainy and dry, hot and cold, fruitful and barren." Rabbi Waskow, whose seminal 1981 book *Seasons of Our Joy* eloquently teases out the various meanings of the Jewish holidays, notes that "this understanding had become so alien to many 'modern' Jews that the first review of *Seasons* condemned the book as pagan because it was so Earth-oriented…. One important measure of change in the generation since is that today it would be very unlikely for any Jewish commentator to condemn the book that way. All or almost all of the Jewish community has come to celebrate, not fear or deny, the earthy aspect of Judaism and the festivals."[6]

As the chart that I was preparing for the IGR meeting took shape, it occurred to me that there is a rough synchronicity between Tu b'Av and Tu biShvat on the one hand and the Pagan cross-quarter days on the other. They also represent similar points in the seasonal cycle: the turning of one season towards another. Nor is it a surprise that the synchronicity is only approximate. While modern Pagans observe the cycles of the moon as well as the sun, their high days are determined by the solar calendar. The Jewish calendar, by contrast, is based on true lunar months, and many Jewish festivals fall on, or very close to, the full moon, which is always the fifteenth of the month. Tu biShvat is the closest full moon to Imbolc, while Tu b'Av is the closest full moon to Lúghnasadh.

This synchronicity was suggestive, but it raised more questions. What about Beltane and Samhain? Are there Jewish analogues to these high days as well? If so, they should be on the full moons of Iyar (April–May) and Cheshvan (October–November) respectively. There are no festivals right on these full moons, but there is one close by whose purpose had always been obscure to me. Lag baOmer is the 33rd day of the counting of the omer, a forty-nine-day period of restraint between Passover, the spring festival (as well as the celebration of our freedom from Egyptian slavery), and Shavuot, which in its seasonal meaning is the festival of first fruits. On Lag baOmer the restraints are suspended: weddings are permitted, young boys traditionally get their first haircuts, and bonfires are lit. Again, the

mood of the day bears some similarity to that of Beltane. The 33rd day of the counting of the omer corresponds to the 18th of Iyar, three days past the full moon.

To find an analogue to Samhain, I needed to dig more deeply. There is a festival on the 15th of Cheshvan mentioned in the biblical book of 1 Kings, but it is one that was instituted by King Jeroboam, who led the northern tribes in their rebellion against the House of David after the death of King Solomon and established the breakaway kingdom of Israel.[7] Since the authors of 1 Kings were loyal to the House of David and its southern kingdom of Judah, they didn't care too much for King Jeroboam and his religious innovations. Jeroboam's autumn festival is a tantalizing suggestion, but not a living or even dormant tradition on which to build.

In fact, in Jewish practice dating back at least to Talmudic times, there are no festivals at all in the month of Cheshvan, and it is sometimes referred to as *Marcheshvan* – "bitter Cheshvan." The preceding month of Tishrei, on the other hand, is chock-a-block with festivals, from the Days of Awe at the beginning of the month through the seven-day harvest festival of Sukkot, which begins on the full moon, to Shmini Atzeret on the 22nd. The last of these festivals, Shmini Atzeret, is a bit of an anomaly. It appears to be tacked onto the end of Sukkot, but is not really part of Sukkot. While Sukkot celebrates the fullness of the harvest, Shmini Atzeret marks an inward turning appropriate to the beginning of winter. A prominent feature of the liturgy for Shmini Atzeret is *Geshem*, the prayer for rain. Like the other cross-quarter day analogues, this is a turning of the season.

But why is it so early – a full three weeks before the full moon of Cheshvan? I found a hint in Arthur Waskow's exploration of a different question: Why is there no winter pilgrimage festival corresponding to the three pilgrimage festivals of Passover in the spring, Shavuot in the summer and Sukkot in the autumn? Waskow notes that once the rainy season began in earnest, the pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem became difficult: "Torrential rains, muddy roads – these meant that we must stay home. So the winter festival was placed immediately at the end of the fall festival, when the pilgrims were still at the Temple."[8] If Shmini Atzeret could be the missing winter pilgrimage festival, it could be the missing cross-quarter day analogue as well – the way Jeroboam's festival was incorporated into

normative Jewish practice.

I entertain the fantasy of being able to observe the Jewish calendar as an integrated whole. To see myself as if I personally experienced the exodus from Egypt, as the Passover Haggadah enjoins me to do, and not only the exodus but also the giving of the Torah at Sinai, the Babylonian exile, the rescue of the Jews of the Persian Empire by the brave Queen Esther, the rededication of the Temple under the Maccabees, and all the other events that our calendar remembers. And to be attentive to the cycles of the earth, sun and moon and mark the high and low points in those cycles with the rituals our tradition prescribes – perhaps with some creative redefinition. It is a fantasy because there are too many aspects of my life, aspects that I neither can nor would want to dismiss, that move to other rhythms and are governed by other stories. This is no doubt why the Jesuits conduct their Spiritual Exercises as a retreat. But the Jewish calendar is not meant to be a retreat, but rather a framework for daily life.

* * * * *

Like the Jewish calendar, the Islamic calendar consists of true lunar months, always beginning on the new moon. However, the Islamic year always comprises twelve such months, while the Jewish calendar periodically inserts a thirteenth month to make up the eleven-day difference between twelve lunar months and the mean solar year. Hence, the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, the month of fasting during daylight hours, always maps onto a Jewish month, but not always the same one. This year – the Jewish year 5774, the Islamic year 1435, the Christian year 2014 – Ramadan coincides with the month of Tammuz.

Also this year, violence in the contested land of Israel/Palestine spiralled from the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers and the revenge killing of a Palestinian youth to rocket fire aimed at Israeli cities from Gaza and Israeli air strikes that, as I write on the 17th of Tammuz (July 15, 2014), have killed more than 150 Palestinians.[9] In this morning's news, it was reported that a ceasefire proposal had been rejected by the Palestinian militants.

And so, in the last two weeks or so, a proposal that originated among

some Israelis and Palestinians, Jews and Muslims, to observe today's fast jointly as a Hunger Strike Against Violence has gathered momentum. From Israel and Palestine the movement spread to North America, and tonight some Jews and Muslims will gather in New York, Philadelphia, Memphis, Oakland and other American cities for dialogue and a joint breaking of the fast. Our religious calendars are among the ways that we – as Jews, as Muslims, as Christians, as Pagans – maintain the distinct character that we cherish. Today, some courageous Jews and Muslims have shown that our calendars can also be a source of reconciliation.

Endnotes

[1] A Canadian Jesuit, Father John English SJ, was a leader in broadening and revitalizing the Exercises. His book *Spiritual Freedom: From an Experience of the Ignatian Exercises to the Art of Spiritual Guidance*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1995), is a useful guide.

[2] The chart is available on request from the author at leischod@rogers.com

[3] Chapter 25 of the biblical book of 2 Kings recounts the Babylonian siege, the destruction of the Temple and the aftermath of these events. Gedaliah's brief governorship and assassination is described in 25:22–26.

[4] Rabbi Arthur O. Waskow, *Seasons of Our Joy: A Modern Guide to the Jewish Holidays*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2012), p. 213.

[5] Heather Botting, "Wiccan Rituals: Celebrations of the Goddess and the God Within," *Vox Feminarum*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (Fall/Winter 2002), pp. 18–26.

[6] Waskow, *Seasons of Our Joy*, p. 244.

[7] See 1 Kings 12:32–33.

[8] Waskow, *Seasons of Our Joy*, p. 67.

[9] The eventual figure would be much higher.

Way of Religion Appreciation 101

By Christopher Queen

RELI E-1010W *World Religions.* The historical origins, central teachings, and devotional practices of the major religious traditions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – are considered in relation to common themes of human experience: the holy or sacred, evil and suffering, love and compassion, wisdom and justice, death and deliverance. Interpretive skills appropriate to religious studies will be explored through opportunities to write and revise descriptive and critical essays.

Course-shoppers at the first meeting of *World Religions* do not fall into predictable categories. For twenty years, RELI E-1010/W at the Harvard Extension School has attracted all ethnicities, educational levels and religious affiliations, including the fastest-growing category of religious affiliation in the United States, the "nones." Continuing education students at Harvard may earn credits toward associate's, bachelor's, or master's degrees. But most are attracted to *World Religions* for personal reasons – to broaden their understanding of the world and to chart the changing role of spirituality in their own lives. Their ages range from teens to seniors, but the greatest index of student diversity is geography. For years the class consisted of commuters from the greater Boston area, a cross section of American religiosity and growing secularism. But now, through the miracle of the Internet, class members participate from a dozen foreign countries as well – without leaving home. These students bring personal experience of all the religions we study. Our encounter with Hindus, Buddhists, Daoists, Christians, Jews and Muslims no longer depends on

readings and films – it takes place among the members of the class.

Most first-nighters have already studied the course website and syllabus online. Some have pre-registered, purchased course books, begun the readings and even written the first essay. They are ready to march through seven religions in fourteen weeks, following a brisk schedule of readings, lectures, and films. They will write four critical essays on specific aspects of comparative religion – "Religion and the Interpreter," "Devotion to God," "Encounter with Mystery," and "Religion: Scourge or Refuge?" – and take a final examination to demonstrate their mastery of core concepts and methods.

More than 100 will register for *World Religions* each spring, an enrollment figure that has not changed since the course was introduced in 1990. They will have access to online lectures, class handouts, films, study guides and data links. Local students will be able to use the Grossman Library and Writing Center on campus. Credit students will exchange essay drafts and receive individual guidance from the teaching assistants (TAs), while non-credit students – "auditors" – will participate in all ways except submission of essays and the final examination. All will participate in online discussions, introducing their own topics or "threads" and responding to those of classmates.

The global reach of the virtual classroom makes for some surprising moments. One year an Egyptian Muslim student reported religious tensions in her Cairo neighborhood during the Arab Spring uprisings, as a Jerusalem Rabbi posted photos and commentary of his son's *bris* (circumcision ritual) for classmates to see. Our senior TA performed his grading and advising duties while conducting post-doctoral research and getting married in Kyoto, Japan. The Shinto wedding and this American groom's commentary were posted for the edification of the class.

Orientation

> The goals of the course are to impart understanding of the essential doctrines and institutions of the world's religions, stressing their founding and normative principles; to identify similarities and differences of thought and practice among

the traditions; and to clarify and articulate one's own religious attitudes and orientations in the context of comparative study.

Before approaching the first religious tradition on the syllabus, the class will spend two weeks on questions of definition, methodology and orientation. I have learned that introductory courses are not universally understood or appreciated. Back in graduate school, I once overheard some professors haggling over who would teach the religion department's introductory course. No one wanted to take their turn again, and all seemed to feel that the course was a distraction from their own research, from the upper-level courses they enjoyed teaching, and from time with the doctoral candidates. Religion 101 was rudimentary, if not superficial. With two degrees in religion and only the dissertation standing between me and a third, I saw the 101 course differently.

My first college religion course had been taught by a Sanskrit scholar who treated ancient Vedic hymns as the DNA of human spirituality. Our department chairman, Clyde Holbrooke, argued for teaching religious studies at the college level in a pioneering book, *Religion, A Humanistic Field* (1963). Oberlin's introduction to religion was seen as the gateway to all the department offerings – or as the only religion course non-majors would ever know. How could this not be an important and exciting course to teach? Walking into the office where my graduate school professors had resorted to drawing straws for the hated assignment years later, I quoted the Biblical Isaiah, "Here am I, send me!" With three years of experience teaching required Bible at an independent secondary school, I was appointed lecturer and soon faced my first class of *Religion and Culture*, Boston University's undergraduate introduction to religion.

In this course and its successors at Harvard, I discovered that it is important to set the stage for the academic study of religion, by proposing certain guidelines and a distinctive attitude. The title of Shinryu Suzuki's modern classic, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind,* offers two clues: that the field of examination of any object always includes the examiner, and that first looks are sometimes the profoundest looks. To this end, the first essay in *World Religions* – ungraded but critically marked and returned – invites students to attempt to investigate the two elements in this equation separately. First,

"describe your religious background, affiliation, or outlook. State what you hope to gain by a study of world religions." And second, "define what you mean by *religion* without consulting outside sources, including the course texts."

In the syllabus, I explain the purpose of this exercise:

> In the study of religion it is customary for the scholar to set aside or "bracket" his or her own beliefs when studying a foreign tradition. The idea is to view the world temporarily from another's perspective. This task is difficult, but it is even harder for someone who has not reflected upon her or his own religious outlook. Two or three careful paragraphs here will be useful to you and your reader as you approach the rest of the course.
>
> In order to speak about one's religious outlook, one must decide how to use the term "religion." Unfortunately (or, perhaps, fortunately) authorities in the academic study of religion disagree on the definition of this term. And while it is not "anyone's guess," it is important that you, as a writer on religion, indicate what you mean when using the term.

As the course proceeds, and as we study many old and new definitions of religion, along with the theories and research protocols that accompany them, students come to see that Edmund Husserl's notion of "bracketing" or setting aside one's own worldview in the interest of scientific objectivity or philosophical impartiality is virtually impossible. Without having spent some time investigating and attempting to articulate one's own religious outlook, this *interpenetration* of subject and object will conceal rather than reveal the vibrancy of the religious phenomena that lie ahead.

Another guidepost to the comparative study of religions is Max Müller's famous maxim, "He who knows one, knows none." Only by zooming up above the launch pad do the contours of the surrounding land become visible; we learn things about planet Earth from satellite imaging that cannot be known from measurements on the ground. The ecology of a forest is the aggregate of intersecting life cycles of the trees and other organisms that make it up. Only when we place Christianity and

Buddhism side by side as "religions" do we discover that religion may not be exclusively defined as "devotion to God." And only when we note that Judaism, Christianity, and Buddhism place "suffering" near the center of their teachings, do we realize that these notions are completely different for each one. The sufferings of the Jewish people and their prophets are often traumatic and confounding; the passion of Christ, the "suffering Servant," is always redemptive and inspiring; while the suffering (*dukkha*) of the Buddha's Four Noble Truths is a universal mark of human frailty — something to be extinguished and overcome, not honored as sacred.

World Religion students are introduced to three approaches to the study of myths, rituals, beliefs, and institutions. We may approach them descriptively, narratively, or interpretively. The *Descriptive* or phenomenological approach asks "What is it?" and seeks the features, textures, structures, and connections linking the actors and objects of spirituality. Tools of natural science and philosophy may be useful here. The *Narrative*, historical, or literary approach asks "When did this happen and how did it evolve and change" in time or in the context of a cultural or literary story. Tools of historical and literary analysis are helpful here. And the *Interpretive* or functionalist approach asks "Why do people do or believe in this way, and what are the outcomes?" Here the social sciences may assist in assessing the relationship of means and ends or of psychological and social motives of religious experience.

Another set of rubrics are derived from the Hindu scripture, *Bhagavad Gita*. I call these three "The Golden Braid of Indian Spirituality," but argue that they may be found in all the religions, in various forms and proportions. They are the Path of Action (*karma*), the Path of Knowledge (*jñāna*), and the Path of Devotion (*bhakti*). These are presented as universal constitutive elements in religion itself, covering ritual, ethics, and monastic codes (action), meditation, prayer, didactic teachings and scholarship (knowledge), and service to god, teachers, and humanity (devotion). The class practices identifying these themes and techniques while viewing *Sacred Trances of Bali and Java*, a documentary film in which a dazzling range of religious phenomena are depicted at the animistic, Hindu/Buddhist, Muslim, and secular-nationalist levels of modern Indonesian society.

Finally, students are encouraged to consider Five Principles of Study in RELI E-1010W. (1) Know thyself, to better recognize the interaction between your own outlook and those of the religious people you will encounter in the course. (2) Cultivate "Religion Appreciation" from the beginning, with the thought that these ancient ways of faith would not have survived for thousands of years were they not precious to others. Seek an appealing feature, such as a teaching or a way of making buildings or raising children, and make that your gateway to the unfamiliar tradition. There is insufficient time in this course to dwell on religions' many failures. (3) Formulate your own criteria for evaluating religious expressions, such as logical coherence, aesthetic qualities, ethical principles and outcomes, alignment with modern worldviews, and the presence or absence of harmony and toleration in religious communities. (4) Develop sensitivity to the "language" of unfamiliar religions: their distinctive symbols and gestures, values, family and social patterns, and the ways in which they celebrate life. (5) Find dialogue partners in the unfamiliar faiths, perhaps with members of the class, one's neighborhood or online. Nothing promotes interfaith understanding as effectively as conversation over coffee or a private exchange of emails.

Ingredients

In a course that encourages appreciation for others' faith and practice, the notion of dialogue, born of sincere curiosity, is a prime ingredient. The instructor may model this by blending the roles of lecturer, moderator and master of ceremonies. Indicating that students are welcome to make comments and raise questions at any time during the class may not be every professor's preference. But such a policy illustrates the fact that scholars are divided on fundamental matters in the study of religion, and that students in the class may have experiences and insights that can advance the conversation. Certainly no instructor of comparative religion can claim to be an expert on each tradition; inviting "help" from the class is not a gimmick or a display of false humility. It is an acknowledgment that learned practitioners and even members of the clergy of the traditions under consideration may be present.

A classroom that is both a meeting ground and a broadcast studio poses

challenges. The students in the room must be particularly welcomed and valued because their presence makes face-to-face conversation possible, and everyone knows that local class members could just as well skip the travel and parking hassles and take the course from home. On the other hand, it becomes important to create a sense of the larger conversation that includes both local and distance students. I have attempted to do this by referring at the beginning of class to threads of discussion that have appeared that week on the course discussion boards. These are often convenient ways to introduce or illustrate the themes of the night's lecture.

A second ingredient of any successful course is the required readings. I have enjoyed using Mary Pat Fisher's *Living Religions*, along with the companion *Anthology of Living Religions*, since their first publication in the 1990s. The author and the publisher, Pearson/Prentice Hall, have updated these texts every few years. The writing and visuals of the books are now supplemented by references and tutorials on a companion DVD and online access to a dedicated website. These materials couple the seriousness of religious scholarship with the enthusiasm I first encountered in the Huston Smith's classic *Religions of Man* (later retitled *The World's Religions*), written in 1958 while at Washington University in St. Louis prior to Smith's years as a lonely humanist on the MIT faculty.

With the outlines and details of each religion richly represented in the readings, the instructor is free to lecture on themes and points that seem pressing to this year's students. Two additional readings address just such themes. One is the issue of religious violence – often the first arrow in the religion-hater's quiver – and its antidote, the peace-teachings of the religions. Daniel Smith-Christopher's *Subverting Hatred: The Challenge of Nonviolence in Religious Traditions* (Orbis 2000) presents essays on the peace-teachings and historical vicissitudes of the traditions we study, thus providing an ongoing answer to the question, "Is religious faith part of the problem or part of the solution in a world of sectarian struggle?" The other issue addressed by a supplementary reading is the secularist attack on religion itself, as reflected in the polemical writings of "new atheists" like Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, and Daniel Dennett. For this task students read Sam Harris's *Letter to a Christian Nation* (Vintage 2006). The issues of Women and Patriarchy in Religion and the growing literature

on Religion and Ecology are afforded special attention in lectures as the course proceeds.

The writing assignments on RELI E-1010W, along with the requirement to post thoughts and queries on the discussion boards, are integral to the "conversation" that defines the course. After the initial essay on "Religion and the Interpreter," students are asked to draft and then polish essays on "Devotion to God" and "Encounter with Mystery" with guidance from the teaching assistants. The first of these exposes students to the possibility that the God with whom devotion is "shared" (the root meaning of the Hindu term *bhakti*) may be far more concrete and polymorphous than the invisible Deity of the faiths that promise death to idolators. Writing about the acts and emotions of love for a goddess like Ganga (the river Ganges) or the elephant-headed Ganesh is a true challenge for students who have been reared in orthodox Jewish, Christian, or Muslim families, as well as to those with no previous religious exposure at all.

The paper on mystery asks students to consider the mystery of life and the experience of the sacred through poetry, metaphor, paradox, holy objects, architecture, gesture and performance. The Hindu sound Om, the smile of the Buddha, the teachings of no-self (*anatta*) and emptiness (*shunyata*), Zhuangzi's humor in expressing "the way" (*dao*) and "not-doing" (*wu-wei*), the use of silence and the miracles of the Bible all point to powers or relationships that are invisible or transcend conventional speech or logic. Many students struggle with this essay, admitting that their life experience and education have emphasized the tangible, the explicit, and the logical.

Appreciation

Much could be said, in conclusion, about the roles that audio-visual media have played in bringing students closer to traditional religious experience. In addition to *Trance Dances of Bali and Java*, two of the BBC "Long Search" documentaries from the 1970s have retained their impact over the years: *Hinduism: 330 Million Gods, and Buddhism: Footprint of the Buddha* (available from Documentary Video www.documentary-video.com/items.cfm?id=869). I have used audio clips from the National Public Radio's religion reporter, Barbara Bradley Haggerty (e.g. "Reconciling

Religious Faith and Natural Disaster" following the 2004 tsunami) and the Smithsonian Folkways releases of classic African American gospel music (illustrating Christian devotionalism and liberation theology). And each term, I have invited guest speakers to bring their faith perspectives into the classroom: devout student leaders and faculty from the university, clergy and laypersons from the community, and a panel of students themselves, invited to share their findings in the final essay. This closing event often serves to validate and bring closure to the multiple conversations that have enlivened the term.

Titled "Religion: Scourge or Refuge?" the final essay invites students to show their appreciation for religion by responding to one of its harshest critics. In *Letter to a Christian Nation*, Sam Harris presents religion as irrational, obsolete, and guilty of great harm in the world. Students are challenged to identify and respond to three of the author's arguments, citing evidence from their readings in the course. Finally, drawing on essays in *Subverting Hatred* students attempt to show how a specific religious teaching or practice might contribute to easing tension or reducing violence in the world today.

Inviting students to have the last word and noting the passion with which they often rise to the task of vanquishing religion's "cultured despisers" – as Frederick Schleiermacher called the readers of his essay *On Religion* more than two hundred years ago – offers a fitting answer to the shoppers who first wandered into the room and logged onto the website of *World Religions* a few months before, asking "Is it possible that the study – if not the practice – of religion is still vital to the world we inhabit now?"

It was always the instructor's hope that the answer would be in the affirmative.

Way of Zarathustra

Homi Dhalla

The soul of the earth complained to the Creator that it was being oppressed by violence, savagery and cruelty and it needed a protector.[1] In response to this call, Prophet Zarathushtra was deputed to bring about order in the prevalent chaos. It was this that moved Rabindranath Tagore to remark: "He was the watcher in the night who stood on the lonely peak facing the East and broke out singing the paens of light to the sleeping world when the sun came out on the brim of the horizon."[2] Zarathushtra was born in eastern Iran about 3500 years ago. We learn from Pliny the Elder (23-79 C.E.) that he was that rare human being who laughed at the time of his birth.[3] Tradition tells us that all nature smiled too, because the plants and waters rejoiced and their growth increased.[4]

On attaining the age of 20, Zarathushtra was guided by providence to a secluded area on Mount Ushidarena[5] where his inner journey commenced. Through deep meditation he saw the light that led to spiritual illumination. In the *Gathas* (divine hymns) he calls upon the Lord: "Unfold Thyself within me."[6] When this occurred it led to his enlightenment. Thus, one called Spitama" became "Zarathushtra" (he of the Golden Light), the Prophet of ancient Iran. He brought forth a new message in a world dark with ignorance.[7]

He began his divine mission at the age of 30. He was met with indifference and even opposition. It was a struggle. For a considerable time his only disciple was his cousin Maidyoimaonha.[8] In his hour of deepest crisis he was attacked by the evil spirit. The only weapon Zarathustra had was the powerful chant, the *Ahuna Vairya*, our most sacred chant. It was chanted at the beginning of the creation of the world.[9] By this chant the evil one was thwarted. But he came once again to tempt the Prophet by offering him the sovereignty of the world if he renounced his religion. But Zarathushtra turned away saying,

> Never shall I renounce the good religion of the Mazda worshippers, not though life and limb and soul part asunder.[10]

This was the crucial test: truth triumphed over evil. In the 12th year of his mission he met King Vishtaspa. According to Zoroastrian scriptures, Zarathustra preached his new message at the court and after lengthy discussions with the wise men and the performance of miracles he was accepted by the king. Vishtaspa became the patron-king of Zarathushtra.[11,12] This became a turning point in the history of Zoroastrianism.

Ahura Mazda, the One Supreme God

The ancient religion of Iran, before the advent of Zarathushtra, was called the Mazdayasnan religion. It was a faith that enjoined the worship of Mazda, "the all-knowing." Besides this, various powers of nature were also revered by the masses. But in the course of time, subordinate deities had become more important. Zarathushtra's signal contribution was his emphasis on monotheism. R. C. Zaehner remarks that: "… in the *Gathas* [hymns of Zarathushtra] we meet with a pure monotheism that not only has a stamp of a profoundly experienced revelation but also gives the impression of having been deeply thought out."[13] From his outpourings in the *Gathas* it is evident that Zarathushtra felt the divine presence very deeply. The term Ahura means "the Lord of life" and Mazda "omniscient."

Zarathushtra considered Ahura Mazda as the sole creator and the absolute ruler of the universe. He is also referred to as the first Thinker,[14] Supreme Judge,[15] the one who showers His grace[16] and is changeless.[17] There are several references in the *Avesta* that speak about Him in the form of light. In one such instance Ahura Mazda declares: "I am the irradiating brilliant Light, I am all Light…"[18] He is the giver of joy to men.[19, 20] There are 101 names enumerating Ahura Mazda's various attributes.

Zarathushtra's relationship with the Creator is one of friendship. He asks for help as if he were asking a friend.[21, 22,23] He addresses Ahura Mazda as his Friend, Brother and Father.[24]

His mission was foreordained, for he was chosen by God "in the beginning."[25] The vision he saw took him back to the dawn of creation. "Then, Mazda, did I realize that Thou wast holy when I saw Thee in the

beginning, at the birth of existence, when Thou didst ordain a (just) requital for deeds and words, an evil lot for evil (done) and a good one for a good (deed): through Thy wisdom (all this shall come to pass) at the last turning-point of creation."[26, 27]

The Holy Spirit of Ahura Mazda

In the *Gathas*, the Prophet praises *Spenta Mainyu*, the Holy Spirit of God. Ahura creates all things through His Holy Spirit.[28] The Prophet proclaims what the most Holy One, has revealed to him[29] and desires that Mazda may listen to him through the Holy Spirit.[30] At the time of the great Renovation of the universe, Ahura shall come with His Holy Spirit[31] and grant perfection and immortality to man through Him.[32]

Ethical Dualism

Dualism in one form or another is prevalent in many parts of the world. The Prophet refers to dualism in a few hymns of the *Gathas.* Zarathushtra observed that worldly existence is in reality a blend of truth and falsehood, good and evil, happiness and pain, light and darkness, righteousness and unrighteousness, order and disorder.

These opposing forces were personified in a pair of Primal Twins, one of whom he called *Spenta Mainyu* (the Holy Spirit) and the other was *Angra Mainyu* (the Evil Spirit). While one stood for increase, abundance, virtue and was a life-giving force, the other was its antithesis in every way. It stood for evil, destruction and disorder. Regarding this, the Prophet clearly declares:

> I will speak of the Spirits Twain at the first beginning of Life,
> of whom the holier spake thus to the wicked one:
> Never shall our minds harmonize, nor our doctrines;
> Neither our aspirations, nor yet our beliefs;
> Neither our words nor yet our actions;
> Neither our hearts nor yet our souls.[33]

And again this opposition is clearly stated:

> And now when these Two Spirits together came,
> They in the beginning created Life and Not-Life.[34]

The latter represents the two phases of the eternal activity of the Divine, viz., creation and dissolution. Both are part of the divine plan. Renewal and renovation are important for the progress of the universe. At another level, these twins could also represent Spirit and Matter. Although the Prophet lays great emphasis upon this opposition between Truth and Falsehood, Ahura Mazda stands above and beyond them. In the *Gathas*, the destructive Spirit is not in opposition to omnipotent Ahura Mazda. His opposition is against the Holy Spirit of God, which is distinct from God. It is man's sacred duty to fight evil in all its forms and stand firmly on the side of Truth.

What is necessary in a dualistic system is that the two powers are either co-equal or co-eternal. In this case it is imperative to note that the *Gathas* as well as the later books speak about this conflict coming to an end and about the ultimate triumph of the Holy Spirit. The power of the Destructive Spirit will only last until the Resurrection of man and the Renovation of the universe. *Angra Mainyu* will be totally eliminated and all evil will be destroyed. Professor E. W. West has rightly stated, "If it be necessary for a dualism that the evil spirit be omnipresent, omniscient, almighty or eternal, then the Parsi religion is no dualism."[35] Similarly, Professor Martin Haug states that, "The opinion, so generally entertained now, that Zarathushtra was preaching a Dualism…is owing to a confusion of his philosophy with his theology."[36] Professor Zaehner refers to Zoroastrianism as an ethical dualism.[37]

However, the moral dualism that Zarathushtra preached was in later times misunderstood. Gradually the Holy Spirit was identified with Ahura Mazda. Hence, we find that in Sassanian times, instead of the earlier opposition between the Holy and the Evil Spirits, Ahura and *Ahriman* (*Angra Mainyu*) form the fundamental pair. This is most inconsistent with the idea of the omnipotence of God and is certainly contrary to the message of the Prophet.

Asha

Asha is the cornerstone upon which the Prophet built the edifice of his new faith. This lofty ideal is to be understood at many levels. In the *Gathas, Asha* was regarded as the Divine Cosmic Law, Eternal Truth, the One

Reality of Ahura Mazda according to which He fashioned the universe. It is also according to this immutable Law that the creation is governed and progresses until the period of the great Renovation.

When one grasps this concept of *Asha*, one moves towards an understanding of Zarathushtra's revelation. Man is told that the path of Truth is made by Ahura Mazda,[38] and it is on this path that He dwells.[39] The one who follows this path shall attain the highest good.[40]

The profoundly spiritual import of *Asha* has not only to be comprehended in its essence but has to be practiced if one wishes to be in union with the Divine, because it is:

Through the best Asha,
Through the highest Asha,
That we may catch sight of Thee,
That we may approach Thee,
That we may be in perfect union with Thee.[41]

And finally the emphasis on *Asha* is so profound that it is declared that:

There is but one Path, the Path of Asha,
All others are no paths.[42]

This moral dualism between *Asha* and *Druj*, Truth and Falsehood, Righteousness and Unrighteousness has a profound effect on Zoroastrian literature. The Prophet expects men to be *ashavans* (followers of Truth or Righteousness), as opposed to *dregvans* (followers of the Lie). Manushchihr, the High Priest of Shiraz and Kerman in the 9th century, echoes this when he writes: "The righteous man is superior to the stars, moon, sun and the fire of Hormazd."[43] Even in their daily prayers a Zoroastrian is made conscious of this uncompromising stance when he recites in the *Tandarosti* prayer:

In this house
May obedience triumph over disobedience,
Peace over discord,
Generosity over niggardliness,
Reverence over contempt,
The true-spoken word (over) the false-spoken word,
(And) truth over evil.[44]

So significant was *Asha* that when the Prophet developed the concept of the *Amesha Spentas* (Holy Immortals) or Archangels, he personified *Asha* as *Asha Vahishta* (the highest or best *Asha*), a mighty Being or an aspect of God himself. He stood only second in rank to Ahura Mazda.

The very first prayer that a Zoroastrian child is taught is the *Ashem Vohu*. Here *Asha* is interpreted by the familiar triad *humata, hukhta* and *hvarshta* (good thought, good word, good deed). The importance of *Asha* can also be gauged by the fact that the Prophet associates Truth with Light. Because *Asha* was the most significant aspect of his message, we find that at a very early stage *Asha Vahishta* came to be identified with Light, as it was considered to be the purest creation of Ahura Mazda. Light or Fire is regarded as the symbol of the faith.

After several centuries Darius the Great (522-486 B.C.) built the world's mightiest empire, ruling nations from north India to the Mediterranean. Zoroastrianism was the state religion of the Achaemenian empire (549-331 B.C.) and we hear echoes of Zarathushtra's teachings in Darius' inscriptions:

> A great God is Ahuramazda who created this excellent work…, who created happiness for man, who bestowed wisdom and activity upon Darius the king… By the favour of Ahuramazda I am of such a sort that I am a friend to Right, I am not a friend to Wrong. It is not my desire that the weak man should have wrong done to him by the mighty, nor is it my desire that the mighty man should have wrong done to him by the weak. What is right, that is my desire. I am not a friend to the man who is a lie follower.[44]

Free Will

The Omniscient Lord has created all creatures free. Man is born free and does not have the stain of original sin. He has total freedom to make his choice. Zoroastrianism is the religion of free will *par excellence* according to Professor Zaehner. In this cosmic battle between the forces of Truth and Falsehood, good and evil, man has to choose. He may choose to be in the army of Ahura Mazda, to fight for the ultimate destruction of evil, or he

may tread the path of evil itself. The words of the Prophet are very clear about this:

Hear with your ears the highest Truths,
Consider them with clear thought,
Before deciding between the two paths,
man by man, each one for himself.[46]

And once he makes a decision, he has to be responsible for its consequences. No Savior can come to his rescue except his own good thoughts, words and deeds. And hence the Prophet in reference to these two paths states:

And of these two the wise do choose aright,
The unwise choose not thus.[47]

The Amesha Spentas

The teaching of the Amesha Spentas (Holy Immortals) is fundamental to the religion of Zarathushtra. Representing the six aspects of God's nature, they are attributes to which man should also aspire. With Ahura Mazda as their Father, they are sometimes considered as seven. They work in complete harmony in the universe:

Who are seven of one thought,
Who are seven of one word,
Who are seven of one deed;
Whose thought is the same,
Whose word is the same,
Whose deed is the same,
And whose Father and Lord is the same –
The Creator, Ahura Mazda [48]

This also points to the unity in the diversity of God's nature.

Because the concept of *Asha* was so important to the Prophet, the first *Amesha Spenta* was *Asha Vahishta.* In the *Gathas* he is spoken of in the highest spiritual sense and at times he is personified as an archangel. *Asha Vahishta*, which also stands for the Best Order, directs the universe according to the Laws of Ahura Mazda. He came to be identified with Light or Fire.

Vohu Manah (loving mind or good mind) is the next Holy Immortal. God communes with man through *Vohu Manah*[49] who represents the highest mental purity of which man is capable. Zarathustra asserts that life is renewed and made full through love. The good mind implies loving kindness not only towards other men but also towards animals. Hence, in later Zoroastrian theology, the entire animal kingdom came under the care of this Archangel. *Asha Vahishta* and *Vohu Manah* are more closely associated with Ahura Mazda than the other *Amesha Spentas.*

Khshathra Vairya, the third *Amesha Spenta*, represents the omnipotence and the universal sovereignty of God. He who lives according to the Divine Laws of *Asha* is granted the strength to serve humanity and to help in the overall progress of the universe.

The first Holy Immortal on the feminine side is *Spenta Armaiti* (holy devotion). By the purifying power of devotion, *Spenta Armaiti* serves as the guide to the righteous path. She is a true friend to man: "I choose for myself the excellent *Spenta Armaiti*; may she be with me."[50] In later times she was identified with the earth, which sustains us.

The last two Holy Immortals are the twins, *Haurvatat* and *Ameretat*, who always appear together in the *Gathas*. *Haurvatat* represents "perfection or spiritual wholeness" and *Ameretat* "immortality." In later tradition, they preside over water and the vegetable kingdom, respectively.

It is significant to note that the values conveyed through the *Amesha Spentas* ought to be practiced in our everyday life.[51]

Harmony with Nature

Professor John Hinnells has stated that "Zoroastrianism [is] the world's first ecologically conscious religion.'[52] The Prophet sees the order in the universe that the Creator has ordained:

> What being laid down paths for sun and stars?
> What made the moon to wax and wane betimes?
> Whose might doth hold the earth and sky apart?
> Who keeps the waters and plants in place?
> Who guides the winds in their uncharted course?
> What architect did fashion realms of light and darkness?[53]

Zarathushtra appreciated the great Plan of Ahura Mazda and taught that man should live in harmony with the law of *Asha*. This Law upholds order and harmony. Man is not to defile the waters or pollute the earth. He is exhorted to recognize the sanctity of the elements.

Man is expected to live in *hamazor* (harmony/unity) not only with the Creator and with his fellowmen but also with nature. In the *Namach i chahar nem* (Salutation to the Four Directions), the Zoroastrian turns towards each direction. Besides treating the various creations of God with respect, he is developing a seminal bond with nature.

Perhaps the most significant stanza, which emphatically shows the crucial role that ecology plays, is from the Zoroastrian Creed itself:

Of what faith are the waters,
Of what faith the trees,
Of what faith the bounteous mother-earth,
Of what faith Ahura Mazda,
Of what faith was Zarathushtra, …
Of that faith and of that Law as well,
A Mazda-worshipper am I.[54]

Light

Light, or its physical manifestation, fire, is intrinsic to the Zoroastrian faith. Zarathushtra made it the symbol of his religion. Ahura Mazda is eternal Light – His very nature is Light. Hence, one of the names of Ahura Mazda is: "I am all-Light, I am full of Light, I am the one possessing Light."[55, 56, 57]

To the Zoroastrian, fire is "the son of Ahura Mazda."[58] Its presence is indispensable at all ceremonies. While praying during the day or night, a Zoroastrian faces some source of light. When he stands before the altar in a fire-temple, the blazing fire reminds him of the radiance of Ahura Mazda. In venerating fire, he does not become a fire-worshipper.

At another level, fire means the power of spiritual illumination – that which purifies and elevates the mind. Light is knowledge – it dispels the darkness of ignorance.

Service to Humanity

One of the most inspiring ideas of the Prophet is the opening line of the *Ushtavaiti Gatha*: "Joy comes to the one who brings joy unto others."[59] This is a significant teaching. Here was a message that combined the spiritual quest with a deep social concern. For Zarathustra service for mankind was the first duty. God's peace comes to him as a reward for loving service.[60] Zarathustra said that the one who is ardent in serving others dwells with the Lord.[61,62] And in the Pahlavi text, the *Shayest-ne-Shayest*, a Zoroastrian is exhorted to serve mankind in different ways:

> These are the three great duties of mankind:
> To make an enemy a friend,
> To make a wicked person righteous,
> And to make an ignorant person wise.[63]

Another facet of social concern is active philanthropy. This has been practiced by the Parsi community in India to this day. Although they number a mere 65,000 in a population of one billion, many of their charities are cosmopolitan in nature. No other minuscule community in India or perhaps in the world has given away and continues to give so much to so many, irrespective of their caste or religion. Hence the adage, "Parsi, thy name is charity."

The well being of others is a refrain that repeats itself in the Zoroastrian world-view. Echoes of it are found in several prayers:

May cheerfulness, joy, good fortune and goodness arrive from the South. May disease, sickness, misery, harm, selfishness and all such evils fly to the North. May the good be powerful. May the evil-minded be powerless and may they repent of their evil deeds…May my prayers be efficacious for you…I pray for the good of the life of all living creatures which Ahura Mazda, the Creator, has created…I pray that the generous may be prosperous, the truthful may be blessed, the wise may be powerful, the unwise powerless. May the waters be ever flowing, the trees be ever growing, the corn be ever ripening. May the thoughts, words and actions of us all be truthful and righteous, so that, in the end, the whole of mankind may be benefited, benefited in this world and in the other world.[64]

The Zoroastrian View of Life

Ours is a perfecting world. It is man's duty to be a co-worker with Ahura Mazda in combating evil in its various forms. He is a soldier in the army of the Ahura Mazda – he directly participates in all battles as he is exhorted to by Zoroastrianism, the religion of action. And this activity has to lead to progress, as continuous progress is the watchword of the faith. He has to contribute his part in the mighty task of bringing about the final Renovation of the universe. Ultimately evil will be completely destroyed and the Kingdom of Righteousness will be established. This is the message of hope that Zarathushtra has given to man.

When shall he be worthy of Thee?
What actions of his shall most appeal to Thee?
Clear is all this to the man of wisdom,
As to the man who clearly thinks,
He who upholds Truth with all the might of his power,
He who upholds Truth to the utmost in his word and deed,
He, indeed, is Thy most valued helper, O Mazda Ahura!

Endnotes

[1] *Yasna* 29.1. (a sacred liturgical text of the *Avesta*, the Zoroastrian scripture)

[2] R. Tagore, *The Religion of Man* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1958) p. 82.

[3] Cited by H. Mirza, *Outlines of Parsi History* (Bombay: H. Mirza, 1974), p. 368.

[4] *Yasht* 13.94. (hymns to Ahura Mazda found in the *Avesta*)

[5] The mount of divine intellect.

[6] *Yasna* 33.12.

[7] *Ibid*, 12.5-6.

[8] *Ibid,* 46.1.

[9] *Ibid*, 19.1-2.

[10] *Vendidad* 19.1-10. (an ecclesiastical code, part of the *Avesta*)

[11] *Yasna* 46.14.

[12] *Yasht* 13.99

[13] R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism* (London: Weidenfeld and

Nicolson, 1961), p. 50.

[14] *Yasna* 31.7.

[15] *Ibid*, 31.8.

[16] *Ibid*, 33.6.

[17] *Ibid*, 31.7.

[18] *Yasht* 1.14.

[19] *Yasna* 29.10.

[20] *Ibid*, 60.1.

[22] *Ibid*, 46.2.

[23] *Ibid,* 50.6.

[24] *Ibid*, 44.2.

[25] Ibid, 45.11.

[26] *Ibid*, 44.11.

[27] *Ibid*, 43.5.

[28] *Ibid*, 31.3.

[29] *Ibid*, 44.7.

[30] *Ibid*, 45.5.

[31] *Ibid*, 45.6.

[32] *Ibid*, 43.6.

[33] *Ibid*, 47.1.

[34] *Ibid,* 45.2.

[35] *Ibid*, 30.4.

[36] E. W. West, *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. V, p. XIX.

[37] Martin Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsis* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1878), p. 303.

[38] R. C. Zaehner, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

[39] *Yasna* 53.2

[40] *Ibid*, 33.5.

[41] *Ibid,* 43.3.

[42] *Ibid*, 60.12.

[43] *Ibid*, 72.11.

[44] *Datastan i Denik* 2.1.

[45] *Darius at Naqsh-i Rustam* (*Old Persian Grammar: Texts and Lexicon*), trans. by R. G. Kent, (New Haven, 1953), p. 138.

[46] *Aogemadaecha* 84. (a Zoroastrian treatise/liturgy on death)

[47] *Yasna* 30.2.

[48] *Ibid*, 30.3.

[49] *Yasht* 19.16.

[50] *Yasna* 45.6.

[51] *Ibid*, 12.2.

[52] See I. J. S. Taraporewala, *Religion of Zarathushtra* (Bombay: B. I. Taraporewala, 1979), p. 44.

[53] John Hinnells, *Zoroastrianism and the Parsis* (London: Ward Lock Educational, 1981), p. 70.

[54] *Yasna* 44.3-5.

[55] *Ibid*, 12.7.

[56] *Hormazd Yasht* 14.

[57] *Yasna* 46.7.

[58] *Ibid*, 47.6.

[59] *Ibid*, 62.1.

[60] *Ibid*, 43.1.

[61] *Ibid*, 43.14.

[62] *Ibid*, 44.9.

[63] *Ibid*, 62.5.

[64] *Shayest-ne-Shayest* XX.6. (a Zoroastrian treatise found in the *Avesta*)

[65] *Afrin-i-Haft Ameshaspandan* 15-17. (a Zoroastrian text)

The Pentecostal Way

Adam Stewart

It has become popular to begin the discussion of Pentecostalism by first pointing out how in little more than one hundred years this initially unpopular Christian sect managed to grow from only a handful of practitioners at the turn of the twentieth century into a global religious movement that currently boasts as many as 600 million practitioners worldwide. Demographers tell us that Pentecostalism might be the fastest growing religious movement in the world, practiced by one in every thirteen people, and one in every four Christians, on the planet. These statistics, as remarkable as they may be, do little to help explain what it is about Pentecostalism that could cause it to possibly surpass the number of Buddhist and even Hindu practitioners around the world in fewer than thirty years from now.[1]

Similarly, many books written about Pentecostalism devote a considerable amount of space to developing discrete definitions of the movement. At various times throughout its short history Pentecostalism has been explained as the result of "devil worship," bad genetics, or socioeconomic deprivation.[2] At other times it has been defined according to some of its more curious traits, particularly the practice of glossolalia or speaking in tongues.[3] More recently Pentecostalism has been explained in relation to its shared roots with other important religious traditions such as the Wesleyan Holiness movement, the Keswick Higher Life movement, or various forms of African and African American spirituality.[4] The desired end (sometimes explicit, but more often implicit) of a number of these and other definitions, is to provide a unifying principle – a kind of Rosetta stone – that is hoped might unlock a set of common characteristics that are capable of bringing semblance to what is a dizzying array of Christian communities that often share little more in common than, as Allan Anderson explains, "a family resemblance that emphasizes the working of the Holy Spirit."[5]

Like the above statistics, these definitions can help us to more precisely understand both the historical and contemporary diversity contained within the Pentecostal movement, but they often similarly fail to explain what it is about Pentecostalism that has attracted practitioners from virtually every nation on the planet. An additional problem with definitions that focus on either the social scientific, theological, or historical characteristics of Pentecostalism is that there exists so much social, theological, and historical diversity within Pentecostalism that they usually fail to include, and thus alienate, often large segments of the movement. Instead of proposing narrow criteria in an attempt to define the movement, some scholars show a preference for phenomenological or typological understandings of Pentecostalism in which the movement's various segments or "Pentecostalisms"[6] are simply described as they appear to the observer or are experienced by adherents.[7] Although a strong advocate of the African and African American roots of Pentecostalism, the pioneering scholar of global Pentecostalism, Walter J. Hollenweger, has at the same time lamented that "Worldwide there is so much variety that about all one can say is that a Pentecostal is a Christian who calls himself a Pentecostal."[8]

Despite the heterogeneity of Pentecostalism and the inherent problem with creating definitions that might essentialize such a diverse assortment of religious expressions, there remains one feature, one deeply held conviction, that unites virtually all those Christians around the world that have been variously labeled as Pentecostal, Charismatic, Neo-Pentecostal, Proto-Pentecostal, Renewalist, or by a whole host of related monikers. This conviction is at once a belief but not exactly a doctrine, a commitment but cannot precisely be described as a practice. Rather, it is an observable component of shared Pentecostal experience that resides primarily in the affections.[9] The best term that I can think of that most accurately describes this conviction is divine immanence – the belief that God can and does regularly rupture the divine-human divide in order to miraculously intervene in the lives of ordinary people. Whether one reads the sermons and writings of early Pentecostal pioneers, or visits Pentecostal churches today from Los Angeles to Lagos, one would be hard pressed to find evidence of a Pentecostal community that did not at its very core hold

a strong commitment to the idea that God continuously breaks into the realm of everyday human experience in order to affect positive change in people's lives.

It might be historically untenable to claim that Pentecostalism forms a coherent reaction to any single phenomenon within either Christianity or modern culture. One can at least claim, however, that Pentecostalism forms an alternative to some of the theologies and expressions of Christianity that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (with deep roots reaching back to the Protestant scholasticism of the sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries and the Enlightenment theologies of the late-eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries) that often characterized God as a primarily transcendent, unknowable being standing over and above human experience. While Pentecostals uphold the traditional Christian view of God as essentially different from the created order, they could never agree with Søren Kierkegaard's characterization of God as "absolutely different" or with Karl Barth's description of God as "wholly other."[10]

Pentecostalism can be viewed as part of a much larger pattern of oscillation within the whole sweep of Western religion between a focus on either a primarily immanent or a primarily transcendent understanding of the divine. This pattern began with ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Greek religion, which Peter Berger explains, was inherently "cosmological" and "embedded in a cosmic order" that failed "to make the sharp modern differentiation between the human and non-human (or 'natural') spheres of empirical reality." These ancient traditions, rather, understood there to be a "continuity between the empirical and the supra-empirical, between the world of men and the world of the gods" that "assumes an ongoing linkage of human events with the sacred forces permeating the universe."[11] Israelite religion, in Berger's estimation, represented a movement away from divine immanence towards the conceptualization of "a God who stands *outside* the cosmos" who is "radically transcendent, not to be identified with any natural or human phenomena."[12] Within early Christianity, and more specifically Roman Catholicism and the various Orthodox traditions, the world was "re-enchanted" or "re-mythologized." Christian concepts such as the Incarnation and the related presence of God in the

sacraments (particularly in the Eucharist), a robust tradition of miracles, and a much more developed theology regarding supernatural beings, all marked a return to divine immanence.[13] With Protestantism, however, came "an immense shrinkage in the scope of the sacred in reality." The sacraments were reduced from seven to two while "the miracle of the mass disappears altogether," miracles become less common and "lose all real significance for the religious life," and a "sky empty of angels becomes open to the intervention of the astronomer and, eventually, of the astronaut," contributing to the gradual movement towards modernity. "At the risk of some simplification," Berger concludes, "it can be said that Protestantism divested itself as much as possible from the three most ancient and most powerful concomitants of the sacred – mystery, miracle, and magic."[14] Viewed against this backdrop of broader developments within the history of religion in the West, Pentecostalism can be seen as providing an alternative to the modern Protestant tradition of disenchantment and divine transcendence.

Pointing to a quite different understanding of God's relationship with the created order, the headline of the inaugural issue of the *Apostolic Faith* read: "Pentecost Has Come: Los Angeles Being Visited by a Revival of Bible Salvation and Pentecost as Recorded in the Book of Acts."[15] The opening lines of the journal continued:

> The power of God now has this city agitated as never before. Pentecost has surely come and with it the Bible evidences are following, many being converted and sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues as they did on the day of Pentecost. The scenes that are daily enacted in the building on Azusa Street and at Missions and churches in other parts of the city are beyond description, and the real revival is only started, as God has been working with His children mostly, getting them through to pentecost, and laying the foundation for a mighty wave of salvation among the unconverted.[16]

These words describe the lived experience of the first generation of American Pentecostals who primarily understood God according to his immanence – God's presence and action in human lives modeled on the

biblical events of the Incarnation (God's act of becoming human in the person of Jesus Christ) and Pentecost (the event when Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to comfort and empower the Church from which Pentecostals get their name).

The inherent optimism contained in the Pentecostal understanding of God and approach to life has been the source of much derision from those who see Pentecostalism as the consummate pie in the sky religion[17] – the epitome of Karl Marx's "sigh of the oppressed creature, the feeling of a heatless world, and the soul of soulless circumstances."[18] The belief that God is always ready to intervene in people's lives, however, is not unique to Pentecostalism, and neither can it be simply explained as a response to the desperate conditions of modern life.[19] As was just noted, the idea of divine immanence is a concept deeply rooted in both biblical literature and early Christian tradition. Like generations of Christians before them, Pentecostals the world over read the stories of redemption found in the Bible such as the Exodus, the Resurrection, and the arrival of the Holy Sprit on the Day of Pentecost, and see no reason to believe that God will not intervene in their lives and in the lives of those around them in a similar way.

Eugene Peterson, the well-known pastoral theologian and author of the popular Bible translation *The Message*, was raised in a Pentecostal community in Montana during the 1930s and 1940s. Reflecting on how this experience of Pentecostalism shaped his religious worldview he wrote in his recent autobiography: "If I were to define what for me makes up the core Pentecostal identity, it is the lived conviction that everything, absolutely everything, in the scriptures is livable. Not just true, but livable. Not just an idea or a cause, but livable in real life. Everything that is revealed in Jesus and the scriptures, the gospel, is there to be lived by ordinary Christians in ordinary times. This is the supernatural core, a lived resurrection and Holy Spirit core, of the Christian life."[20] Similarly, when the former general secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa, Tokunboh Adeyemo, was asked why Pentecostalism was growing at such a remarkable rate on the continent of Africa, he replied without hesitation. It is because Pentecostals "take the book, the Bible, at face value. They believe it. They believe that it is the Word of God. They believe that the

power, the miracles, the signs, and the wonders that they read about in the Bible are operative and applicable today … they believe in prayer, and they believe that prayer can do whatever God can do. And since there is nothing impossible with God, they actually believe that with prayer you can do everything – moving mountains, healing sicknesses, raising the dead – they go to prayer meetings expecting things to happen."[21] It is this, using Peterson's words, "lived conviction" that the works and acts of God contained in the biblical witness can be experienced by anyone at anytime – the permeability of the here and now by the power of God – that resides at the core of the Pentecostal experience. "For Pentecostals," Keith Warrington writes, "revelation is not just intended to affect the mind but also the emotions; theology is not explored best in a rationalistic context alone but also with a readiness to encounter the divine and be impacted by one's discoveries in a way that will enlighten the mind but also transform the life."[22]

A number of scholars have described this Pentecostal conviction in a variety of ways. Grant Wacker has called it "primitivism" or Pentecostalism's "primitivist impulse"[23] denoting Pentecostals' "longing for direct contact with the divine" and their desire to live "solely in the realm of the supernatural, with the Holy Spirit guiding every aspect of their lives."[24] Margaret Poloma identifies this conviction as a "worldview," or (borrowing the term from Steven Land and Daniel Albrecht),[25] a "core spirituality," which she defines as "a curious blend of premodern miracles, modern technology, and postmodern mysticism in which the natural merges with the supernatural."[26] This worldview or core spirituality, she continues, rejects "a Cartesian dualism that separates body from spirit" and results in a spirituality in which "supernatural phenomena are regarded to be a 'natural' experience" and "[s]igns and wonders analogous to those described in the premodern biblical accounts are expected as normal occurrences in the lives of believers."[27] Douglas Jacobsen deftly summarizes this underlying Pentecostal conviction when he writes that, "In contrast to other groups or churches that emphasize either doctrine or moral practice, pentecostals stress affectivity. It is the *experience* of God that matters – the felt power of the Spirit in the world, in the Church, and in one's own life. Pentecostals believe that doctrine and ethics are

important, but the bedrock of pentecostal faith is experiential. It is living faith in a living God – a God who can miraculously, palpably intervene in the world – that defines the pentecostal orientation of faith."[28]

These scholarly explanations provide a certain amount of help when attempting to describe the Pentecostal conviction in divine immanence that stands at the center of the Pentecostal experience. The historian Martin Marty, however, is correct to remark that the fullest understanding of Pentecostalism cannot be achieved by reading books, but only through experiencing it for oneself, by "being there."[29] Keith Warrington has similarly observed that "to understand Pentecostalism, it is a significant advantage to be a Pentecostal."[30] The best that I can do here in order to give the reader a glimpse of what it is like to be immersed in the Pentecostal experience, or what it is like to be a Pentecostal, is to share a story of God's immanent intervention in the world told to me by a Pentecostal. Stories such as these help to put some flesh on the scholarly skeleton that struggles to describe what the Pentecostal conviction in divine immanence actually looks like.

The following story was told to me by Sam Welten, the Executive Director of Possibilities International, an international humanitarian aid organization. A number of years ago he brought a group of North Americans, many of whom were Pentecostals, to deliver medical aid at an orphanage in the Central Asian country of Uzbekistan. The group had brought what they believed was enough medication in order to treat all of the children at the orphanage. Soon after they arrived, however, they realized that there were far more children than they had anticipated that required a dose of a specific medication. "I remember," Sam told me, "one of the nurses saying to me, 'I don't know what we are going to do, but a lot of the kids that we are seeing require this one medication and I don't think that we have enough. It's going to run out. We've only got enough to treat another three or four kids and we've got to see another sixty kids.' I remember saying to her," Sam explained, "'Don't worry about it. Just do the best that you can and that's all that we can do.' At about 10:30 or 11:00 the next morning while I was working on a project outside of the orphanage, she came running across the yard and grabbed me by both shoulders. She said, 'You'll never believe what has happened. That medication that I was

telling you about, it's multiplying in the cupboard!'"

Sam initially thought that the nurse simply meant that more medication had been found. But the nurse, he recounted, "Shook me and said, 'No. You're not listening to me. That medication should have been gone an hour ago and every time I go back to the cupboard there is more. I'm asking people if they've found more medication and they say that they haven't. It's multiplying in the cupboard.'" Sam told me that he would never forget that day as long as he lived. "It was crazy. We had enough medication to treat every one of those kids. To this very day she has no idea where that medication came from. She told me, 'I was the one responsible for packing the medication and I asked if someone else had brought more with them. No one knew what I was talking about.' She said that they started that day with four or five packages. It took her three or four trips to where the medicine was stored in order to realize, 'Hold on a second, I keep taking one of these and when I go back, there are still four or five there.' She told me later that she just got to the point where she admitted that this was going to sound crazy, but she expected that the medicine would be there. God worked a miracle for those kids that day."

This story is just one example of hundreds that Pentecostals have shared with me about how they believe that God has reversed the order of the natural world in order to demonstrate his presence and to help those in need. This particular story contains obvious biblical correlates with the miracles of the widow whom the prophet Elijah promised her jar of meal and jar of oil would not go empty, the prophet Elisha who fed a hundred hungry people with just twenty loaves and ears of grain, and Jesus' miracles of feeding the 5,000 and the 4,000 found in the Gospels.[31] Pentecostals believe that through faith they can encounter the same God described in the pages of the Bible, and that this God is willing and able to miraculously intervene in the world in order to make the seemingly impossible, possible. Keith Warrington is correct when he writes that "Pentecostals do not simply affirm a list of biblical beliefs; they have encountered them experientially."[32] It is not beliefs and practices such as the baptism of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, divine healing, or prophecy, but, rather, the lived conviction in the immanent activity of God in the world, which under girds all other aspects, and forms the heart, of

the Pentecostal experience. The Pentecostal way is perhaps best described as living life everyday expecting to meet God.

Endnotes

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[2] For a good example of the characterization of Pentecostalism as demonic see, Alma White, *Demons and Tongues* (Zarephath: Pillar of Fire, 1910). For one of the best assessments of Pentecostalism in relation to eugenics theory see, George Barton Cutten, *Speaking with Tongues, Historically and Psychologically Considered* (New York: Yale University Press, 1927). For the most important attempt to explain Pentecostalism according to socioeconomic deprivation see, Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). For a more detailed discussion of these and other works see, Sean McCloud, *Divine Hierarchies: Class in American Religion and Religious Studies* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 90-97.

[3] J. L. Sherrill, *They Speak with Other Tongues* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1964); H. J. Stolee, *Speaking in Tongues* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1963).

[4] Estrelda Y. Alexander, *Black Fire: One Hundred Years of African American Pentecostalism* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2011); Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987).

[5] Allan Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, eds. Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelius van der Laan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 15.

[6] Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 10; and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "Introduction: Pentecostalism and Pentecostal Theology in the Third Millennium: Taking Stock of the Contemporary Global Situation," in *The Spirit in the World: Emerging Pentecostal Theologies in Global Context,* ed. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), xvi; 224-225. and Michael Wilkinson, *The Spirit Said Go: Pentecostal Immigrants in Canada* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 30.

[7] Anderson, "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions," 16-20; Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas, "Introduction," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Revised and Expanded Edition, eds. Stanley M. Burgess and

Eduard M. van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), xvii-xxiii; Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 1; Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 25-31; Adam Stewart, "A Brief Introduction," in *A Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Adam Stewart (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012).

[8] Walter J. Hollenweger, "Pentecostalism's Global Language," *Christian History*, 58 (1998): 1, accessed June 28, 2011, www.christianitytoday.com/ch/1998/issue58/58h042.html.

[9] Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

[10] Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 250; Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments,* eds. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 44-47.

[11] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), 113.

[12] Ibid., 115-116, emphasis original.

[13] Ibid., 121. See also, Bernard J. Bamberger, *Fallen Angels: Soldiers of Satan's Realm* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1952).

[14] Ibid., 111-113.

[15] The *Apostolic Faith* was the periodical distributed by William J. Seymour, the influential African American leader of the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California. The revival lasted for approximately three years between 1906 and 1909 and played an incredibly important role in the development of early Pentecostal theology and ritual in addition to the dissemination of Pentecostalism around the United States and the rest of the world. See, Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006); Adam Stewart, "Azusa Street Mission and Revival," in *A Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Adam Stewart (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012).

[16] *Apostolic Faith*, September 1906, 1.

[17] Interestingly the phrase "pie in the sky" originated from a song entitled, "The Preacher and the Slave" written as a parody of the gospel song, "In the Sweet Bye and Bye" by the Swedish-American labor activist Joe Hill (Joel Emmanuel Hägglund) in 1911. The song criticized Salvation Army and other preachers who attempted to convert migrant workers while ignoring their present material needs. The song's most famous lines read: "You will eat, bye and bye, In that glorious land above the sky; Work and pray, live on hay, You'll get pie in the sky when you die." The song also contains an obvious reference to Holiness and/or Pentecostal preachers which reads: "Holy Rollers and Jumpers come out And they holler, they jump and they shout Give your money to Jesus, they say, He will cure all diseases today." See, Edith Fowke and Joe Glazer, eds. *Songs of Work and Freedom* (Chicago: Roosevelt University Press, 1960).

[18] Karl Marx, "Towards a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, ed. David McLellan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 72.

[19] Adam Stewart, "Re-Visioning the Disinherited: Pentecostals and Social Class in North America," in *A Liberating Spirit: Pentecostals and Social Action in North America*, eds. Michael Wilkinson and Steven M. Studebaker (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 136-157.

[20] Eugene H. Peterson, *The Pastor: A Memoir* (New York: HarperOne, 2011), 214.

[21] Donald E. Miller and Dan Leopard (Producers and Directors) *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

[22] Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 21.

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[24] Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 12.

[25] Daniel E. Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 28; Land, 23.

[26] Margaret M. Poloma, *Main Street Mystics: The Toronto Blessing and Reviving Pentecostalism* (Lanham: AltaMira Press, 2003), 21, 22.

[27] Ibid., 22.

[28] Douglas Jacobsen, "Introduction: The History and Significance of Early Pentecostal Theology," in *A Reader in Pentecostal Theology: Voices from the First Generation*, ed. Douglas Jacobsen (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 4, emphasis original.

[29] Martin E. Marty, foreword to *Signs and Wonders: Why Pentecostalism is the World's Fastest Growing Faith,* by Paul Alexander (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), x.

[30] Warrington, viii.

[31] 1 Kings 17.8-16; 2 Kings 4.42-44; Matthew 14.13-21, 15.32-39; Mark 6.31-44, 8.1-9; Luke 9.10-17; John 6.5-15.

[32] Warrington, 22.

Way of the Inner Compass: Life With & Within

Lauri Siirala

I am writing this in response. Responding is different from reacting. It comes from a deeper and more profound territory in the human instrument comprising of mysterious dimensions of body, psyche, energy, spirit and intelligence. All of these together and all what we are yet to know in addition add up to the raw material life uses to make itself conscious in the earthbodybeings that each one of us is. All life-forms react as ordered by a vast instinctual intelligence. Life forms in the process of becoming conscious begin to respond from a wider reservoir of unfolding creativity that on planet earth is perhaps best named as living, conscious love.

Love responds and is a response to that where intelligent love is needed for love's own purpose.

I am responding to the request from my oldest friend in Canada, a man I have known from the very first years after I moved to Canada in 1963. We have lived and loved in the same geography, the same sequence of seasons. We have done at times the same work, some of our children are born approximately at the same times. We have loved and lost and loved again; moved from there to here and connected at surprising locations and crossroads in different parts of the world. We have sailed the same seas figuratively and actually. We also age more or less in pace of each other towards the final mystery of dying into life.

We share partially a common ancestry in a far northern country of curious genetic and linguistic origin. And we each in our own way love the truth of life, of living life and life/death and of woman.

How could I but respond to this request; especially since my friend has been kind enough to offer editing my piece; knowing he has that gift and I not.

Needlepoints – needle points.

An amazing needle
a needle point
a needle that points
a point

pointing here
pointing there
pointing everywhere

moving to and fro
from pole to pole
and poles shift

north and south
and east and west
and southwest

and in and out
and out and in
and within
and without

where's the true north?
Where's the compass?

II. Come what may

Following the inner compass is a journey and a process leading to a consciousness that rests in a center that remains undisturbed come what may and whenever come what may comes.

Discovering, finding, calibrating and re-calibrating the inner compass is a life-time and life-long endeavour. For the true north in the geography of existence is often not quite the same as the true north of the inner unknown and unknowable landscape. In the outer world the signposts

appear to remain relatively unchanged, often for centuriess or millennia – in time. The inner landscape is quite something else. There, the bloodhound of truth and love and living life needs to remain ever vigilantly sniffing the tracks of the mystical and the magical reality of living life, making life conscious of itself through the consciousness of I who experience and am simultanously.

Fortunately every child is born with and within a sufficiently calibrated instrument for the purpose of life itself. Whether I as an individual find my way through the vagaries and pathways of existence to a well tuned and true living life in both my inner and outer circumstances remains to be seen in each individual's unfolding life story from birth to death and all in between and onwards towards the greater truth from there to here.

The outer compass sways between the changing poles of the four directions of the wind and air and in additon between the past and the future, never stopping in the eternal frame of now.

The inner compass is attuned at birth steadily within, while discovering the tricks and turns and pathways of the outer. It's a balanced movement at first and then, alas, increasingly conditioned to follow the examples of the outer, both the living and living dead.

Rilke in one of his poems describes life as a brief note between birth and death and that death's note tends to dominate.

The perception is true enough as I look at life in my 66th year. The melody of living life has followed its inevitable course towards death of the body. But how about life?

In following the course of Tao, the living and flowing river of life from being born into a body of form from the formless source of all life, I have entered also the living moment of presence, of pre-sense, of being formless living life while in form and time. Form dies into the formless from which living form rises again into time and circumstance.

III. Conscience, consciousness, con-science

Human beings have very different understandings of moving straight. When the engineers of the German army built roads in Lapland during WWII, they were straight as arrows from one point to the other.

When the Sami people move straight, they start from a point with the

aim of moving to another eventual location. When the journey begins, the steps lead to a landscape that is familiar, but full of potential. The aim of the journey may be to reach a location where their reindeer herd is expected to be.

After walking some distance, a river bank is reached, where the rains have brought an ample flow of fresh water. It indicates that some distance off, there may be a hollow where the river trout is gathered and available. So the steps lead there and for a pause to check it out.

This new location offers an easier, though longer walking route, and the feet follow that new knowledge. On the way, it appears cloudberries are ripe, and a little off the route there is a good swamp ready for picking. So the meandering journey goes straight in the new direction.

The herd has also moved on following the same straight logic, and the paths of the herders and the herd eventually cross at a location from which there is a straight line from where each started. They have each moved straight from here to there and there to here, each following their inner compasses directly to the right destination.

IV. Pain and pleasure.

Buddha in his time described existence as suffering. Right on; good-on-him. No question about the relative and limited insights psychologists, philosophers, poets among others, of the pendulum between pain and pleasure being quite real, though not the truth of the matter.

I've certainly experienced sufficiently in my 67th year to realize that suffering, pain, in itself hurts and that pleasure is a fleeting phenomenon, ephemeral as all in existence. Avoiding pain has a certain instinctual intelligence to it and seeking pleasure is as old as existence and has some added value to it – as potential to be something more then fleeting bliss.

But what about right suffering and intelligent pleasure? Is there perhaps an intelligence and a conscious potential in the process of avoiding and approaching? Is there a middle way, where the corrective intelligence of the inner compass allows me to move only to the halfway point and of withdrawing at the right halfway point; a rhythm like that of the breath, of receiving just enough until the reception transforms into the motion of giving and that, in turn, turns giving into receiving where the

giving is needed as a reception by someone or something, perhaps totally previously unknown to both parties.

For in truth there is a magnificent compass of the whole that calls for the totality of its participants to dance to an everchanging tune, a cosmic melody that is flowing in eternal harmony calling all parts to participate in the harmony of the whole. Some call this God. Why not, for all the wise men and women who have followed their own inner truth towards this mystery have in their own way sensed or heeded the namelessness, formlessness, genderlessness of this eternal and immortal something that is beyond description or definition, name or form.

And this something is in me and the me in you and in every piece of the energy we call matter. It is a potential to wake up and be and become more and more what I am already, have always been, will always be, eternally new and fresh and alive in the mystery of life, I am.

And no one can do the job for me; I am the way, the truth and the life and I have to walk the walk and talk the talk that leads me to this intimate relationship with my inner guiding compass, my inner lover and my inner love. In this existence I have to realize this also with the other, I in another form, time, and gender. To become whole I need the other, the whole, as much as the other needs me as well as the entire universal, cosmic whole that cannot be or do without my evolving consciousness, the intelligence of the whole that here on earth is expressed as love.

If I were to give each moment even half of what I am and what I have to someone having less then half of what he or she or it needs, would there not be more equilibrium, fleeting balance and balancing in the whole?

V. What compass do I follow?

Having discovered this incredibly intelligent instrument, I have be alert each moment, for there are so many other instruments on offer from all possible directions, including and especially the intimate others that life has guided me to be in an inner connection with. The peddlers of second rate instruments are numerous and clever, and in my body/psyche/mind there are sufficient viruses, trojan horses and other malware programs that have passed into the collective psyche for generations. So the art of listening and looking, of right perception, needs to be practiced and re-

practiced again and again for the entire life span of this living instrument my body/psyche/mind is.

VI. Being in the picture frame of the ever-present now

The fact of now is the truth of now. And now is, now I am what I am and do what I do. Fact. Truth.

VII. Form and formless

I am simultaneously in and out of form, of matter. No matter what.

So what's this life and living all about? And how do I follow my inner compass to accommodate the constantly changing circumstances that need to include all the varieties of experience that compose the art work of living life?

Life of love/of joy/of right suffering/of creativity/of moving on
of making something/of creating
of going from place to place
of encountering/of letting go/of responding
of being/of communicating/of communing
of giving/of taking/of finding out/of giving up/of giving in/of being present/of being presence
of getting stuck/of being freed/of grace/of sense and non sense/of connecting/of disconnecting
of being born
of being born again and again
of dying/of finding/of getting lost/of pleasure/of pain/of work/of no work
of need/of being needed/of service.

VIII. Discovery and re-discovery.

When I was born, I was discovered – and covered soon again. The psychic veil was removed as I entered existential form, and for a while I was seen as I am for all those with eyes to see, with the eyes of love that said a profound YES to the living life made visible by birth from the psyche to living form. The entry of new life in form is always a miracle to behold and to awaken

those present to a deeper love and intelligence of love and loving.

It has the potential of bringing forth a new covenant to love intelligently, passionatately and courageously in order to bring forth a more loving, more intelligent generation of life in living form. Life, evidently, is in no hurry; it brings forth generation after generation of new bodies to make this potential a reality, eventually.

So how did I get so fortunate that I rediscovered this inscrutable instrument, this inner compass that points to the true in me and the other, in the inner and the outer? I could call it a God compass as well, but more on that later.

I was born with the potential of a perfect instrument and in my days of innocence before being corrupted, as all who are born must be corrupted, was indeed guided instinctually by the yet to be realized consciousness from which I, as well as all other forms are born into existence.

The outer compass points to the geographical directions, the inner to the inner landscape of my present place on the midheaven of existence, of the inner psychic landscape of past homes and my deepest inner wells of pure being, of my way of entering existence and my way of relating to the others with whom I have sufficient inner connections.

IX. Pawnshops of existence.

Soon after birth, I as well as all others born into our current existential conditions, began the pawning of my inner potentially perfect compass to the various pawnshops of the world.

I pawned it to my parents, aunts and uncles. I pawned it to my siblings.

I pawned it to my teachers and my schools. I pawned it to church and religion.

I pawned it to my girlfriends. I pawned it to my wives. I pawned it to my children.

I pawned it to my career. I pawned it to my hopes and wishes.

I pawned it to my greeds and fears. I pawned it to the world of men.

I pawned it to boredom, to depression and hopelessness.

I pawned it to the fool's gold of imagination

Then one day I found I could not pawn it any more, for without my inner compass I am lost and foundering on the wonderful ocean of living

life, living love, of passion of adventure and discovery of the truth of life immortal and passionate love of life and woman.

Having found that, my journeys to the pawnshops became more frequent, in and out and in and out and then more infrequent; I could only march to the steps and then turn back, not even opening the door, for my lovely inner compass reminds me ever more quickly of miss-steps and miss-takes and miss-givings and misses.

The amazing thing is that I bear no grudge to any of the pawnshops. Quite the contrary, without them I would not have learned to value and to love the real thing. And the real compass also has this calling function: "please retrieve me, pay the price and recollect me, we belong to one another, we are not two." Again, I could say it's the God compass calling me back to unity with the whole.

Church religions are the most dangerous pawnshops in existence, yet as necessary as all the others. It's the whole calling its parts into union with the whole, for the whole is not whole without all its parts and the part is lost without unity with the whole.

And love is the unifying, common sense, sense of all senses, seen and unseen also of non-sense, of space which is sense without substance.

And the inner compass is a compass of love in all its mysterious dimensions – a compass between world of form and life without form.

As I grow older and near the end of physical existence, I also see the loving compass of death guiding form into the formless, finding the right path to the ending of the contract between I live and I living life in form and person. This part of the journey with the guidance of the inner compass is the latest and the final one in existence and thus still unknown and perhaps the trickiest to navigate.

X. Caveat emptor! Beware of the newest Trojan horses!

As many of the functions of the outer instrument begin to fail and deteriorate, the connection to the call of the inner compass becomes ever more important. The new pawnshops of the world are as dangerous and misleading as the previous ones, and with some faculties clearly getting lost, what chance has the inner compass with the clamour of the pawnshops

of aging cleverly marketed for an increasing audience of aging men and women? Cruise ships and travel packages, suctions and face/booblifts, bigger, thicker penises rising eternally to the Viagra god's promises, the geriatric care facilities, the drug companies, the life extension promises of healthfoods and nutritional supplements, the implants and pacemakers!

And yet … every visit to every pawnshop is a compulsory stop on the road to nowhere; that is, to here.

And every shopkeeper that I've ever pawned my inner compass to is also a zen master in disguise or at times one such right in the open. Every step taken is a compulsory step in going straight in the deeper same sense. I am a wanderer in the landscape of the unknown, the miraculously new as well as the same boring old paths and patterns.

This moment is a frame in the timeless through which I, who live in time and create time, must pass through and stop in to find my bearings to go on and in.

Each connection, each step, is a compulsory step in the unfolding choreography of life and consciousness. Each child, each wife, lover, friend, teacher, master, boss, neighbour and casual passerby offers an opportunity for something, in the moment and in some cases in the long standing, and imperatives of the often difficult and challenging karmic inner ties that are from beyond time and understanding.

XI. Seasonal variations

As the saying goes, for everything there is a season. And seasons differ in different parts of the globe and different seasons of life and different seasonings provided by the environment, inner and outer. Learning to recognize change of seasons and seasonings is an art in itself. The human mind gets stuck in so many yesterdays and so many patterns and tastes and preferences whose season has gone already and yet the change in season or seasoning is not yet recognized by the indubitable and ever-alert inner compass of common sense and sensibility.

XII. Balance and pressure

So what has this inscrutable instrument, this inner compass shown me so far? Everything I've seen and experienced and then some and more to

come; for my contract with the builder is not yet up and much updating and tuning is yet to be done, it seems.

I've learned to see that my inner compass leads me where I need to go, moment to moment, and when to depart or change direction. As long as I make no fuss and bother about even sudden changes of course, there is no problem, no wrong course or setting. Change is there at all times, the course changes with the wind direction and the price of fish in the marketplace, tempered and spiced with various pressures, inner and outer, including the famous fluttering of butterfly wings in China. The whole governs the part and the part influences the whole, inscrutably, inevitably and invisibly. The visible is always effect, not the cause.

And I, the invisible, immortal particle of the immeasurable whole, am the cause; I, the nameless, formless being beyond time, create the circumstances of my life through my inner compass that not only shows direction, but enables it to appear in changing form and circumstance, no matter how I fight and/or tremble in the midst of this all.

XIII. Recalibrating the inner compass

How does it happen? What have I done and discovered in doing so? It opens, unfolds, gets revealed through praxis, practise and reflection on several unfolding layers and levels during this life sentence and the eventual, inevitable pardon through death into immortal life. And always in the final analysis this all happens through love and grace from the unkown whole that some of us in our ignorance call God.

Do I calibrate the compass or does the compass calibrate me? The old chicken and egg syndrome …
Through the physical body:
Through the energybody:
Through the mind:
Through the feelings and emotions:
Through the various layers of the psyche:
Through the spirit:
Through the unknown and unknowable.

And then back into the physical body until death us do part.

And then there are approximate charts to the unknown waters of life. There are the hundreds of sacred texts and paintings, there is art and poetry, there is astrology and astronomy, there are the various sciences, there is the *Tarot* and the *I Ching*, the *Runes* and the eneagrams and palm readers and the sooth sayers, the shadow readers and the shamans – take your pick and *caveat emptor*. The signs are many and the trails innumerable, and each traveler must in the end discard all but the inner compass that leads into the pathless path and towards that something that cannot be named or described but is the all of all.

And it is all contained in the frameless frame of this eternal and immortal moment of now, in the body writing and reading these very words:

knowing you have a centre that remains essentially undisturbed.

Coda: A dream in progress

I am about 4 years old. We've just moved for perhaps the 6th or 7th time in my still brief journey in existence. The journey began as a war refugee towards the last days of WW II from a town that would end up on the wrong side of the border, looking at it from my family's vantage point.

We've just returned from a second period in another country and are waiting for our first "own home" to be renovated sufficiently to take us in. Our family of five occupies the study of another family; a large one room with windows to the lake.

It is winter. I wake up to a nightmare that will recur for years. I am chased by a pack of wolves on the lake ice; they are gaining on me. I cannot escape. I wake up crying.

In our new home my father checks under the bed every night with a flashlight to make sure the wolf is not there, just one wolf that is after me night after night.

Of course there is no wolf when the light shines under the bed, but what about when the dark comes? Then comes the wolf and it is determined to find me.

This nightmare eventually fades away to be replaced by others. A snowball that gathers speed and size and I am caught inside it until it

crashes and explodes and I wake up.

Many years later I am driving the coast of California toward Vancouver and have a dream of driving the same curvy road with a motorcycle, my older sister sitting behind me. I drive faster and faster until one curve I cannot negotiate and fly with the motorcycle a good distance over the cliff and watch a white beach beneath. I let go of the handlebars and begin to float down gently. I call my sister to let go as well and she does. We both float gently to the beautiful, white beach.

Some years later I have returned to my native Finland and am spending some time alone at our family's old estate very close to the border and the town from which our family was evacuated at the end of the war.

It is a warm June day and I fall asleep in the pinewoods, on a soft mossy ground. All of a sudden I become aware that a wolf is sleeping on my belly, a she wolf. She feels so good and vital and sinks inside my belly. I become instantly conscious of her being the same she wolf that chased me on the ice, who slept under my bed – to look after me, to guard my journey and bring me home. I am at peace and blessed to be looked after and loved by the female. She has found me and will never leave me as long as I live.

And love.

Way of Personality Types

Christopher Ross

When we draw near to ourselves, it is hard to shake the idea that we are *the original.* "This is me" we say, and we are reflexively distrustful of personality systems and typologies that would seem to shrink our sense of ourselves as one of a kind, as unique. We are familiar to ourselves. If we dig beneath our modesty, we may hear ourselves add "… and this is normal." Furthermore, somewhere in the recesses of our personality we assume that other people are psychologically like us. And so not only do we tend to privilege our needs over others but also tend to see ourselves as the norm, with other people as less successful versions of *our* humanity. However, at some point in our spiritual journeys we need to confront the subtleties of our narcissism.

The challenge to transform our natural preference for favouring ourselves into concern for others in their uniqueness is expressed in most world religious traditions in a form of the Golden Rule, the encouragement to "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," as enjoined by Jesus, or by Buddha's "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." One hundred years of research in the psychology of individual differences, or personality psychology, confirms the worst fears of our narcissism: not only are the majority of people not like us, but there is indeed a minority of other humans who are quite like us.

The journey from division and aloneness to wholeness and community is one way to describe the course of personal development. Carl Jung (1875 – 1960), Swiss psychiatrist and early collaborator with Freud, captures this aspect of human development through his concept of individuation. Jung chose the term individuation to describe the processes of psychological *and* spiritual growth into wholeness, which for him went hand in hand. In Jung's view, being an *in*dividual was a process of becoming "*un*divided." Jung's "Analytical Psychology" is based on the assumption that a dynamic and valuable tension exists between opposites that form part of the human

psyche. The most basic polarity in his depth psychology is that between conscious and unconscious.

Jung thought the most accessible aspect of our unconscious to be the sets of opposites that were the foundation to his personality typology articulated in *Psychological Types*: energetic focus (extraverted or introverted), way of perceiving (sensing or intuitive), way of judging or deciding (thinking or feeling), and outside interface (perceiving or judging). Understanding his personality typology is a good starting place for our journey toward individuation. Jung describes *eight* associated but different ways of being conscious in order to correct our personal bias of considering others as merely less successful versions of ourselves.

Jung's approach to psychological life undergirds the world's most frequently used personality instrument,[1] the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI [1980]) pioneered by Isabel Briggs Myers and her mother Katherine Myers, which in turn is compatible with the most scientifically validated personality measure – the NEO-PI based on the Five Factor Theory of Personality.[2] My presentation of their approach to individuation through personality typology follows that of Jungian analyst John Beebe who emphases familiarity with all eight as ways of orienting human consciousness.[3]

Jung considered that there were four key cognitive processes that he called functions, each of which may be directed in an introverted or extraverted direction depending on whether we are energized from the outside world (extraversion [E]) or our inside world (introversion [I]). Each of us possesses two contrasting perceiving functions – sensing (S) and intuition (N) – and two contrasting ordering or judging functions – feeling (F) and thinking (T) – for organizing our perceptions and making decisions. The sensing function gathers information by focusing on specific details, whereas the intuitive function orients to patterns and cognizes 'wholes.' Thinking and feeling are contrasting – yet complimentary – ways of judging and ordering the information we gather through our perceiving processes. Thinking orders information through detached logical analysis with attention to consistency. Feeling orders on the basis of values – what matters – with special attention to human need.

While each of the four cognitive processes of consciousness – sensing, intuition, feeling and thinking – can be differentiated for the purpose of measurement, as with the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, in practice each operates in an extraverted or introverted direction in any given moment. Individuals therefore have the capacity to orient their consciousness in eight ways: through extraverted sensing (Se), introverted sensing (Si), extraverted intuition (Ne), introverted intuition (Ni), extraverted thinking (Te), and introverted thinking (Ti), extraverted feeling (Fe), and introverted feeling (Fi).

These processes of consciousness will be considered in the above order, describing (1) the operation of each mental process in general terms, (2) the means of recognizing each in ourselves and others, and finally (3) a list of features that can increase our awareness of the play of each process in our lives, with the view to bringing the less preferred and therefore less developed processes more fully into our everyday lives and thereby increasing our resources for coping with life's challenges and opportunities.

Extraverted Sensing (Se)

Extraverted sensing connects us to the physical world that surrounds us, and enables us to delight in the sights, sounds, smells, tastes and textures of the five senses. Se provides a direct pleasure and satisfaction that cannot be derived from "reading instructions, taking a course, or considering the ramification of our actions.[4] This is the gift of Se to us all: sometimes it is the direct experience of life that counts in all its delights and raw physicality. Jungian type educator Lenore Thomson states, "Every time our actions are changing immediately and directly in concert with our surface perceptions, we're drawing on Extraverted Sensation."[5]

Recognizing Se in Ourselves and Others

Se is (1) an information gathering or perceiving process (2) focused on the current, objective external world in order to (3) fully experience the rich details of the environment through the five senses, (4) drawing "energy and enjoyment directly from people, objects and events."[6]

We can become more aware of Se in our lives by reference to these key features:

- Delight in the physical senses
- Orienting to the present
- Detailed pleasurable attention to the immediate
- Unfiltered experience
- Effortless attunement to the here and now
- Taking pleasure in action

To access extraverted sensing, recall a time of complete immersion in a physical experience: driving down a deserted road at dusk, or preparing bread to bake – adjusting the pressure of your hands in accord with the increasing firmness of the dough's texture, or attuning your caresses to the relaxing skin of your beloved.

Introverted Sensing (Si)

Introverted sensing is a process for gathering information that is focused on the subjective, internal world of an individual whereby current sensory experience is compared to similar past experiences by reference to a database of selectively stored but vividly detailed memories.[7] A subjective factor is at the core of Si. Thompson states, "Only some things strike us as important, useful, familiar, or exciting enough to convert into mental content – that is, into facts that we retain over time."[8] Jung himself used the example of several painters who paint the same garden but produce a different picture.[9]

Recognising Si in Ourselves and Others

Whereas Se is the realist painter, Si is the impressionist painter "faithfully rendering … the *impression* made by the object on the subject."[10] Nevertheless, Si dominant persons would probably insist that they *were* providing a completely factual, that is, objective version of events. This may account for heated disputes concerning the facts between people

who rely exclusively on Si to perceive 'What *really* happened?'

When Si is operating in us, because of the specifics we are noticing in the present, we are drawn to relive the past. Through that same means, and with a view to determining 'What is different? What is the same? What can be improved?' we unconsciously but selectively explore the impact and significance of current events, people, and experiences. Through Si we learn from past mistakes. By the same token, Si provides stability by anchoring the impression of the external object in the familiar field of previous impressions and making comparisons. Isabel Briggs Myers was married to Chuck Myers with dominant Si and said that such types "base their ideas on a deep, solid accumulation of stored impressions."[11]

We can become more aware of the operations of Si in our own life and that of others by reference to these key phrases:

- accessing a detailed array of stored facts,
- unconsciously using a subjective internal filter
- selecting present impressions that resemble past impressions
- experiential recall – reliving events viscerally through an emotion filled re-play of past events

In order to access Si, recall a time when you were able to sort through a mass of detailed information, partly because your memory of handling similar information on a previous occasion made the task more familiar.

Extraverted Intuition (Ne)

Extraverted intuition is a perceiving process focused on the outside world that grasps "sensory data as a pattern of changing relationships,"[12] seeking out new possibilities with "a nose for anything new and in the making."[13] Ne draws a line between the dots and gets excited about them, striving "to apprehend the widest range of possibilities inherent in the object."[14] Driven to build possibilities, Ne orients to the future – to what is 'not yet' – conjuring up a future even before much is known about the present.[15] Ne sees the future-in-the-present external world and is energised by the possibilities in the future that are discerned

there.[16] Extraverted intuition excites and is excited by multiple projects.

Recognising Ne in Ourselves and Others

Through Ne, every fact is explored for the potential embedded in it. A series of associations are triggered by the external world, and new possibilities created. "For example, given enough elements to suggest a star … we have a hard time *not* filling in the blanks and seeing the complete image of the star." Yet "intuition can be dead wrong and still feel like knowledge."[17] To summarize, Ne is (1) an information gathering process (2) turned toward the external world, that (3) seeks out connections and relationships between the objects, people and events in the environment, with a view to (4) generating "real-world possibilities."[18]

We become more aware of the operations of Ne by referring to these key words and phrases:

A sense of scope

- Inspiring energy triggered from the outside
- Relationships, connections, possibilities, and opportunities
- Feeling excitement about the possibilities for change existing in the present
- Enthusiasm for new projects

To access Ne, recall a time when you found yourself in a familiar situation but saw new possibilities.

Introverted Intuition (Ni)

Introverted intuition is an inwardly turned information gathering process that "searches for grand patterns, themes, and systems in order to understand the meaning and significance of everything."[19] Ni orients to inner images that convey the backdrop of accumulated human experience and that, according to Jung, have gathered into archetypes laid down in what Jung called the collective unconscious, representing the distillation of intense experiences repeated since time immemorial,

> These images of the unconscious, [are] produced by the creative energy of life . . . [and] represent possible views of the world which may give life a new potential.[20]

Recognising Ni in Ourselves and Others

Experiences arising from Ni carry great conviction of their own truth, which sometimes give rise to accusations of arrogance from those who do not share the intuition. Ni brings an inner vision of what may be possible that transcends the present moment and puts present trials and triumphs in context.[21] In summary, Ni is (1) an information gathering process that (2) focuses on the subjective, internal world of the unconscious (3) seeking connections and relationships between the contents of the unconscious, in order to (4) discover underlying significance, systems and meaning.[22]

We can become more aware of the operations of Ni by reference to these key phrases, activities and experiences:

- Seeking meaning that underlies seemingly disparate facts
- Receiving insight and hunches
- Discerning underlying commonalities and patterns
- Reflecting and reframing
- Challenging convention
- Offering critiques.

In order to access Ni, recall a time, at whatever age, when you felt stuck, reflected even for a moment and then found a way through, or out of, your predicament. For example, you may have had plans for a day's outing with someone who had to cancel because of illness, but you were nonetheless able to re-envision the day.

Extraverted Thinking (Te)

Extraverted thinking is an externally oriented ordering or judging process that spontaneously organizes the external world in a logical

way, drawing on principles of consistency.[23] Te regulates our "external situation through the methodical application of critical analysis."[24] Te uses inductive logic. For example, we use Te when we examine a situation to determine "When 'this' happened, then 'that' resulted." Our Te then proceeds to formulate a contingency plan: "If I/we do 'this,' 'that' will happen again." Furthermore, if the "that" is regarded as a "good," we then designate a chosen goal. Eventually, the "If we do this" becomes transformed by our Te into an "ought," or even a "must" that carries an obligation and pressure to act.

Recognising Te in Ourselves and Others

Te develops relevant standards that guide decisions, fuelling a drive to structure and organize the external world through a common system of guiding rules. For Te, it is a matter of "responsibility, honor, and knowledge to keep faith with certain principles of order."[25] The most universal example is the law of reciprocity or Golden Rule expressed in most religions: "Do to others what you would like them to do to you." Furthermore, Te pushes for equality with regard to basic universal moral principles, for example, equal treatment before the law. Extraverted thinking is more concerned with maintaining *systems* that effectively take care of people, whereas feeling/ judging processes focus upon direct one-on-one care.

In summary, Te is (1) a decision making process (2) directed toward the external world, that seeks (3) to institute systems of organization in order to (4) assign information within an appropriate system, through (5) a process of comparison based on objective criteria.[26]

We become more aware of the play of Te in our own life and that of others by attention to these activities:

- Applying practical logic
- Detecting causes and effects
- Asking 'What's the most relevant guiding principle here?'
- Creating structures and programs to get things done

- Concern for objectivity and 'equal treatment.'

In order to access Te, recall a time when you developed a plan to reach a cherished goal, for example saving money for a longed for vacation on different continent.

Introverted Thinking (Ti)

Introverted thinking is an internal logical ordering process that abstracts from a range of situations or experience, with a view to naming and defining their nature. Ti is concerned with standards of truth and delights in finding just the right word to fit a particular case. Ti pokes at things and asks "Is it really true?" This cognitive process orients to the network of logical relationships implicit in a situation and deduces from these networks principles which form the foundation of an analytic framework. Myers describes Ti as "primarily interested in the underlying principles." These principles in turn organise concepts and ideas when paired with auxiliary intuition, or organise facts when paired with sensing. Ti's mode of operating is analytical, detached and impersonal: "Introverted thinkers use their thinking to analyze the world, not to run it."[27]

A subjective element is at work in the operations of Ti, though this may be disavowed. "Introverted thinking is primarily oriented by the subjective factor…. [It] begins with the subject and leads back to the subject, far though it may range into the realm of actual reality." It formulates questions and creates theories, it opens new prospects and insights, but with regard to the facts its attitude is one of.[28] Beebe amplifies this subjective aspect of Ti: "Introverted thinking has to reflect on whether a particular construction really accords with the conviction of inner truth, regardless of what the received opinion might be."[29]

Recognising Ti in Ourselves and Others

Ti has these characteristics: it is (1) a decision making process, (2) focussed on the subjective, internal world of precisely intersecting underlying principles and truths, that (3) creates original categories and systems, (4) assigning all information to a place within an appropriate

framework (5) based upon logical analysis.[30] Key phrases for the recognition of the operation of Ti in our own psychological life are:

- Asking: 'What's going on here?
- Using logic in a precise way
- Discerning underlying structure and principles
- Establishing internal frameworks
- Engaging in successive categorisation
- Monitoring for consistency between values

In order to access Ti, reflect on how many ways you might be able to classify a range of different objects you found in your basement that did not seem at first glance to have anything in common.

Extraverted Feeling (Fe)

Extraverted feeling automatically adjusts us to the social situation.[31] Like Te, it is a rational or ordering mental process oriented to the external world, that seeks to organise whatever is perceived.[32] Whereas Te proceeds on the basis of detached cause-effect analysis, the priority of Fe is making judgments and determinations in *harmony* with "generally accepted values"[33] and on the basis of the promotion of human relatedness.[34] Fe actively "seeks to connect with the feelings of others"[35] and "value[s], above all, harmonious human contacts," and is invaluable "in situations where needed co-operation can be won by good will."[36]

Fe plays an important part in all our lives. It connects us warmly to those we love. Fe warns us – through the chill of indifference from others or within ourselves – of breakdowns in communication. Moreover, we make decisions based on our sense of relatedness to a person or group – as family, friend, co-worker. Indeed without Fe, "a 'civilised' social life would be virtually impossible."[37] Jung claimed, "This kind of feeling is very largely responsible for the fact that so many people flock to the theatre or concerts, or go to church, and do so with their feelings appropriately

adjusted," especially in relation to those of other people.[38] Not surprisingly, a high proportion of those who affiliate with a religious group have Fe as a dominant or auxiliary function, forty three per cent of Evangelical Protestants,[39] thirty six per cent of Canadian Anglicans,[40] thirty five per cent of Catholics.[41] Organised religion then is arguably very much an extraverted feeling institution where emphasis is placed on harmony and relationship.

Recognising Fe in Ourselves and Others

Fe has these characteristics: it is a (1) decision making process, (2) focussed on the objective external world, that (3) creates and draws upon systems of cultural values in which (4) everything is assigned an appropriate place (5) on a qualitative, relational basis, so that (6) choices can be made and actions initiated that optimise harmony with the outer world.[42] We can more readily recognise the operations of Fe in our own life and that of others by reference to these key phrases:

- Concern for harmonious human contact
- Caring for the needs of others
- Honouring values promoting human welfare
- Naturally appreciating or wanting to appreciate
- Organising and making decisions based on a sense relatedness

In order to access Te, recall a time when you went with your heart: you made a decision primarily out of concern for harmony with other people, even though your actions may have been perceived as inconsistent with what appeared to be the objective situation.

Introverted Feeling (Fi)

Introverted feeling is an inwardly directed process of judging that orders incoming information according to our inner values and makes decisions accordingly. Fi cherishes *inner* harmony above all else, and adapts the outer world to optimise congruence between inwardly inspired ideals. Relationships, work and other activities are required

to foster what "really matters." Fi is the most subjective of the four decision-making processes, and the only one of the eight mental processes with the non-negotiable element of complete loyalty to inner values. The resultant inner certainty is foundational to a human life, supplying it with "direction, power and purpose."[43] Beliefs held by Fi are personal and uninfluenced by established value systems of the culture.

Jung thought that introverted feeling types were hard to read because "so little appears on the surface."[44] "Still waters run deep" captures the hidden warmth that forms the core of Fi.[45] Isabel Briggs Myers regarded herself as an introverted feeling type and stated, "[They] have a wealth of warmth and enthusiasm" which "may not show until they know someone well." Those with dominant Fi wear "their warmth on the inside, like a fur-lined coat." "Reliance on feeling leads them to judge everything by personal values." Knowing what is most important to them, "they protect it at all costs."[46]

Recognising Fi in Ourselves and Others

Fi is (1) a decision making process, (2) focussed on the subjective internal world of absolute personal value systems, that (3) assesses all things based upon whether they uphold these values, conflict with them, or have no impact, in order to (4) create and maintain inner harmony, and to be true to themselves.[47]

These key phrases may increase our awareness of the operation of Fi in our own life in the lives of those we care about:

- In touch with a quiet inner warmth
- Experiencing inner peace and harmony with core values, integrity
- Feeling authentic matters above all else in the moment
- Feeling a deep internal moral clarity
- Intensely aware, sensitized, and attuned
- Feeling quietly inspired, passionate

In order to access Fi, recall a time when you felt driven to take a stand even though there was little chance of success, for example at a decision-making meeting at work or in a community group where yours was a minority opinion.

Applying the processes to your own personality

A closer reading of the eight processes may enable you to determine which is the dominant process is in your psychological life, the one that plays the largest role in shaping your personality type. The dominant process is your "heroic" process that you rely on moment by moment to cope with life's demands. Which of these eight processes do you resort to most frequently?

After determining your dominant process, identify your second most developed process – what Jung called the auxiliary function which helps the dominant by offering some diversity to your personality. For example, if your dominant process is extraverted, your second process most likely will be an introverted process. Furthermore, if your dominant process is a form of judging, either thinking or feeling, then your second or auxiliary process will be a perceiving process – either intuition or sensing.

Upon re-reading descriptions of the eight processes, select one or two to explore more thoroughly as candidates for your auxiliary process. Our second strongest process is used to nurture others, according to John Beebe. The six less preferred and less often used processes are less under our conscious control, but equally important in how they affect our lives.

To illustrate, let us see how each process plays a part in a single work day. In the course of a day, we have the opportunity to draw on each of the eight cognitive processes in Jung's typology of personality:

> When we awake, we relish the red-orbed sunrise while smelling the coffee (extraverted sensing [Se]). We feel a harmonic connection to the friend or family member who started the coffee maker and put our favorite mug beside it, and we say "Thank you" as they make their way to the shower (extraverted feeling [Fe]). We take out our day planner as see what we have organised for ourselves (extraverted thinking [Te]). We groan when we note no new overarching vision to the back-to-back

> activities of the next fourteen hours. (Our introverted intuition [Ne] is not happy!) We are rescued from our misery by an unexpected telephone call from a friend not seen for three years who has a stopover at the airport less than forty minutes away. We re-organise our morning and have a new schedule for the day (extraverted intuition [Ne]): there are new possibilities. Over breakfast with our friend Chris, we share our new article. She points out some inconsistencies in our argument and suggests an alternative (introverted thinking) that nails the points we really want to make. Chris also rectifies some factual errors, thanks to her introverted sensing, which she tactfully addresses with the help of her sensitive extraverted feeling. Driving now to the office later than usual, we feel satisfied (introverted feeling [Fi]) – a friendship renewed and real progress on a cherished project that is nearer completion. It is only ten fifteen in the morning (extraverted thinking in combination with introverted sensing).

In conclusion, the more conscious we become of all eight cognitive processes at play in our psychological life – no matter what their relative strength within us – the more flexible, richer, and deeper will become our life. Our relationships with intimates and seeming strangers will improve, since we will be more accepting of these 'others' because we have become more familiar with the various processes within ourselves. This is the way of personality type, and the way to wholeness and community: inward and outward connection.

Endnotes

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Way of Nonduality and Psychology

Rob Menning McRae

I can remember clearly one night talking about my undergraduate thesis with my advisor at the time, Dr. Darrol Bryant.

He had said to me, "Rob, you are describing nondualism, but is it a philosophy or a perspective or a religion or a path of realization or the Real or what? Which is it? Because if you can't tell the reader what it is, you are not going to be able to talk about what it has to do with psychology."

Good point, Darrol. Very good point. And never mind the reader – what about explaining this to my self? I was trying to integrate what felt like two divergent fields: nonduality and psychology, and I was not finding their meeting point.

But perhaps first I should take a step back and tell you why I would even want to. Nonduality is a truly fascinating subject; it is the closest thing this planet has to a cross-cultural, multi-faith, and universal expression of the divine. In most Eastern religious traditions, it is the very core of the spiritual teaching. This is the case in Taoism, Zen Buddhism and the Hindu Vedanta. But nonduality is also at the core of the mystic traditions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism.[1] But the relevance of nonduality is not limited to the spiritual traditions. In the West, the growing field of Transpersonal Psychology has acknowledged the nondual as our best expression of that which is the ground of all being – the divine source from which we come, and the highest peak of consciousness to which we aspire.[2]

Dr. Bryant helped clarify my paper because he showed me that if I were to write about nonduality and psychology as separate entities, by themselves, there would be no cohesion to the paper. Moreover, I realized that if I could describe nondualism through the lens of psychology, and vice versa, both my project, and my understanding and embodiment of it,

would improve immensely. I came to see that nonduality and transpersonal psychology are both part of the same stream in our growth and personal awakening. It does not make sense to talk about nonduality as *just* a philosophy from the East, or *just* a religious practice. It is by definition the field upon which all other motions of life take place. Likewise, the psychology of growth loses depth and potential if we do not consider that it occurs in a nondual context.

Because nonduality represents a shared vision of the highest state of being across such vastly different traditions, it clearly deserves our respect and appreciation. For if this is true, this is no small thing. If what we are doing on this planet is heading in any upward direction of evolution – spiritually speaking – we must seriously consider the nondual as the very structure upon which we climb. In the next pages, we are going to be introduced to secular nonduality, and its role in transpersonal psychology. Then, we may see that it is integral to and inseparable from our discussion and our work of healing and growth.

Nonduality is about the powerful simplicity of unity. When we talk about nonduality, we are not just talking about connectedness between things; we are talking about a deeper order of reality than what we normally perceive – a reality where things are actually of one essence. We don't need to name this essence (though we do) or make it heavy with religious or philosophical concepts (though we have). It is hard to describe because it is more of an experience than an idea. For many of us, we can come closest to relating to a sense of nonduality when we remember the feeling space of those rare moments in life where we may have experienced a softening of our outer shell and a merging with the world around us - perhaps a still and silent moment in nature, the perfect unity of a loving embrace, or a transcendental insight in meditation or prayer. All these things point to a reduction in the projection of our separate selves and a touch of the eternal that lives somewhere beneath our surface.

When an individual experiences nonduality, there is a joining and therefore a healing in some way. It is like taking a drink from the well of our source. The complete and permanent experience of nonduality by a person is what is called enlightenment or self-realization. It is a resting in that source. It is the space experienced by mystics from time immemorial,

where subject and object unite, time and space become meaningless, and life dissolves into an awareness and experience of the divine impersonal Self – which remains as all that is. And though this may be what our spiritual traditions point to as an ultimate goal, any person can take a dip in this source – wherever they might be in their path. And inevitably, this will be a healing experience. Specifically, as the word nonduality indicates, reality is not two. It is not multiplicity. It is the primal reality that remains when all distinctions have been transcended. Nonduality is the divine ground of being that is left when you take every other idea away. It is beyond all conceptualizations. It is *a priori* to the body and the mind.

The classic example that has been given to explain nonduality in the Hindu tradition is the 'rope and snake' analogy. Traditionally, the example goes something like this: you see a snake in front of your path, and you stop out of fear. At some point, your vision clarifies and you realize that the snake is in fact just a length of rope. Then, you laugh at your previous fear which came from your ignorance of the true nature of the object in front of you. Now that you see reality, you can joyfully advance and never again will you be able to look at this rope and believe that it is a snake – your perspective has permanently been altered by your new wisdom.

In this analogy, the snake is our common perception of the world. It is the universe of appearances that most of us wake up to every day. We have fear in this world because we believe that this common perception is real. From this springs *all* of our suffering – from the slightest anxiety to the deepest neurosis. However, at some point we may recognize that the world as we had all previously known it – the 'consensus reality' of appearance and form is nothing more than an illusion: it does not exist except in our mind. We can now see what truly is: one essence that is the real nature of all things. Our fear is gone forever, and with it our suffering.

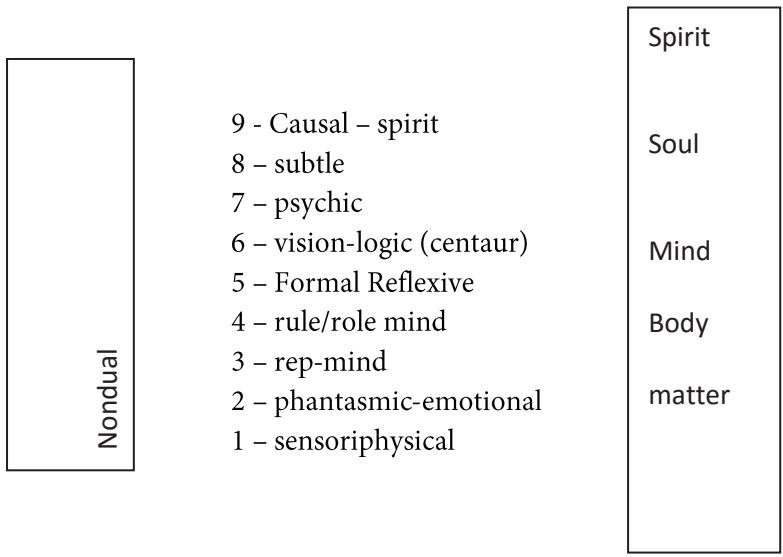
As far as the nondual traditions are concerned, this little story sums up the entire process of our learning and the only point of life – the apperception of reality. In the Western tradition of healing we too seek out the perception of reality. We constantly seek to strip away illusions of projection, unnecessary defence mechanisms, and the veils of past trauma that prevent us from experiencing life to its fullest. And as the field of psychology has grown over the last century, we have peeled away more

and more layers of limitation from the self, revealing a richer core than we had initially imagined. Increasingly, we are recognizing that the goal is not just normalcy and social integration, but excellence and the achievement of our potential. As we continue to strip away illusions, we are coming to see the nondual as the landmark of the deepest self, and we are starting to tap its potential for healing both the mind and soul.

Transpersonal psychology, particularly as expressed by this field's main proponent, Ken Wilber, sees life as an evolution from lower to more advanced degrees of consciousness. And even if we are not convinced of Darwinian, biological evolution in the traditional sense, it is clear at least that consciousness evolves – whether in the course of a lifetime (as per developmental stages) or humanity over the course of history (a movement towards more unified and expansive states of being).

In this illustration[3]

The Evolution of consciousness



From Wilber, p. 127, 1996

Note that the evolution is expressed as this motion towards spirit, and that the nondual is expressed as the space in which everything has occurred. "Strictly speaking," writes Wilber, nondualism is "not one level among others, but the reality, condition or suchness of all levels."[4] Because of this ubiquity of the nondual, it acts as a universal reference point for healing and psychological growth.

The integration of Eastern religious philosophies with Western psychology over the past century has been matched by a desire for greater consciousness in the individuals attending therapy. The "profession of psychology seems poised to implement a new paradigm"[5] towards wholeness of person, overlap of theory and the inclusion of the spiritual realm. In light of this trend, nondualism provides an ideal philosophical basis to healing because it solves the basic problem of human suffering: separation.[6] The therapy that does not do this, we must admit, fails in dealing with either the wounded self or the ascending soul. The nondual, which unites the ascending and descending directions of our spirituality[7] must be included in our expanding psychotherapeutic context, since we have found no other secular ideal that can fill that role. For many years Western psychology has omitted the soul from its perspective of the whole person. And while this distinction from religion and theism has been crucial, it has meant throwing out the baby with the bathwater – the human was reduced to its parts. However, by including nonduality into the framework of therapy, we may keep God and religion out of the equation while still recognizing that movements toward non-physical unity have a healing effect.

As this occurs, and psychology in both its theory and practice merges more and more with spirituality, the synthesis of East and West becomes fluid and real. 'Nondual therapy' is becoming a growing practice, and attempts are being made to find ways to acknowledge the nondual in the therapeutic practice. Because the nondual is essentially a space in which all other experience arises, it is available to a person approaching it from any level. It does not, and in fact, should not be named. It is not a single technique, nor is it limited to certain special scenarios or persons. The therapist with a nondual approach simply opens to the transcendent unity that is present in the relationship with the client, and allows that unity to

draw the meeting past other mental constructions.[8] Therapy is largely a mirroring, and when the therapist holds a space that moves beyond ego and its problems, the client is drawn naturally along with it. Crucially, as Wilber notes, "you can have a nondual state experience at virtually any stage."[9] The result is that therapists with such an inclination can use their awareness of nondualism to bring greater wholeness and therefore healing to their clients, no matter what the client's current world view might be. This is partly possible because the nondual can be merged seamlessly into the therapeutic dialogue. It manifests simply as any number of ways that the therapist assists the client to deconstruct problems and connect with their own presence. And as a general rule, this will have positive results. Joy, compassion, love, peace, gratitude – these are some of the most powerfully positive states of being that we can achieve in life. All of these are states that can be brought on by approaching the nondual.[10]

From a transpersonal perspective, it can be said that the infusion of the nondual into our lives *is* the process of personal healing and self-growth. Rather than considering the nondual as an out-of-reach mystical concept, we ought to be educated in its basic philosophical premise, and then guided to relate to it in whatever way we can. The progressive inclusion of nondual awareness can be a "way to both understand and facilitate the direction of psychological healing and development."[11] This will of course be different for each of us according to where we are situated on a map of consciousness. But regardless of our position, the dissolution of personal barriers, and the expanding of the limitations of our worldview may give us all very positive leaps forward in our personal and indeed collective well-being. I need no religious or metaphysical beliefs to notice that when I relax rigid ideas of self, or increase awareness and connection in this moment, that a greater lightness of being ensues. A nondual approach to therapy is not about solving problems, but about finding a space where there are none, and becoming accustomed to it.

This has less to do with method and more to do with attitude. However, there are many formal techniques that have been presented that greatly facilitate the nondual approach. Generally, these techniques all integrate elements such as mindfulness (as it might appear in Zen meditation), detached awareness (as seen in the philosophy of Aurobindo's Integral yoga

and advaita) and self-inquiry (as seen in the approaches of Nisargadatta Maharaj and Ramana Maharshi).[12] These elements present themselves in any number of ways and practices, but are already evident in many popular forms of therapy where the nondual element can always be brought to the fore by an aware therapist. Examples of these techniques are the 'third wave' cognitive therapies, such as Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT), Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT). These are all statistically valid therapeutic methods that incorporate some or all three of the above mentioned elements. Other methods may also be useful in introducing nonduality, such as Byron Katie's 'The Work", Judith Blackstone's 'Realization Process', or the common techniques of meditation, visualization, mandalas, mutual eye gazing, mantra, metaphor, paradox, storytelling and dream analysis.[13]

The Zen teacher Adyashanti, believes that the possibility of nondual therapy has nothing to do with process, but merely with the establishment of the therapist in this field, which will naturally and by definition reach out to the client in whatever way is best in that moment.[14] This seems appropriate, since it is consistent with the essence of nonduality itself. Simply put, the nondual can be evoked from any technique. What is needed then is not a more refined process, but the profound element of the enlightened therapist. As has been said, the therapist cannot expect to be able to bring a client to a level that he or she has not been able to achieve themselves. The space they hold, and the healing they themselves carry are both relevant to the task. Perhaps then we should be training therapists with not just traditional techniques, but with a combined set of practices from the established, mystical nondual traditions, meant to bring about deeper change within? Surely this could only be a positive direction in the counseling fields.

In the end, it would behoove us to recognize the nondual as the universal ground of being that has been referenced by sages from all cultures from all time, expressed in a secular way. From there, it can be appreciated as less mystic, and more natural. It is not out there, but within us and within reach – ready to be perceived by any who allow it. If this is so, we can recognize its role in our healing and personal development,

whether that be in our homes, temples of worship, or in the therapists office. All and any of these can be used in service of a trend toward the inclusion of the nondual into our lives. As Blackstone has succinctly pointed out, it is precisely the shift from the focus on our complex personal problems to the nondual field of unity "that constitutes the direction of psychological healing and personal development."[15] Indeed, the psychology of growth and nonduality are, simply, not two separate things – they are nondual.

This integration has meant for me a constant and daily attempt to let go of judgments of the mind, and to feel the peace that comes with an acceptance of a deeper unity of life that mystics suggest can be found when the ideas of good and bad are dropped. It is a balancing act, where we must always look beyond the limits of the conventional self. What I call the nondual, and what you might call God or Brahman, is a gentle companion in this process – always there and ever ready to draw us into a "peace that passeth understanding" (Philippians 4:7).

Endnotes

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The Baha'i Way

Dr. A. K. Merchant

I have been a member of the Baha'i community since 1975. I am grateful for the opportunity to share my understanding of the Baha'i way.

Religion plays an important role in how we understand time – both the linear time of history and the cyclical times of social and spiritual events. In that sense history is still, according the Baha'i writings, an unsatisfactory record of human progress. It is a calendar of the days that are past. It takes you through a silent avenue of tombs. It tells you stories of the battles fought and the empires carved by men and women. It is a poor record of the struggles that took place in the souls of those, whose achievements adorn its pages. Other landmarks that regulate history and remained in the memory of human time are the natural calamities such as pestilence, famine, drought, earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, cataclysmic events, *inter alia*.

"The fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His Religion," declared Bahá'u'lláh, "is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race, and to foster the spirit of love and fellowship amongst men. Suffer it not to become a source of dissension and discord, of hate and enmity. This is the straight Path, the fixed and immovable foundation. Whatsoever is raised on this foundation, the changes and chances of the world can never impair its strength nor will the revolution of countless centuries undermine its structure."[1]

For most people in today's world, religion or *dharma* is not understood in such a straightforward manner. The ancient legacy of dharma, or religion handed down by our forefathers has become a heady brew of meaningless traditions, pseudo-spirituality, superstitions, rituals and dogma. So much so that the positive qualities of this powerful civilizing agent has been reduced to belief in cultic practices and blind faith in charismatic god men and god women who have come to hold sway on the belief systems of countless millions – from the illiterate masses to the sophisticated and

famous men and women in every country of the world. In such a setting India blessed by an extraordinary multiplicity in linguistic, ethnic and cultural fields with an even more complex interplay of different religions has also been looked upon as a showcase of tolerance and assimilation, for behind the obvious diversity there is an unending unity which is the greatest feature of our civilizational ethos. *Satyamayve Jayte* (Let Truth Prevail). India's legacy of the inter-faith dialogue and inter-religious parleys dates back to the days of emperor Ashoka and found culmination in the addresses of Swami Vivekananda in the first Parliament of the World's Religions in 1893.

Civilization, as we know it, is very ancient and as our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru wrote: "We might say that the first great cultural synthesis and fusion took place between the incoming Aryans and the Dravidians, who were probably the representatives of the Indus Valley civilization. Out of this synthesis and fusion grew the Indian races and the basic Indian culture, which had distinct elements of both. In the ages that followed there came many other races: Iranians, Greeks, Parthians, Bactrians, Scythinans, Huns, Turkis or Turks (before Islam), early Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians. They made a difference and were absorbed. "India was', according to Dodwell 'infinitely absorbent like the oceans.'"[2]

In the perspective of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings, the greatest danger of both the moral crisis and the inequities associated with globalization in its current form is an entrenched philosophical attitude that seeks to justify and excuse these failures. The overthrow of the twentieth century's totalitarian systems has not meant the end of ideology. On the contrary, there has not been a society in the history of the world, no matter how pragmatic, experimentalist and multi-form it may have been, that did not derive its thrust from some foundational interpretation of reality. Such a system of thought reigns today virtually unchallenged across the planet, under the nominal designation "Western civilization." Philosophically and politically, it presents itself as a kind of liberal relativism and, economically and socially, as capitalism – two value systems that have now so adjusted to each other and become so mutually reinforcing as to virtually constitute a single, comprehensive worldview.[3]

The contribution of religion towards capacity building and promoting

the peace process has in part been undervalued owing to the negative image it has acquired as a result of the history of conflicts in which religion has been seen to play a considerable role. The turmoil of the age has forced one scholar, Cantwell Smith, to write: "It is no longer possible to understand each 'religion' as a stable system."[4] The interconnectedness of man's religious history, as well as the convergence of 21st century humanity into one community, make it desirable to speak of "one history of religion." "It is not the case that all religions are the same, however. They have grown up and developed in different times and at different places and represent and have represented many varieties of responses to the sense of the transcendent. Yet there is a continuum which is the historical process in which these different faith traditions have operated."[5]

Therefore, in order to enable every man, woman, youth and child to fulfill their highest potential an educational system has been conceived by the worldwide Baha'i community known as the "Ruhi Institute". The titles of the books as developed by this Institute are by themselves quite illustrative of the range and breadth of the subjects covered, namely, Reflections on the Life of the Spirit; Arising to Serve; Teaching Children's Classes, Grades I, II & III; The Twin Manifestations; Spiritual Empowerment of the Junior Youth, 27 books, including: Glimmerings of Hope, Learning About Excellence, Spirit of Faith, Breezes of Confirmation, Drawing on the Power of the Word, The Human Temple, etc.; Planning & Teaching the Divine Cause; Walking Together on a Path of Service; Family Prosperity, and the like.[6]

The curricula offer an understanding of problems of present-day society at three levels of comprehension. The first is a basic understanding of the meaning of words and sentences of passages from the Holy Texts, which constitute the core of these courses. Thus, for example, after reading the quotation, "The betterment of the world can be accomplished through pure and goodly deeds, through commendable and seemly conduct",[7] the participant is asked, "How can the betterment of the world be accomplished?" At first glance, this type of question may appear too simple. But our actual experience points to some of the reasons for the adoption of a simple approach to this basic level of understanding. The second level of comprehension is concerned with applying some of

the concepts in the quotations to one's daily life. And the third level of understanding requires the participants to thinks about the implications of the quotations for situations with no apparent or immediate connection with the theme of the quotation.

Many years of experience with the study and practical application of the guidance offered in these materials has demonstrated that examining ideas at these three levels of understanding helps collaborators create a conscious basis for a life of service to humanity and making each participant an agent of positive change for the building of an ever-advancing civilization. In fact, the above system of education allows for the almost infinite development by various user communities of branching subsets that serve particular needs.

Moreover, the operation of the institute board; the functioning of coordinators at different levels; the capabilities of friends serving as tutors of study circles, animators of junior youth groups; teachers of children's classes; and the promotion of an environment conducive at once to universal participation and mutual support and assistance have evolved over time and are being continually improved upon and refined. Of particular significance are the pedagogical principles governing the curriculum: developing a capacity in every man, woman, youth and child to serve humanity in the light of Divine purpose in this age of the "planetization of humankind"[8] The process may be likened to walking a path of service. This conception shapes both content and structure. The very notion of a path is itself indicative of the nature and purpose of the courses, for a path invites participation, it beckons to new horizons, it demands effort and movement, it accommodates different paces and strides, it is structured and defined. A path can be experienced and known, not only by one or two but by scores upon scores; it belongs to the community.

To walk a path is a concept equally expressive. It requires of the individual volition and choice; it calls for a set of skills and abilities but also elicits certain qualities and attitudes; it necessitates a logical progression but admits, when needed, related lines of exploration; it may seem easy at the outset but becomes more challenging further along. And crucially, one walks the path in the company of others."[9]

Over the past thirty plus years thousands of Baha'i communities

– from hamlets, villages and towns, to cities and megalopolis – are increasingly advancing the system of learning and attracting millions to experience the joy of building a new world. The work advancing in every corner of the globe today represents the latest stage of the ongoing Baha'i endeavour to create the nucleus of the glorious civilization prophesied in the sacred scriptures of all the extant religions. Baha'is understand that the building of such an enterprise of infinite complexity and scale will demand centuries of exertion by humanity to bring to fruition.

For, the growing interdependence and the intensifying interaction among diverse peoples pose fundamental challenges to old ways of thinking, believing and acting. How we, as individuals and communities, respond to these challenges will, to a large degree, determine whether our communities become nurturing, cohesive and progressive, or inhospitable, divided and unsustainable? "To build a new world is no easy task. The road is stony and filled with obstacles, but the journey is infinitely rewarding."[10]

Humanity's crying needs will not be met by a struggle among competing ambitions or by protest against one or another of the countless wrongs afflicting a desperate age. It calls, rather, for a fundamental change of consciousness. The time has come when each human being on earth must learn to accept responsibility for the welfare of the entire human family. "The world is being made new. Death pangs are yielding to birth pangs. The pain shall pass when members of the human race act upon the common recognition of their essential oneness. There is light at the end of this tunnel of change beckoning humanity to the goal destined for it according to the testimonies recorded in all the Holy Books."[11] The internalization of the basic human values could serve as foundational blocks to the profound changes we are all experiencing.

Bahá'u'lláh speaks of two distinct but simultaneous and mutually reinforcing processes: one leading to the spiritual unity of the human race, that he refers to as the "Most Great Peace"; the other to the political unity of nations and described as the "Lesser Peace". The former is a distant goal, requiring a monumental change in human consciousness and conduct that only religious faith can ensure; the other is more immediate and can already be detected on the political horizon.

The horrific experiences of wars in the history of humankind and the

resultant two world wars gave us the League of Nations and the United Nations respectively; the frequency with which world leaders, particularly with the ending of the Cold War and the rise of international terrorism, have met and debated on global issues; the renewed call for a global order that issued from the leaders at the Millennium Summits in 2000; the multiplication of organizations of civil society that focus attention on a variety of international concerns through the operation of an ever-expanding network of activities; the widespread debates on the need for global governance and numerous organized efforts towards world peace; the emergence of international tribunals; the rapid developments in communications technology that have made the planet borderless – these are among the voluminous evidences of an accelerating momentum to wage peace despite ominous signs of war.

Ostensibly, the movement leading to world unity must encounter opposing tendencies rooted in stubborn habits of chauvinism and partisanship that refuse to yield to the expectations of a new age. The torturous suffering imposed by such conditions as poverty, war, violence, fanaticism, disease, and degradation of the environment, to which masses of people are subjected, is a consequence of this opposition. Hence, before the peace of nations matures into a comprehensive reality, it must pass through difficult stages, not unlike those experienced by individual nations until their internal consolidation was achieved. "Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in and centre your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements."[12] "The world is in travail, and its agitation waxeth day by day", is Bahá'u'lláh's warning. "Its face is turned towards waywardness and unbelief. Such shall be its plight, that to disclose it now would not be meet and seemly. Its perversity will long continue. And when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake…"[13]

Earthmen landing on the moon have perceived what poets, philosophers, and prophets have proclaimed through the centuries – the oneness of the human family. At a time when there is talk of setting up a base on the moon let us recall what one astronaut reported:

> The view of the earth from the moon fascinated me – a small

> disk, 240,000 miles away. It was hard to think that that little thing held so many problems, so many frustrations. Raging nationalistic interests, famines, wars, pestilence don't show from that distance. I'm convinced that some wayward stranger in a spacecraft, coming from another part of the heavens, could look at earth and never know that it was inhabited at all. But the same wayward stranger would certainly know instinctively that if the earth were inhabited, then the destinies of all who lived on it must be inevitably interwoven and joined. We are one hunk of ground, water, air, clouds, floating around in space. From out there it really is one world.[14]

"Consort with the followers of all religions," Bahá'u'lláh appeals to all, "in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship."[15] And again: "It is not his to boast who loveth his country, but is his who loveth the world."[16] His vision of humanity as one people and of the earth as our common homeland, enunciated over one-hundred forty years ago, was dismissed out of hand by the world leaders to whom he first addressed his mission. But today it has become the focus of human hope, more so with the ecological and environmental disasters that could well decide the fate of humankind.

Bahá'u'lláh addressing humankind more than a century ago said: "Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch."[17] He compares humanity to a tree. The people of various races, castes, religions and cultural backgrounds are all like the branches and leaves of the same tree. The roots of this tree should be firmly fixed onto the spiritual principles that are the basis for values and morality and for living in harmony with each other. "Peerless is this Day, for it is as the eye to past ages and centuries, and as a light unto the darkness of the times."[18]

Endnotes

[1] Baha'u'llah. *Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah*. (New Delhi: Baha'i Publishing Trust of India, 1973), section CX, p. 215.

[2] Nehru, J. L. *The Discovery of India*. (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1961, repr. 1967), p. 76.

[3] Cf. Baha'i World Centre. *The Century of Light*. (New Delhi: Baha'i Publishing Trust of

India, 2001), p. 135.

[4] Smith. Wilfred Cantwell. Quoted in S. Bushrui, The Spiritual Heritage of Humankind, lecture notes, Landegg International Academy, 1991-92, p. 24.

[5] Ibid., 25.

[6] These materials are available from the Baha'i Publishing Trust of India, F3/6, Okhla Industrial Estate, New Delhi 110 020. Website: www.bahaindia.in <http://www.bahaindia.in/>

[7] Baha'u'llah. Quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*. (New Delhi: Baha'i Publishing Trust of India, 1969), p. 25.

[8] A phrased coined by the famous Jesuit theologian and philosopher, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

[9] The Universal House of Justice letter addressed to National Spiritual Assemblies dated 12th December 2011 (unpublished).

[10] The Universal House of Justice letter dated 9th November 1993, published in *Promoting Entry by Troops*. (New Delhi: Baha'i Publishing Trust of India, 1993), p. 3.

[11] The Universal House of Justice letter dated 23rd May 2001 published in *The Baha'i Year Book–1992-93*. (Oxford: Baha'i World Centre publications, 1993), p. 43.

[12] Baha'u'llah. *Gleanings*, op. cit. Section CVI, p. 286.

[13] Ibid., section LXI, pp. 118-119.

[14] Fersh, Seymour, ed. *Learning About Peoples and Cultures*, "Our Place on Earth." (Canada, Agincourt: The Book Society of Canada Limited), p. 17.

[15] Baha'u'llah. *Gleanings*, op. cit. Section CXXXII, p. 289.

[16] Ibid., section CXVII, p. 250.

[17] Ibid., section CXXXII, p. 288.

[18] Baha'u'llah. Quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, op cit. p. 69.

Mennonite Brethren Way

Vic Froese

Those uninitiated in the ways of Mennonites can be forgiven if they think that Mennonite Brethren wear black clothes, shun modern technology, and ride in horse-drawn buggies. Mennonites come in many varieties, and the black-clothed, bearded buggy riders are only one variety. Canada alone has dozens of different Mennonite groups, all alike in the conviction of the truth of their own views but divided by historical circumstances, theological emphasis, and often – sad to say – a failure to love each other.[1] Mennonite Brethren (MBs) are one among numerous Christian denominations that trace their origins back to an apostate Dutch Catholic priest named Menno Simons (1496–1561), a convert to the "heretical" Anabaptist movement in the sixteenth century. It happens that MBs are indistinguishable in dress and use of technology from any other group in the culture they reside in. It is the particular "way" of this highly adaptable Mennonite people I will attempt to describe in the following few pages.

MBs are found the world over but are not many in number. At just over 400,000,[2] all the MBs on earth would fill a city no larger than Kitchener, Ontario, or Omaha, Nebraska. Yet remarkable cultural diversity will be found among those 400,000. The highest concentration of MBs is in India (over 200,000 members), with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (about 95,000) in second place. As a point of comparison, in all of North America (including Mexico and Panama) there are only 73,000 MBs. Smaller communities are found in Latin America, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Ukraine, Russia, Angola, South Africa, Thailand, and Japan. Considering that even in Canada a good number of MBs are Chinese by ethnic origin and the Mennonite Brethren emerge as a strikingly multi-ethnic, multi-cultural faith community.

To describe the spiritual way of the "average" MB would require more knowledge of MBs in India than I have. My own experience has been with the Canadian MBs – specifically those whose parents or grandparents

emigrated in the last century from South Russia (now Ukraine) where the MB movement first began over 150 years ago. It is their religious experience I will attempt to portray. However, while I cannot speak for MBs of Chinese or Vietnamese ethnicity in B.C., or French MBs in Quebec and Manitoba, they too should be able to recognize themselves in my portrayal of MB "spirituality" since they are the fruit of MB missionary work.

Although Mennonites of some other persuasions resist it, MBs happily wear the "evangelical" badge. And like all evangelicals, they begin their life as Christians with conversion. Conversion for MBs is a matter of the heart rather than of the head. It is usually not a years-long, drawn-out affair, but a sudden, datable event, the climax of which is the moment when one says "yes" to God and "no" to one's former life. Ideally, the crisis of conversion should occur no earlier than in young adulthood, at a point when the convert has sinned enough, regretted enough, and understands enough that she/he deeply appreciates the redemption offered. Having been racked with guilt and despair over one's sinfulness, one values the new life in Christ so much more and one's commitment is more likely to be deep and enduring. But even if they are children at conversion – before good and evil are clear concepts – MBs will typically remember a moment when they "gave their life to Jesus" or "accepted him into their hearts." There is a clear "before" and an equally clear "after;" an abrupt end and a joyous new beginning. The life that ends is one driven by selfishness and spiritual rebellion, while the one that begins is marked by obedience, devotion, and joy. Conversion is the point at which one is, to use the expressions outsiders love to deride, "born again" or "saved" – born anew as a child of God, saved from the eternal hell that awaits the unrepentant sinner.

But whether dramatic or more muted, conversion involves an encounter with the transcendent God that demands a decision. The key questions posed are: *Will you let Jesus, who died for your sins, come into your life and be your Saviour and Lord? Will you accept his free offer of eternal life and surrender yourself to him?* A "yes" means that one turns away from one's former life of sin (i.e., repents) and turns in faith towards a gracious and merciful God. It means promising, from that moment on, to live to please and "glorify" him. For some, the knowledge that their faith in Christ will admit them into heaven (and keep them out of hell)

motivates their choice, but for many more the promise is secondary to the desire to be reconciled to the God who loves them without reservation, even to the point of sacrificing his Son for them. For MBs, conversion is reconciliation, a human "yes" responding to the divine "yes" spoken to the world in Jesus Christ, bringing in its wake profound peace, joy, and unhindered spiritual communion with the Saviour. A hymn much loved by older MBs is Gustav Knak's "Oh, That My Heart an Altar Were," which poetically expresses these sentiments:

Oh, that my heart an altar were of incense and of praise,
Where thanks and honour to the Lamb my soul might ever raise!

The knowledge of this Lamb sublime has banished doubts away,
Because my faith is placed in Him, I fear no Judgment Day.

The debt of sin has now been paid, 'Tis covered by the blood!
And God has no remembrance made since came the cleansing flood!

My heart is glad, I now rejoice, To find such peaceful ways!
Thus ever shall I lift my voice in my Redeemer's praise![3]

If the spiritual life begins by answering affirmatively the offer of God's grace and forgiveness, the progress of the new life of discipleship depends on continuous reaffirmation and deepening of that decision and continuous resistance to the lure of one's former ways. While believer's (adult) baptism and monthly communion (the Lord's supper or the Eucharist) assist in deepening one's spiritual roots, just as important are such "spiritual practices" as regularly fellowshipping with other believers, habitually reading the Bible, frequent prayer, stewardship of time and resources, and serving God with the gifts one has received. Enabled by the Holy Spirit, a Christian dedicated to these disciplines will grow in faith and spiritual understanding, develop the character traits of the Saviour, and, at the same time, be equipped to withstand the devil's flaming darts of temptation.

For MBs, fellowship occurs in a special way on Sundays but may happen in more ordinary ways any time two or more believers meet. In

more ordinary ways, fellowship does not depend on talking about heavenly things. What's essential is the sharing of oneself, one's possessions, one's gifts, and – not least of all – one's food. The most exemplary MBs are wonderfully hospitable. They happily open their homes to friends and family, which in some churches includes almost the entire congregation and even many outside it. Commitment to the spiritual life is deepened through such fellowship, as the bonds of mutual love and responsibility are strengthened. Likewise, the lure of yielding to temptation dwindles (but never disappears) under the healthy pressure exerted by the spiritual and moral expectations of the Christian community.

Sunday fellowship adds worship of God to garden variety weekday fellowship. Before the service begins, there is often an almost irreverent buzz in the foyers and pews of MB churches as congregants exchange greetings and friendly conversation. There is no doubt that mundane fellowship infiltrates the sacred fellowship of Sunday mornings. MBs do not have an elaborate theology of worship, one that, for example, explains the service as reflecting the mystery of heaven or as enacting the banquet celebrating the coming of God's kingdom on earth. Theirs is a more pragmatic understanding of the point of their assembly. As they clap or raise their hands to songs of praise accompanied by guitar and drums, or as they enjoy the soul-stirring four-part harmonies of traditional old hymns accompanied by organ or piano, their "spiritual batteries" are recharged and they are given courage to face the week ahead. Listening to a brother or sister share their "faith journey"; being lead in prayer by worship leaders who offer heart-felt extemporaneous prayers to God; attending to the thoughtful spiritual reflections of a Bible-immersed minister of the Word – these and other elements of MB worship serve to remind believers that they are graciously-forgiven-sinners-become-children-of-God and to equip them to live as disciples (lit., students) of Christ, bringing glory to God with their lives.[4] In this way the sacred fellowship of Sunday mornings infiltrates and transforms the quality of mundane activities and encounters during weekdays.

MBs are encouraged to have daily "devotions," much as Catholics are urged to go to Mass everyday. Devotions may involve an entire family, but

usually are private and preferably conducted at the start of the day. They consist of reading a short spiritual meditation and a passage of Scripture, and then spending time in prayer. Although the three components of devotions follow, more or less, in that order, it is recognized that each qualifies the other, especially prayer and Bible reading. As a late MB Bible scholar observed, "We need to pray in order to hear God's word to us, and the hearing of God's Word informs our prayers."[5]

MBs claim no originality in the elements that make up their prayers. Praise, gratitude, repentance, petition, and intercession are widely recognized in the broader Christian world as essential components of Christian prayer. In praising God, one gives him the honour he is due as the Creator of the universe, Saviour of the world, and Sustainer of life. Being made aware of whom one is addressing quickly raises awareness of one's unworthiness to address this God. Confession and repentance of sins is required. In fact, petitioning God and praying to him on behalf of others are scarcely conceivable until confession is made and forgiveness, requested. Expressions of profound gratitude to God for his loving-kindness and mercy, especially to Christ for paying the penalty for one's sins with his death on the cross, must be part of any devout prayer.

Petitions are now more appropriate. As the Scriptures teach that God's children should gratefully present their requests to their Father,[6] petitions do not encourage self-centredness as much as a cynical observer might think. They are a reminder that the scope of God's generosity is wide and his desire to bless, boundless. Then, knowing that Christians are to love each other and even their enemies, thoughts must soon turn to the needs and sufferings of others – first, of those nearest them; then of their immediate neighbours, local communities, cities, countries; and, finally, of those who suffer want, especially spiritual poverty, the world over. All need the healing and saving presence of God. MBs are aware that intercessory prayers can make them complacent rather than moving them to act, and so they also pray that God would show them how they might help answer their own prayers. Like the Mass, devotions should end with a sense of being sent out into the world to be God's ambassadors and agents of mercy and love.

The Bible, however, holds pride of place in the spiritual consciousness of MBs. Prayer can be powerful but also weak unless disciplined and directed by the Bible. Fellowship with other Christians – receiving their wisdom, understanding, and love – is also a potent means of abiding in faith, but pious friends do not unambiguously communicate the Word of God. In any case, it is best to listen to God, whose Word is "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). MBs pride themselves on being "biblicists," "people of the Book."[7]

The article on the Bible in the MB Confession of Faith reads, in part: "We accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God and the authoritative guide for faith and practice."[8] But an authoritative guide is useless unless read. And the Bible is so deep and wise that a single reading will barely skim the surface of its spiritual riches. Regular reading is demanded. The method of reading, of course, varies widely: from randomly opening the book in the hope that God will lead the reader to an especially appropriate passage, to the more disciplined and scholarly approach, which could involve consulting a Greek or Hebrew Bible and the judicious use of Bible commentaries. Most MBs would fall somewhere in between, but virtually all would look for words that address them personally. The words might challenge them to perform some act of mercy or love, convict them of some transgression, help them deal wisely with a difficult situation or relationship, give them hope in despair, consolation in times of grief, or reveal a truth about God that deepens their spiritual understanding and joy in living their faith. For MBs, God speaks in many ways, but never more immediately than when he speaks through his Word.

The MB instinct is to read the Bible as literally as possible, and in this, they occasionally resemble simple fundamentalists. Many MBs assume that a "young earth" and a literal six-day creation is the only Christian position. Biblical wonders are accepted as divine interference with the laws of nature. Many MBs believe that Christians the world over will disappear from the face of the earth to meet Christ in the air at his second coming (1 Thessalonians 4:17). But although exasperating to the higher educated, this simplicity has a certain virtue: It inclines MBs to disregard the limits of what others would call "reality" and to take risks that few with "common sense" would dare accept but which can pay off in surprising ways. Not all

the risks are praiseworthy. Citing Malachi 3:10,[9] some MBs would sooner go hungry than donate less than ten percent of their income to church ministries (hoping, of course, that God will provide). Others, however, hear God as in biblical times and abandon the security of well-paying jobs to accept what turn out to be richly rewarding calls to serve overseas. Still others, instructed by the Holy Spirit (Luke 12:12), strike up conversations with complete strangers and introduce them a higher quality of life. Daring international ministries like Family Life Network[10] were started by MBs who believed that nothing is impossible for God. For pious MBs, the "current consensus" of scientists does not define the limits of the possible, since God is under no obligation to abide by those constraints.

MB historians and theologians have bemoaned the way MB spirituality has, over the years, been adversely swayed by popular North American evangelicalism and its preoccupation with experiential faith and personal godliness. This obsession, they argue, has tended to overshadow emphases that Anabaptists held dear: the faithful church as a sign of God's redeeming and sanctifying presence; concern for the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned; love of neighbour through service; love of enemy through non-resistance.[11] But one Anabaptist concern – namely, proclamation of the gospel – has long received a disproportionate amount of MB time, money, and energy. Missions and evangelism are regarded as activities that express the very essence of MB identity. Join the belief that without conversion a soul will be eternally lost to a genuine love for the unredeemed and it could hardly be otherwise. Jesus' last words in Matthew's Gospel (a.k.a., "The Great Commission"[12]) is read in a way that underscores the point, raising evangelistic and missionary work to the rank of highest importance.

Lately, the prominence given by MB scholars to the corporate witness of the church, and the growing interest even among evangelical thinkers on the church's "missional"[13] character are moving MBs to recover once ignored Anabaptist interests. MBs are increasingly exploring new ways of bringing the church to the world, rather than merely reaching out to the lost and trying to lure them into their sanctuary. The MB church is learning again to serve the world like the Saviour it proclaims, by supplying its physical as well as spiritual needs. Even so, MBs resist thinking that love of neighbours means no more than building homes and filling stomachs.

Relief work, benevolent service, or social justice alone can never establish the intimate relationship with God for which the human race was created. Leading others to a conversion of the heart, MBs insist, is the main business of Christ's disciples.

Twenty-five years ago, one MB writer's vision of the denomination's future included greater realization that the gospel speaks not only to the needs of the individual soul but also to issues of racism, poverty, war, corrupt politics, extravagant lifestyles, and splintered families.[14] To some extent, that vision has become reality. Few MBs today would deny that the "good news" is relevant to these afflictions. The peace of Christ, they affirm, encompasses all of reality, not just the realm of human subjectivity. Missing from the writer's list were such issues as women in ministry, sexual orientation, interreligious dialogue, and environmental degradation. These are proving more difficult for MBs to address. The Bible speaks obliquely on the last issue and perhaps too directly on the first three. MB literalism and lingering sectarianism will make fruitful discussions of these questions challenging but, one hopes, not impossible.[15]

There is, of course, only so much that one tiny religious community can do. Perhaps it is enough that MBs focus on fostering deep spiritual devotion and on sensitively proclaiming the good news of God revealed in Jesus to people around the world. It can be hoped, however, that such evangelism and discipleship, in promoting a deeper consciousness of God and of life as divine gift, will also generate sensitivity to the vexing issues of the day and inspire creative responses to the dangers that threaten the world. Confidence that the loving God revealed in Jesus Christ can conquer fear, hatred, and despair; the witness to the possibility of peace in the MB community at its best; and the conviction that God eagerly bids all to join him in redeeming and blessing the world may be among the most valuable gifts MBs are able to offer in these all too interesting times.

Endnotes

[1] Margaret Loewen-Reimer nicely surveys the Canadian Mennonite scene in *One Quilt, Many Pieces: A Guide to Mennonite Groups in Canada*, 4th ed. (Waterloo, Ont.: Herald Press, 2008).

[2] These and the following statistics come from Abe J. Dueck, ed., *The Mennonite Brethren Church Around the World: Celebrating 150 Years* (Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press, 2010), 376–77.

[3] Quoted by Hans Kasdorf in "Pietist Roots of Early Mennonite Brethren Spirituality," *Direction* 13, no. 3 (1984): 51.

[4] "Following the New Testament example, believers gather to commemorate the resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week. On the Lord's Day, believers joyfully devote themselves to worship, instruction in the Word, prayer, breaking of bread, fellowship and service. They limit their labour to work of necessity and deeds of mercy." *Confession of Faith of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches* (Winnipeg, Man.; Hillsboro, Kan.: Board of Faith and Life and Board of Resource Ministries, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1999), s.v. "The Lord's Day."

[5] David Ewert, *Finding Our Way: Confronting Issues in the Mennonite Brethren Church* (Abbotsford, B.C.: Self-published; printed by Christian Press in Winnipeg, MB, 1999), 167.

[6] Cf. Philippians 4:6.

[7] For a recent discussion of this characteristic of MBs, see Doug Heidebrecht's forthcoming article, "People of the Book: The Significance of Mennonite Brethren Biblicism and Hermeneutics," *Direction* 40, no. 2 (2011).

[8] *Confession of Faith*, s.v. "The Written Word of God."

[9] "'Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,' says the LORD Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.'"

[10] Website: http://www.fln.ca. Not to be confused with Family Life Ministries in the U.S.

[11] See, for example, John E. Toews in "Theological Reflections," *Direction* 14, no. 2 (1985): 60–68, esp. 61.

[12] Matthew 28:18–20, which reads, in part, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

[13] The term has generated some confusion as it has gained popularity, prompting Alan Hirsch to clarify its meaning in "Defining Missional," *Leadership* (Fall 2008): 20ff.

[14] Howard Loewen, referred to by Katie Funk Wiebe in *Who are the Mennonite Brethren?* (Winnipeg, Man.: Kindred Press, 1984), 105f.

[15] Hopeful signs are there. See David Balzer's "Chatting about God over the Airwaves: What I Learned about Interfaith Conversation," in the *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, November 2011, 10–12.

Way of Jesus and Marx

Roland Boer

I am by no means the first to compare Jesus of Nazareth and Karl Marx. Actually, I am somewhat wary of such comparisons, not because I do not think there are some striking intersections or likenesses, but because those who undertake such comparisons tend to assume that Jesus is the source and Marx the borrower. This trap is an easy one, since Jesus of Nazareth existed some 1800 years or more before Marx. Yet temporal priority does not necessarily mean logical, political or ontological priority. In other words, rather than assuming that religion provides the absolute font of ideas and practices, it is really only one code, one language for expressing these ideas. Politics may provide another language, philosophy another, and so on.

This translatability has a number of ramifications, of which I can mention two. First, the absolute claims of any language disappear and they become relative to one another. Second, the translations overlap only partially, for their fit is never complete. They have some elements of an idea in common, but other elements lie beyond the overlap. Thus, in each case meanings in one language extend beyond the translated term in the other language. This situation leads to both the enrichment of the idea in question, but also to potential losses as the idea moves from language to language. With these preliminary thoughts in mind, I would like to explore five points of contact, five translatable terms between Jesus of Nazareth and Karl Marx.

From Each … To Each …

> To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to each according to his ability. –Matthew 25:15

> And they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. –Acts 2:45

> From each according to his abilities, to each according to his need! –Marx[1]

At the heart of both Christian communism and Marxian communism is this basic precept: that we should contribute according to our ability and receive according to our need. Simple enough in its formulation, it is exceedingly difficult to put into practice. Christian communist groups continue to exist today in many parts of the world (see, for instance, www.basisgemeinde.de), and their precepts may be outlined easily enough: a common belief in the resurrection of Christ; communal living; communism of goods and production, with the proceeds of any production allocated throughout the community according to need. Often meals are held in common, although private space is acknowledged. All of this is based on both the sayings of Jesus and the depictions of early Christian communism in Acts 2 and 4.[2]

Marxian communism initially attempted to define itself over against Christian communism by arguing that the latter concerned only a communism of consumption. By simply selling property and redistributing the wealth, as in Acts 2 and 4, they did not change the system at all.[3] Marxian communism would therefore take the next step and make the means of production communal along with consumption. Since then, however, Christian communists have responded by emphasizing the need for communal production as well.

Private Property

> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. –Mark 10:24; see also Matthew 19:24 and Luke 18:25

> The theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property. –Marx[4]

The scathing criticisms of private property that we find in the mouth of Jesus are well known. "Go, sell what you have," he tells the rich man who asks for the secret of eternal life (Mark 10:21; Matthew 19:21; see also Luke 12:33). Again and again, we encounter the polemic against property,

the possession of which is regarded as an evil and as a massive hindrance to joining the kingdom of God. Jesus valorises simplicity over luxury and forgoes the influence and power that comes with wealth. In short, everything about him stands against the deep values of the Hellenistic propertied classes. In the words of G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, "I am tempted to say that in this respect the opinions of Jesus were nearer to those of Bertholt Brecht than to those held by some of the Fathers of the Church and by some Christians today."[5]

Why oppose private property, which had been invented by the Romans a little over a century before the time of Jesus? The reason is that private property, as the Romans first defined it, is based upon slavery. More specifically, private property (*dominium* from *dominus*, master) relies on the reduction of one human being to the status of thing (*res*) that is "owned" by another human being who has absolute, inalienable power over that thing. With this basic meaning, the Romans then extended the sense of private property to cover most things in our lives. And this is the sense of private property that has come down to us, through a complex history in which the meaning of private property was lost and was then recovered to become the basis for capitalism.[6] As for Jesus, his implacable opposition to private property is clearly due to its basis in slavery.

Marx comes to a surprisingly similar conclusion via a different path. For Marx, private property arises in the context of alienated wage-labour, in which workers sell their labour power to another in order to make products that are not the worker's. These products become commodities that are then sold in order to generate profit for those who do not work. We need to remind ourselves that the unemployed for Marx are not those at the bottom of the economic pile, but those at the top, the capitalists who do not work but make their wealth on the backs of those who do. In many places, Marx speaks of wage-labour as nothing better than slave labour – which brings us back to the critique of property in the Gospels.

From Below

> So the last will be first, and the first last. –Matthew 20:16; see also Mark 10:31 and Luke 13:30

> The theoretical conclusions of the Communists…express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes. –Marx[7]

Marx is famous for championing history "from below," from the perspective of the working class, of the poor, of everyday people who show not merely a remarkable ability to take the initiative, but who are actually the prime movers of history. Peasants, slaves, serfs, colonised people, workers – these and more are the real causes of what happens in the world. The "big men" – so often the focus of history and politics – are constantly trying to respond to these real causes. They may seek to express their deepest wishes, but more often than not they try to curtail the radical demands of ordinary people.

In the Gospels, Jesus wishes to spend far more time with the despised and dregs of society – prostitutes, winos, "sinners' and so forth. These are the "little ones" (Matthew 10:42; 18:6-14; Mark 9:42; Luke 17:2), the "least" (Matthew 25:40-5), the "last." In the thorough shakeup of the "kingdom of God," these are the ones who will be raised up and made first. A distinct angle on this approach from below may be found in a spatial analysis. Palestine at the time of Jesus was arranged in terms of *polis* and *chora*. The former designates the Hellenistic city, with its Greek architecture, language, culture, religion and practices. The *polis* was the location of power, wealth, the ruling class and the colonizing army of the Romans. By contrast, the *chora* was the countryside around about the cities. Here the language was Aramaic, the culture Palestinian, and the villages operated according to tried and true practices of communal agriculture. The *chora* was also poor, overworked and yet living on the edge of starvation, for the *polis* drew all its requirements from the *chora*, irrespective of whether the latter could in fact do so without affecting its own livelihood. What is noticeable about the Gospel stories is that Jesus' whole concern is with the people of the *chora*.[8] Apart from his final turn to Jerusalem, he studiously avoided the *polis*. This was a thoroughly consistent concern with those from below.

Metanoia

> I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to *metanoia*. –Luke 5:32

> The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is to *change* (*verändern*) it. –Marx[9]

Here there seems to be a great gulf between Jesus and Marx. The traditional way in which the Greek *metanoia* has been translated is "repentance." Given the way "repentance" has been interpreted and framed by the church, Jesus here seems to be referring to the need for "sinners" to confess their "sins" and to begin leading a righteous life. Repentance becomes an individual act in which one turns away from debauchery, revelry, dishonesty and the pleasures of life in order to turn towards God. This seems far indeed from the sense of social, political and economic transformation that is embodied in Marx's famous thesis I quoted above.

Let us look at this biblical text again, since the individualised interpretation of modern, evangelical Christians is far from the truth. Recall that the "sinners" are actually those rejected by society; they are the "little ones" among whom Jesus feels at home. They are rejected by the self-described "righteous," the ones whom Jesus criticises, condemns and avoids. But what about *metanoia*? Its basic meaning is a change of mind, or rather a change of existence, a complete about-turn in life – in short, a thorough transformation that begins from below. Now the meaning of the last becoming first, and the first last, takes on a somewhat different meaning. Here the words of Mary also take a deeper, political resonance: "He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree" (Luke 1:52). We have come rather close to Marx's revolution, except that the one propounded by Jesus includes a religious revolution.

Miracles Can Happen

> And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease." –Mark 5:34

> In certain respects, a revolution is a miracle. –Lenin[10]

For my final point, I wish to be a little provocative and bring together Jesus and Lenin on the question of miracle. As is well known, the Gospels are full of cures (for blindness, deafness, lameness, leprosy and flows of blood), of exorcisms, and of miracles in which nature itself performs in a unique fashion. Far less well-known is the fact that Lenin often described a revolution in terms of a miracle. But what does it mean for Lenin to say that revolution is a miracle?

First, miracle is not, in Hume-derived terms, an event that is inexplicable according to the "laws" of nature, nor is it a moment or an event that changes the very coordinates of existence. Rather, a miracle is a point of contact between two seemingly incommensurable worlds. In theological terms, a miracle is a touching between heaven and earth, or the moment when transcendence is bent towards immanence.[11] In the Gospels, a miracle occurs when heaven touches earth, or, more appropriately, when earth draws heaven down to its level. For Lenin, the two worlds are not so much heaven and earth but the expected and the unexpected. No matter how much one may devote to organisation in preparation for the revolution, whether in terms of party structure, publicity organs, propaganda, parliamentary involvement, agitation on the streets or military training, the actual moment of revolution inevitably occurs without forewarning, a spark that turns instantaneously into a conflagration.

After the revolution in 1917, Lenin's usage of the language of "miracles" increases even more. The new government was faced with impossible challenges. They were systematically attacked by the "white" armies, which were supported by an international consortium (United Kingdom, France, USA, Japan, etc.). The country was ruined after the First World War, in terms of industry, transport, and grain production. And the new government sought to build a new social, political and economic order. In this context, Lenin speaks again and again of miracles, of "miracles of proletarian organization,"[12] of miracles "without parallel."[13] He is not averse to designating an individual a "miracle worker," such as Miron Konstantinovich Vladimirov, the Military Commissar Extraordinary of the Railways. If he can, in the face of a chronic shortage of materials "perform a miracle" by repairing two

railway lines instead of one, he "will indeed be a miracle worker."[14] All of which may be summed up: "The history of our proletarian revolution is full of such miracles."[15] Here the word "miracle" has been enriched in an unexpected direction.

Together Again

From each according to his or her ability, to each according to need; sustained critique of private property; understanding the world from below, from the perspective of ordinary people who are the real history makers; the radical potential of *metanoia*; the political translation of miracle as revolution itself. I have suggested that in each case we find a point of contact between Jesus and Marx (and Lenin). That contact sets of a whole series of new layers of meaning, enabled by the translation of terms between the Bible and communists, between theology and politics. And both are richer for it.

Endnotes

[1] Karl Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme," *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 24 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1891), 87.

[2] Brian Capper, "The Palestinian Cultural Context of Earliest Christian Community of Goods," in *The Book of Acts in its Palestinian Setting,* ed. R. Bauckham (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 323-56 and "Community of Goods in the Early Jerusalem Church," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt,* eds. H. Temporini and W. Haase, Series II, vol. 26, no. 2 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995), 1730-74; Scott Bartchy, "Community of Goods in Acts: Idealization or Social Reality?" in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester,* ed. B. Pearson (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1991), 309-18; Rita Halteman Finger, *Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

[3] Karl Kautsky, *Foundations of Christianity,* trans. H. F. Mins (London: Socialist Resistance, 2007 [1908]); Rosa Luxemburg, "Socialism and the Churches," in *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks,* ed. M. A. Waters (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970 [1905]), 131-52.

[4] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The Manifesto of the Communist Party" in *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 6 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1848 [1976]), 498.

[5] G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World: From the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquest* (London: Duckworth, 1981), 433.

[6] Perry Anderson, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism* (London: Verso, 1974), 65-7; H.

F. Jolowicz, *Historical Introduction to the Study of Roman Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 142-43, 426; Andrew Linklater, *International Relations: Critical Concepts in Political Science* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1432; Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 31; David Graeber, *Debt: The First 5,000 Years* (New York: Melville House, 2011), 199-201, 205, 290.

[7] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, 498.

[8] G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, 427-30.

[9] Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach (original version)," in *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, vol. 5 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1845 [1976]), 3-5.

[10] V. I. Lenin, "Speech at a Plenary Meeting of the Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, February 28, 1921," in *Collected Works*, vol. 32 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1921 [1965]), 153.

[11] Antonio Negri and Gabriele Fadini, "Materialism and Theology: A Conversation," *Rethinking Marxism* 20, no. 4 (2008): 666-8.

[12] V. I. Lenin, "Letters from Afar," in *Collected Works*, vol. 23 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1917 [1964]), 306-7.

[13] V. I. Lenin, "Speech at a Meeting of the Prokhorov Textile Mills Workers, Held to Mark the Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution, November 6, 1921," in *Collected Works*, vol. 33 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1921 [1966]), 117.

[14] V. I. Lenin, "Telegrams to M. K. Vladimirov," in *Collected Works*, vol. 44 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1919 [1970]), 198.

[15] V. I. Lenin, "Results of Party Week in Moscow and Our Tasks," in *Collected Works*, vol. 30 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1919 [1965]), 71-5.

Way of the Composer

Michael Purves-Smith

Music is mysterious and unbounded, a never entirely explainable force of pleasure and repose that follows us from the last two months we spend in our mother's womb until we depart this life. The rhythm of our mother's heartbeat, breathing, and footfalls comes close to being music as do our last thoughts as we hear them in our mind's ear. The inextricably entwined neurology of the ear, the larynx, the vocal cords, and the brain is where music resides, although both our visual and kinetic senses play a part in its perception. While many creatures have evolved a similar aural neurology, only we humans have harnessed it for artful music. It is the non verbal sibling of thought, and for many of us a lifelong friend, giving us some of our first and last tastes of the beauty and wonder of nature as it may be organized in sound.

For both music and thought we have evolved elaborate technologies to enhance their external presentation. For example, we have taught ourselves to read and all that follows from that, and we have learned to perform together in an orchestra. Yet thought can be heard in plenitude in the mind but not so music; it only reaches its full potential in the external world. Accordingly, the two siblings, born in the same neurological nexus, begin to follow different paths. We give each a space of its own, the boundaries of which we perfectly understand, but cannot fully define.

Yes, music is a place of repose and pleasure and a source of magic and beauty, but it is much more. It changes throughout our lives with every encounter we have with it. And what does its close relative, thought, demand of music? Not much it would seem; only that it be composed of both timbre and rhythm, that each musical utterance be true to itself, and, some would say, that it obey the laws of nature, especially as they make themselves manifest in the overtone series.

All acts of music gather meaning by the extent to which the mind perceives their form and content as being repeatable. Thus, the sounds

that a composer like the twentieth century iconoclast, Edgar Varese, offers us are rendered in the mind as music. The audience and performers of his *Octandre* or *Ionisations*, for example, have learnt over time what belongs in Varese's musical vessels and how they are shaped. With repeated hearings these works have become instantly identifiable and enjoyable, mostly for that reason. The success of Varese's music resides not so much in musical skill and imagination as in his audacity in being the first to part company with fixed pitch as one of the determinants of meaning in music. The effect of his music is forbidding at first, but just as there is loveliness in a desert place, so too we discover the beauty of his arid musical language. Thus the concept of song expands to encompass more and more that we accept as music.

What, then, is the way of the composer? Does the term, *composer*, cover anyone who writes music? Perhaps, since much, maybe even most of what we hear as music, is never written down, it would be better to apply the term *composer* to anyone who creates a new musical vessel, or takes part in the collaboration that leads to its creation – all the members of a rock band are often composers in this sense. However, most of us prefer to use the word to describe someone who, on his or her own, creates a string of musical vessels to shine, hopefully through repeated performances, in the musical firmament. In this sense, their works are like the artifacts of a painter, a poet, a novelist, or an architect.

But there is a catch; a composer is dependent on the collaboration of performers and audience, both of which are decidedly fallible. However, without their collaboration, anything that a composer may have written is condemned to be ephemeral. With concert music, it is entirely the performers who confer the status of durable artifact on any new composition, because it is they who will understand the way in which it is true to itself – the way in which it makes sense – the way in which it satisfies their idea of musical logic. Once the performers have understood what constitutes a persuasive performance, often through repeated renditions and by familiarity with the peculiarities of a composer's style, it is the audience that confers final approval by calling forth repeated hearings.

It is ironic that music is very difficult to hear in the mind. To audiate is the verb that is only very belatedly coming into our language to describe the

workings of the mind's ear. We audiate words with great clarity but hardly anyone can hear in their heads, with anything like detailed precision, the music notated on a composer's score. Music invariably requires an external rendition for complete comprehension. On the other hand, almost all of us can imagine the playwright's work with some exactitude upon first reading his play and the only thing that stands in the way of doing the same with dance, for example, is a lack of familiarity with dance notation. Thus music, a somewhat unwilling collaborator with visual imagination, is the art form that most encourages an almost liturgical repetition for its full appreciation.

I was recently part of the orchestra for a splendid performance of Handel's *Messiah*. The conductor announced that he was, with that event, celebrating his 300th performance. There may have been some exaggeration there, but, since he is a celebrated countertenor and had sung the alto solos in many parts of the world, I am prepared to take him at his word. I have been a part of a more modest thirty or so renditions, not including the many times that I have listened to recorded performances of the work. I would cheerfully perform it as many times more. Why is this?

You will say that the *Messiah* is not like other music, that it is special, having acquired a quasi liturgical, ritual quality. One of the values of liturgy is that it serves to affirm through repetition of the familiar the spiritual and cultural verities we rely upon. Conversely, liturgy, through the predictable repetition of known formal elements, takes on a quasi-musical aspect. I can't generalize about this, but I think that many of us build over time a repertoire of often repeated, quasi-liturgical music that we carry with us throughout our lives. This might include anything from a country and western classic to a much loved opera aria. The *Messiah* as a whole, it seems to me, is a splendid example. It is astonishing how large the audience is that knows in some detail the rubric of the liturgy of the *Messiah*, and it is true that attending a performance of it does affirm our cultural and/or spiritual values. This is not an especially earthshaking observation for most of us, but for a composer it is important. One wants to write music that at least some of the time imparts the pleasure and reassurance that come with familiarity, exactly the sort of thing that is best exemplified by works like the *Messiah*, or Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

It follows from this that a part of the way of the composer, and a part of the way of any artist, is to discover a lasting trail into the popular imagination. However, it is more than that. Consider the complex of possible musical vessels as though it were a vast and mostly unknown wilderness. It is the composer's job to open pathways into that wilderness? Most are short and lead through territory that we are familiar with and require no risk. Each new KD Lang song will follow a different path through a completely predictable and safe landscape. However, some paths are long and wind through unfamiliar territory. For example, such would be the situation for many setting off with Stravinsky for the first time. The *Messiah* is long, but the territory is known in every sense. It is like a walk along a familiar forest path. With each turn we anticipate the pleasure of the familiar, yet we perceive each with fresh insights every time we walk the path. Since we cannot audiate the *Messiah* with the same precision we might a literary text, every time we listen the *Messiah*, we reconstruct it in a new way, even though we may be in the midst of something profoundly familiar.

Looking out from that *Messiah* orchestra into the audience seated in the pews of a church, I saw a grandfather with three of his grandsons in their early teens just a few rows away. I smile to imagine their mother saying, "Your grandfather would love you to go with him to the *Messiah*. You can make it your Christmas present to him." We were joined together in a ritual. He was obviously fully aware of what came next throughout the performance. The boys were rapt in the astonishment of exploration. As a student of such things, I was following my own path of wonder at the composer's sovereign mastery of the depiction of words through music. I would suppose that all creators of music hope that some of their work will lead others to follow over and over again, like an old friend, the paths that their musical vessels open. In fact, a lot has to happen before any music, or for that matter, any art reaches that state.

Perhaps the most important factor is the skill of the creator. We humans are deeply moved by virtuosity and technical mastery. To verify this, one need look no further than the hits on the YouTube. People gravitate toward perfection. Like a slam dunk executed with perfect élan, the reward for the viewer is often only momentary and we have no need to go back to it.

People also gravitate to the new, but mostly newness in the context of the old. So a composer such as Beethoven, renowned as the exemplar of the tormented artist, moves us not so much by his message, as by the effortless mastery of his complex language and by the originality of his thought, both of which we hear with ever more refined pleasure after repeated hearings.

Speaking of Beethoven, the early 19th century German polymath ETA Hoffman (1776 – 1822) wanted to privilege instrumental music. Hoffman was almost certainly wrong about this. In fact, music reaches the apogee of its cathartic powers when coupled with moving narrative, as in the last acts of Verdi's *Othello* or Puccini's *Madame Butterfly.* Who among us can hold back a flood of tears as such moments? Therein, music offers us the incomparable gift of tears without the penalty of pain.

Here is what Hoffman had to say:

> When music is spoken of as an independent art, does not the term properly apply only to instrumental music, which scorns all aid, all admixture of other arts (poetry), and gives pure expression to its own peculiar artistic nature? It is the most romantic of all arts, one might almost say the only one that is genuinely romantic, since its only subject-matter is infinity. Orpheus's lyre opened the gates of Orcus. Music reveals to man an unknown realm, a world quite separate from the outer sensual world surrounding him, a world in which he leaves behind all precise feelings in order to embrace an inexpressible longing. . . .[1]

While I may not feel comfortable with Hoffman's veneration of instrumental music expressed in this quote taken from his well-known review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, the second part of the quote offers an admittedly romantic explanation of the ineffable in music. All of us who delight in sitting down to an evening of chamber music, or to a symphony concert will understand that. Indeed, the ideas I have been expressing so far are themselves influenced by Hoffman's romanticism.

On the other hand, a composer such as Bach, although certainly aware of the potential, will not have considered it essential that his music should be repeated beyond the occasion which called it forth in the first place. I wonder what he would have made of the devotion to his

music that now exists. It is so universally understood to be logically and deeply stimulating that a concert bearing his imprimatur will attract large audiences, even when many of the pathways are being explored for the first time. I wonder too what he would have made of the notion of a canon of great music, or great literature, or the canon of any art form. However, anyone who has given equal time to both knows in his heart that there is something profoundly more worthy of repeated contemplation in a Bach cantata than in a cover of a song by Brittany Spears, regardless of what the new philistines may have to say on the subject. Nonetheless, Bach saw himself as a composer of occasional music and he dedicated himself with consummate craft to that work.

Is this then another part of the way of the composer: to write occasional music with as much craft as possible, and to leave it to the audience, the performers, and those weird modern interlopers, the marketers, to decide which of their musical pathways we will learn to love? Leaving out the marketers, that is likely pretty close to the way composers such as Bach or Mozart would have defined the way of the composer. Craft is leavened unpredictably by genius, but in the end any composer must write enough music to gain an intimate feeling for his or her own musical personality. It is another of those inexplicable qualities of music that, eventually, no two musical personalities are exactly alike. Each inevitably reflects the individual character of a unique composer, and, I would say, also the rhythm of the composers speech. This means that Leonard Cohen's music sounds as it does because he spoke English and Johnny Hallyday's efforts to capture a similar quality does not sound quite the same, because his language was French.

So, you ask of me, "Do you claim to be a composer, and do you then know your own musical language?" I answer a qualified yes to both these questions. Certainly, I have written a great deal of music and have a fairly clear understanding of the idiosyncrasies of my musical style. Circumstances of my career led me to write mostly concert music. I am sure that I would have been as happy writing religious music, music for the lyric stage, movie music, or popular radio music, for example. Oh well, contemporary composers tend to be specialists. I think that my career decidedly missed the heyday of concert music, which was probably from

around 1700 – 1950.

Composers of my generation have spent a great deal of time rooting around in the complexities of serial technique, or in its polar opposite, the blandness of minimalism, or lost in an unrelenting storm of close dissonance, all in the name of absolute music, or in the expectation of an achieved newness – two very romantic notions. For my part, I have not wanted to give up on the musical strategies that make Mozart's music so perdurably popular. Accordingly, I will be overjoyed if some of my melodies are deemed memorable; I have tried to find new ways to privilege dissonance, without having to rely strictly on the common practice techniques of tension and release; I value clear orchestrations based upon the overtone series; and I have not been afraid to juxtapose widely differing musical styles, especially if they may be held together by textual or narrative devices.

The widespread refusal to acknowledge the normative expectations of an audience for "new music," has, I think, damaged the cause of concert music. The categorization of contemporary music as "new music" suggests an unhealthy regard for the quality of newness. The reification of newness is not *ipso facto* a good thing, and it is rare. Music, written in the interests of sounding contemporary and relevant, in the style of Gyorgi Ligeti, for example, is no less a copy than something written in the style of Sir Arthur Sullivan. It seems to me that we should expect from the composers of the future a mastery of as many parts of the universe of music as possible. We will then admire them for their skill and imagination in drawing upon this infinite resource to lead us down pathways that we will want to travel over and over again. Just as verbal language is not going to escape from meaning any time soon, and it will be thousands of generations before we have moved beyond our earthly habitation, so music is not likely to win clear of the restrictions of the overtone series and/or the idea of beauty.

My own reason for writing music had a lot to do with the fact that I found the process helpful in understanding the work of those composers whose music I wanted to comprehend, perform, and enjoy. However, if I were to advise a young musician as to how to proceed along the pilgrimage of the composer, I would tell him to write as much music as possible for every occasion that presents itself, always with the object of a deeper

understanding of his craft; I would recommend that he seek opportunities to create music where consummate craft is demanded; I would tell him that personal expression in a young artist is vastly overrated – it will come as craft is mastered; and I would tell him to lay aside any fear of repeating the past and to draw inspiration from that which, after much reflection, most deeply moves him.

Endnotes

[1] See *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (Leipzig), 1810, trans. Martyn Clarke. In David Charlton, ed., *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 96–7, 98.

Way of the Lakota

Martin Brokenleg
Wanbli Wakita (Sicangu Lakota)

The English title for this article is a good translation of a vital Lakota concept, *Lakol Wicoh'an kin,* the Lakota Way. This *Lakol Wicoh'an* is not a set of rules and certainly not one rule for everyone at all times. The *Lakol Wicoh'an* is not in writing nor is it in the possession of one person. It is the living tradition of the entire Lakota Nation. Some of it comes from revelations, some of it from the experience of living on the northern prairies of this Turtle Island of North America. Certain families or communities carry some of this tradition. This living tradition comes in the form of visions, songs, stories, didactic teaching, daily customs, and mainly in the form of a tradition of how to do things, the protocol that gives one the experiential learning of how to live as a Lakota.

My experiential learning of the Lakota Way goes back to my paternal grandfather. He was ninety-nine when he died. I was seven. He was a medicine man and a horse trainer. Our family name comes from him. He was in his 50s before he saw white people in person. As a child I listened to elders who were at The Little Big Horn the day Custer was killed in 1876. I knew adults whose spouses were killed at Wounded Knee in 1890. My family taught and lived the Lakota Way. I could not help but learn it.

The Lakota

The Lakota Nation is known in our other two dialects as the Dakota, or Nakota people. The words are the same but are pronounced differently due only to the differences in dialects. The governments of Canada and the USA have called our nation the Sioux. Our name for ourselves is Lakota, Dakota, or Nakota, depending on the dialect of the speaker.

What does the name mean? What people call themselves tells us what they value and how they see themselves. The Lakota concept of a place of perfect harmony of relationships is expressed by the word, *Wolakota*. This

is the place where everything relates to all other entities, as they should. In this place of *Wolakota,* all human beings are in good relationship but so are they in relationship to all plants, animals, stars, winds, celestial bodes, and the things of the spirit world. When all of these things are in good relationship, it is the place of *Wolakota.* By calling ourselves *Lakota Kin*, we are saying that we are the people of this balanced and harmonious state where we are in good relationship with all other things. Being in good relationship is the primary Lakota value and the goal of existence for the entire nation.

Design of this essay

A people are defined by their culture. My definition of culture is that it consists of a pattern of group behavior exemplified in artifacts, action, speech, and thought in a form, which can be taught and learned. Lakota artifacts are described and portrayed in historical texts by historians and anthropologists. Lakota tools, clothing, weapons, and tipis abound in museums and art galleries. Material culture is the most obvious and easily-identified aspects of Lakota culture. Later items from the horse culture days of the 19th century are probably the most popular items.

Physical Culture

Some details in physical culture are interesting even though they are not necessarily the most important dynamics in Lakota life. Over the 19th and 20th centuries, Lakota garments move from being painted buffalo and deer hide to being adorned with trade beads. Still later, articles of clothing are cloth adored with cloth ribbon and occasional buttons and beads. The reason for this change is simply that cloth and trade items were easily acquired and could be used with little preparation work compared to leather hides from elk, deer, and bison. Most human communities gravitate toward less work and the Lakota fit that pattern.

In the latter half of the 19th century, the American flag appears in painted adornments and in beadwork designs. This decorative motif seems incongruous in a time when an American military campaign against the Lakota and their allies intensifies. Some anthropologists image this as an attempt to placate military powers or may even be a capitulation to the

American forces when it is actually not for those reasons at all. Lakota thinking is fascinated with power and how it can be acquired and used. The American flag seems to give power to those who carry it and so *Lakotapi* assume they can gather some of its power by depicting it on their clothing and weapons. In a similar way, dragonflies are very difficult to swat. Their dodging ability keeps them safe from human swats. Knowing this, Lakota warriors often beaded a dragonfly silhouette on their clothing or weapons assuming this would protect the wearer from being hit by bullets or other weapons. The American flag is used as an amulet of power.

Virtually any aspect of Lakota material culture can be analyzed to identify Lakota philosophy. One can examine a tipi and see revelation and the teachings from *Pte San Wi*n, the White Buffalo Calf Woman who has revealed much to the Lakota. The last time she came, she brought the prayer pipe and she gave the Lakota many instructions about how to live well on this earth. Among those teachings, she said the power of women was in their task to uphold the community by providing sound family and home life. This is the duty of the poles of a tipi, to uphold the entirety, to cover those who are sheltered beneath. The White Buffalo Calf Woman taught that the role of the Lakota man was to provide for the community and to protect it. The tipi cover is that protection but it relies on the strength of the poles, the womenfolk, to complete its task. Likewise, Lakota men provide and protect the community but this can be accomplished only with the help of the women.

Historic Lakota society was very mobile. All goods had to be necessary for survival and no extra items could be kept in a nomadic lifestyle. All Lakota arts are then incorporated into practical items. Tipi covers displayed the accomplishments of the man. All articles of clothing were decorated with symbolic arts including footwear, belts, dresses, shirts, and amulet protectors. Weapons and tools were artistically adorned as well.

Actions in culture

The actions area of Lakota culture includes all the larger ceremonies of social and religious life. The Sun Dance is probably the most complex religious ceremony. Many other smaller ceremonies are often a part of the Sundance ceremony. The ear piercing ceremony which marked a

toddler as a Lakota and opened his or her ears to spiritual teachings is a part of the offerings the adult make who are not directly involved in the sun dance. Other Lakota ceremonies such as The Pipe Ceremony, The Pipe Fast, the Womanhood ceremony are all outlined in other historical documents. None of these ceremonies are pictured nor are they described in cookbook detail. One of the reasons is that there are a variety of ways they can be done, depending on what was revealed to the leader of the ceremony. Another reason to avoid a specific description is so they are not misappropriated and used in ways other than what has been revealed to Lakota people as appropriate.

Some general themes emerge from the ceremonial tradition, which will be more fully described in the consideration of Lakota thought below. Still, some themes are obvious.

Ceremonial actions reveal a Lakota understanding that a person can have a relationship with animate beings or inanimate objects for the benefit of the Lakota. We can speak to and receive help from stones, thunder, animals, and the spirits. All of these relationships are brought into being and maintained through reciprocity. The dynamic of something going over and something coming back is the action of reciprocity.

When a Lakota gathers sage for a ceremony and she leaves a handful of tobacco to thank the sage nation for their gift, that is the action of reciprocity. When a Lakota hunter takes the life of a deer for food, he leaves the blood of the animal on the ground in thanks. This is the action of reciprocity. At any ceremony, a Lakota is careful and meticulous about attention of the details of ceremony and the accuracy of ritual since this action of reciprocity will enhance the favour of the spirits being related to.

The outcome of ceremonies demonstrates the Lakota assumption that like brings about like. If a person of good will takes part in an action and means well by it, good is the outcome. If someone injures a member of my family, we can, after an appropriate time, retaliate in return since this would bring about injury to the offender. Like brings about like in a kind of negative reciprocity.

Purposeful actions are patterns of behavior that define the Lakota nation, from gestures to communicate with other persons to complex ceremonial action to communicate with the spirit world.

Speech and culture

Anthropologists consider speech as the carrier of culture. One can perceive only those concepts he has words for. Of course one can see the world only the way her language permits her to see it. Lakota vocabulary has many words to describe the appearance and arrangement of a tipi but almost no words for modern appliances, except for those invented descriptions that have common acceptance.

Learning the Lakota language can be done for vocabulary words and some phrases. Most non-Lakota speakers find the 27 systems for conjugating verbs too difficult to learn easily. Still, reality exists in language and Lakota has expressions and understandings that cannot be easily transferred into English.

An example of a concept central to Lakota culture but complex to translate is the concept of *wakan.* Early missionaries were usually the first translators, and they typically understood *wakan* as meaning "sacred," in English. *Lakotapi* spoke of many things being *wakan*, that seem not to be sacred. Thunder was *wakan*, and so were twins, gay people, amulets, and stones. Most contemporary translators wuld say the English word "powerful" is the best translation of *wakan.*

Lakota language is the best carrier of culture, and it is such a vast area of the Lakota way that it must have its own consideration beyond the scope of this article.

Thought and culture

The thought world of a nation is the most important level and yet it is the most difficult, since one cannot see thought but must assume it from actions, explanations, and choices of a person or a community.

The most spoken Lakota words at ceremonies is the phrase, *Mitakuye Owas' in*. Literally, "my relatives you-all [are]." "All my relatives," being the usual translation, or more rarely, "You-all are my relatives." This phrase is spoken at all ceremonial actions and frequently at the end of an oration. Who are "All my relatives?" All the people gathered around are my relatives and so are all the animals. All the inanimate objects in the world, such as stones and trees, are my relatives and so are all the beings and forces in the

spirit world. The celestial bodies of the sun, the moon, and the stars are my relatives and so are all the natural forces such as the winds, the thunders, the tornados and hail. A Lakota is a relative to all these entities and lives out life negotiating the relationships that make life possible.

Can someone who is not Lakota understand the power of Lakota kinship? Perhaps one can understand, if one considers the traditional idea of family. Until this past century, the world understood that a family consisted of 250 to 300 people spread out over five generations. Advertising had not yet invented the artificial concept of a nuclear family.

In a Lakota family, relatives are understood in the context of their generation. A person would have a biological mother and a biological father, but they are not the only parents the person has. All of one's parents' brothers and sisters are also one's parents. Every Lakota child knows more than one mother and one father, and these are real parenting relationships. Every child is wet nursed to have the life experience of being fed by more than one mother and protected by more than one father. The terms aunt and uncle were reserved for those who married into that generation but they might also be called one's mother and father as well. That entire generation above one is a generation of parents.

The generation above that would be one's grandparents. Moreover, anyone in that generation in one's entire community is properly addressed as grandmother and grandfather. This honourific term is not restricted only to the parents of one's parents.

In one's own generation there are brothers and sisters. Those called "cousins" in English would be termed brother and sister in Lakota. They are the children of one's mothers and fathers. Lakota culture does not have "removed" cousins. If someone is in one's generation, then he or she is one's brother or sister.

The generation below one is the generation of children. One's own biological children are joined with the children others would call nieces and nephews. In the Lakota way, they are all one's children.

Moving down one more generation brings one to the generation of grandchildren. As with the generation of one's grandparents, everyone in one's community in this generation is ones grandchildren.

A Lakota *tiospaye* is this five-generation 250-300 member family. This

word for family cannot be used for a smaller unit than this. We have the word *tiwahe,* which names a household, the residents of one tipi, but that is not a family. Only the full five-generation constellation is a *tiospaye,* a family.

To function in a Lakota family requires a very high degree of social intelligence, due to the communal and interdependent relationships that exist. One must know how to negotiate conflicts and resolve disagreements that preserve the functioning of the entire family. One must also know which conflicts to negotiate and which to just leave alone. Usually it is the cohesion of the family that is the deciding factor in this consideration. *Lakotapi* think it is better to just leave come conflicts alone rather than risk turmoil and upheaval in the family.

For a Lakota who has life-long experience in this traditional idea of family, a high degree of social satisfaction is the ideal outcome. To have a lifetime of belonging experiences makes all of life worthwhile.

Successful social relationships are based on the dynamic of reciprocity. If one is going to receive from one's relatives, giving something in return insures the transaction. If one expects good things from a family member, one should return the favour. Reciprocity supports the exchange between any two parties. A Lakota family is strong as long as its members support one another in positive ways. This reciprocity enhances the mutual support family members give one another. It also enhances relationships outside the family.

Lakota kinship is not restricted only to other human beings. It extends to the other "Nations," as Lakota refer to animals, plants, spirits, and celestial bodies. This is not merely a poetic referral to an animal or other entity, but rather is the reality of the relationship, in the Lakota experience. For example, when a Lakota is in need of food and hunting is required, this action is understood to be an encounter between relatives and not that of a superior being to an inferior. Since Lakota consider all other plants and animals to exist in nations, as Lakota exist in a nation, the interaction is of equals who are relatives to one another. A hunter must be prepared to realize the seriousness of taking the life of a relative in order to survive. Prayer, ceremony, moral balance, as well as motor skills and knowledge of the relative's ways all come together on the hunt. After

spiritual preparation, the Lakota goes to an appropriate place and waits to see which relative will come to his aid. When the relative comes, the act of taking a life is accomplished with as much skill as possible so there is minimal suffering. When the relative falls, the Lakota is expected to approach with respect and gratitude, making offerings to the relative and the sacred powers for making survival possible. A similar progression occurs when plants are taken for food or medicine. Reciprocity of respect characterizes this interaction between the needy Lakota and the relatives who give their lives so we can survive.

By now, it is clear that kinship is the most sacred and valuable item in the Lakota way. No object, no sacred site, no religious ceremony matters as much to *Lakotapi* as much as kinship. Kinship defines Lakota people so much that no sense of individuation supersedes the communal identity of kinfolk. The bulk of Lakota consciousness is devoted to the requirements of kinship more than to any other value and sacred object, or any ceremonial action. Nothing is as important to us Lakota as being a good relative.

Significant Thought Patterns

In light of the importance of kinship in The Lakota Way, all other patterns of Lakota thought are not as important. Some of these patterns are unique and influential in Lakota thought but they do not approach the importance of kinship for us Lakota.

Lakota reality is a unified whole and is not divided. Since the European age of the Enlightenment, western academia has divided reality into a realm that is physical and a realm that is immaterial. The latter is sometimes thought of as spiritual and sacred, and in other settings, it is thought of as a secular realm of ideas. In either case, western thought seems to divide reality and assume that one realm does not involve the other. So, a physical object doesn't have a theology. Conversely, spiritual dynamics occur without a physical manifestation.

For us Lakota, our experience with reality has both spiritual and physical aspects at the same time. We are conscious of the colours we wear since they have spiritual implications. Our ceremonies are highly spiritual, and this is manifested in the nuanced and extravagant attention to physical detail. This is not a manifestation of a superstition but rather of

a profoundly developed sense of how the physical allows the manipulation of the spiritual realm. Another example is that Lakota elders can look at another person and determine the state of the other's soul or spirit from eyesight. This is not a possibility in western culture but it is an accurate evaluation in a Lakota world. Spirits are seen, heard, felt, smelled, and even tasted in Lakota reality. Medicine people can cause stones to move, illnesses to be healed, and protective amulets to appear. This occurs since the physical realm and the spiritual are one realm for the Lakota.

Our cultural tendency is heavily biased toward passivity. This is probably due to the heavy focus on spiritual forces, a trait common to all theological cultures around the world. *Lakotapi* are surprised when we realize that people in western culture actually believe they can change the outcome of events by interventions. Lakota people trust that outcomes will occur as they must no matter what one might do to change an outcome.

There is an inter-language sign system used by First Nations on the prairies. This allows people to communicate with one another no matter what language they speak. All the hand signs in that system focus around the mid-chest, since thinking is understood to occur in the heart, due to the holistic functioning of the heart. The Lakota word for thinking, *wowiyukcan*, means thinking with one's mind, heart, body, and spirit at the same time. Heart thinking moves easily using the tools of symbol, ceremony, protocol, and repetition. Western thought seems linear, verbal, logical, and abstract to us Lakota. It does not satisfy the working of our spirits in life.

The Lakota thought world is complex and varied. What matters most to us Lakota is the power and sacredness of kinship. Our phrase, *Mitakuye Owas'in*, All my relatives, is the best summary of the Lakota Way. It contains our highest values and the most important of our sacred ways. Kinship has caused us to survive from time immemorial.

Way of Jonathan Edwards

Richard Hall

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower – but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.
— Alfred, Lord Tennyson

The way might be a physical path to a destination. It might also be a way of life leading to a desirable goal. Aristotle outlined such a way as consisting of a life in accord with reason and virtue in order to attain the pearl beyond price of wisdom or understanding the causes of things. The earliest Christians were at first called "Followers of the Way," the Way of Christ unto salvation. Following such a way as prescribed by Aristotle or the Gospels is a means of achieving happiness or beatitude, which is the ultimate end of human life.

Jonathan Edwards, America's premier philosopher and theologian, was born at East Windsor, Connecticut, in 1703 and died at Princeton, New Jersey, in 1758. The main events of his life can be briefly told. He matriculated at Yale College in 1716. In 1722, after two years of graduate study in divinity, he went to New York City where he briefly ministered to a Presbyterian congregation. The next year he returned to Connecticut and in 1724 became a junior tutor at Yale. In 1727 he married Sarah Pierpont who was seventeen. They would have eleven children, eight girls and three boys. Then, in 1729, upon the death of Solomon Stoddard, his maternal grandfather, Edwards replaced him as the minister of the Meetinghouse in Northampton, Massachusetts, which Stoddard had served for fifty-seven years. His grandson would continue to minister there until 1750 when, ostensibly owing to a dispute over church membership (among other

reasons), Edwards was dismissed from his pastorate and betook himself and his sizeable family westward to Stockbridge, then a wilderness area, to serve as missionary to the indigenous tribes of Mohawk and Mahican Indians. In 1758 he was called to the Presidency of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University), but within weeks of assuming that office succumbed to an infection incurred by a smallpox vaccination.

From his youth on, he was enthralled by nature and brought to it a naturalist's curiosity. He was particularly fascinated by the so-called ballooning spider (*Orbitelariae*), and wanted to know why it appeared to fly wingless. He observed and collected specimens and noticed that they extruded the finest filaments of web from their abdomens, and when these were of sufficient length, the wind would lift them and the spiders up into the air where they floated until hooked to trees and bushes. At the age of sixteen, he wrote a short essay on the subject, "Of Insects," which was deemed an important contribution to entomology by the nineteenth-century pioneer in this field, Henry McCook.

However, his ever inquisitive mind probed deeper than natural science. During his adolescence he addressed that perennial and most fundamental question of philosophy as to why there is something rather nothing in another essay, "Of Being," dating from 1721. His answer in brief is that we cannot even conceive of a state of pure nothingness; whatever conception we may come up with will still be about *something,* however insubstantial. It is impossible to rid our minds of every idea so as to think of nothing. Since nothingness is impossible of conception, *something* must be, which is mind, but obviously not finite human minds since the world can be easily conceived of without them – for most of earth's history there were none. What must be is the infinite or divine mind, or God. One cannot conceive of a world without that Mind which creates and contains within itself all things or ideas. Minds, infinite and finite, and the ideas they contain are the sole reality. Some regard this as a form of metaphysical idealism reminiscent of George Berkeley's (though Edwards formulated it independently of his).

As was natural for the son of a Congregationalist pastor, Edwards was greatly exercised by the things of religion. "There is no question whatsoever, that is of greater importance to mankind," he would later

write, than "What is the nature of true religion?"[1] In his youth Edwards had a classic experience of conversion which in maturity he recounted in his *Personal Narrative*. Though Edwards' conversion did not change the course of history as did the conversions of St. Paul, St. Augustine, Luther, and John Wesley, nevertheless it had a decisive impact on his own life and the course of American religion. Thereafter Edwards' theme was the absolute sovereignty of God; he held a conception of the world in which all things and events were ordered by God according to his wisdom. God, as Mind, is the sole ultimate reality, the most real thing there is, on whom the whole of the created order depends for its existence. This theme runs as a diapason[2] throughout all his works. In his polemical mission to defend the divine sovereignty against those who would deny its veracity and further to convince skeptics of its truth, Edwards mined the various resources of revelation, the natural sciences, and philosophy. The results are those works that have made his reputation in theology and philosophy – *Religious Affections*, *Freedom of the Will*, *Original Sin*, *God's End in Creation*, and *True Virtue* (to give their abbreviated titles).

Now from his life and life's work, what can we glean as to Edwards' Way? It is, in a word, "holistic." Holism is evident in his concept of mind, in his complementary conceptions of the religious and moral forms of life, and in his approach to nature. I shall begin with his holistic concept of mind, which is fundamental and informs other aspects of his holism.

According to the faculty psychology inherited by Edwards, the soul or mind is divisible into distinct faculties or departments. There is what is variously known as the understanding, reason, or intellect, that is, the thinking part; there are the emotions, the feelings of pleasure and pain, of love, hate, and joy, the affective part; and there is the will through which we act, the volitional or active part. Now Edwards, significantly, does not conceive of these faculties as substances or parts of a substance but as capacities, thereby anticipating the functionalist psychology of William James. Further, he reduces the number of these faculties to only two: the one, by which the mind is "*capable* [italics mine] of perception and speculation," is the understanding; the other, by which the mind "does not behold things, as an indifferent unaffected spectator, but either as liking or disliking, pleased or displeased, approving or rejecting," is generically

called the "inclination," or the "will" if it issues in actions, or the "heart" with respect to the mind in the exercise of this faculty. For Edwards, the emotions (affections and passions) are not distinct from the will but differ from it "only in the liveliness and sensibleness of exercise."[3] Edwards expresses the intimacy between the understanding and the inclination (will/heart) in the following equation from his *Freedom of the Will*: "the will always is as the greatest apparent good is."[4] That is, the mind cannot help but be inclined towards what at the time appears to the understanding as the good which is the most agreeable or pleasing. An object's appearing good to the mind is equivalent to the mind's choosing it, where the heart leads, the will follows.

Edwards, then, conceives of the soul or mind holistically in which its capacities of understanding and inclination are wholly integrated. Any object of our awareness will ineluctably draw or repel us to some degree, however minutely; we cannot remain affectively neutral or indifferent to anything in our experience; we are, inescapably, in a continual state of affective and volitional responsiveness. Edwards' concept of mind therefore is voluntaristic.

This holistic concept of the soul or mind informs Edwards' Way as he describes it in religious terms in his *Religious Affections*. True religion for him begins with an idea of God's supreme attribute, namely, his transcendent beauty or holiness or benevolence. But is not enough that we have merely what he calls a "notional" understanding of that idea, giving us "speculative" knowledge of it; in other words, it is not enough to know that God *is* holy and what that means theoretically and abstractly. We must also have crucially a spiritual understanding or what he calls a "sense of the heart" or sensible knowledge of God's holiness. That is, the contemplation of it should elicit a frisson of delight in us. Edwards aptly illustrates the difference between these two kinds of knowledge with an analogy to honey. Knowing the chemical composition of honey and the manner of its production, and knowing *of* its sweetness without having tasted it, is speculative knowledge of it. But having actually tasted and savored the sweetness of honey, its most important attribute, is sensible knowledge of it. The sense of the heart, "wherein the mind don't only speculate and behold, but relishes and feels,"[5] involves both a correct intellectual

apprehension of God's holiness as well as the appropriate delight taken in it – it is, in brief, an intuition both cognitive and affective.

Moreover, a sensible knowledge of God's holiness, according to Edwards, engenders a "fervent love to God," the "fountain of all the affections," from which "will arise an intense hatred and abhorrence of sin, fear of sin, and a dread of God's displeasure, gratitude to God for his goodness, complacence and joy in God when God is graciously and sensibly present, and grief when he is absent, and a joyful hope when a future enjoyment of God is expected, and fervent zeal for the glory of God." "True religion," Edwards affirms, "in great part, consists in holy affections." The reason is threefold: First, without the affection of pleasure there could be no sense of the heart to receive and rejoice in God's holiness. Second, religion that does not engage us emotionally and volitionally is no religion at all. As Edwards puts it, "If we ben't in good earnest in religion, and our will and inclination be not strongly exercised, we are nothing." Third, the affections are the motives of our actions. "Such is man's nature," notes Edwards, "that he is very inactive, any otherwise than he is influenced by some affection" since affections are "the springs that set men agoing." And Edwards esteems certain actions, "Christian practice," as "the greatest sign of grace."[6] True religion, then, involves the *whole* person, engaging one's reason and emotions and manifesting itself in behavior. Religion which is purely an intellectual and ceremonial affair with no emotional involvement – no joy in God and love for neighbor – is, as Edwards puts it, all light without heat. Religion which is highly charged emotionally but with little or no thought behind it is all heat without light. But true religion is informed by a right apprehension of divine things and animated by the appropriate emotions issuing in good works. True religion, for Edwards, is an affair equally involving head, heart, and hand.

Edwards' Way later took an ethical turn in his posthumously published dissertation, *True Virtue*. Here his holism is evident in his inclusive conception of the moral order. He conceived of that order as the totality of persons including pre-eminently and centrally the person of the Godhead. His term for it is "being in general." (In a footnote, he intriguingly suggests that even non-human beings qualify for membership in the moral order because they are possessed of a modicum of understanding and will, the

two qualifications sufficient for membership.) Edwards affirms that our ultimate loyalty should not be to any finite part of general being – not to a particular sub-group such as a tribe, a party, or even a nation – but to the whole of it. His definition of "true virtue" is "benevolence to being in general." Anything less than that is false virtue or even vice because a loyalty to a particular group may conflict with loyalty to the whole; exclusively promoting the interest of one particular faction may undermine that of all. He even scores commonly accepted virtues as love of country. Edwards, with ever a sharp eye for hypocrisy and detecting the reality beneath the veil of appearance, reduced patriotism to a form of self-love on a grandiose scale. Of course we are partial to those of our own group, a disposition that even animals exhibit. Moreover, patriotism can motivate destructive acts. "Hence, among the Romans," Edwards observes, "love to their country was the highest virtue; though this affection of theirs so much extolled, was employed as it were for the destruction of the rest of mankind."[7]

Now Edwards does not disallow particular loyalties as being virtuous as long as they do not interfere with our loyalty to the whole system of beings. Put another way, the interests of particular beings or groups thereof ought to be co-ordinate or harmonious with, and ultimately promote, the inclusive interests of general being. Our love for any being or group of beings must needs be proportionate to their worthiness consisting of the amount of being (intelligence) they partake of and the degree of benevolence to the system that they themselves exercise. The interest or well-being of the general system should always be the polestar of our moral orientation. Further, this universal benevolence to being in general must be thoroughly disinterested; it must be not for the sake of any presumed benefit that might redound to one's self, but solely out of love and the sake of the general system of being.

Edwards' holism is no less evident in his treatment of nature. It was for him a subject for precise scientific observation and explanation. He had the scientist's curiosity about the workings of the natural world. In a notebook, "Things to be Considered an[d] Written fully about," he lists the physical phenomena he wished to investigate. This list fascinates with the sheer variety of things he hopes to investigate – gravity, stars, respiration, thunder, lightning, etc.

Above all else Edwards was fascinated by light and colors which were fit objects for his holistic way of thinking. He studied them scientifically, his discussion being informed by his avid reading of Newton's *Optics*, the then *locus classicus* of the physics of light. He thus hoped "To shew, from Isaac Newton's principles of light and colors, why the sky is blue; the sun not perfectly white, as it would be if there were no atmosphere, but something inclining to a yellow even at noonday; why the sun is yellow rising and setting, and sometimes, in smoky weather, of a blood red; why the clouds and the atmosphere that is near the horizon appear red and yellow before sun rising and after setting; why mountains at a distance are blue, etc." But light and its colors are for him much more than objects for dispassionate investigation; they are no less things of inestimable beauty upon which he dilates. He analyzes whiteness and the several colors engendered by it into varieties of mathematically quantifiable proportion or harmony:

> That mixture of all sorts of rays, which we call white, is a proportionate mixture that is harmonious (as Sir Isaac Newton has shewn) to each particular simple color and contains in it some harmony or other that is delightful. And each sort of rays play a distinct tune to the soul, besides those lovely mixtures that are found in nature – those beauties, how lovely, in the green of the face of the earth, in all manner of colors in flowers, the color of the skies, and lovely tinctures of the morning and evening.[8]

Yet he does not stop there. Light and its colors are beautiful symbols of divine things. Thus he notes that "White, which comprehends all other colors, is made use of in Scripture often to signify holiness, which comprehends all moral goodness and virtue," and "the beautiful variety of the colors of light was designed as a type of the various beauties and graces of the Spirit of God."[9] Indeed, Edwards regarded the whole of nature as a vast "book" of what he called "types" or symbols importing moral and spiritual truths, thereby anticipating Emerson who considered that "particular natural facts are symbols of particular spiritual facts."[10]

Approached holistically as Edwards did, natural phenomena are to be investigated scientifically, admired and enjoyed for their beauty and sublimity, and deciphered for their spiritual meanings, thus making them

objects of both speculative and sensible knowledge, and thereby giving full play to the speculative understanding and the sense of the heart.

Edwards' Way was one shaped by an affective love of God and creation.

Endnotes

[1] Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. by John E. Smith, II (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 84.

[2] Diapason is the just octive in Pythagorean organ tuning, a grand swelling burst of harmony.

[3] *Ibid*., 96.

[4] Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. by Paul Ramsey, I (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 142.

[5] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 272.

[6] *Ibid*., 108, 95, 99, 101, 406.

[7] Jonathan Edwards, *The Nature of True Virtue* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1960) pp. 3, 88.

[8] Jonathan Edwards, *Scientific and Philosophical Writings,* in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards,* ed. by Wallace E. Anderson, VI (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 221, 306.

[9] Jonathan Edwards, *Typological Writings*, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. by Harry S. Stout, XI (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 69, 67,

[10] Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature," in *Nature, Addresses and Lectures*, I (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1903), 25.

The Way of A Jewish Mystic: Recycling Creation

Daniel Maoz

Recycling Creation

Creation has been understood by many as "something from nothing." The Holy and Blessed One spoke all things into being and saw that Creation was good. But shortly after this, the same Creator declared that what had been brought into existence from nothing was a mistake.

Judaism believes that Jews are called to repair this damaged world. Jewish mysticism believes that it is possible to take the various creative sparks from Creation and return them to the Source, thus neutralizing them from the damage that they can bring about.

If Creation brought about something from nothing, then Jewish mysticism seeks to transport the world's brokenness from something to nothing, from the world in which we live to the world in which the Almighty resides.

Bob Dylan – A Modern Jewish Mystic

Bob Dylan has been given many labels from the beginning of his musical and poetic career in the early 1960s until today. His music is known all around the world – "Blowin' in the Wind," "The Times They Are A'Changin'," "With God on Our Side." Dylan has been called the voice of an entire generation, a prophet of his times, a musical genius, a poet and, now, a Jewish mystic. I consider Bob Dylan to be a Jewish mystic because of the way he has lived his life over the past half dozen decades and especially because of the way he explains and interprets life in his poetry. For me Bob Dylan provides an excellent example of "the way of a Jewish mystic." And I hope that by the end of this short essay I will have given a clear idea of what a Jewish mystic is as well as my reasons for choosing Bob Dylan as my example. By taking a song that Dylan wrote about ten years ago

as a reference point to explain what Jewish mysticism is, I will be able to explain different expressions of Jewish mysticism. If you are familiar with other mysticisms – Sufi, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu to name a few – you will be able to see similarities and differences for yourself by comparing them to Jewish mysticism.

Ain't Talkin'

Bob Dylan has been writing poems and setting much but not all of his poetry to music for the past 60 years. He has written well over 500 songs and has recorded many of them in New York. In 2008 he recorded an album, *Modern Times* that ended with the song, "Ain't Talkin'." Its lyrics are the most personalized mystical expression I know. "Ain't Talkin'" is also one of the most concise summaries of the way of a Jewish mystic. I will walk through the song's verses and choruses in the order in which Dylan wrote them as a means to cover briefly the large and complex topic of Jewish mysticism.

Dylan has many times said in interviews that his writings are all about himself and his own life experiences. So by understanding the words to this poem we are not only getting to learn about Jewish mysticism and the way of a Jewish mystic, we will also get to learn about Bob Dylan as a Jewish mystic poet of our own times.

The Mystical Garden

> As I walked out tonight in the mystic garden
> The wounded flowers were dangling from the vines
> I was passing by yon cool and crystal fountain
> Someone hit me from behind.

Paradise is Jewish heaven. The Hebrew *pardes* means "orchard," "garden," or "park" – a reminder of when God created heaven and earth, vegetation, the sun, the moon, and the stars, and all living beings including Adam and Eve in a garden called Eden. The mystic visits Paradise, a mystic garden, where heaven and earth meet. From this vantage point, the mystic can view a crystal fountain in its eternal glory (heaven) as well as wounded

flowers in the midst of mortal life (earth). The mystic is profoundly struck by the contrast of earthly brokenness and a glorious heaven.

Silence

> Ain't talkin', just walkin'
> Through this weary world of woe
> Heart burnin', still yearnin'
> No one on earth would ever know.

The deepest mystical encounter with God comes, not with a foundation-rocking earthquake, not with all-consuming fire, not in deafening thunder. The prophet Elijah learned (1 Kings 19.11-13) that God self-reveals by complete silence. Jewish legend further says that when God gave Moses the Torah, instruction for Israel that included the 10 commandments, at Mount Sinai, "Nature was silent and at rest when the Decalogue was proclaimed on Sinai. No animal made a sound, no fowl flew, the very angels kept silent, and desisted from praises before God. The billows of the sea became calm and at rest, and no creature uttered a sound while the words were uttered by the living God saying, I am the Lord your God." (Exodus Rabbah 29.9) Silence characterizes the way of a mystic who listens for peace, direction, strength, and God's presence.

One summer I accompanied a youth group to Mammoth Caves in Kentucky. As we walked into caves deep below the surface of the earth, the air temperature decreased and our flashlights soon became our last remaining means to see in the almost perfect darkness. At the innermost point of our walk, our guide asked us to stand completely still, remain as quiet as possible, and turn out our flashlights. The darkness was striking. But what struck me most was the feelings I began to have because of the complete silence of the situation. I began to hear my heart beat and, with every breath, I could sense so many bodily activities. I realized then that we live in a world so cluttered with distracting sounds that when we find ourselves experiencing complete silence it can be almost deafening.

The heart of the mystic burns with passion for holiness. Overwhelmed and exhausted from living in a broken world, the mystic is conflicted

between wanting to remain in this ruined world to contribute positive change and yearning to leave this world to rest in God's presence, totally free of all weariness. No one on earth can fully know a mystic's experience in this way.

Repair

> Now I'm all worn down by weepin
> My eyes are filled with tears, my lips are dry
> If I catch my opponents ever sleepin'
> I'll just slaughter them where they lie

The mystic can become emotionally exhausted from having to live with the terrible contrast between divine holiness which the heart passionately longs for and the deeply discouraging reality of life on earth where perfection, healing, and wholeness remain out of reach for even the most devoutly committed person. Tears and constant weeping, whether outwardly physical or inwardly emotional, are characteristic of the mystic's experience.

Jewish mysticism teaches that when God created the earth and all that is in it, every created thing contained a spark of God within itself. As these created elements failed, wore out, or became broken, the mystic was called upon to find and capture them, one divine spark at a time, and return each one to God's presence where they would be restored to their original glory. Once restored, the mystic was to return each spark back to earth. By doing so, the mystic participates in a Jewish obligation to repair the world. This sacred commitment to fix the world is called *Tikkun Olam*. The voyage taken by the mystic to have "broken" sparks repaired is called transcendence and the actual departing from and returning to this world, though seeming timeless, is known as a transcendent moment. The mystic will repeat this journey many times to restore as many damaged sparks as possible.

Plague

Ain't talkin', just walkin'
Through the world mysterious and vague
Heart burnin', still yearnin'
Walking through the cities of the plague

As the mystic walks through the broken world, fully aware of how wonderful life could be when completely repaired, there is a sense of mystery. The reason for such sadness and pain escapes the mindful mystic. Why would people choose death instead of life? The mystic also realizes that the world is infected with diseases – conceit, greed, pride, gluttony, to name a few. Yet when people are born into a world of pain and suffering, many see life with all of its troubles and sorrow as "normal." If we do not know of a better way then we will settle into the brokenness and accept pain and suffering as the way that life can and should be. As the world gets more dysfunctional people do not expect to be able to do anything to repair it – in fact the whole situation can be so large and overwhelming that people are discouraged and depressed. The mystic, even with a sense of knowing what can be and an understanding of how to act in order to repair the world, rightly views the world as having a plague of which it is not even aware. It is a plague that can engulf cities.

Contemplation

The whole world is filled with speculation
The whole wide world which people say is round
They will tear your mind away from contemplation
They will jump on your misfortune when you're down

No matter what form of mysticism, whether Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or other, the discipline of contemplation is central to the way of a mystic. Taking the time to reflect on life instead of getting caught up in the blur of daily activities – allows the mystic to remember how things

could be/should be instead of falling prey to the tyranny of urgency. The mystic knows that taking time to think/contemplate, to connect with what is whole and true, is not a waste of time but rather a time to avoid waste.

The mystic has a strong sense of how life can and should be based on an internal ethical and moral compass. Without this strong knowledge of good and bad, the world has nothing better to go on than coincidence and speculation. People without a moral compass are threatened by someone who seems to know what is right and wrong. They will try and knock a mystic off the track of silent reflection at best, and even seek to harm anyone who makes them uncomfortable with their immoral choices at worst. And when a mystic experiences hardship, they will be among the first to enjoy the mystic's adversity, adding to it however possible. The way of a mystic is fraught with danger.

Need

> Ain't talkin', just walkin'
> Eatin' hog-eyed grease in a hog-eyed town
> Heart burnin' – still yearnin'
> Someday you'll be glad to have me around

An old expression, "hindsight is twenty-twenty," means that once we know the outcome of something we can "see" plainly how obvious the outcome is now even though beforehand the outcome didn't seem so clear.

The world doesn't appreciate the morality of a mystic while the mystic is living and reminding it of the missteps it takes. But when the mystic is no longer around to be a reminder of the consequences of our actions, the world, all of a sudden, realizes the value of the mystic and will think back on the days when it was glad to have the mystic around. "You never miss your water till your well runs dry." (Bob Dylan, "Let's Stick Together," *Down in the Groove*, 1998)

Danger

They will crush you with wealth and power
Every waking moment you could crack
I'll make the most of one last extra hour
I'll avenge my father's death then I'll step back

Part of the mystic's task is to explain the situation in which the world finds itself, including a clear picture of why the world finds poor choices so tempting. Wealth is, the Bible says, a root of all kinds of evil. Power is another elusive lie by which the world is tempted. The mystic cautions that in order to achieve vast wealth and dominant power that God has not ordained, a person needs to get on a tread mill that will almost reduce them to tears. But, once again, the mystic sees this as an opportunity to avenge God the Father and reduce the enemy to the same ineffectual level that the enemy wishes to reduce creation's sparks. Once the mystic has redeemed the time and allowed for one more spark to be renewed, the mystic can then step back out of the battle for that particular brokenness of creation.

Misery

Ain't talkin', just walkin'
Hand me down my walkin' cane
Heart burnin', still yearnin'
Got to get you out of my miserable brain

Traditional Judaism teaches that every Jew has a good side (Yetzer Tov) and a bad side (Yetzer HaRa) from which to make life choices. A Jewish mystic is someone who characteristically chooses the good side and is pained at even the existence of a bad side co-existing within. From the Yetzer HaRa come thoughts of temptation and wrong-headedness. In the daily walk of a Jewish mystic, the heart and mind silently yearn for God and desire to do what is good.

Code

All my loyal and much-loved companions
They approve of me and share my code
I practice a faith that's been long abandoned
Ain't no altars on this long and lonesome road

Throughout history, Jewish mysticism has been treasured by a very few mystics with its practices and knowledge being treated like a well-guarded secret. To study mysticism, the ancients required that a person first be no younger than 40 years old. They must be married. And they need to be masters of the Talmud, the Oral Torah given with the Written Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai. The special knowledge and unique practices of a Jewish mystic were also kept under careful watch in each generation. There was a mystic's code that protected this prized information and insured that only those who could handle it in safety and for holy purposes would actually access it.

Related to this, Jewish tradition speaks of there being 36 righteous people living in every generation throughout history. Just as Moses interceded on behalf of humanity in order that God would not destroy the earth completely, these 36 righteous individuals' sole purpose on earth is to insure that human existence is justified so that great disasters and judgments do not befall humanity. They are not religious, per se. In other words, they are faith-based rather than sacrifice-based, as they are said to have existed long before altars were commanded to be built in worship of God.

Cost

Ain't talkin', just walkin'
My mule is sick, my horse is blind
Heart burnin', still yearnin'
Thinkin' 'bout that gal I left behind

In this chorus, I am reminded of a scene from *Fiddler on the Roof* where Tevye is preparing for the Sabbath with a final milk delivery run and his horse throws a shoe, making it impossible for him to continue burdening his horse with the load of milk; so he puts the yoke on his own shoulders and completes his deliveries by being the beast of burden while his horse limps behind the milk wagon. The mystic gets no earthly help for the mystical mission to repair the world and intercede on behalf of an unrighteous world. And the mystic is under obligation not only to renounce material affection but also to consider every human love pale in comparison with a passionate love for God.

Chariot

> It's bright in the heavens and the wheels are flying
> Fame and honor never seem to fade
> The fire's gone out but the light is never dying
> Who says I can't get heavenly aid?

One way of a Jewish mystic is called *merkavah mysticism*. Here the mystic receives a vision of a heavenly chariot (Hebrew, *merkavah*), as did the prophet Ezekiel. His was a vision of "the likeness of the glory of the Lord" on a chariot composed of four living creatures that had the likeness of a human bearing faces of an ox, a lion, an eagle, and a human (Ezekiel 1.1-28, especially verses 9-14). God's "throne" is the mystic's singular source of support.

"I could see that there were four wheels beside the cherubs, one wheel beside each of the cherubs; as for the appearance of the wheels, they gleamed like the beryl stone. In appearance, the four had the same form, as if there were two wheels cutting through each other. And when they moved, each could move in the direction of any of its four quarters; they did not veer as they moved. They [cherubs] moved in the direction in which one of the heads faced, without turning as they moved. Their entire bodies – backs, hands, and wings – and the wheels, the wheels of the four of them, were covered all over with eyes. It was these wheels that I had heard called, 'the wheelwork.' Each one had four

faces: One face was a cherub's face, the second a human face, the third a lion's face, and the fourth an eagle's face." (Ezekiel 10.9-14; *TANAKH: The Jewish Bible*)

Transferal

Ain't talkin', just walkin'
Carrying a dead man's shield
Heart burnin', still yearnin'
Walkin' with a toothache in my heel

Just as John Bunyan's main character in *Pilgrim's Progress* learned that he was in a sense a dead person in desperate need of life that could only come to him from God, the way that Jewish mystics envision their own lives factors in the handicap they are given at birth: a mortal body that is constantly in pain and increasingly dying. The way of a mystic carries a shield of faith not only to protect from an enemy without but also from death itself within.

Complicating the mystic's ability to get their bearings in a world gone wrong, in manner similar to that of the Hebrew prophet whose sensory receptors on occasion mixes human emotions (for example, "I saw a voice"), so the mystic receives what would otherwise be considered a confusion of senses and body part functions: eyes can hear, ears can see, feet can ache like a tooth.

Fear

The suffering is unending
Every nook and cranny has its tears
I'm not playing, I'm not pretending
I'm not nursing any superfluous fears

The mystic cannot escape the endless suffering that everyone experiences in life. The Preacher answers his own question as to what reward a person can expect for toiling and worrying: 'day in and day out, all thoughts are

grief and heartache, and even at night the mind has no respite' (Ecclesiastes 2.22,23; adapted from *TANAKH: The Jewish Bible*). What makes it most anguishing for a mystic is an acute knowledge of the other world, that wherein no sorrow or suffering exist. Such contrast makes the earthly experience all the more unbearable.

For the mystic, all fears are consumed by fear of the only one to be feared, the Holy and Blessed One. I remember when I was young, when we moved and I was transferred to an inner city senior elementary school that was known as the toughest school in town. Class was so tough that the Principal and Vice Principal were the only teachers. Many of my classmates were on day passes from jail terms. I was constantly bullied after school and on the way home each day was followed, heckled, and kicked by two brothers who did so just to be bad. It all ended when Myles, a six foot one inch senior started walking home with me. At first the brothers continued to follow, but after about a week they realized that Myles was not going to let me walk home alone any more. All my fear that the presence of the brothers caused me also left when I realized that Myles would be at my side. The mystic realizes the abiding presence of God and is fearless.

Transcendence

> Ain't talkin', just walkin'
> Walkin' ever since the other night
> Heart burnin', still yearnin'
> Walkin' 'til I'm clean out of sight

The way of a Jewish mystic cannot be described as a perpetual encounter with God. Transcendent moments when a mystic "leaves" this world only to "return" to it with restored sparks and a new understanding occur infrequently at best. But the daily life and perspective of the mystic can never return to what it was before encountering divine presence. Fear transfers from everything lesser to God alone. Value placed in material things fades as the mystic realizes the true value of life. Deep love for the well-being of others takes a front stage while self-interest and self-advancement become that which the mystic allocates to the care God will

provide for them: 'to forget about themselves for awhile and go out and see what others need.' (Bob Dylan, "Thunder on the Mountain," *Modern Times*, 2006) In effect, transcendent experiences allow mystics to change their way of thinking, and make themselves a different set of rules – rules that conform to the call of a mystic that we looked at earlier. Through transcendence, the Jewish mystic loses self for God's sake.

Absence

> As I walked out in the mystic garden
> On a hot summer day, hot summer lawn
> Excuse me, ma'am I beg your pardon
> There's no one here, the gardener is gone

God created the earth and all that is in it. And God tended the garden. Then God created humans and passed along the tending of the garden to them. While God sustains all of creation by God's presence, God is no longer looking after the earth as its gardener. Humans have largely relinquished the task of caring for the earth as well. From earth's perspective, the gardener is gone. The way of a mystic does not include gardening or tending to the earth. That is the stated responsibility of every person on earth.

The Ends

> Ain't talkin', just walkin'
> Up the road around the bend
> Heart burnin', still yearnin'
> In the last outback, at the world's end.

The way of a mystic, as we have briefly encountered through Bob Dylan's lyrics of "Ain't Talkin'," bring us to an end. But to what end is yet to be determined. It will be, from a human viewpoint, the end of the world. But this can mean something terrible, something apocalyptic, something totally destructive – where the basic elements of the world as we know it dissolve and are no more. Or it can be something beautiful, something

glorious, something restorative – where the broken and fallen elements of the world as we know it are returned – one by one – to their source and recreated according to how they were when they were first created. The former scenario depicts victory for the mystic's enemy, one and the same as God's enemy – the one that comes only to kill, to abolish, and to destroy. The latter scenario portrays victory for the mystic, one and the same as God's agent for good – the one that is sent to restore life, to return the broken to its source for repair, and to recreate a new earth where Yesh (Something) and Ayin (Nothing) meet at the last outback, at the juncture of reality and existence, of time and eternity. Both circumstances are possible from our present situation, but only one scenario can come to pass – unless both occur simultaneously, where the righteous are only aware of glory and restoration while the unrighteous are only aware of destruction and annihilation. But this would take a miracle of God to bring about something so impossible for the human mind to take in fully.

Ways of Imperfection: Spiritual Disciplines for the Healing of the World

David J. Goa

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me . . .
to appoint unto them that mourn . . .
to give unto them beauty for ashes,
the oil of joy for mourning,
the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
that they might be called trees of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.
—Isaiah 62:1a,3

My strength is sufficient for thee:
for my strength is made perfect in weakness.
—II Corinthians 12: 9

All of us who walk the fragile pathways of our wounded world are invited to a spiritual renaissance.[1] We are invited to be transformed by a relationship with God and to draw forth the gift of compassion and mercy shown to us by "the most Merciful"[2] and bequeath it to the life of the world. We are invited to draw close to God and, through Divine grace, to the recovery of who we are created to be. We are invited to see all creation, including every human being, as a mirror of the Creator and lover of the worlds.

Here we will explore those spiritual disciplines in relation to Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and my own Orthodox tradition. Said Nursi, both in his life[3] and through the *Risale-i Nur (a Quranic Commentary)*, calls us to those spiritual disciplines that lead to the recovery of the central gifts of our human nature: impotence, poverty and compassion. He invites

us to the cultivation of the disciplines that transform our mind and heart so that we see again that we are guests of God, travelers "in the Name of God" through the deserts and vineyards of the world. With the recovery of the gifts of our nature – impotence, poverty and compassion – we stand before the life of the world with a new freedom that makes it possible to speak a healing word without fear or desire.

There is a remarkable synergy between the call of the new Said in *The Words*[4] and in *Letters*[5] and elsewhere and the spiritual theology of Orthodox Christianity, the tradition in which I stand and whose disciplines I exercise. Both call us to a recovery of the central duty of all human beings: to worship the Creator and sustainer of life. Both call us to exercise thte spiritual disciplines that Revelation has taught us may, through God's grace, lead to a recovery of our human nature: the disciplines of prayer and fasting. And both speak to us of the fruit of such discipline: a life lived present to our natural gifts, our impotence, poverty and compassion, our "ways of imperfection" that begin to open us to God, the ways through which God finds us. It is this synergy that we explore here.

The Duty of Worship

There is a refrain running through the *Risale-i Nur*: human nature was created for the worship of God and only truly finds its home in the act of adoration. The very name "Orthodox", given to the whole tradition of the Christian East, means "proper praise". Often a more modern definition is applied and many, both some of the faithful of the church and scholars with no commitment to the Revelation, reduce the word "orthodox" to right and proper belief, or, to put it even more precisely, right propositional statements *about* the divine. This is a recent invention. In the Greek language of the early Christians, "ortho" and "doxa" are root words that together mean "the right" or "proper praise" of the Creator and sustainer of life. It is to "worship God in spirit and in truth."[6]

Here is how Orthodox Christian worship begins:

> Blessed is our God always, now, and ever and unto ages of ages.
> O Lord our God, whose might is incomparable, whose glory is

> incomprehensible, whose mercy is infinite, and whose love of man is ineffable, do thou thyself, O Master, in thy tenderheartedness look down upon us and upon this holy house, and grant us and those who pray with us thy rich mercies and compassion.[7]

> Bless the Lord, O my soul; O lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly.
> Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment…,
> Who established the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever…
> —Psalm 103

These opening words of worship that we chant together in Orthodox churches around the world are written on my heart. When I am privileged to hear the faithful chant the first sura of the Glorious Qur'an, the Fatiha ("opening"), in home or Mosque, I hear echoed what I know so well.

> Bismillah, In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful
> Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds;
> The Compassionate, the Merciful;
> Master of the Day of Judgment;
> You alone do we worship, and to You alone do we pray for help;
> Guide us on the Straight Path.
> The way of those to whom You have favoured;
> Not to those who have incurred Your wrath. Nor to those who go astray.[8]

Human beings were made for the worship of God and only find their true home in adoration.[9] Our response to this most basic disposition of the mind and heart will orient us to God, to ourselves and to the world. To worship is the most basic of human desires, the desire for God, and it brings with it the greatest of challenges. When we misunderstand this desire or when we are misled as to its meaning, we stumble into the precinct of idolatry. Instead of opening our heart and mind to the Creator of the worlds, we

elevate some lesser being or dimension of human experience, some desire or fear, even some virtue or principle and seek in it the satisfaction of this basic longing to adore God.

The Recovery of Our Created Nature

In the Orthodox tradition of Christianity we have a distinct way of understanding this challenge for the human mind and heart.[10] It is quite different from the understanding in the Christian West, the Latin tradition of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Here, too, I find a synergy with Said Nursi.

The human mind has the capacity for memory and imagination. As far as we know, we are the only creatures for whom remembering and imagining occupy such a central place in identity. Our memory and imagination may easily create a prism through which we see and engage life. These dimensions of our mind are a gift. They are also an enormous challenge: because we remember it is possible for us to hang onto the pain and pleasure we have experienced, to linger with it and long to replicate it. Indeed, it is difficult for us not to do this. This impulse has turned many a person into a sensualist. Many others, having experienced brutality and humiliation, have reordered their identity and live and see the world through the lens of victim. Because we can imagine life different than it is, we can cling to utopian dreams with no basis in reality. Indeed, it is difficult for us not to do this. Nations, empires and civilizations have sometimes been built on such utopian notions, and we see them flourish, devour portions of the world and then crumble into a dim memory. Nostalgia and utopian dreaming, the longing for what no longer is and the desire for what never has been, plague the human mind. Nostalgia and utopian dreaming can rip us out of the reality of our life together. When this occurs we step out of the world God has given us into a world of our own making. We are thus estranged from God, the life of the world and our own deepest self. Nostalgia for the past or a utopian dream of the future robs us of the Divine Presence.

We have a powerful description of this part of the human struggle in Said Nursi's Sixth Letter.[11] He talks of his withdrawal to the "top of Cam Dagi, the Pine Mountain, in the mountains of Barla." He is in a deep

struggle with loneliness, exile, a sense of loss and separation from all that he loved.

> My Lord! I am a stranger, I have no one, I am weak, I am powerless, I am impotent, I am old; I am without will; I seek recourse, I seek forgiveness, I seek help from Your Court, O God!

Said Nursi has entered a "dark night of the soul"[12]. On the other side of this struggle, as the estrangement lifts, Nursi writes,

> "Since we have a compassionate Creator, there can be no exile for us! Since He exists, everything exists for us. Since He exists the angels exist too. The world is not empty. Lonely mountains and empty deserts are full of Almighty God's servants. Apart from His conscious servants, stones and trees also become like familiar friends when seen through His light and on His account. They may converse with us and give us enjoyment."

Spiritual Disciplines: Prayer and Fasting

If sin is stepping outside of the world of God's making into a world fabricated out of our own passions of nostalgia and utopian dreaming, what is the pathway for the recovery of the Divine Presence? How do we find our way back into friendship with God, back to being a servant of the Master of the Universe, and, thus, back to our created nature?

In Orthodox theology, all spiritual disciplines are forms of prayer and fasting. There are only these two spiritual disciplines, prayer and fasting. Both are revealed to us as aids for our return to and remaining in the Divine Presence.

Orthodox theology of prayer speaks of it as having two intimately related purposes. Prayer is given to us as a discipline for quieting the cacophony of our mind and heart, for letting go of the preoccupations facing us in our daily life, for offering up to the throne of God's grace the inner passions, the nostalgia and utopian dreaming that have come to frame the way we understand ourselves and God and our way of relating to the world. We use an ancient Greek word for this dimension of prayer. It is

the *apophatic* (literally "turning away from speech") aspect of prayer, and its disciplines aid us in turning away from our own mental constructs.[13] The first stage of prayer is to empty our mind and heart of all fear and desire, to quiet our soul and let go of all those attachments through which we have come to understand ourselves, God, and the world. It cultivates in us a place empty of worldly desire, a place where we may again encounter the living God and rediscover the Divine grace that holds all life together. This *apophatic* discipline is accompanied by the act of confession and reconciliation since we are unable to let go of our passions as long as we suffer from enmity towards our brothers or sisters. Setting matters right with others is part of this discipline of self-emptying. It is the beginning of restoring that place at the centre of our being where God's grace has its rightful dwelling.

Both the cycles of liturgical prayer, our common prayer together in fellowship, and our cycles of personal prayer begin with the disciplines of self-emptying, of letting go and restoring that place where God's grace is again orienting our life. And it is out of this restored dwelling place of grace that we praise God with sincerity and wholeness of heart.

A fifth century Church Father, St. John Cassian (d. 435), describes the monastic prayer commonly found throughout Orthodox monasteries in his day, a form of prayer that continues not only in monasteries, but in the lives of all faithful Orthodox Christians in our own day.[14] Here is his description from fifteen hundred years ago.

> All the eastern cenobitic communities, especially in Egypt, have the following rule for prayer and chanting. When the brothers have gathered for this purpose at the time of assembly, they do not immediately rush to kneel as soon as the chanting is completed, but stand for a little while, before bending their knees, and pray with their hands outstretched. After this they fall to the ground and pray again for a little while, in a kneeling position. Then they all rise at the same time, and with hands outstretched, and with greater intensity, at length they complete their supplications. No one bends his knee or rises from a kneeling position until the one leading them in prayer bends or rises first.[15]

Every time I am privileged to be in the presence of Muslim prayer, *Rak'ah,* I am filled with a sense of the great continuity of God's servants stretching back through the seventh century into early Christian monasteries where men and women held up their hands and placed all the world behind them, bent their knees and prostrated in supplication. It is only when we are emptied of our passions that we open again to the grace and compassion of God. The desire to adore the Creator of all that is flows from this emptiness. Every time this occurs in the life of a woman or man, they return to their created nature, remember the Divine and regard the world again through the eyes given by Revelation. "Behold I make all things new."[16]

Muslims and Orthodox Christians share a vigorous discipline of fasting and this also aids us in emptying ourselves of this world's desires and of the passions which have claimed these desires and reoriented our lives around them. Here is Said Nursi on fasting.

> [F]asting in the month of Ramadan awakens even the most heedless and obstinate to their weaknesses, impotence, and want. Hunger makes them think of their stomachs and they understand the need therein. They realize how unsound are their weak bodies, and perceive how needy they are for kindness and compassion. So they abandon the soul's pharaoh-like despotism and recognizing their utter impotence and want, perceive a desire to take refuge at the divine court. They prepare themselves to knock at the door of mercy with the hands of thankfulness – so long as heedlessness has not destroyed their hearts, that is.[17]

> [Fasting] is a healing physical and spiritual diet of the most important kind. When man's instinctual soul eats and drinks just as it pleases, it is both harmful for man's physical life from the medical point of view, and when it hurls itself on everything it encounters whether licit or illicit, it quite simply poisons his spiritual life. Further, it is difficult for such a soul to obey the heart and the spirit; it willfully takes the reins into its own hands and then man cannot ride it, it rather rides man. But by means of fasting in Ramadan, it becomes accustomed to a sort of diet. It tries to discipline itself and learns to listen to commands.

Fasting in the Orthodox Christian tradition is based on three insights. The first one was found in the Hebrew Bible where we read of the disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving as part of what human beings can do as they seek the forgiveness of their sins. Each of these is a sign of repentance, a recognition that one has turned from God and wishes to reorient one's life to the mercy of God. The second insight is drawn from the Christian tradition of contemplative prayer where we learned that fasting can substantially aid the concentration of the mind and heart in prayer. We set aside the normal needs and appetites of our life and focus our attention on the spiritual life. Through fasting, our heartfelt prayer and sincerity come to occupy more time and space in our life. The third insight is embodied in Orthodox piety of devotion, a form of *memoria passionis*, a time set aside to remember the grace of God present in and through our suffering in life, a grace unveiled for us and modeled in the suffering of Jesus Christ and the saints.

Behind all three insights is the spiritual need to reach into the depth of the human mind and heart and heal the diseases located there, diseases that are preventing us from bringing our whole life, mind and body, joy and suffering, and our weakness into one single act of remembrance of God. Fasting is a discipline leading us to participation in the love of God, a love shown so vividly in the life of the prophets and all those women and men who have been servants of the Holy One. As Nursi has noted, it is not only possible but likely that we become so attached to both physical food and our spiritual appetites that we no longer act out of freedom. To use his formulation, the passions that have taken root in our soul and seized the reins of our life drive our mind and heart. We are lost to our appetites and our life is reoriented around these appetites. Fasting, like prayer itself, helps us empty ourselves of these appetites, physical, psychological and spiritual, so we can stand in God's grace and respond to the life of the world with the liberty befitting our created nature.

Service for the Life of the World

I began by suggesting the deep synergy between Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's *Risale-i Nur* and the Orthodox spiritual tradition in which I stand. Both call us to a recovery of the central duty of all human beings – to worship

the Creator and Sustainer of life. Both call us to the pathway of prayer and fasting leading to a recovery of our human nature. And both speak to us of the fruit of such discipline: a life lived present to our natural gifts, our impotence, poverty and compassion, our ways of imperfection.

When I first read sections of the *Risale-i Nur* in which Said Nursi discusses impotence, poverty and compassion, the word "impotence" fell oddly on my ear. It took some work to begin to understand what is involved in his use of this particular word. We have a rich tradition of thought on "poverty" and "compassion" within Orthodoxy, but the use of the word "impotence" seemed strange at first. Perhaps my own initial struggle to understand is itself a witness to just how profoundly we resist thinking about our weakness. In a world that highlights power and potency, "impotence" is not commonly spoken of as a gift.

Then the words of Jesus Christ's best known sermon came to my mind, words I also pray every time we gather together to worship the Creator. They are a portion of what Christians call the Sermon on the Mount.[18] Let me give you the key part of this text, the Beatitudes, from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 5.

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them saying,

> Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
> Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
> Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
> Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
> Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
> Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
> Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.
> Blessed *are* ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
> Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

When I was a child, the first beatitude, was difficult to take to heart. I memorized them but they always sat upon my heart and I could not, like the other beatitudes, "place them within my heart."[19]

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for *theirs is* the kingdom of heaven."[20]

What did Jesus Christ mean by "poor in spirit"? If I read Said Nursi right, the "impotence" he speaks of and the blessed condition Jesus Christ speaks of in this beatitude are the same. Let me walk into a consideration of the "poor in spirit" and see if you recognize in it the impotence of which Bediuzzaman speaks.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

This is a disturbing text. The Greek word used for "poor" in the first beatitude is *ptochos.*[21] It does not refer to a person of modest means. There is a different word for that. Rather, *ptochos* refers to a person who is destitute, one who has "no place to lay his head." What does Jesus mean by placing at the threshold of the blessed life the condition of complete emptiness?

Is he saying that as long as we harbour anything of our own spirit, any nostalgia or utopian dreaming, any ambition, any ideal, any absolute, any need, any wound, any appetite at all, we will not have the spiritual gifts he points to in each of the other marks of the blessed life? Without being empty of our own ego, our own way of seeing what faces us in our daily experience we will not have
the capacity to mourn
the stance of meekness
the thirst for righteousness
a pure heart
the skill to make peace
the will to suffer for righteousness sake

What does poor in spirit mean? "Spirit,"is one of the most complex words in scripture. But its use in this text is deeply anchored in the central

human challenge, the challenge to our mind and heart that I have spoken of earlier. When our identity, our way of knowing ourselves, God and the world flow from our own passions, our own nostalgia and utopian dreaming, our own fears and desires, we are filled with a spirit of our own making. To turn the beatitude around: "cursed are those rich in a spirit, full of their own fears and desires."

Being poor in spirit is knowing I cannot save myself; that I cannot heal myself; that I have no defense against the enemy, against death, spiritual and otherwise. It is that awareness that Said Nursi came to on the mountain in Barla, that we need God's help and mercy more than we need anything else.

Being poor in spirit is to be free of the rule of fear and desire, the great forces that place us in a world of our own making, a world where even the love and mercy of God cannot reach us. Faith's natural place at the centre of our nature, the orientation of our mind and heart, is replaced by the accumulated fears and desires we imagine our selves to be. Our self-image becomes our treasured idol, the object of our gaze, and we remain locked up inside with the world veiled to us. And the tragedy in this is that the "mosque of creation," to use that lovely phrase of Said Nursi, is no longer the place of our habitation.

Being poor in spirit *is* the beginning of the spiritual life. Without knowing our impotence, our weakness, without being grounded in dependence on God, we walk the pathways of our own making. We do this no matter how virtuous such pathways may appear. Nursi invites us to a renewed sense of our own impotence so we might see the whole of the "mosque of creation" as a mirror of God. Jesus Christ speaks of the blessed life opening up to each of us through being poor in a spirit of our own making. From this way of being, which our world so often considers weakness, flows a life of service and healing, a life present to God's mercy and participating in that mercy for the healing of God's beloved creation.

Endnotes

[1] I have taken my title from *Ways of Imperfection, An Exploration of Christian Spirituality*, Simon Tugwell, O.P. Springfield, Illinois: Templegate Publishers, 1985. It was originally presented at the international conference on the *The Risale-i Nur: Knowledge, Faith, Morality and the Future of Humankind.* It has been revised for inclusion here.

[2] Divine mercy is a hallmark of the faith of the people of the Book.

[3] See *Islam in Modern Turkey, An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, Sukran Vahide, edited and with an introduction by Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi'. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2005.

[4] *The Words, On the Nature and Purposes of Man, Life, and All Things*, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, translated by Sukran Vahide. Istanbul: Sozler Publications, 2008.

[5] *Letters, 1928-1932*, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, translated by Sukran Vahide. Istanbul: Sozler Publications, revised edition, 2001.

[6] The Gospel of John 4:24.

[7] *The Priests Service Book* (Dallas, Texas: The Diocese of the South, 2003): 117.

[8] *The Holy Qur'an with Translation and Commentaries*. Istanbul, Turkey: Acar Matbaacilik Yayincilik Hizmetleri, Ambalajsan, 2003: Part 1, Surah 1.

[9] See *The Idea of the Holy*, Rudolf Otto, translated by John W. Harvey (first published in German in 1923; New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), and, *The Sacred and the Profane, The Nature of Religion*, Mircea Eliade, translated by Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957).

[10] *A Regard for Creation, Collected Essays*, David J. Goa (Dewdney, B.C., Canada: Synaxis Press, 2008), *The Human Presence, An Orthodox View of Nature*, Paulos Mar Gregorios (Madras, India: The Christian Literature Society, 1980), and *Being as Communion*, John D. Zizioulas (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985). See also *The Spirituality of the Christian East, A Systematic Handbook*, Tomas Spidlik, SJ, translated by Anthony P. Gythiel (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications Inc, 1986).

[11] *Letters, 1928-1932*, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, translated by Sukran Vahide. Istanbul: Sozler Publications, revised edition, 2001: 42-44.

[12] The dark night of the soul as part of the spiritual journey has deep roots for the people of the Book. We find an early reference to it in Moses' drawing near to "the thick darkness where God was (Exodus 20:21). Gregory of Nyssa (c.330 – c.395), builds on this dimension of the spiritual journey in his masterpiece, *The Life of Moses,* translated by Abraham J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson (New York: Paulist Press, 1978).

[13] Gregory Palamas, monk, archbishop and eminent theologian, brings the apophatic tradition to its apex. See *The Triads*, Gregory Palamas, translated by Nicholas Gendle (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), *Treatise on the Spiritual Life*, Gregory Palamas, translated by Daniel M. Rogich (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Light and Life Publishing Company, 1995).

See also *A Study of Gregory Palamas*, John Meyendorff, translated by George Lawrence (England: The Faith Press, 1964).

[14] See both *John Cassian: The Conferences* and *John Cassian: The Institutes*, translated and annotated by Boniface Ramsey, O.P., in the series, *Ancient Christian Writers*, edited by Dennis D. McManus. New York: The Newman Press, 1997 and 2000 respectively.

[15] Quoted in *Facing the World, Orthodox Christian Essays on Global Concerns*, Archbishop Anastasios (Yannoulatos), translated by Pavlos Gottfried (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003): 121.

[16] Revelation 21:5

[17] *Letters, 1928-1932*, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, translated by Sukran Vahide. Istanbul: Sozler Publications, revised edition, 2001. The Twenty-Ninth Letter contains a treatise "On the Month of Ramadan", pages 466- 473. The quote is from this section.

[18] There are two accounts of the Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament, Matthew chapter 5 and Luke chapter 6. I recommend *Not By Bread Along, Homilies on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, Archbishop Lazar Puhalo (Dewdney, B.C. Canada: Synaxis Press, n.d.), and, *The Gospel of Luke*, Luke Timothy Johnson, Volume 3, *Sacra Pagina* series, edited by Daniel J. Harrington, s.j. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1991).

[19] See Jacob Needleman, *Why Can't We Be Good?* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2007: 18-19) for a a story from the Rabbi Hillel the Elder who was a contemporary of King Herod the Great (37-4 B.C.E.). "The pupil asks the rabbi, "Why are we told to place these words upon our hearts? Why does it not tell us to place these words *in* our heart? To which the Rabbi replies, "Our hearts are closed. All we can do is to place these words *upon* our heart. And there they stay . . ." ". . . until one day the heart breaks . . .and the words fall in."

[20] Beatitude is a literary form found in both the Hebrew Bible and the Gospels.

[21] I am indebted to Jim Forest for discussions on the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount and for his book *The Ladder of the Beatitudes* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2003) for much of what I have to say on the first beatitude.

Way of Intelligent Design

Jonathan Wells

As an undergraduate at the University of California in Berkeley in the late 1960s I had accepted Darwinian evolution. But a few years before entering the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) in the late 70s I had become quite skeptical of it.[1] I was disturbed by the way modern theologians accepted Darwinism uncritically and re-fashioned Christian doctrine to fit it. To learn more about the evidence for this supposedly scientific theory, I took a weekly UTS shuttle to New York City and spent hours at the Columbia University biology library, where my research convinced me that genetic mutations and natural selection are incapable of producing large-scale evolution. The central issue for me was never biblical chronology, but the Darwinian claim that evolution was purposeless and undirected – which contradicted the Christian doctrine that human beings were purposefully created in the image and likeness of God.

In those days, Reverend Moon, the founder of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity (the Unification movement) often came to UTS to speak to us. He urged us to find out what God wanted us to do with our lives – and he encouraged us to aim high. He recommended praying every day at the same time and place, and I followed his advice by spending an hour or two every night praying in the nearby woods.

After seeking God's guidance for a year and half I concluded that God wanted me to challenge Darwinism. When Reverend Moon offered scholarships to some of us to pursue doctorates in religion, I jumped at the chance to study the theological aspects of the Darwinian controversy, and I entered the Religious Studies program at Yale Graduate School.

New ERA

In 1979 Unification conference activities were brought under the umbrella of the New Ecumenical Research Association (New ERA).[2] And in January

1981, at a New ERA seminar on Unification theology in Puerto Rico, I said that "the origin of species is the least understood aspect of the theory of evolution," and "theology has a right to challenge the assumption that evolution is a fact."

New ERA had then come up with the idea for a series of conferences on "God: The Contemporary Discussion." More than 165 scholars and religious leaders attended the first of these. They included the noted British atheist Antony Flew and the eminent scholar of world religions Huston Smith, who later played a major role in the controversy over Darwinism and intelligent design.

On July 1, 1982, UTS student Lucy Massengill (whom I had known since 1969) and I were married by Reverend and Mrs. Moon – along with over 2,000 other couples – at Madison Square Garden[3] in New York City. In June 1983, Lucy graduated from UTS and went to work for New ERA. In 1985, she helped to organize a summer seminar on Unification theology in Québec, Canada.

Charles Hodge's Critique of Darwinism

Just before the Québec conference I had received my Ph.D. from Yale with a dissertation on nineteenth-century Princeton theologian Charles Hodge, a critic of Darwinism. Hodge was not a young-Earth creationist; in fact, the age of the Earth – so prominent in twentieth-century controversies – did not play a major role in the nineteenth-century debates.[4]

Hodge rejected Darwin's theory of the origin of species by natural selection because (a) it was not supported by scientific evidence and (b) it denied design. Hodge wrote in *What Is Darwinism?* (1874) that – theologically – "the grand and fatal objection to Darwinism" was its "denial of design in nature," which was "virtually the denial of God." If the Creator called the universe into being, Hodge argued, "and then abandoned the universe itself to be controlled by chance and necessity, without any purpose on his part as to the result, or any intervention or guidance, then He is virtually consigned, so far as we are concerned, to non-existence." Hodge concluded that Darwinism's exclusion of design is "tantamount to atheism."

My Yale dissertation defended Hodge on this point.[5] Since I had

done much of my research at Princeton Theological Seminary, I offered to give a seminar there on my findings, but the faculty was not interested. I subsequently learned that although Charles Hodge was Princeton Seminary's leading light in the nineteenth century, many there now regard him as an embarrassment because of his opposition to Darwinism.

Going for a Second Ph.D.

Upon receiving my Yale Ph.D, I was appointed Director of the International Religious Foundation (IRF), which included New ERA, the Youth Seminar on World Religions and several other Unification-affiliated inter-religious organizations. But my true mission was to topple Darwinism, and administering IRF was taking me away from that. After considerable prayer, I decided in 1987 to go back to graduate school. I had already studied the Darwinian controversies from a theological perspective; now it was time to study them from a biological one.

I resigned from my position at IRF and applied to several biology Ph.D. programs in California. Before knowing whether I would be admitted to any of them, Lucy and I moved to California with my 80-year-old mother (who was living with us) and our 4-year-old daughter. It was like stepping off a cliff, purely on faith.

Soon afterwards I flew back to New York to attend a meeting of Unification Church leaders with Reverend Moon, who told me I should not go back to school because I was too old. (I was then 45.) After the meeting, I prayed a long time for guidance and decided to go ahead with my plan anyway.

But none of the schools to which I had applied accepted me. Lucy and I got jobs and I tried again. This time I was granted interviews at Cal Tech, Stanford, the University of California at Berkeley, and the University of California at Davis. I was admitted to Berkeley and Davis, and chose the former.

Just before starting my Ph.D. studies at Berkeley in 1989, I traveled to Canada for a New ERA conference on "Reappraising the Enlightenment," which sought to "restore to the intellectual task some of the major emphases found in the pre-Enlightenment period" – such as "the religious, spiritual and ontological." My paper was titled "Overcoming Darwinism."

Darwin On Trial

After finishing the course work for my biology Ph.D. in 1991, I heard that a Berkeley law professor had just published a book critical of Darwinism. Walter Hearn, a biochemist living in Berkeley whom I had met at a UTS-sponsored Evangelical-Unification dialogue in 1979, told me the book was very good, so I picked up a copy of Phillip E. Johnson's *Darwin On Trial*. Once I started reading it I couldn't put it down.

The next day I telephoned Phil, introduced myself, and suggested we meet for lunch. Not sure how he would react to my background, I asked Walt to accompany me; but Phil was undeterred by what he came to call my "colorful" past, and we became good friends.

In 1992, the American Academy of Religion (AAR) held its annual meeting in San Francisco. I had joined the AAR when I was a first-year graduate student at Yale. The 1992 program included a session on religion and science, and I wrote to the session chairman describing my background. I explained that I did not have time to write a paper but could serve as a commentator on papers written by others. He accepted my offer, and before the conference I received two papers, one of which was "Bio-Cultural Roots of Conscience, Shame and Sin," by James Fowler of Emory University.

Fowler's paper argued that an "evolutionary perspective" ruled out a historical fall involving a transgression by an original male and female. In its place Fowler proposed a fall upwards into the "first conscious self-awareness" that accompanies every person's experience of being weaned; to overcome the accompanying shame and guilt, Fowler recommended "thoughtful and balanced parenting." The second paper took a somewhat similar approach.

The audience consisted of the leading figures in the religion-science dialogue in American academia (except for Huston Smith, who was attending a different session). Since the papers had been circulated beforehand I was asked to start off with my comments. I said that Darwinian evolution is not based on facts, but on "philosophical naturalism." Thus "the exclusion of a historical fall owes more to anti-theistic philosophical commitments than to scientific evidence." Furthermore, a "fall upwards"

into consciousness is not a fall at all, and from a Christian perspective our only hope of overcoming the shame and sin that afflict human nature is God's saving grace.

When the session ended, the paper-writers, the session chairman, and almost everyone else in the room turned and walked away from me without a word. I was being shunned.

In June 1993, Phil Johnson convened a historic meeting at Pajaro Dunes, near Monterey, California, titled "The Darwinian Paradigm: Problems and Prospects." The discussion focused not only on problems with Darwinism but also on arguments for "intelligent design" – the idea that it is possible to infer from evidence in nature that some features of the world and living things are better explained by an intelligent cause than by unguided natural processes. Participants included biologist Dean Kenyon, philosophers of science Steve Meyer and Paul Nelson, mathematician Bill Dembski, biochemist Mike Behe, and molecular biologist Doug Axe – all of whom soon became my friends and colleagues in the new "intelligent design movement."

Since intelligent design (ID) is based on evidence from nature rather than the Bible or religious doctrine, it is not the same as creationism. And since ID does not claim to infer the existence and attributes of God, it is not the same as natural theology.

Phil advocated what he called a "big tent" that included anyone willing to be skeptical of Darwinian evolution, entertain the possibility of ID, and engage in civil discourse on the issues. The tent included agnostics, Christians and Jews, as well as young-Earth and old-Earth creationists. It was also big enough to include me – a Moonie.

When I received my Berkeley Ph.D. in 1995, UTS President David Kim asked me to write something explaining to other Unification Church members why I went for a second Ph.D. against Reverend Moon's advice. I did so, explaining that I was convinced that my decision was consistent with Reverend Moon's vision, not in opposition to it. I wrote about my long prayer walks and research in biology, and I concluded: "Father's words, my studies, and my prayers convinced me that I should devote my life to destroying Darwinism." My explanation was eventually posted on the Internet (without my knowledge), and years later Darwinists cited these

words as evidence that I was motivated entirely by blind religious faith and subservience to Reverend Moon.

In 1990, former U.S. Census Bureau Director Bruce Chapman and technology guru George Gilder founded the Discovery Institute, a public policy think tank in Seattle. In 1996, Steve Meyer teamed up with political scientist John West at the Discovery Institute to start the Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture (later re-named the Center for Science and Culture), in order to provide an institutional home for research on ID and to explore the public policy implications of Darwinism.

The same year, I was one of many speakers at "Mere Creation," the first large public conference on ID, which was held at Biola University in Los Angeles. I also co-authored some articles with Paul Nelson on evolution and ID. In 1997 I was invited to become a fellow of the Discovery Institute, and in 1998 Lucy and I moved with my 90-year-old mother, 14-year-old daughter and 8-year-old son to the Seattle area.

Icons of Evolution

While still a graduate student at Berkeley I had noticed that some textbook illustrations used to persuade biology students of Darwinism actually misrepresented the evidence. For example, drawings made by German Darwinist Ernst Haeckel in the 1860s portrayed the embryos of fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals as being almost identical in their earliest stages – supposedly evidence for their common ancestry. Yet as a biology graduate student I had seen many actual vertebrate embryos, and they did not look like Haeckel's drawings.

I also learned that textbook photos of black and white peppered moths resting on tree trunks – supposedly evidence for natural selection – had been staged: In the wild, peppered moths don't normally rest on tree trunks. It seemed to me that Haeckel's embryo drawings and the photos of peppered moths, like some other misleading textbook illustrations, were Darwinian icons rather than scientific evidence. After moving to Seattle, I decided while on a walk with Lucy one day to write a book titled *Icons of Evolution*.

Regnery Publishing, which had brought out Phil Johnson's *Darwin On Trial*, published my book in the fall of 2000. Meanwhile, the Berkeley

Unitarian-Universalist Church had chosen Huston Smith to give its annual Lawrence Lecture, which he titled "Evolution: Why Can't We Handle This Issue Sensibly?" Huston announced that the following day he would host a discussion between me and University of California paleontologist Kevin Padian, who was also president of the pro-Darwin National Center for Science Education (NCSE).

On October 14, 2000, a standing-room-only crowd filled the meeting room at the Berkeley Unitarian Church, but although Padian had originally agreed to come he did not show up. Berkeley biology professor Richard Strohman, with whom I had done post-doctoral research from 1995 to 1998, kindly took his place, and we spent the next few hours discussing the scientific weaknesses of Neo-Darwinism.

The following month, NCSE Executive Director Eugenie C. Scott gave a seminar defending Darwinism at the University of California at San Diego. In the course of her remarks she held up a copy of *Icons of Evolution* and said, "This book will be a royal pain in the fanny." In December, with the help of Josh Gilder (George Gilder's cousin), I published "Survival of the Fakest" – essentially a summary of *Icons of Evolution* – in *The American Spectator*.

Critics Rave

The World and I, a monthly magazine affiliated with the Unification-owned *Washington Times*, commissioned the first published review of *Icons of Evolution*, by University of Kansas paleontologist Larry Martin. Martin acknowledged that my book was "factually accurate" – "if Wells made a technical error," he wrote, "I missed it" – but he disagreed with my critical take on Darwinism. *The World and I* invited me to respond to Martin's review, which I did.

Other Darwinists greeted *Icons of Evolution* with furious denunciations and personal attacks. Their favorite tactic was to try to discredit me and divert attention from the scientific issues by emphasizing my connection with Reverend Moon and the Unification Church. Hostile reviews of my book were published by American biologists Jerry Coyne in *Nature*, Massimo Pigliucci in *BioScience*, and Rudolf Raff in *Evolution & Development*. Danish biologist David Ussery published a hostile review

in *Skeptic*, Berkeley English professor Frederick Crews published one in *The New York Review of Books* and NCSE director Eugenie Scott published one in *Science*. Kevin Padian (together with NCSE staffer Alan Gishlick) published a particularly nasty review in *The Quarterly Review of Biology*. Coyne, Pigliucci, Padian and Gishlick all quoted – or rather, misquoted – my 1995 essay about why I went for a second Ph.D., and Raff, Ussery and Crews focused on my Unification affiliation.

I responded to all of these in "Critics Rave Over *Icons of Evolution*," which was published by the Discovery Institute. Although my book did not defend ID, but merely criticized misleading textbook illustrations used to promote Darwinism, it became known as an ID book, and I became notorious as an ID advocate. By then Darwinists were waging an all-out war against ID, and their weapons were not logic and evidence, but censorship and character assassination. *TechCentralStation* writer Douglas Kern described their approach in 2005: "Ewww...intelligent design people! They're just buck-toothed Bible-pushing nincompoops with community-college degrees who're trying to sell a gussied-up creationism to a cretinous public! No need to address their concerns or respond to their arguments. They are Not Science. They are poopy-heads. There. I just saved you the trouble of reading 90 percent of the responses to the ID position."

ID and the Future

It seems that all intellectual and scientific revolutions provoke resistance from the entrenched establishment. ID is certainly no different, and since 2005 the abuse and censorship by Darwinists has grown. In spite of it, I am currently trying to demonstrate the scientific fruitfulness of ID by using it to guide biological research. For example, I am testing an ID-guided hypothesis about a possible cause of cancer, and I am doing theoretical work on the information that directs embryo development. I also continue to write on theological aspects of the controversy.

Meanwhile, the evidence for Darwinian evolution is growing weaker by the month, and interest in ID among students is growing stronger. Of course I cannot say exactly what the future holds, but I would not bet on Darwinism.[6]

Endnotes

[1] "About UTS," Unification Theological Seminary (2009). Available online (2010) at http://www.uts.edu/about-uts.html

[2] Some of the publications arising from early Unification sponsored conferences include M. Darrol Bryant & S. Hodges, *Exploring Unification Theology* (Barrytown, NY: Unification Theological Seminary, 1978), and R. Quebedeaux & R. Sawatsky (editors), *Evangelical-Unification Dialogue* (New York: Rose of Sharon Press, 1979). There were also a dozen volumes emerging from the conferences on God beginning with M. Darrol Bryant & Fred Sontag, eds., *God: The Contemporary Discussion* (New York: Rose of Sharon Press, 1982).

[3] Montgomery, P.L., "4,000 Followers of Moon Wed at the Garden," *The New York Times* (July 2, 1982), p. 1.

[4] See J. R. Moore, "Geologists and Interpreters of Genesis in the Nineteenth Century," pp. 322-350 in D.C. Lindberg and R.L. Numbers (eds), *God & Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986), C. C. Gillispie, C.C., *Genesis and Geology: The Impact of Scientific Discoveries Upon Religious Beliefs in the Decades Before Darwin* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951), Rpt 1959 by Harper & Row and Charles Hodge, *What Is Darwinism?* eds. M.A. Noll & D.N. Livingstone (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994), pp. 152-157.

[5] See Jonathon Wells, *Charles Hodge's Critique of Darwinism: An Historical-Critical Analysis of Concepts Basic to the 19th Century Debate* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), J. Wells, "Darwinism and the Argument to Design," Dialogue & Alliance 4:4 (January 1991): 69-85. And J. Wells, "Politically Dead Wrong," *Origins & Design* 17:2 (November 1996).

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Way of Chinese Christians (Protestant)

Xie Wenyu

The population of Chinese Christians has been steadily increasing over the past three decades. At this point, most of them are first-generation Christians. To characterize the Way of Chinese Christians in a singular way is an impossible job, as their way of being Christian is in the process of formation. Here, my focus is on Protestant Christians in China.

Christianity in general has been present in China for over one thousand years. However, its serious impact on Chinese culture and Chinese thinking started with the introduction of Protestant Christianity by Robert Morrison (1782-1834) in 1807. Morrison began his missionary work by translating the Bible into Chinese. It was his conviction that the goal of missionary work was to invite Chinese to come to Jesus. In order to do that, the Bible had to be translated into Chinese so that Jesus could speak to Chinese people directly. Morrison's translation project was carried on by many of the western Protestant missionaries who came to China after Morrison and continued for a century. In 1908, the so-called union version of the Chinese Bible was published, which has become a widely accepted version in current Chinese churches. Two Chinese scholars participated in the union translation but the translating team consisted mainly of western missionaries.

Beginning in the 19th century, thousands of western Protestant missionaries from different denominations entered China, and in the early 20th century they were the dominant face of Christianity in China. When they evangelized Chinese people, they presented Christianity in a form of westernized Christianity. Their interpretations of the Bible were dressed in western theology, their experiences of God's grace were expressed in terms of western culture, and the churches were managed in a western way. Consequently, Chinese Christians in this period embraced western

culture, pretending to speak and behave in a western manner. They became unlike other Chinese. In the eyes of many other Chinese, these Chinese Christians were enslaved in thinking and spirit by westerners. It became a popular saying in Chinese language: When a Christian emerges, one Chinese disappears. Many Chinese Christians were despised by the majority of Chinese people.

In 1922-27 there was an "Anti-Christianity Movement" which called on all Chinese intellectuals to reject the influence of western Christianity. The movement was well received and spread all over China. The movement involved intellectuals who pushed hard for the government to take control of education from the westerners. This was widely accepted and gradually realized.

The "Anti-Christianity Movement" was a great challenge to many Chinese Christians, especially those who seriously considered the issue. The difficulty was that when Chinese were converted to Christianity, they understood the Bible in the way that western missionaries had explained the Bible to them. Many had had an experience in their life of the love of God, an experience which was real and intimate to them. Yet, they felt they had to use the words and language that westerners used to express their own experiences. And it was a vocabulary and a language that often sounded strange to Chinese ears. It was not how things were expressed in the Chinese language. Moreover, these new Chinese Christians had to stop doing certain things which Chinese usually did, such as performing the ritual of remembering ancient ancestors, and so on. The challenge was that if they did these things they would retain their Chinese status but it would damage their Christian status in the eyes of western missionaries. On the other hand, if they tried to satisfy western missionaries, then they became distanced from their fellow Chinese. Which status should they maintain?

These questions are serious. Could one be a Christian and Chinese at the same time? What kind of life should a Chinese Christian live? What is the manner in which a Chinese Christian should behave in society? And further, how and in what kind of institutional form should Chinese churches be organized? Both western Protestant missionaries and Chinese Christians at that time felt the urge to respond to these questions.

There were two major responses. According to the western missionaries,

it meant that Christianity should be localized or contextualized. But for many Chinese Christians, it was more of a question of how to express their experience of the Christian faith.

Localization or contextualization has been a hot topic among western missionaries as well as among Chinese scholars who are interested in the Chinese Christian church. The assumption of this movement is that western Christianity must be clothed in Chinese culture. This assumption contains the goal of promoting a type of Christianity in Chinese form. The starting point in this movement is, however, that western Christianity in part of western culture. Essentially, the foundation of the movement is western culture, and consequently, it moves to westernize Chinese culture. After decades, it seems that it has achieved some successes, as it keeps producing more translations and publications of books from western languages into Chinese. But this approach simply leads more Chinese Christians to embrace western values. This approach has more negative than positive effects as it has deepened the gap between Chinese Christians and their Chinese fellows.

The other approach to this dilemma started from a different foundation. It held that Christians, by the exact meaning of the word, refers to a group of human beings who believe in Jesus Christ and want to be his followers. Jesus claimed that he was sent by the heavenly father to human beings to declare God's love and salvation. Anyone who believes in his declaration and comes to him will be saved. And through him, one becomes a child of God, capable of establishing an intimate relationship with God. Christian faith is a feeling of trust. That is, it is a trust that Jesus is the Christ who brings us into a new relationship with God. This trust changes the believer's life and gives a new life experience to him or her, and builds up strength in the believers' life. Once such a feeling occurs, it must be expressed in language, art, rituals and other forms, which are called culture. The same feeling, for example, joy or pain, may be expressed differently in different cultures. Indeed, an expression of joy in one culture may not be seen as joy at all by another culture. But the feeling is real, no matter what clothes it may wear.

To gain their own expression of their Christian faith, some Chinese Christians have constantly endeavored to walk their own way in living

a Christian life. There has been a movement called the local churches movement (or assembly hall churches), initiated by and under the leadership of Watchman Nee (Ni To-sheng 1903-1972), started in the late 1920s. Nee had close contact with English Brethren but insisted that the Chinese church should be organized by Chinese Christians without the involvement of foreign missionaries. In Nee's definition of the local church, the Chinese church should not be divided by denominations. Each location only needs a church with financial and administrative independence. It was a Chinese Christians' response to the Anti-Christianity Movement.

Nee was born to a Christian family in 1903. In his early life, he could not accept the Christian faith from his family, seeing that Christian life as his mother lived it was a kind of western-enslaved life. He was sent to a school administered by Anglican missionaries. Yet, under the influence of the May-fourth Movement (began in 1919), he felt sick of western missionaries and Chinese evangelists. He wanted to be an independent and successful Chinese and had a big plan to be so. When he was seventeen years old, he had a moment in which his heart was touched by God. As he recalled, in that moment, he found that his life was full of sin and prayed to God to have mercy on him. He then experienced God's love, which brought him great joy and peace. After that, he abandoned his plan for his life and engaged himself in evangelism.

Nee's local church movement has been successful. Interestingly, even though Nee objected to the Christian church being divided by denominations, the local church is now the biggest denomination among Chinese churches. Nee's theology played a big role in these developments. Nee wrote a huge volume of essays addressing different aspects of Christian life. Two of them are worth mentioning here: *The Spiritual Man* and *The Normal Christian Life*. In his works, Nee attempted to express the Christian faith in a Chinese way, which includes the existential concerns of people, the use of ordinary Chinese language, the testimonies of Chinese believers, pursuing expectations, and so on. Actually, he developed a program to help his Christian followers adopt a spiritual life. I would call this a way or a set of spiritual exercises that would transform one's life.

I shall analyze this approach to demonstrate the way of a Chinese Christian life as Nee understood it.

In *The Normal Christian Life*, Nee designs a program of five steps for being a Christian. The first step is to know that Christ is within us. Nee argues that

> The normal Christian life must begin with a very definite 'knowing,' which is not just knowing something about the truth, nor understanding some important doctrine. It is not intellectual knowledge at all, but an opening of *the eyes of the heart* to see what we have in Christ.

There is no question that when one becomes a Christian, he or she must believe in Christ and see him as his or her savior, and follow him. All Christians start their Christian life with this living and inward knowledge of Christ. It is a knowing that is an opening of the heart to the Christ that is within.

The second step in Watchman Nee's program is to reckon (count or credit) ourselves dead to sin and embrace new life in Christ. Here, Nee refers to the statement that we find in Paul's Letter to the Romans: "*Knowing* that our old man was crucified with him…so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin…reckon your selves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." (Romans 6: 9, 11) Nee then explains that the "reckoning of faith" is the key for one to continue as a Christian. He interprets the word "reckon" as an accounting act, such as counting property or money. In reckoning or considering oneself a Christian, one will be able to abandon his or her old-self and embrace the new self.

The third step in Nee's program is to present oneself to God. Nee writes that "Presenting myself to God implies a recognition that I am altogether His. This giving of myself is a definite thing, just as definite as reckoning." One cannot present oneself as one's "old self." But when a Christian has reckoned himself dead in sin through Christ, he becomes a new person and this new person will devote himself to God's will and to following Christ. He then presents himself to God.

The fourth step is to "Walk...after the Spirit." Nee tells us that the Spirit is installed in us while we have yet to fulfill the ordinance of the law. In our lives, we may be subject to the flesh and so ordered by the law. Yet, when we follow the Spirit, we are free from the ordinance, from the law, and the

indwelling of the Spirit allows us to fulfill the new law of loving God and the neighbor.

And the last step is to bear the cross and walk with Christ. Now, we walk after the Spirit and do whatever God wants us to do rather than what we want to do. Nee says that at this step, "God is bringing you to the place where He has but to express a wish and you respond instantly." Once a Christian has reached this place in his or her life, he or she will act exactly as God wants. Then, he or she can live a normal Christian life.

These five steps constitute the way of a Christian life as Nee understood it and wrote in his books. Since then, a great number of Chinese Christians has accepted his Way and designed their life accordingly. As we examine this proposal closely, we may find that the second step is the most important one. Nee uses the term "reckoning of faith" as the crucial step in the Christian life. That is, the act of reckoning must be taken by a faithful man. With this act, a Christian will submit himself to God's hand.

Watchman Nee then moves further to advise his readers to adjust their lives according to God's will. In his program, a Christian must carefully discern God's will before he takes any further actions. God's will is the starting point of a Christian life, and it can be revealed to him if he follows these five steps. To practice these five steps is to live a normal Christian life. These five steps might also be called a spiritual exercise or a Way.

We may consider the Way of Watchman Nee as an alternative way for Chinese Christians. In Nee's book, the "reckoning of faith" is conducted by Christians themselves. When a Christian has gained his new self, he will then reckon himself dead and present himself to God.

However, in *Romans* Paul uses the term "reckon" (to count, credit or to justify) in a way different from Watchman Nee. Here, the subject of this act is God, rather than Christians themselves. Only God is able to reckon a believer or judge a man righteous. The initial act must be from God's side, not the human side. The only thing a believer can do is trust in God's promise of forgiveness and acceptance. One must recognize that God has actually forgiven his sins or wrong-doing, whatever sin or wrong it may have been and whenever it may have occurred. He cannot do anything else. That is, a Christian can only be justified by God in Christ and that justification must be received in faith. One is not saved or made right with

God by one's own judgment or act. He can only trust that his decisions and acts are forgiven by God, that he has been reconciled with God.

In faith, he trusts that God has mercy on him and accepts him as righteous in Christ Jesus.

Moreover, living a faithful life is a response to our being reconciled to God in Jesus Christ. At the beginning of that faithful life one is not fully aware of God's will nor is he fully empowered by God's will. Yet he has to make decisions and to act. He only needs to observe God's working in his life, confident that the spirit will guide one's decisions and actions. Such a Christian grows in an understanding of God's will and working. He may still make wrong decisions in God's eye. But one thing he knows for sure from observing God's work in faith is that God is ever-loving. And as he trusts more and more on God and relies more and more on God in making decisions he will grow in a faithful life.

The spiritual exercises and living a faithful life are two aspects of the Christian life. The spiritual exercises enable the person to acknowledge God's gracious and loving acceptance and to recognize God's will for our lives. The faithful life then involves acting in accordance with God's will, and surrendering our decisions to God's judgment while trusting in God's promises. Chinese Christians include these two aspects in their Way of life.

Way of Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Fragmentary Wholeness

Peter Frick

Introduction

Sometimes our intellectual formation takes shape in ways we cannot anticipate. My encounter with Dietrich Bonhoeffer was one such moment in my own intellectual and spiritual journey. When I was a student at the University of Tübingen, Bonhoeffer's name was a household item. But for whatever reason I hadn't really read his writings and his life was known to me in the familiar cliché of the pastor who resisted the Nazis and was murdered for it in a concentration camp at the end of the war.

The Beginning of the Journey

The first substantial step of my journey with Bonhoeffer came about in this way. After finishing my doctoral studies, I finally put in practice what I had purposed for many years: to read Bonhoeffer's own writings. So in 1998 I purchased my first Bonhoeffer book: *Gemeinsames Leben* (*Life Together*). The reason I bought this book was not so much that it was one of the classic Bonhoeffer works, but simply because it was the cheapest in the new critical 17-volume hardcover series *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke (DBW)*. At that time, I had no intention to read all of these volumes as they amount to about 10,000 pages. And yet, as I started reading Bonhoeffer I was drawn irresistibly into his way of thinking and writing. Like many before me, I became fascinated with the freshness of his ideas, the brilliance of his theological insights and the personal courage of his life. It took me a decade, but I did persevere and read all 10,000 pages. So, almost accidentally I was drawn more and more into his writings and before I knew it, I had published essays and books, joined the International Bonhoeffer Society, became an elected Board member and joined the

teams of editors and translators who produced the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English (*DBWE*).

The First Station on the Way

Bonhoeffer's *Life Together* – written at the request of his former students in a four week period after the closing of the Underground Seminary by the Gestapo – is a reflection on Christian community life as practiced at the seminary. As such it is not simply a manual for Christian community that can be used anachronistically in our contemporary context. Nonetheless, on almost every page I discovered golden nuggets that made me pause and reflect on them. Bonhoeffer writes about the dynamics between silence and speech, the importance of meditation and service, the need for genuine confession as the breakthrough to cross and community and so on. And yet, there was one topic that gripped me more profoundly than the others: Bonhoeffer's discussion of the genuine and an illusionary Christian community.

In a nutshell, this is what inspired me: Bonhoeffer argues that in genuine Christian community the foundation for human relationships and interaction is the fact that Christ is the mediator. In this context, Bonhoeffer is not speaking of Christ being the mediator of the divine-human relationship, but of the person to person relationship. For Bonhoeffer, to claim that Christ is mediator implies that there is no direct human to human, soul to soul relationship.[1] Such an understanding, Bonhoeffer insists, is "of immeasurable significance."[2] As a theological statement, hardly any Christian would disagree that Christ is the mediator between human beings. This is not the difficulty. The real challenge of the claim has to do with its psychological and sociological implications. This is the case even more so today in our own post-modern world than in Bonhoeffer's times. In an age when human beings are drawn to each other for mostly emotional reasons, it is worth our while to listen to the fresh voice of Bonhoeffer. This was how I encountered his words. As fallen beings, it is our nature to like those who like us. Often rather unconsciously, we want the other to be like us, we want the other to be in our image. It is precisely this attempt to mold and sculpt the other according to our liking that is an illusion and ultimately destroys human relationships and community.

For this reason, the theological statement that Christ is the sole mediator flows into the psychological release of the other. What does this mean? In Bonhoeffer's own words,

> "This means that I must release others from all attempts to control, coerce, and dominate them with my love. In their freedom from me, other persons want to be loved for who they are, as those for whom Christ became a human being, died, and rose again… This is the meaning of the claim that we can encounter others only through the mediation of Christ. Self-centered love constructs its own image of other persons, about what they are and what they should become."[3]

When I first read these lines, they had a tremendously powerful and fresh impact on me. (Later I saw parallels with Emmanuel Levinas' ideas on alterity and the face-to-face encounter.) The way he phrased his conviction that human relations must be unconditional to the core struck me as being far more than a sophisticated way of expressing a theological insight. That Christ stands between people is tremendously freeing. It frees the Christian community from a false and cheap idealism about human bonding and protects it from becoming a club of preferential like-minded friends to the exclusion of the other. Bonhoeffer had a very demanding understanding of the Christian life, and this shines through more clearly than perhaps anywhere else in his classic work *Discipleship*.

As is well known, Bonhoeffer thought that the Lutheran discovery of grace – as important a corrective as it was during the Reformation – had by the beginning of the twentieth century been so radically misunderstood and misrepresented among Lutherans that the very integrity of the Christian faith was at stake. In the vein of Kierkegaard's critique of Christendom and Karl Barth's deconstruction (curiously a term first used by Luther in theological debate and not the invention of post-modernism) of cultural Protestantism, Bonhoeffer attempted to redraw the map of grace to such an extent that its cheap abuse would once more yield a firm foundation for Christian life. The very first sentence of *Discipleship* leaves no doubt as to Bonhoeffer's intentions:

> Cheap grace is the mortal enemy of our church. Our struggle today is for costly grace… Cheap grace means grace as doctrine, as principle, as system. It means forgiveness of sins as a general truth; it means God's love as merely a Christian idea of God.[4]

Bonhoeffer's achievement in *Discipleship* was his ability to articulate with utmost clarity what it means to follow the call of Jesus Christ in such a way that it is neither simplistic nor unrealistic. The gist of his theology is straightforward: either the following of Christ is genuine, involving costly grace and has an impact on how Christians live in the world or it is useless. It is therefore in accordance with his ideas in *Discipleship* when he later wrote in his unfinished *Ethics* that there is a political dimension of grace. Repeatedly he speaks of the way or the coming of grace. Since costly grace is not merely God's love as an idea, for Bonhoeffer it follows that "there is a depth of human bondage, of human poverty, and of human ignorance that hinders the gracious coming of Christ."[5] While firmly holding on the teaching that justification of the sinner comes solely by the grace and faith in God, Bonhoeffer nonetheless argues that "there are conditions of the heart, of life, and in the world that especially hinder the receiving of grace."[6] As Bonhoeffer rightly argues:

> The hungry person needs bread, the homeless person needs shelter, the one deprived of rights needs justice, the lonely person needs community, the undisciplined needs order, and the slave needs freedom. It would be blasphemy against God and the neighbor to leave the hungry unfed while saying that God is closest to those in deepest need… If the hungry do not come to faith, the guilt falls on those who denied them bread.[7]

Bonhoeffer's idea on grace – the unity of his theological convictions and their socio-political implications – was another decisive milestone for me when I first encountered it in his writings. He often used the expression "to stand on solid ground;" his teaching on grace has become such a solid ground in my own spiritual formation. I can go as far as saying that reading Bonhoeffer at the time I did was an experience that shaped my spiritual life to such an extent that without this encounter I would not be the same person. The insights I gained from his understanding of unconditional

human relations mediated through the risen Christ, coupled with his teaching on the power of grace, have shaped my spiritual formation in immeasurable ways. And yet – this is only half the story. The other side, equally as important to me, is the manner in which reading Bonhoeffer had a significant influence on my intellectual formation.

The Second Station on the Way

My first encounter with Bonhoeffer as a kind of spiritual mentor was very soon enhanced by my reading his second academic dissertation, entitled *Act and Being. Transcendental Philosophy and Ontology in Systematic Theology*. As the subtitle of this book suggests, its theme is about theology and philosophy. This work is by far the most dense and demanding of all his works. It is a tightly argued engagement with the epistemological tradition since Kant and idealistic philosophy since Hegel. The key attempt of the young Bonhoeffer – he was only 24 years old, after he had finished his doctoral dissertation at age 21 – was to articulate a theologically and philosophically viable concept of revelation that neither does violence to the absolute being of God (Barth's influence on his thought) nor the contingency and concreteness of revelation in human life (the act character of revelation). On my first reading of *Act and Being* I was only partially able to understand the intricacies of his argument. At any rate, what did grab my attention immediately was his position that the human self cannot come to an adequate self-unerstanding (because of its fallenness) apart from revelation.

As I understand it, Bonhoeffer's argument unfolds in this way: He starts with an essentially epistemological presupposition by referring to Luther's dictum *sola fide credendum est nos esse peccatores* (we know by faith alone that we are sinners). In language often resembling Heidegger, he argues that as human beings we cannot know that we are sinners, for we have in us no organ that can arrive at such a conclusion. "Were it really a human possibility," he argues, "for persons themselves to know that they are sinners apart from revelation, neither 'being in Adam' nor 'being in Christ' would be existential designations for their being. For it would mean that human beings could place themselves into the truth, that they could somehow withdraw to a deeper being of their own, apart from their

being sinners, their 'not being in the truth.'"[8] In other words, Bonhoeffer understands being in Adam/Christ as possessing ontological reality. But, and this is crucial, the ontological category of being in Adam/sin is such that it is epistemologically impossible for a person to conclude that s/he belongs to such a category – apart from revelation.

Elsewhere Bonhoeffer explains the epistemological impasse in these terms. Everything comes down to "the decisive question that must be put to transcendentalism and idealism alike: Can the I understand itself out of itself?"[9] For Bonhoeffer, the answer is an emphatic negation. "The attempt to understand oneself purely from oneself must come to nothing because Dasein"[10] is never independent but in reference to the ontological reality of the fallen person. Put differently, the fallen self is always ontologically and epistemologically limited to the extent that it cannot know its own state of not being in the truth. The self as a starting point for self-knowledge is always limited by its own incapacity to see itself precisely in its own limit in the same way as the eye cannot see itself.[11]

More than I can explain in these few lines here, I constructed from Bonhoeffer's reflections my own "solid ground" to stand on as far as ontology, epistemology and existence (*Dasein*) are concerned. More than any other thinker (Paul Tillich is important here as well) Bonhoeffer has helped me in staking out the intellectual matrix of my own human existence, the being of the world, the fallenness and finitude of all things, the existence of evil, my faith in God as the Triune One, the search for meaning and the freedom to be myself. I am not claiming that Bonhoeffer has helped me solve all of these questions in my life; I am merely saying that he has like no other thinker shaped the visible and invisible threads of my thinking.

The Third Station on the Way

After I had completed my doctoral dissertation on the concept of divine providence in Philo of Alexandria, it dawned on me one day (I cannot recall any details of that "revelation") that the structure of my thinking is interested in "system." By that I mean that I am interested in the larger, systemic questions and issues in life and not in the details. For example, I am interested in Pauline theology, that is to say the overarching questions,

challenges and contexts of his life and teaching, and not in the exegetical details of a particular verse. I should clarify that these details are also important, but for my way of thinking they are subordinate to the larger whole.

With regards to Bonhoeffer's influence on my thinking: he opened up the spiritual and intellectual dimensions of my thinking on my journey to discover my own system (Bonhoeffer himself disliked the idea of system). Another way of putting these matters is to acknowledge that I discovered in him the attempt to articulate the important questions in life – before one attempts the answers. This sequence is crucial for me. Understanding the questions of *Dasein* is of primary hermeneutical significance; answers follow from the depth of our understanding of the questions. In some cases we may never arrive at a satisfying answer to a question.

In terms of my own intellectual (I use this term in deliberate distinction from "academic") journey, this is the path were I am on right now. Even though I have achieved a certain clarity and comprehensiveness in my theological thinking, I am still on this journey to clarify further and to ask the same questions over and over again in the hope to discover new insights. It may be an overstatement, but I do see life as an essentially hermeneutical endeavor. As human beings we are all engaged in this never-ending predicament of making sense of ourselves and the world around us. Bonhoeffer has helped me in establishing enough solid ground under my feet so that I could reach a certain maturity in my thinking. To say that I have gained a certain maturity in my thinking is not to say that I have adequately understood life's questions let alone found viable answers. Indeed, to put it in the most precise terms, in spite of my penchant to think systematically and comprehensively, I have learned (to a large extent from Bonhoeffer) that life is in its very nature always incomplete and fragmentary. This brings me to my final point.

Fragmentary Wholeness

In spite of the fact that I am intensely preoccupied with theological and philosophical questions and that I am constantly engaged in the hermeneutical circle to make intelligible my own *Dasein* and that of the world, there is something beyond and above the intellectual life. It is, in short, life fully lived. While Bonhoeffer lived in unusual historical times

– when Nazi crimes despised humanity and the church failed to speak out and resist in action – he somehow was able to make sense of his own life. What is so inspiring about his life is not that he has become a saint, or phenomenon or some kind of icon. What inspires me is the way in which he evaluates what he terms "the polyphony of life." On 21 July 1944, the day after the failed conspiracy on Hitler's life, he writes from prison to his best friend: I "am still discovering right up to this moment, that it is only by living completely in this world that one learns to have faith. One must completely abandon any attempt to make something of oneself, whether it be a saint, or a converted sinner, or a churchman (a so-called priestly type!), a righteous man or an unrighteous one, a sick man or a healthy one. By this-worldliness [*Diesseitigkeit*] I mean living unreservedly in life's duties, problems, successes and failures, experiences and perplexities. In so doing, we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God, taking seriously, not our own sufferings, but those of God in the world – watching with Christ in Gethsemane. That, I think, is faith; that is μετάνοια (metanoia); and that is how one becomes a human and a Christian."[12]

What I learned from Bonhoeffer is this: although we take great pains in thinking through the intricacies of our lives, the purpose of life is to live every day in the knowledge that the power of God's love for ourselves and for all of the world is sufficient to give it meaning, even if this meaning must remain fragmentary in the whole of our lives.

Endnotes

[1] Cf. *Life Together. The Prayerbook of the Bible: An Introduction to the Psalms* (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English* 5), translated by D. Bloesch and J. Burtness, edited by G. Kelly (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 32-33 (hereafter *DBWE* 5).

[2] *DBWE* 5, 34.

[3] *DBWE* 5, 44.

[4] *Discipleship* (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English* 4), translated by R. Krauss, edited by G. Kelly and J. Godsey (Minneapolis; Fortress Press, 2000), 43.

[5] *Ethics* (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English* 6), translated by R. Krauss, C. West and D. W. Stott, edited by C. Green. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 161 (hereafter *DBWE* 6).

[6] *DBWE* 6, 162.

[7] *DBWE* 6, 163.

[8] *Act and Being: Transcendental Philosophy and Ontology in Systematic Theology* (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English* 2), translated by H. Martin Rumscheidt, edited by Wayne W. Floyd (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 136 (hereafter *DBWE* 2).

[9] *DBWE* 2, 46.

[10] *DBWE* 2, 38.

[11] Cf. *DBWE* 2, 46.

[12] *Letters and Papers from Prison* (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English* 8), translated by Isabel Best, Lisa E. Dahill, Reinhard Krauss, Nancy Lukens and Martin Rumscheidt, edited by John W. de Gruchy (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 486.

Way of the Artist

Wendy Fletcher

Art as a spiritual pathway lends itself to the service of healing the self, mending the world, and imagining a future: all three.

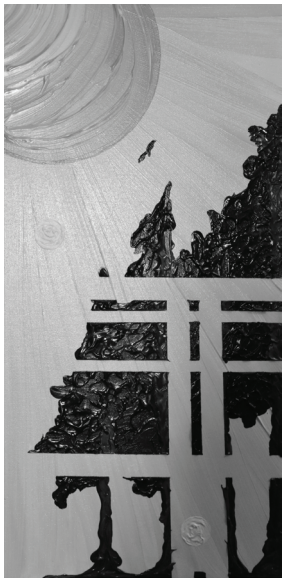
Poet Mary Oliver writes in her poem *Through the Long Black Branches*: "Listen, are you breathing just a little and calling it a life?" It is my fundamental belief about this journey, that we as creatures are called to embrace the opportunity of life by living as fully, richly, deeply as we possibly can. It is also the case that for most of us, the road throws up challenges which can become stumbling blocks to our thriving. The journey toward living fully, deeply, richly is complicated. It is not possible for the faint of heart.

The act of thriving which begins as a personal act in turn has huge implications for the worlds around us. Given the interconnectedness of all that is, our living and dying directly impacts everything around us: our friends and family, our work places, our communities, our nation, our world. What we do stays in the world.

The Personal

As I hit mid-life, the challenges become stumbling blocks, which had gathered along my roadside and had become overwhelming – so much rubble strewn every which way. I entered Jungian analysis. You may be aware that expressing oneself artistically in the course of the Jungian way is very important. At that point, I had had little engagement with artistic expression for over two decades. As we headed toward Christmas, when I was 40, my son Joshua said, "I know what we are going to buy you for Christmas!" It was the most life-changing gift I have ever received. There under the tree that Christmas morning was a small easel, brushes and a set of paints. I began that day, painting my way to healing, integration and peace.

At first I allowed my brush simply to move on the canvas – pouring



paint, moving it around. Next my pain began to rise. The paintings I produced documented an interior narrative fraught with loss, violence, grief and betrayal. I call that season my pain painting years. Over time, the colours and the forms shifted. My need to purchase black and red paint subsided (although red remains one of my favourite colours). Gradually, more oranges, yellows and pinks companioned my greens and purples and blues. Over time, the paintings documented a story of healing, of hope, of joy. They began to document my present and hoped-for future rather than my past. As the transformative power of colour and form surged through me, others were drawn to my creations. They began to recognize themselves in my work. The paintings became a form of silent communication between artist and viewer. Aspects of my story touched aspects in theirs.

Eventually, those viewing my paintings began to express themselves with words. They would talk about the feelings which emerged for them in viewing the paintings. Over time, those who did not want to paint themselves began to ask if I could transcribe their feelings for them through the creation of images which were meaningful to them. This began a very intimate and challenging aspect of my artistic journey. I listen to others talk about their feelings, an event, a place and then try to communicate for them their meaning. Recently, a colleague talked about her emotional house with reference to the birth of her new granddaughter. In reflecting her meaning, I worked to express the twinning of her journey with that of her new granddaughter's, while also capturing something of her experience of her new granddaughter's spiritual energy and her hope for this beginning story. Despite my years as a priest and spiritual director, this chapter in my journey of artistic expression is a form of spiritual intimacy with others which I have previously not experienced in the same way.

This brief sharing of my own journey with art as a spiritual pathway

and healing practice encapsulates my meaning: artistic expression engages the human being as an individual and in relation to the other, opens up a broader community of engagement in a process which heals, and in turn, opens up pathways for human thriving which are less possible on other roads.

The Social: Art as Commentary and Catalyst for Social Imaginary*

At a theoretical level, it is my view that the tri-partite world of art engagement – artist, art, viewer – creates a new form of reality which in turn opens out to the possibility of insight or meaning-making which is unique to the experience unfolding in the act of immediate encounter. Philosopher Michel Foucault coined the word "heterotopia" which expresses something of the experience which I am articulating here. Heterotopia names the phenomenon of a created space which is unique, informed by layers of meaning which may not immediately meet the eye. Foucault holds that there are many layers of reality existing in parallel and a "heterotopia" is a contained and particular universe of meaning shaped by both objective and subjective dimensions. A "heterotopia" moves beyond the binary oppositions of a hegemonic narrative by insisting that competing truths claims, experiences, and forces frame the discourse of meaning. I have come to see that the lived experience of art in relationship fulfills exactly this function. We see the world and define our reality in new ways through an encounter with and in the creation of art.

The social geographer Edward Soja took Foucault's concept of heterotopia and from it developed his notion of "Thirdspace." Soja's argument is that in the experience of "Thirdspace" there is a confluence of realities which create an experience which integrates the known and unknown, the objective and subjective, the abstract and the concrete, mind and body, the universal and the particular. This experience informs consciousness in an 'othering' of any knowing.

In other words, we become a stranger to ourselves and in so doing find new ways of imagining our own stories and the possibilities in the worlds around us. This process, which is intensely personal, becomes then intensely social as our transfiguration becomes the agency of new social

imaginaries. Art frees us to participate positively in the creation of new social imaginaries less bound by the subjective or projective needs of a particular valued world. Healing, mending, imagining: all three are linked in the project of best-becoming.

The Transcendent: Mysticism and Art

The post-modern deconstruction of worldviews and norms which both Foucault and Soja address has been named before. The long tradition of mysticism, mystical thought and mystical practice in a variety of religious traditions addresses a similar theme. Within the Christian context, which is my religious home, generations of practitioners have reflected this way of understanding. In the mystical experience one encounters the transcendent – that which is beyond the self. Our experience of the actual – that which is directly in front of us which we can apprehend with our five senses – is re-cast in a vision of the real – that which is beyond either our objective or subjective experience. From an encounter with that which is beyond us, we return to the space of our current realities with new sight and sensibilities.

Notable among Christian mystics was Hildegaard of Bingen. Living in the 12th century Rhineland area of Europe, Hildegaard was a religious leader serving as the Abbess of a double monastery (male and female vocations). Her leadership was inspired by her mystical visions which had come to her since the age of three. As a vehicle for expressing the meaning of her visions, of communicating their intent to her community, she honed her skill as an artist. She painted illuminations of her visions, hoping that these visual representations would communicate God's intention more aptly than her words. Those illuminations continue to today, serving as a transitional movement in the communication of meaning between this world and the next, the everyday and the transcendent. For Hildegaard, the artistic illuminations, as with the mystical experience, served a dual purpose: they communicated the experience of the rapture of divine union with God and secondly they expressed God's intention for the world. In other words, they depicted a new social imaginary. In this regard then, the mystical experience parallels the "Third Space" of Soja's theory.

The Celtic spiritual tradition talks about the "thin place." The ancient

Celts believed that there are physical places where God's presence is more acutely to be encountered than elsewhere. Thin places are spaces where the now and the not yet meet, and we are able to see in a different way, if only for a moment, outside of this worldly sight illumined by other-world eyes. Although the Celts predominantly understood this term to refer to a geographic location, I believe the concept addresses that liminal space, that third space where in art, artist and viewer encounter each other and a new kind of situation is created. Understandings bound by subjective adherence to socially prescribed normativities are set aside in the space of encounter which art creates, and new ways of being in the world emerge as possibility in the imagination. If you can imagine it, if you can see it, you can live it.

Artistic Expression as a Radical Act of Hope

A definition of hope which I have long appreciated is this: hope is being able to imagine a future in which you would like to participate. In the act of art production and encounter, there is a pushing back of the known. The everyday and concrete are set aside in the making of a space for something which is other, which transcends the actual, which lends itself to the imagination of multiple, desirable futures.

The twentieth century became the cradle of some of the worst horror human history has ever known. Headlining the list of horrific events was the holocaust. In the middle of that story lies a breach in the trajectory of horror, a breach which reflects the lifeline of hope which art can become. Between 1942 and 1944, 150,000 Jews, 15,000 of whom were under the age of 15, were moved to and then through a place called Terezin, located near Prague in the Czech Republic. Gathering thousands of artists, writers, and musicians, this camp served in 1944 as a 'model' of a Jewish village promoted in National Socialist propaganda. While the constructed positive narrative of life at Terezin was duplicitous, the nature of the community gathered there meant that a place for art and culture was created in the middle of the suffering.

In particular, it is the story of an artist who devoted her energy to empowering children in the middle of horrific dislocation and life trauma. Friedel Dicker-Brandeis was an artist who had trained with the Bauhaus

in Weimar, Germany. The Bauhaus was one of the most influential art movements of the twentieth century, the traces of which can be yet observed in many contemporary art approaches. Surfacing as a response to the the rapid rise of the industrial sector and accompanying technology and the fear that all spirit would be stripped from contemporary culture, Bauhaus artists sought a pathway and approach which would ensure that the soul stayed in manufacturing. They argued that one should look beneath the form for the essence and from a comprehension of the essence create the outer form. When Brandeis ended up being transported to the Terezin concentration camp, she filled the two allowed suitcases (50 kilos) with art supplies. She used these not only to practice her art, but to practice an early form of art therapy with children sent to Terezin with her. Although Dicker-Brandeis died after transport to Auschwitz in 1944, approximately 5000 drawings and poems survived Terezin as a witness to the struggle and also the hope of the many children who passed through the camp. In the drawings you see children expressing trauma, but also through their art creating an imaginary – the world they once lived in as an act of hope that they would live in that world again. These art fragments created between 1942-44 are for me a most dramatic illustration of my understanding of the place which art plays in human survival. Art becomes a radical act of hope, creating a vision for a world, a future in which we want to participate. Although my own suffering pales in comparison to the suffering of these young ones, this is how I understand much of the art of the children of Terezin, and how I understand my own struggles to paint a hoped-for future of beauty, in which I and those with me might thrive. Artistic expression not only surfaces and manages pain: it plants a stake in the future which is possible beyond suffering.

The art I have loved the most is the work of the twentieth century German expressionists. Short-lived though the periods of their movement were, cut short by the politics of conformism demanded by German fascism, their insistence that expressing the essence of things, the spiritual meaning of what was perceived through colour rather than form as the first work of the artist carries with it the possibility of art as a life-giving force which more structured realism does not. Buoyed up by emerging theories of colour, which linked colour to emotion and to emergent psychological

discourse, the painters of Die Brucke (the Bridge) and Der Bleue Reiter (the Blue Rider) for a brief moment in time opened a visionary new pathway between this world and the inner world. Through the use of bold and unexpected colour and a technique which eschewed the limitations imposed by structuralism, the German Expressionist captured the essence of the possibility of art used in the service of human thriving. It is this approach which motivates my own artistic attempts.

After painting for several years, I realized that I had developed an unconscious system to my painting. It is possible after the fact to read what I meant in my painting, sometimes more clearly than my own conscious intention. Specific colours represent specific meanings, as do shapes and forms. In the past decade I have purchased perhaps two tubes of black paint. Black rarely ever appears in my paintings. Where another might use black, I usually apply a deep purple. This exclusion of black from my painting repertoire was an unconscious thing but one which when combined with my overuse of brighter colours reflects my primary stance toward the world – one, trauma and pain notwithstanding, of overwhelming hope and joy. I realized over time that yellow and orange in my paintings represent hope. Greens and turquoise represent vitality and verdancy. Pinks and roses are joy. Purple and deep blues are depth, contentment and spiritual peace. Red is intensity and passion. Metallic paints, which I often use as an underlay and an overlay, are the colours of illumination, divine grace, the presence of the holy. When you see angular shapes – rectangles and squares – you can read fragmentation in my work. Circles and circular patterns communicate blessing, providence, grace and the presence of the divine. Competing use of life-giving colours and rectangular shapes communicate the complexity of fragmentation and healing in the same story.

Art then is a spiritual pathway which creates previously unimagined spaces for human thriving both personal and communal. In accessing that part of the person which is beyond the concrete and rationale, artistic expression breaks down the barriers of the expected, the normative and particular in favour of the unexpected and the surprising. As the viewer encounters art, the individual is released into the possibility of the communal, and change of the self is given flight in hope of the

transfiguration of the whole.

As a parting thought, I return to the poetry of Mary Oliver. In her poem *Wild Geese,* she concludes with this final line: "What will you do with the one wild and precious life you have been given?" My answer to that is: live. I intend to live, as richly, deeply, fully and well as I can. In the project of living and living well, art, for me, has become a primary pathway: life as it is and life as it is becoming nurtured by colour, symbol and hope.

*Ed. Note: "Social imaginary" is a sociological term meaning "the set of values, institutions, laws and symbols common to a social group and the corresponding society through which people recognize their social whole."

Way of a Unification Member

Frank Kaufmann

I am delighted and honored to accept Darrol Bryant's kind invitation to contribute to this important collection. Darrol wrote me to say, "Frank, I would love you to write something on the Way of Rev. Moon," something that would help people to understand the spiritual path of the Moonie ...."*

"Oh Gosh" was my first reaction, "writing on "The Way of Reverend Moon" would be really difficult," but writing "something that would help people understand the spiritual path of the Moonie ...?" Well that is less difficult. I know the spiritual path of at least one "Moonie."

But, now I must switch to some different label than "Moonie" because too many of my friends think the word is a slur and an offense. So, for the purposes of this essay I will henceforth use the term "wild-eyed, brain-washed, ..." No wait, this won't do either. OK, I will use the innocuous term "Unification member," and write of "the way of a Unification member."

Something you may not have thought about.

Most people do not realize this, but anyone serious about understanding Unification members should know this following unusual fact: If you meet a Unification member, it is very likely that this person probably knows every last weird, nutty, disconfirming thing anyone could possibly unearth or concoct about Reverend Moon and his family. Furthermore, we fully acknowledge that any given assertion might well be true. Unification people generally are intelligent, thoughtful, and reflective folks. Yet somehow, despite this curious combination we are perfectly delighted and content with the path we follow, in fact deeply grateful, and given the chance, would do it all over again only with greater joy and gratitude the second time. In this regard, perhaps we are probably not much different from believers of other religions.

How does one become a Unification member? Externally there are all sorts of ways one can "become a member." Some join the Unification effort

with little or no human contact at all! For example someone might spend week after week studying taped lectures at a "video center." Another might join the opposite way, perhaps receiving a visit from someone who visits for weeks or months and sits over tea at the kitchen table.

One common way that people join is by hearing lectures over the course of some weeks at a "church center" or "workshop center," with others also studying Unification teachings for the first time. In almost all cases (including those born into the community) the decision of whether or not to follow the Unification way comes in the context of studying the basic teachings of the community, *The Divine Principle*.

Periodically people claim to be "led" to the Unification path by some mysterious inner compulsion. I myself met a Sufi Sheikh one afternoon who had travelled from Sierre Leone directly to the lobby of the New Yorker Hotel for the sole purpose of meeting Reverend Moon. I happened to be in the lobby at the time. This man in regal, powder blue robes of the desert demanded of me "where is Reverend Moon?" This man was a significant spiritual leader with thousands of his own followers back home. Of course no one could produce Reverend Moon for him that afternoon. Nevertheless, he has remained a passionate devotee of Reverend Moon all the days of his life from that day.

Many Unification people contend that they committed to the path and community of Unification based on the persuasive logic of the teachings in the *Divine Principle*. I myself disagree that such a thing is possible. It seems to me that if a text could be written in such a way as to be compelling to this degree, the world would be full of Unification believers by now. The fact is that many thousands more have studied these teachings than the few who follow this path. By this logic, I think other factors are vital for the birth moment of Unification devotees.

In virtually all cases, one can mark and identify a crystal clear moment of surrender, an "aha" that carries the burdened soul over the river Jordon to living faith and abundant hope.

The educational content that spawns these moments, externally and on the face of it, is the *Divine Principle*, the revealed teachings introduced by Reverend Moon, systematized by his early followers, and refined and approved by Reverend Moon. This is why (I believe) so many Unification

members believe (or will say) "I joined because of the *Divine Principle*." There is a way that this can be said to be true, but of course a theological teaching alone cannot create new life. If it could, it would do so every time it was taught. But many people have read the *Divine Principle* with no effect in their lives at all.

In my view, becoming a Unification member is similar to the Christian phenomenon of conversion in which the "Word" serves as the conduit through which a form of "rebirth" "convicts" the hearer. It is essentially a spiritual phenomenon. I believe people on the path of Unification are best understood to be "converts," people "born again," individuals "awoken" by some spiritual dynamic. We are one way in one moment, and suddenly entirely different in the next.

Why do so many people leave Unification?

From my view there are two parts to answer this question. The first part is, I feel, is explained quite well and simply by Jesus in his comments about seeds, soil, and growing conditions (Mt. 13:3–9). Just what Jesus explains for those with ears to hear seems also to be the case for those trying to survive fruitfully on the path of Unification. Interesting in Jesus' observation is the fact that in this parable, those on the path face the danger of being choked to death both from without and from within.

The second reason people leave, I believe, is peculiar to Unification itself. I find similarities in this instance to accounts of why individuals fall off Asian meditative paths. Here the lore describes demons (or lions) at the gates of each chakra and at the gate of each progressive level of spiritual growth toward enlightenment, liberation, and realization.

A strong element in Unification teaching (though ignored by a great many members) is the understanding that restoration traverses a path of "8 vertical stages" and expands along a trajectory of "8 horizontal stages."

Reverend Moon, who understands himself to be responsible for the "restoring of all history," (all "8 vertical stages") and "restoring" "the entire cosmos, and God" (all "8 horizontal stages"), has led his movement accordingly.

Members trying to stay on the Unification path together with Reverend Moon during these eight decades of his public ministry have been called

to pass through 8 vertical and 8 horizontal stages. (Most members do not ponder this as part of their Unification experience.) What this means practically is that members have been put through fairly thoroughgoing devastation and disorientation on at least 8 occasions. While trying to live simply, as a decent human being, deeply devoted Unification members find themselves torn and crushed in extreme transitions.

Each time we come to a point where we feel we are beginning to "get this" – as things are starting to look a little better," we feel a "little more familiar," and "the suffering seems to be moving slowly behind us" we are plummeted to rock bottom. In these moments again and again, things suddenly loom to look and feel worse than ever. We awaken in the pitch black with the gnawing sense (yet again) "Hey! This is not what I signed up for."

Whenever these transition times happen, there is always a significant exodus of Unification members, if not downright "leaving the movement," then at least re-defining their relationship to the rigorous and demanding "course of restoration." This exodus (both styles) always includes significant, very high, established leaders of the community and a great many of the more talented, skilled, and sophisticated members. Out with them goes the "foundation" and the institutional memory of this delicate work. As a result, a very real and unfortunate fact arises, namely that the main qualification for being a high Unification leader is to have done nothing more than not leave. To be fair, though, this odd qualification conceals a certain, elusive set of rare strengths and virtues. We must recall that in Jesus' time, there was not even one such soul on earth who had the strength and ability to "not leave." It was only after the Emmaus road experience that such individuals began to arise, and on *this* foundation of faith did the church begin to grow.

The path itself: similar to the dynamic involving the 8 vertical and 8 horizontal stages, there is yet another vital dimension to Unification teaching that is (in my view) tragically and widely ignored by members. This oversight has to do with the "I" in the equation. I believe this "restoration" path and structure identified by Reverend Moon, and on which he leads his followers, applies not only to Reverend Moon's design for "saving all of history," and "restoring the entire Cosmos," but is equally, unequivocally

and deeply bound to the "restoration" and liberation of the "follower" too.

With regard to the 8 vertical stages, it is the job of the adept to melt the history of sin and evil by one's walk, prayers, tears, and deeds. The Unification member is meant to be a person lost in the valiant battle to liberate others from sadness and oppression. What too many members have failed to catch is that one day, in the heat of this battle, suddenly the sounds fall silent, the clash grows still and the dawn burns away the mist to show you that the peace, the light, and the liberation you've labored to give to others has become your own. It has become you.

The same is true for the 8 horizontal stages. Members agonize, giving their all to protect and advance the pure and the simple way of good. We are meant to do so, bearing ever greater weight and complexity as the work expands from family, to clan, to nation and onward and outward. Again it happens, one day, that this crippling weight and this lonely trudge of ever greater and broader responsibility suddenly opens as the blossom of one's own divinity.

To me, the path of Unification is a treasure of infinite worth, unknown and unmined. It is there for the taking, gathering dust, trapped in the person of Reverend Moon, who has lain bound and gagged in the vile smear of lazy media and the ropes and ties of Lilliput.

What is daily life like on the path of Unification?

Reverend Moon provides very specific guidelines for all cycles of life, including the span of time from dawn to dawn. Time is a very big thing in Unification life, very big.

These guidelines and way of life, like everything he does and teaches, grows directly from the application of his theology and cosmology.

According to Unification teachings, the origin of evil (and that which needs fixing) in a universe created by an all-powerful and all-good God stems from a tragic, perfect storm involving three dimensions of creation: 1. human free will, 2. the creative power of "the word," and 3. the corruption of love.

The process to remove evil (from the self and from the world) involves Unification people in three constant and incessant, core life works: 1.

Study the word of God every day, ideally at 5 a.m., ideally for an hour at least, ideally with all the members of one's household. 2. Live in an active committed and accountable relationship with a person in a spiritually "superior" position, and finally 3. Live in an active, committed, and accountable relationship with people in a "spiritually learning" position in relation to you.

The first obligation obviously involves the adept in a mission to re-establish a proper and wholesome relationship with the word of life that should define our being. It is unending education and surrender. It is the lifelong mission to fuse the conscience with the voice of the living God.

The second part of Unification life (be accountable to a spiritual "superior") puts us in excruciating relational experiences that when guided well (especially by "the word") sears away the putrid crust of pride, arrogance, inflexibility, evasiveness, irresponsibility, and a host of debilitating qualities that take root in untended human lives.

The third part of our way daily is the cross. It is the part of life that stretches and rents us asunder through the love we are desperate to give to others. We are meant to be obsessed and driven in a way that everything broken, hurt, alone, uncertain, afraid, overwhelmed or overcome, breaks our hearts, is unbearable. Anything that cries out evokes prayers, tears, steps, and hard, hard work, all for the sake of repair and balm. This is so in all moments, waking and sleeping. This last part of our way helps us to metamorphasize from smug, self-absorbed, uncaring, self-pitying, cynical, lazy people, to becoming compassionate. But for us, compassionate means not only a way of "feeling." It is a way of effectively transforming all things and all people from suffering to joy. Kind of Dalai Lama meet Max Weber.

Conclusion

This is the water-strider version of a Unification story. It barely touches the surface. Concealed within each thought offered here are days and volumes pressing against the dikes around a full heart creaking to breakthrough.

The way of Unification is difficult, but it is a path that travels through a land of wonder, ever new, ever fresh, full of innocence, in a theatre of magic and discovery. Reverend Moon himself is a door ajar through which

we can peek at the light. If I have one saddness, it is that more have not received from his outstretched hand.

*Ed. Note: This was written prior to the death of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon (1920-2012).

Way of Krishna and Radha

Shrivatsa Goswami

Religion is the human search for and realization of the Divine. This process is hampered due to limitations in our knowledge of ourselves and of the Divine. The chasm between the human phenomena and the Divine is also the cause of this ignorance. Yet to make religious experience possible, the connecting link is provided by the divine intervention in the form of an incarnation, a messiah, a prophet, an avatar, a guru and their communication in the form of holy word. The Divine beyond imagination, thus, takes an image to make comprehension and realization possible on the part of the seekers. But how does the indeterminate 'become' determinate? And, who 'gives' image to the imageless?

Jiva Gosvami, a 16th century Caitanyaite philosopher says that "the Ultimate Principle, generally defined as an indeterminate (or ineffable) Absolute, manifests variously due to the differences in the competence of the seekers" (Bhagavata Sandarbha, anu 1), which is predominantly shaped by their psychological make-up and environment.

This explains the innumerable images of the Divine in the Hindu religion. These images are in the form of natural elements, animals, birds and even mythic man-lions, etc. Different gods and goddesses correspond to the diversity of human frailty. The variety of divine images from the natural to the human realm may suggest an evolution and hierarchy in Hindu religious experience, but it is actually concurrent. It merely underscores the fact that nature and the animal kingdom are an essential part of the human reality and experience. It is an 'ecological theogony.' The hierarchy exists only from the human perspective, because human experience responds most immediately and fully to human forms, symbols and images.

Therefore, the sublime divine image has been cast as a king, a priest, a teacher, etc. But the built-in power, grandeur, and status involved in these images prevent us from completely uniting with the Divine. That uniting

with the divine is only possible in the amorous relationship where two lovers flow into each other. The love relation includes and transcends all other relations. This model is reflected in the divine where the supreme god and goddess, Krishna and Radha, are in an eternal love union. Masculine or feminine by itself would be a distortion of the real image, which can only be substantiated in a human context.

Human reality is grounded and supported by such essential qualities (*dharma*) as truth, love, non-violence, compassion etc., which in turn are 'absolutized' and fully universalised in the Divine (*Ramo vigrahavan dharmah*). Spiritually realized souls testify that the essential nature of the Divine is "being (*sat*), consciousness (*cit*) and bliss (*ananda*)." Quintessentially, it is pure love. Love presupposes two lovers bound in love. In the love game called religion, the divine is Krishna and the devotees, essentially human, are represented by Radha. In love there is a natural tendency of attraction for one another. In love lovers are related through participating in the beloved's being. Love is a relation through realization, lovers mutually realise. Religious history testifies to the human side of the story: human seeking and realizing the Divine.

But the human side is only one-side of the history of religion. There should be an equal, if not greater, 'desire' in the divine lover to seek and realise the human beloved. If saints exemplify the process on the human side, the incarnations reveal the divine intention. The Divine Absolute interacts in human situation by taking incarnations. The Hindu history of incarnations/*avatars* shows that the fullest divine manifestation (*svayam Bhagavan*) could take place only in the most human image of Krishna, devoid of all paraphernalia of 'divine power.' Other awesome and powerful incarnations are only partial manifestations of the divine (*amsa* and *kala avatara*). Krishna and devotees could relate to each other fully. In this loving relationship all distinctions, even divine and human ones melted away (*ardhanarisvara*).

Yet, it is both. Ontologically, the love of human beings is in the image of the primal and eternal divine love of Krishna and Radha. But that divine love is not meaningfully available to us if it is not explicable and understood in our own human context and categories. Thus, the *Mahabharata* (Santi 299.20) rightly declares that "Nothing is superior to human reality."

II.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu (1486-1533) is the image *par excellence* of love. Born in Bengal, Caitanya was a precocious child who early on excelled in the study of Sanskrit. He became so skilled in argument that older scholars refused to engage him. But when traveling to Gaya, he encountered Ishvara Puri who became his guru. It marked his transformation from a scholar to a devotional *bhakti*. When he returned to Bengal, he had adopted a new practice that focused on chanting the name of Krishna. He now refused to engage in debate. For Caitanya, it was the ecstatic mode that led to the deepest and most profound realization of the divine. Over the coming years Caitanya traveled across India, singing, dancing and chanting the divine name of Krishna. A whole movement grew around Caitanya. And though he became a renunciate, he instructed his followers to marry. Later followers of Caitaya came to see in him that "lover, beloved and love itself dance in one body" (Caitanya Caritamrta 3.18.17). In the loving union the separate identities of lover and beloved are lost completely. Krishna and Radha are indistinguishably lost in Caitanya, the joint incarnation of both. Divinity and humanity merge in the spirituality of love which alone can remove without any prejudice or distinction the artificial divisions based on race, colour, sex, nation, language, economy and so on….

In the sixteenth century, Sri Caitanya sent six of his followers to Vrindavan, the playground of the young Krishna. They were known as the "six Goswamis" and their task was to revive devotion to Radha/Krishna. Jiva Goswami, Rupa Goswami, and Sanatana Goswami also articulated the main teachings of this strand of Krishna devotion, along with many of the stories of Krishna and Radha. In 1515 Caitanya had travelled from his native Bengal to Vrindavan, a small village on the Yamuna near Mathura in north-central India. Here Caitanya had located sacred places along the banks of the Yamuna where Krishna had played his flute and where he had danced with the *gopis,* especially Radha. In Vrindavan, the Goswami families founded the temple of Radharamana, devoted to Radha and Krishna. My father, Sri Purushottam Goswami Maharaj, along with my brother, Venu, and I stand in this lineage. Today Vrindavan is a pilgrimage site for all Hindus, but especially for those devoted to RadhaKrishna. The greeting in Jaisingh Ghera, our ashram and home, is "Radhe, Radhe!"

III.

Caitanya gave to us a form of bhakti/devotion that centered in the ecstatic mode: chanting, singing, music, and the Hari Krishna mantra. I first met Darrol Bryant at a remarkable Assembly of World Religions in New York and he came to Vrindavan for the first time in 1986. Then he came with his family for a Dance Festival I had arranged involving Krishna & Radha troups from across India. He has returned many times and on several occasions with groups of students for Diwali or the Festival of Lights and for Holi or the Festival of Colour, two of the major holidays of India. These celebratory events, especially Holi, include Radha/Krishna *lila* or plays that dramatize events in the life of Krishna and Radha. During Holi thousands of devotees and pilgrims come to Vrindavan to celebrate, to throw colours on one another, and to enjoy the divine play in temples, ashrams, and the streets of Vrindavan.

At the Radharama temple, pilgrims sing and dance as holy songs are sung and priests spray the crowd with coloured water. There is an ecstatic/devotional mood that engulfs the whole scene. As Caitanya once remarked, 'music and dance are the principal ways to honour the divine."

In the auditorium at Jaisingh Ghera people gather to witness the play/lila of Krishna and Radha performed by young boys. One year, Professor Bryant and his students spent the evening before a performance picking the petals off of roses (red) and chrysanthemums (yellow/gold) for the dramatic conclusion of the play. The following day a crowd of 200 gathered, seated on the rug covered floor of the auditorium. The music began and over the next hour we watch the play of Krishna and Radha, beautifully costumed, as they danced their amourous play. One scene has the women/*gopis* with long *lathis*/sticks beating the men, who dance around the stage with cushions and protective shields on their heads. There is much laughter from the audience. The culmination of the play finds Krishna & Radha seated as centre stage as baskets of flowers – rose petals and chrysanthemum petals – are poured over their heads until they are completely covered. Then suddenly they emerge from their flowered bower and join hands and whirl across the stage as the *gopis* and boys throw the petals on them and each other. The music builds as we reach the dramatic and ecstatic climax

of the play. The audience has been riveted throughout and everyone claps as I take Krishna on my shoulders, together with a basket of petals, and enter the audience throwing petals on everyone. The music continues and there is bliss/*ananda* everywhere.

It is a fitting emblem for the Way of Krishna and Radha.

Way of a Programmer

Benjamin Bryant

To a programmer, any computer is like a playground where you have the power to set many things in motion. The only limit is your degree of mastery of how the computer works. Ah, but most people are intimidated by computers, or they don't have the knack or the patience. Why is one person drawn deeply into programming while most aren't the least bit interested?

One clue about my path is that from the time I was a year old, I did hour upon hour of everything from blocks and Lego to canal systems in mud puddles. Generally, it was about building things, drawing things, creating things with the materials around me to reflect my imaginings of the bigger world. I never ceased to be inspired by the thought that I myself could create the houses and towers and ships and castles and vehicles that populated the world I witnessed and the stories that were told to me. A lot of people did this when they were young, but I did it with a particular single-mindedness. And I did it with my trademark open-mouth breathing and drop of drool on my chin until I was older and learned to catch the drool that pooled behind my lower lip before it flowed over (most of the time). Such was my focus on translating the creative ambitions of my mind to the materials in front of me that all the world around completely disappeared.

I suppose that most engineers were fascinated by building things from early on. But I came into the world at a unique time in history that opened a new kind of opportunity. In 1978 I turned 10 and had a passion for video arcades, which were beginning to replace mechanical pinball arcades. My cousin Todd and I spent many hours in the arcades, often watching others play because we weren't allowed to waste too much money in such a way. But having 2 quarters in the palm of your hand and going to the arcade was divine. One of the first video games was Space Invaders where rows of crab-like aliens descended with military precision back and forth across the screen while you controlled a gun ship along the bottom of the screen

with left and right controls and a shoot button. When a TRS-80 came to the school library in 1980, I signed it out during lunch hour to work on creating the space invaders game. I was very timid about my grandiose hopes. I never admitted to anyone what I was trying to do because it seemed very audacious to attempt such a thing. I found a way to make the rows of aliens move across the screen but then I lost my program when I made a mistake with the cassette tape deck used to store the program. My father's colleague had a computer in her home and she showed me how to type in some commands. But I was mortified because when she told me to type "input," I spelled it with an m and she teased about thinking I knew about computers but did not know how to spell "input."

I wonder if my inability to gain credibility or success with computers had something to do with my ambition to master them. But I also have another theory about what drove me into the loving arms of computers. The social universe was never my strong suit and yet in 7th grade, after returning from 6 months in England where I had gained some status playing soccer at recess, I briefly escaped those limitations and asked a very cute girl to walk home with me. We "went together" innocently for a few months – we never kissed – but I was deeply emotionally involved and when she dumped me I lost any bit of confidence I had.

An engineer is one who applies science to solve problems. A programmer is a kind of engineer who applies computer science to solve problems. But what sets programmers apart from other engineers is that while engineers develop solutions to work in the real physical world, programmers develop solutions to work in an "artificial" world created entirely by people. Even though many types of engineers deal in abstractions with things they can't directly see like sound or pressure, mass and energy, they are always concerned with the laws of nature. Programmers are not. Even though programmers need to create solutions that can be used in the real world, in building their solutions, programmers are only concerned with the interfaces to the programs and devices they are given, not the laws of nature.

So I went deeply into this world, the world inside the computer. I did a lot of programming in the early 80s. The first personal computers were coming into homes, and my cousin Todd and I created a lot of home-

made computer games. We made a game like Pac-Man on my first home computer, the Vic 20, where letters chased you around obstacles. Todd's friend had a TI-99 on which we created a word-based adventure game that described locations and gave you choices of different actions. On the Commodore 64 we designed animated helicopters in assembly language with a new graphical feature called sprites. Once a game got good enough to play, we would play it until the sun came up the next day. In the mid-80s we made a game on the IBM PC Jr where your plane had to drop bombs on targets to clear a passage through the sky, and the bombs had forward momentum. We spent countless hours playing it. That game I actually polished up and submitted to a PC Magazine contest but it was disqualified because they did not support the PC Jr disk format. Todd and I also became heavily interested in something that did not involve computers, a Medieval fantasy game called "Dungeons and Dragons." In high school, my computer teacher let me do my own thing in the back or skip the class because the coursework was too simple for me. One time I happened to be walking past the computer lab planning to skip the class and some students told me they were going in for an exam I had forgotten about. So I walked in with them and aced the exam. My computer teacher got me a spring break job in computers and then I applied for a really great summer job at a university-based company and got it. It was the perfect fast track. But then when I said I needed two weeks to visit my mother, they said no. The boy a year older than I who took the job went on to be a programming superstar, not to mention he dated the girl I had lost in 7th grade.

Missing out in the competition, the job, and the girl, I was having trouble finding something on which to build confidence. I was also bullied in 8th and 9th grades, kicked in the stomach on the way home from school and sat on for a few minutes during a football scrimmage in PE class. The movie "The Imitation Game" shows Alan Turing, one of the pioneers of computer science, being bullied and humiliated in school and yet he excelled in math so singularly that he was recognized by MI6 to lead their recruitment to crack the Nazi codes. And it turned out he had the right stuff to overcome the impediments the system placed in his way and complete that mission. Like many misfits and geeks, I can feel a kindred

connection to Alan, but I was not so gifted as to be recognized among geeks. Between high school and college, I had a year with my family in India and Italy and I left behind my intense interest in computers and Dungeons and Dragons. I now saw them as anti-social and limiting – part of why I had never asked a girl out since 7th grade. So going into college, I hoped I had a future in academia and/or anthropology, not computers. But I took computers on the side because the subject was easy for me. Still, I did not do anything with computers outside of my computer classes. I did not own a computer and it was a 4-year hiatus from self-initiated programming. I spent all my college study time struggling with Calculus and Anthropology, and my spare time playing pick-up basketball. In second year, I finally got a girlfriend. In my final week of college exams, I aced a computer exam I had not studied for and did so-so on everything else. The experiment was over. I promised myself I was done with school and I would get a job in computers at least temporarily while I thought of how I might do something with cultural anthropology. I resigned myself to the fact that sometimes you just got to do what you're good at when it happens to be something that pays.

And so, in spite of what I had thought since high school, I gravitated to where my talents lay. Out of college, I wanted desperately to work with the C programming language because all other languages were for the weak of heart. But I had not used C in college and did not have work experience in it. In the newspaper classifieds, I found a C job that sounded great. The ad gave an address but no company name and asked interested persons to send their resume. But I drove to the building and looked at the directory by the elevator to guess which company it was. Then I went across the street, found the number in the phone book and called and asked if I could drop off my resume in person. I don't know where I got the gumption to do this, but I was afraid they might dismiss me outright unless I did something above and beyond. I got the job. I imagine that in any field it is an amazing thing, getting your first real job, especially one where you are thrust into a lot of responsibility. Here I was being flown to New York City to fix software in the bowels of a big insurance company next to Wall Street. It was exciting. I also got a security clearance and worked on site in the Pentagon.

In the workforce, I saw anew that there were different kinds of programmers. As in other engineering jobs, programmers are trained in hypothetical and academic problems. In your computer courses, usability and dependability are not so important, whereas convincing people that you are smart and onto something big is very useful. But in the workplace, while you can fool people for a while, you ultimately have to make things that actually work and are practical to use. Some programmers do not make that transition very well. Many programmers are not what you would call well-rounded. Programming is a process of repeatedly writing code and then seeing if it works. This is a constant interaction and feedback that can substitute for what most teenagers get from their friends. So programmers can amass great confidence with computers while losing confidence with regular folks and under-developing their social skills. They can also lose some connection to how computer illiterate people think.

I already mentioned that the world inside computers is an "artificial" world created entirely by computer scientists. Programmers write and edit "programs" which are pages and pages of instructions telling the computer what to do and when to do it. Each computer is a microcosm of both physical devices and programs. Thousands of people have a hand in creating the various parts. There are the devices such as the screen, the buttons, the mic, the speakers, the battery, and the wireless adapter. All of these are evolving pieces of technology in their own right, brought together into a single machine. Then there are the programs. First you have the programs that help the parts to work together. And then you have all the apps like your email or word processor, each of which is a program written by a team of programmers incorporating components built by other teams. Obviously the machine has no independent idea of what anyone wants it to do, so a glitch is an error in the instructions it has been given. Glitches are not only due to obvious programmer errors but also to the subtle miscues between all those cohabitating devices and programs.

So you have this incredible man-made virtual world inside computers where programmers are spending large quantities of time. Just as the accumulated wealth of the English language is based in the investment in the written word that has been accumulated over the centuries, the depth and breadth of the world inside computers grows exponentially every

year as it is shared across the Internet via discussions and programs. Even though people everywhere are integrating computers into their everyday lives more and more, especially with smart phones, they remain outside of this sphere. They still understand a computer virus metaphorically as a contagious disease rather than as a program. TV shows like CSI add to the confusion by presenting as commonplace things that are still impossible for computers to do. But programmers are the ones with a direct connection to the underlying picture, and yet a varying connection to the surrounding picture.

I've been blessed with a rounded life experience that lets me see a lot of the surrounding picture as well. It's 24 years after college and I still think programming is only part of my destiny. Eventually, I will find a way to break out into other fields like writing and filmmaking. But why did I choose programming, or should I say why did it choose me? I grew up at a unique moment in history where I became enamored with video games in the first video arcades, and then saw my chance to make a mark on the world when the first home computers became available. I guess it was an extension of the blocks and Legos I did when I was small. But as someone having little success or power in the real world, it may have appealed to me because it was a virtual world in which I had the possibility of absolute power. My passion led to a skill that gave me a livelihood and the accompanying credibility. But, more than that, I am forever grateful to be part of a rich and stimulating frontier with endless possibilities.

My Views on Religion: All Human Beings Are Full Brothers

Jialu Xu

Honorable friends from all countries of the world, honorable professors of educational departments and universities across China, it is my great honor to present to you a topic that I have been thinking about recently.[1]

When I speak with religious leaders from across the world, I am often asked questions concerning my beliefs and the beliefs of the Chinese people as a whole. I would like to state here that I do not belong to any religion and that I am an atheist, but I respect all legal and uplifting religions. Although I do not believe in a personal god, I do respect and follow Confucianism. After having contacts and exchanges with religious leaders from across the world, I began to reconsider and put in order my thoughts on the issue of what we should believe in. Across the 9.6 million square kilometers of Chinese soil, people are also reconsidering this. The era we live in is defined by confusion, and because of this we should reflect and look inwards to retrieve what we have believed in through the ages.

The German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer once cited the words of another German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, to the effect that 'the things that we should cherish the most are not the things we remember, but rather, the things we forget.' I believe that what he meant is that when we recover our memory and find that we have lost something, then we can realize how precious it is. Here I would like to share without reservation some of my memories and reflections on these matters. I am look forward to hearing comments and criticism from my fellow colleagues working for the common cause of the Confucius Institutes.

There is a word almost entirely unique to China called *tongbao* or "compatriots." In English, the phrases "born of the same parents" or "full

brothers/sisters" are used to indicate brothers or sisters born to the same parents. Why, then, do I say the word "*tongbao*/compatriots" is "unique" to China? My reason is that the word "tongbao/compatriots" contains the Chinese character for being "born" of a mother. Thus the most general meaning of "*tongbao*/compatriots" refers to the entire Chinese people. This makes the term very rare among world languages.

I remember that when I was in school, I did not understand the meaning of "*tongbao*/compatriots." My father told me that the term referred to the Chinese people. But when I grew up, I learned that by "*tongbao*/compatriots," we mean that it is like all the Chinese people are born of the same mother. Though I understood the meaning of the word, when I saw so many people I was not acquainted with every day, I did not feel that we were born of the same mother. Instead, what I saw in my daily life was quarreling among students and adults. It was not until after I had gained more knowledge about the natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, especially Chinese Confucian and Taoist doctrines, and had a spiritual realization, did I really come to understand the implications of "*tongbao*/compatriots," both its literal meaning and its profound implied meaning. Following my studies in philosophy and religious studies, I got a more subtle feeling of spiritual enlightenment. What had I come to understand?

For Confucianism and Taoism, heaven and earth (i.e., the universe and nature) are the parents of mankind; as humans, we are the most precious part of the universe with a unique intelligence. Our destiny is connected with that of the universe. Although it seems that people are unrelated, they are closely related by blood. For nations separated by thousands of miles, their physical and spiritual connection is undetectable either by our sense organs or by modern technology but there really exists a certain relation. This phenomenon is often discussed in the ancient classics of Confucianism and Taoism.

In fact, a close examination of other ancient civilizations which have had an impact on mankind's social life from ancient to modern times, especially the major religions, will find that almost all of them have ideas similar to those of Confucianism. For instance, with regard to the story of Adam and Eve in the Old Testament, isn't it suggesting that we, their

descendants, are born of the same parents? Brahmanism regards "Brahma" as the highest object of worship, but all of mankind was created from the body of the "Primal Man." Those born from its mouth – the Brahmins – are the noblest; from its arms come the Kshatriyas; from its legs the Vaishyas; and from its feet, the Shudras, the most humble class. This is a caste system with a strict rank and order which evolved from ancient ethnic conventions, but it still demonstrates the original understanding that all people come from the same body. Similarly, a rough observation of the vestigial remains of prehistoric religions (such as animism, totemism and shamanism) will find that while worshiping all things on earth, people have had the idea that man and all things share the same origin.

The research results from the natural sciences, humanities and social sciences in modern times have inadvertently verified the judgments of the ancients through highly advanced technological means. Beyond that, a host of societal phenomena vividly tell us that, although we are seemingly separated by vast oceans and have not met each other, we originated from the same embryo and share the same destiny. For instance, 99% of the DNA of people across the world is the same. It's unfortunate that what biologists are focusing on are the differences of the less-than-1%. DNA testing is used to detect lineal descent and essentially, these genes account for less than 0.1% of the entire genetic makeup, ignoring over 99% which enables us to recognize that all of humankind are relatives.

I would like to give another example: though blood relationships grow far apart after several generations, the hereditary characteristics are extremely similar. From the perspective of epidemiology, when influenza appears in one country, a faraway country on another continent also detects the same disease. Avian influenza, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and HIV/AIDS, which were prevalent at the end of the 20th century, are well-known examples.

From the viewpoint of the meteorological environment, two centuries of industrialization in Western countries and the industrialization of emerging countries since the mid-20th century have led to an accumulation of high levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which organisms on earth can hardly tolerate. Who can tell when and where the filth, dust and CO_2 above us are released? Excessive deforestation in the Amazon

Rainforest has impacted continents tens of thousands of miles away.

Looking at the state of the economy, the Subprime Mortgage Crisis in the United States triggered the global recession, and the European Debt Crisis swept across not only surrounding countries but also the whole of Europe and even the entire world. This is also the case at the societal level. It is difficult for us to say that there is virtually no relation between the "Occupy Wall Street" movement and the social crises in Tunisia and Egypt, and that social unrest in European countries has nothing to do with the "Occupy Wall Street" movement. At the moment, we assume that these connections are related to advanced electronic information technology and convenient transportation. However, doesn't this suggest that all humans belong to the same whole and cannot live without each other?

The above thoughts of the ancient sages appear in both the development and the evolutionary processes of religions and the non-religious Confucian doctrine. Why did people living in different corners of the world long ago come to similar conclusions through observations of the relations between man and the universe, and between human beings? It seems to me that people involved in nomadic and especially agrarian life constantly observed the universe and all things on the planet and looked inside of themselves while performing their work in order to adapt to circumstances to ensure safe, stable and continued production, and then experienced the intimate relationship between man and all things of the universe. From the relation between the movements of the sun, moon and stars and the transition between climatic seasons, the correspondence between the cold, heat, dryness and wetness of the four seasons and human diseases (Chinese medical science has played a pronounced role in this respect), to distant blood relationships with nevertheless existing heredity characteristics, all drive us to think and recognize that humans share the same origin and that man and nature are inseparable.

Why and how sages and people of foresight in the primitive Agrarian Age with difficulties and hardships could reach conclusions very similar to today's judgments is difficult to imagine?

I believe this is mainly underpinned by the following reasons. The major tools used to observe the subjective and objective worlds in ancient times were sense organs, limbs and internal organs. They could not explore

the grander field of view or the microscopic world. That being said, anything, be it macro, micro or a sort of "middle ground," each contains similar laws within itself. We can tentatively say that the ancients had a "middle ground" type of recognition. People of later generations have continuously extended their eyes, hands and feet, which means that later generations have produced new and increasingly precise and convenient devices. In this way, meticulous observation and research on the macro and micro worlds are made possible.

The same is true of Chinese medical science. Chinese medical science can diagnose internal symptoms from parts of the human body, such as the ears, the soles of one's feet or facial complexion, the coating of the tongue and pulsation of the wrist. And, in most cases, Chinese medical science arrives at the same diagnosis as Western medical science does with the help of advanced equipment, and is even more precise in diagnosing certain symptoms. Modern medical science can test for the presence of cancer by drawing 10ml of blood; Buddhism says that the universe can be seen from a drop of water and that a single mustard seed can hold the whole of Sumeru (a great mountain in Sakyamuni's preaching), meaning that the genes (i.e., laws) in all things, from the extremely large to the extremely minute, are all the same. I think the reason that the ancient peoples of China, the West, and India reached the same conclusion that humans share the same origin is that they had drawn 10ml of the universe's blood, or got a hold of the mustard seed that reflects the laws of the universe.

Much to my surprise, our Chinese ancestors came up with philosophical insights more than 2,500 years ago that man and nature belong to the same body. With heaven as the father and earth as the mother, they saw that humans are intimately related. Descendants such as myself can only partially understand – and that only after a long period of study – the wisdom of the ancient sages. Perhaps we can now more accurately understand the rich meaning of Confucius' saying "Within the four seas, all men are brothers." He did not vaguely say that we need to be kind and friendly towards all people in general; rather, he had a profound understanding arising from his philosophical meditation on himself and the universe, as well as a deep love and care for all of humanity resulting from a combination of rationality and perception.

Therefore, modern people should not look down on their own childhood, nor mock it. Questions put forward by ancient sages concerning the origin of the universe, why the human body is so complex yet subtle, and where humanity's ultimate destination lies still continue to confuse us. Astronomy, physics, mechanics and many other disciplines continue exploring the origin of the universe, and in the past several centuries have produced abundant results. Nonetheless, many conclusions reached by scientists are almost all hypotheses and have not been "confirmed." Many conclusions made by ancient sages cannot be overturned even today. For instance, Buddhism believes that the universe does not have a "beginning" or an "end," and Taoism proposes that the reality of the universe itself is "Tao," which existed before the universe. Can we say that this is incorrect? Even modern science could not prove it to be "false." Moreover, the American sociologist Robert Bellah recently indicated in his speech at the Institute for Advanced Study of the Humanities and Religion at Beijing Normal University, that modern science has put forward or contributed to a host of questions that science itself cannot actually resolve. To find convincing answers, I am afraid we have to rely on the humanities and social sciences.

We cannot afford to ignore the question of the origin of religion. There are numerous writings focusing on this issue, but at this point we still do not have an entirely consistent explanation. I agree with the following explanation: it originated from humans' curiosity towards, fear of, and reliance on inexplicable objective and subjective phenomena. From fear and reliance came belief, and group belief bred sacrificial offerings and related prayers and rituals. When the number of people with the same beliefs surpassed that of the established crowd, religion came into being. As religions developed and expanded, they have created and preserved many classics for humankind. There is no lack of "prehistoric" evidence for religion. And from these early religions came many customs formed to adapt to the environment, with conventions spreading from generation to generation. These classics are the embryos of later literature, history, philosophy and the natural sciences. In other words, without religion, there would be no human culture to speak of, and religion is, in itself, a kind of culture.

Religion continuously evolves as humanity and society develop. Over the course of the past several millennia, religion has on the one hand tried to become localized while on the other hand absorbed useful nourishment from other cultures. The phenomenon of "alienation" is inevitable in this evolutionary process. For instance, religion breeds science which often reaches conclusions contrary to those of religious classics. Since science is performed in labs or in the field and can obtain repetitive verifications, it can prove some religious doctrines to be "false" which could not be "confirmed" on their own. For instance, Buddhism and Taoism "help the souls of the dead find peace," and Judaism and Brahmanism have narrations of the creation of man by their gods, which often serve to affect the piety of followers. Given this tension between science and religion, it should not be strange for us to learn that the number of devout Christians and Catholics in Europe has been decreasing in recent decades.

However, belief is so important that humans cannot live without it. Various beliefs, including religious faith, will not decline, let alone disappear, as science develops. As a matter of fact, religion possesses the natural ability to adapt to changes in the times and can engage in self-regulation. As science grows, religion is also evolving. Buddhism, by means of the "primitive Buddhism" taught directly by Sakyamuni, led to the generation of Zen Buddhism after entering China, which was suited to China's customs and practices, and went through a process of "Sinicization." Similarly, Christianity adapted to the emergence of capitalism and the psychology of the emerging classes after the Reformation led by Martin Luther and John Calvin, as the Middle Ages came to a close. These are instances of success in adaptation.

Now, science is again experiencing "self-alienation," or a paradox created by itself. As a result, religion is faced with another daunting challenge. So long as it can adapt to this new environment and respond properly, cleverly and in a timely way, the trend toward the decline of religion can be changed. The paradox and challenge are that science runs contrary to religion to a certain degree, but in itself science has now become a type of intangible "religion." Today, many people believe that science and technology can address all issues on the planet – such as freedom, equality, peace, prosperity, environmental degradation and the

disparity of wealth. These attitudes are contributing to the "technology worship" that is sweeping across the world. It is true that science and technology have greatly improved productivity and people's quality of life, especially throughout the 20th century. However, behind the combination of technology and capital is worsening greed and exploitation. Commonly used methods include continuously launching wars and creating an endless line of novel products to stimulate social consumption. Industrialization calls for globalization, and the nature of capital determines its thirst for globalization. The tenet and nature of pursuing extraordinary profits prompt capital to expand into regions with low costs and lucrative profits and also to create new means of making profit: mainly "advertisement consumption," "fashion consumption" and "vanity consumption." Advertisement creates excitement, fashion makes people frantic and consumption satisfies vanity, which goes on in an endless and unstoppable cycle. The profits from material products cannot satisfy the limitless desires, so profiteers have turned to painstakingly exploiting the virtual economy and creating all kinds of incomprehensible financial derivative products, a phenomenon commented on by the U.S. President Barack Obama. In this way, a very small number of people have experienced a dramatic growth in wealth while material things and stimulation have become the sole desires of more and more ordinary people. As a result, the original beliefs of the people are regarded as "deficient." For society and history, this means that morality is lost. This challenge was generated by the West's capital, but the victims also include the West itself. As relations between humans and between different countries get ever closer and economic globalization deepens in today's world, no country or nation is immune to this challenge.

Are beliefs really "deficient?" I do not agree with this. There are only three kinds of beliefs: those in god, virtue and material things. Most Chinese people do not belong to any religion but they believe in the virtues widely-recognized by the Chinese, which are very similar to those repeatedly emphasized by Aristotle. For Chinese people, the pursuit and cultivation of virtue is endless, and the people with the best virtues are the sages who are objects of the veneration of the entire nation. Confucius is one example. Confucius differs from God and Allah in that he is not a

transcendent and absolute personal god, but his revelations of the secrets of life and the world and his guidance for the people of the world are all the same. Therefore, some scholars regard Confucianism as a doctrine with religious features, which is reasonable. As for people who believe in "material things," commonly referred to as "fetishism," they do not accept the revelations of gods, nor do they accept the advice of sages and moral constraints, so they do whatever they like in an unscrupulous way, hurting themselves and even society as a whole.

In view of such social conditions, religion and doctrines like Confucianism should, I believe, play their role in rescuing people and society from material fetishism. Many religious leaders I know are deeply concerned about today's world. For instance, my good friend Dr. Robert H. Schuller, founder of the Crystal Cathedral, U.S.A., told me that "What concerns me the most is the conflict between the spiritual and the material and secular ideology's control of our spirits. People's material consumption will affect their spiritual quality and values, so we need to engage in further exploration and studies to increase the world's vitality." By "exploration and studies," he meant that religion and Confucianism must "keep up with the times" in order to "rescue the world." As things stand, such a transformation of adapting to the times has been launched continuously in the past, and is still going on today. For instance, Chinese Buddhism puts forward the ideologies of "Life Buddhism," "Humanistic Buddhism," and "Livelihood Buddhism," while Christianity no longer takes a literal view of scripture and has new understandings of God and history.

All of us should "keep up with the times," which calls for continuous dialogue and enhanced understanding between different civilizations and religions to work together for a more beautiful world. I have made strenuous efforts in recent years to promote dialogue between Chinese Confucian civilization and Christian civilization, and I myself have had dialogues with Christianity, Judaism, and Islam as well as with Buddhism and Taoism within China. I believe that face-to-face dialogue among people of different cultures and religions, whether it be separate dialogue in a small room or public dialogue with others at a forum, can help find things in commonalities and can at least help attendees become aware that both parties are worried about the crisis of humankind. The more

dialogue between civilizations and religions and the deeper the mutual understanding among nations or countries becomes, the more likely it is for us to live together in peace. I initiated and held the "Nishan Forum" at the birthplace of Confucius in September 2010, on Confucius' birthday.[2] Professor Wolfgang Kubin of the University of Bonn said in his paper that the ideal world of Confucius is a Utopia. This prompted me to ponder, isn't promoting a harmonious world through dialogue between civilizations and religions a Utopia? Perhaps it is. Confucius was once said by others to "know it's no use, but keep on doing it." I want to follow in his footsteps and spare no efforts until the time of my death.

I think exchanges among cultures can be divided into three types: intergovernmental, academic-religious, and interpersonal communications. Intergovernmental communications are designed to address current political issues and the balance of interests between different nations. Some topics are temporary and need to be addressed immediately while others are far removed from the daily thoughts of the general public. Interpersonal communications, including business and trade, tourism, performances, visits, and competitions, are "transient" in nature. They can greatly impress the parties concerned only temporarily and do not touch upon religion, beliefs and other deep-rooted issues. Only exchanges and dialogue between academic and religious circles can cut straight to the foundation of culture and have a profound and lasting effect. In the best case scenario, academic-religious dialogue can even address government decision-making or at the very least, provide spiritual food for the public. I call upon all countries to strengthen exchanges in this field.

Confucius Institutes are a channel and platform for enabling dialogue between Chinese culture and other cultures of the world, using the most important carrier of culture – language – to build bridges for exchanges between different civilizations, with profound and long-lasting results. Language is a unique form of culture, and through mastering Chinese, people can have contact with and understand the psychology, character and habits of the Chinese people. In addition to providing day-to-day Chinese language teaching, Confucius Institutes can also host various academic exchanges and lectures, and even academic research beneficial

for both parties. Though it is improper to talk about or touch upon issues of religion at Confucius Institutes in some countries and regions, the national ideology and customs radiating from hundreds of years of religion have become matters of common interest and discussion, which will contribute to promoting mutual understanding. Over the years, I have worked as a volunteer for the cause of Confucius Institutes with all my heart and soul, and I truly enjoy this work. One of the reasons for this is because I think that this dialogue involving different civilizations and beliefs has wider and more profound implications, which is the only way forward for humankind towards friendship, peace and happiness.

To believe in a god, one is bound to follow the revelations of that god; to believe in virtue, one is bound to follow the instruction of sages. The two are full brothers, and the common parents are heaven and earth, which reveal endless secrets to us and inspire us to explore and ponder from generation to generation. Only unfettered worship of material things is evil. The offspring of gods and the descendants of sages should not stand in opposition to each other, but rather, we should respect each other and work together to pull people out of the vicious cycle of blind worship of material things. We thus help them gain real respect and live a meaningful life, because they are our *tongbao*/compatriots.

Endnotes

[1] The Honorable Jialu Xu is the head of the Confucius Institute of China. It funds the teaching of Chinese language and culture in schools, colleges, and universities around the world. This address was given at the 6th Confucius Institute Conference in Beijing in December 2011. I was present for this address and I was told that this was the first time that "religion" was addressed at the annual gathering of the Confucius Institutes. I subsequently requested permission of Jialu Xu to include his address in this volume.

[2] Editorial note: the Nishan Forum, bringing together scholars and religious leaders from across the world continues. In 2012, I attended the Nishan Forum in Qufu, Shandong Province, China. It brought together more than 200 scholars and religious leaders from more than 50 nations. It was a remarkable event.

The Way of Interspirituality

Kurt Johnson and David Robert Ord

"Interspirituality" is a new sense of, and emphasis on, an international perspective and experience of the world's spiritual and religious traditions in their emerging global context. Growing rapidly, especially in the last few decades, out of the world's post World War II interfaith movement, interspirituality emphasizes the experiential, heart, and consciousness-related qualities of the world's many spiritual traditions and deemphasizes the specific creedal and dogmatic claims of the religions. Thus, in its present form at a global level, interspirituality is not really a "way," so much as a *trend* as religion and spirituality make a natural and inherent adjustment to our world's rapid movement toward inevitable globalization and multiculturalism.

The emergence of this trend is timely. It's widely acknowledged that a universal spirituality is, in fact, arising rapidly worldwide – a global shift to the heart of true spirituality at the core of all the world's religions. This new "spirituality of the heart" also reflects an emerging new global "unity consciousness." As stated by interfaith pioneer Brother Wayne Teasdale, who coined the term "interspirituality" in a 1999 book *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions*:

> The real religion of humankind can be said to be spirituality itself, because mystical spirituality is the origin of all the world religions. If this is so, and I believe it is, we might also say that interspirituality – the sharing of ultimate experiences across traditions – is the religion of the third millennium. Interspirituality is the foundation that can prepare the way for a planet-wide enlightened culture, and a continuing community among the religions that is substantial, vital, and creative.[1]

Overall, the vision of interspitiuality is well summed up in this paragraph by Teasdale as well:

> We are at the dawn of a new consciousness, a radically fresh approach to our life as the human family in a fragile world. This journey is what spirituality is really about. We are not meant to remain just where we are. We cannot depend on our culture either to guide and support us in our quest. We must do the hard work of clarification together ourselves. This revolution will be the task of the Interspiritual Age. The necessary shifts in consciousness require a new approach to spirituality that transcends past religious cultures of fragmentation and isolation. We need to understand, to really grasp at an elemental level that the definitive revolution is the spiritual awakening of humankind.[2]

Many Champions

The vision of an emerging interspiritual age has arisen from leaders across the world's religious, spiritual, and philosophical traditions, anchored in the foresight of a globalizing world and a deep sense of the underlying commonalities held by all the traditions.

Brother Teasdale's naming of interspirituality was preceded by a host of earlier visionaries and leaders in all the world's religious and spiritual traditions. Interestingly, the names emerge from across all the world's religions since their initial arising in what has become known as the Axial Age – the period from 800-200 BCE. Across these many traditions, the forerunners of interspirituality were visionaries who realized that a common experiential thread underpins all spiritual experience and is the harbinger of an eventual "great coming together." In fact, a list (and photos) of some fifty of these pioneers can be seen on the internet at several interfaith and interspiritual websites.[3]

Many of these individuals were associated with the global manifestions extending from the 1962-1965 historic Vatican II Council. The latter had profound effect on religions around the world, further nurtured by ecumenical leaders of global stature like His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and so many others. Scholars note that this vision framed the international discussion of the so-called "foundationalist theologians" after Vatican II,

who envisaged the possibility of a global religious pluralism ultimately joined in heart and consciousness. Further, these unifying principles characterize the best vision of philosophy and futurism as well – from the perennial humanist goal of "a global ethical manifold," to Ken Wilber and the integralists' positing of a "conveyor belt" to an "Integral Age."

The roots of interspirituality also run deep in secular society. The same ethos that marks interspirituality was at the heart of the 19th century American enlightenment flowing from the pens of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman, who identified the insights of interconnectedness and the praxis of love. With the culmination of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, the same ethos became the message of humanism (be it secular or religious humanism). The motto "deed over creed" was coined by Ethical Culture founder Dr. Felix Adler.

Indeed, a host of historical visionaries across the millennial wisdom traditions forecast the arising of a global universal spirituality – specifically in the last centuries, pioneers such as Teilhard de Chardin in the West and the champions of Indian independences like Gandhi and sage Sri Aurobindo (with his companion, The Mother) in the East. From these and other wellsprings have also evolved what has become known as the burgeoning and multifaceted "evolutionary consciousness movement."[4] The trend is identified by developmental philosophers as "a great conveyor belt" toward a successful global civilization.[5] It is attributed to multiple and convergent causes. In the evolutionary consciousness movement, and the consciousness sciences, it's recognized as the natural next step in our cognitive evolution. Social scientists see it as a global adaptation driven by inevitable trends toward globalization and multiculturalism. Of course, many proponents of religions see a "divine hand" at work.

Not an Abandonment of Religion but a Shift of Emphases and Priorities

What is envisioned in interspirituality is not an abandonment of the phenomenon of religion (the phenomenon of spirituality appears "wired" into what humans are), but a "return to Source," an emphasis on the *best* that all the world's religions have always offered in the arenas of values, ethics, and ideals.

Our recent influential book, *The Coming Interspiritual Age* – chosen as a "Best Spiritual Book of 2013" by Spirituality and Practice.com – attributes this historical shift to many causes. Indeed, if a "world awakening" – what some are also calling a "Second Axial Age" – is arising, there are vast and complicated implications for our complex world, including the arenas of religion, science, social structure, governance, economics, culture, and more. Certainly, all compassionate spiritual traditions affirm that there is an ultimate goodness that we are to help make fully present in the world, and that we can develop an identity more consciously informed by a deeper source, a higher power, a greater self – whatever it may be called. The task of a global spiritual revolution appears to be the awakening of this deeper reality common to the world's many religious tradition and an emphasis on living in accordance with it. For those involved with interspirituality, this requires a major effort to bring our awareness out of preoccupation with petty and self-centered concerns into a compassionate connection with all life, living in ways that all can live.

According to documents of the United Nations Department of Public Information, major influential elements in this progress toward an emerging universal spirituality, global sense of shared universal values and ethics, and potent action toward world change have included The Charter for Compassion, The Earth Charter, and more recently the Interspiritual Declaration (the latter of the emerging global interspiritual movement}.[6] These three efforts, and their global constituencies express, inspiringly, the emerging spirituality, ethics, and values needed for a sustainable future.

Trends Toward a Global Interspirituality

The Coming Interspiritual Age surveyed global factors influencing and contributing to the emergence of world change centered on significant input from the reservoir of that collective human wisdom generally known as the world's perennial Great Wisdom Traditions. It asked if there is an inherent role for spirituality and religion from this innate reservoir of human wisdom that forms the underpinning of our species' millennial history – albeit obscured by a plethora of social and cultural factors

Absent such a contribution from the wellsprings and ideals of the world's values and ethics traditions, it suggests the world appears destined

to march toward globalization led by self-serving special interest groups, political and financial institutions, leaving the public at the mercy of uncoordinated planetary resource exploitation and consumerism, coupled with a cacophony of competitions and conflicts over politics, financial wealth, natural resources, and the various other currencies of malevolent international power. Overall, then, what is envisioned is the global emergence of a stronger and stronger "contemplative voice" to help guide our human destiny – and perhaps just in time.

Interspirituality has arisen internationally, especially in the last two decades, from within the contemplative core of the world's many religious traditions. Its modern well-known proponents across the Western religions have been the late Brother Wayne Teasdale, in large part because of his own close association with colleagues and parallel interspiritual pioneers such as the late Fr. Bede Griffiths, Raimundo Panikkar and Thomas Merton (pioneers of East-West contemplative and mystical dialogue), and Fr. Thomas Keating. Fr. Keating pioneered not only the East-West Centering Prayer Movement but also the more than two decades-long Snowmass Interreligious Initiative. The latter – particularly from its "Nine Points of Agreement"[7] – can be seen as spawning the current increasingly dynamic interspiritual movement, especially after the works of Teasdale further popularized the concept. A search at Google today turns up some 100,000 entries with Interspiritual and Interspirituality and as of 2014 over twenty international networks that had sprung up, and been working separately for over two decades, have come together as the Global Interspiritual Association.[8]

The momentum of this movement results mostly because the world's spiritual heritage – driven by the contemplative and mystical voices of the world religions – does not stand alone. Rather, it is part of a larger surrounding context of myriad other progressive visions gathering in recent decades across a number of other fields of human endeavor and culture. This combined vision featured prominently in Paul Hawkin's bestseller *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming*. Consistent with our statistical and other surveys in *The Coming Interspiritual Age,* these global confluences include trends, and recognizable progress, across science, sociology, history, and

consciousness and brain-mind studies, all of which involve developmental threads that are inevitably part of an international unfolding of a growing planetary multicultural and globalization process.

A number of conclusions about these global trends appear self-evident. What is characteristic of them as a whole are rather obvious conclusions testifying to the precariousmess of our time.

These include:

l) ***Globalization*** of planet earth is inevitable. The question is what kind of a globalization it will be and whether it will be devoid of any significant contribution from the Great Wisdom Traditions;

2) ***Multiculturalism*** is inevitable. Again, the question is what kind of process will unfold and whether it will be a bumpy ride full of competition and conflict (indeed possibly even outright economic and military warfare), or whether a more reasoned dialogue may emerge, mitigating such negative consequences to some degree. Myriads of statistical studies support the reality of these trends; and although we don't have space here to cite many of these fascinating overviews, we refer the reader specifically to statistics and tables in several of our recent publications.[9]

3) Well-vetted ***Points of Agreement Already Exist*** across the world's religions, most basically the "big four" derived from all the Post Vatican II global discussions already cited above. These are **(1)** the possibility of a common core to human mystic experience, **(2)** fundamental teachings held in common by all the world's religions, **(3)** the shared ethical implications of the teachings of all the great traditions, and **(4)** the inevitable mutuality across the religions regarding commitment to social and economic justice.

While it's true that creeds and dogmas, exclusive by nature at a cultural level, still characterize much of the purely religious side of the world's traditions, significant movements across the world's spiritual communities – emphasizing the profound mutual recognition among human beings in the realm of "the heart" and the primary understanding of profound similarities across the traditions' understandings of unifying states of

higher consciousness—are also moving profoundly to potentially alter this equation. Spiritual emphasis on the experience of "the heart" and states of unitive higher consciousness appear to universally nurture profound life-altering experiences of interconnectedness, mutuality, and "Oneness." These experiences are reflected in an increasingly expanding worldwide popular literature and media regarding the experience of a global collective or gestalt of "We."

Summary Statements

Thus, in sum, we can list the fundamental shifts in global awareness necessary for the successful arising of a global universal spirituality—or "interspirituality." They include the following, many of which are already unfolding before our eyes in these current times:

- Appreciation of the interdependence of all realms of human life and the surrounding cosmos
- Growing ecological awareness, with recognition of the interdependence of humankind and the biosphere, including the rights of all biological species
- Embracing of the shared wisdom in all the world's religious and spiritual traditions, past and present
- Growing friendship, and actual community, among the individual followers of the world's religious and spiritual paths
- Commitment to the depths of the contemplative pursuit and the mutual sharing of the fruits of this ongoing journey
- Creative cultivation of transnational, trans-cultural, trans-traditional, and world-centric understanding
- Dedication to nonviolence, with a commitment to transcend militancy and violence tied to national or religious identities
- Receptivity to a cosmic vision, realizing humanity is only one life form and part of a larger community, the universe.

For many, these shifts mark the threshold required for healthy globalization, and the birth, through the world's Wisdom Traditions, of an unfolding Interspiritual Age.

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Endnotes

[1] *The Mystic Heart*, p. 26.

[2] Teasdale, Wayne. 2010. Words from Brother Wayne Teasdale read at the founding of the Universal Order of Sannyasa, January 9, 2010 (http://www.orderofsannyasa.org/joinus.htm

[3] See www.thecominginterspiritualage.com and www.isdna.org.

[4] See "Toward Unity Consciousness" in *The Coming Interspiritual Age*, pp. 225-238.

[5] See Wilber, Ken. *Integral Spirituality: A Startling New Role for Religion in the Modern and Post-modern World*. Boston MA: Shambhala, 2006.

[6] Draft documents from United Nations NGO Forum 21 for the United Nations Department of Public Information made public at annual meetings, New York City, August 2014.

[7] The "Nine Points of Agreement" from Miles-Yepez, Netanel [Ed.]. *The Common Heart: An Experience of Interreligious Dialogue*. Brooklyn NY: Lantern Books, 2006.

[8] See www.interspirituality.com and proceedings of The Dawn of Interspirituality Conference (October 2013) at www.satyana.org.

[9] See statistics in Johnson, Kurt and David Robert Ord. 2012. "A Spirituality for the 21st Century: Inevitablities and Possibilities. *Kosmos Journal*, Fall/ Winter 2012, and *The Coming Interspiritual Age*.

Pebbled Thoughts
I

there are so many ways
through life
I carry my stones pebbles crumbs
lay them before me
carefully
with great thought
sometimes on the spur
scatter toss
other times I plop them down
stand upon
the where I am now
preach from the path

but then I am pushed
veer
through tangled forests of thoughts
traumas

stones of belief
crack beneath my feet
pebbles become sharp in my fist
crumbs blow away turn to mush

the path the way
is shrouded

I keep moving

searching

finding the way
the truth
through life

Pebbled Thoughts
II

stones on back
pebbles tightly gripped
crumbs deep in pockets
I set out
on bare earth
not knowing
Where I am going
until I am there…
...and even then...

but when I reach a cliff
I throw them all
and fly

Truth is
pathless

hovers
moves freely
flips
no god is god

I am a collection of maps
but never walk the ground
(or find the treasure)

Merton said
Now Here This
So I remove my sandals

follow the path
living inside me

live what is

the truth

I am free

the way is pathless
strewn with pebbles
stones
crumbs
saved and chosen

Contributors

Pamela O'Rourke is an innovative and creative teacher, mother, and friend. She was my student in Religion & Culture, but discovered her vocation as a teacher of the aged. Pamela initiates classes on a wide range of topics at retirement centers in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. She has travelled with me to India on several occasions and produced the most poetic diaries of our ventures in dialogue with the religions and cultures of India.

Huston Smith is a leading American philosopher, scholar of religion and the author of *The World's Religions.* Originally published as the *Religions of Man*, it is simply the best and most popular – more than 2 million copies sold – introduction to the world's religions. I read it as an undergraduate and it has been required reading in all my courses. Born to missionaries in China, Huston taught at Washington University (St. Louis), MIT, Syracuse University and the University of California in Berkeley. His *Forgotten Truth*, *the Common Vision of the World's Religions, Beyond the Postmodern Mind*, and *Why Religion Matters* are also important contributions. I came to know Huston in the early 1980s and edited a volume *Huston Smith: Essays on World Religions* in the 1990s. We have been friends for decades.

Enes Karic is a distinguished Professor of Qur'an Studies at Sarajevo in Bosnia. He has also served as the Minister of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport for the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and is a prolific author and novelist. We met at an international conference in Konya, Turkey, the home of the Sufi poet Rumi. Over meals and conversations, I learned that we shared a deep commitment to dialogue. I also learned from Enes something of the contributions of Bosnian Muslims to European culture. We have maintained contact ever since.

Clinton Gardner first encountered Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (1888-1973) while a student at Dartmouth College in the early 1940s. Rosenstock-Huessy was a remarkable German scholar who left Nazi Germany when Hitler came to power and taught at Harvard and Dartmouth until retiring in the late 1950s. He wrote many books, including *Out of Revolution: The Autobiography of Western Man*, *The Christian Future, Or the Modern Mind Outrun*, and the multi-volumed *Sociologie*. Gardner served in the U.S. army in WWII and returned to establish an import/export company and, later, Argo Books to keep the writings of Rosenstock-Huessy in print. We became friends in the early 1970s and he facilitated my meeting with Rosenstock-Huessy prior to his death. He has made major contributions to the understanding of this neglected figure.

Mohinder Singh is a prolific scholar on the Sikh tradition and a friend and guide into the Sikh traditions since the mid-1980s. He was the Director of the Guru Nanak Foundation when I first met him, his wife Mona, and two daughters. Since then, he has served as Director of the Centre for Panjabi Studies in New Delhi and is currently a member of the National Commission for Religious & Linguistic Minorities of the Government of India. We always meet when I go to India.

Bob Chodos is a writer, editor and translator, and a long-time member of Waterloo Region's Reform Jewish congregation, Temple Shalom, where he is a lay service leader and bar/bat mitzvah tutor. He has been a member of Interfaith Grand River since its founding in 2001 and participates in a number of study groups, both Jewish and interfaith. In the course of his interfaith involvement, he has been the editor of a Jesuit magazine, lit Chanukah candles in a mosque, co-led a bar mitzvah service with a Unitarian minister, and said the mourner's kaddish in front of an altar to the Goddess Brighid. We have been friends for years.

Christopher Queen has taught an extension course on World Religions at Harvard University for many years, as well as serving as a Dean of Students. Educated at Oberlin, Union Theological Seminary and Boston University, he has published extensively, including *Engaged Buddhism in the West.* We

met at an event in New York City where I learned of his experience in teaching World Religions. His reflections on his teaching so impressed me that I asked him to write about it for this volume.

Homi Dhalla is the first Zoroastrian it was my privilege to meet, at a conference in Bangalore, India. Within hours of our meeting, he invited me and my family to stay in the family home in Pune when I came to India on sabbatical in the mid-1980s. We did, and he has been a trusted friend ever since, as well as my guide into the Zoroastrian world. He was educated at Harvard University and Bombay University. He taught in Tehran and Bombay (now Mumbai). He founded the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation in the late 1990s and has been a prolific writer and lecturer. He has become deeply committed to environmental issues and sees his own Zarathustrian tradition as promoting an ecological outlook.

Adam Stewart was a doctoral candidate in the joint Wilfrid Laurier University-University of Waterloo PhD program in Religious Diversity in North America when we first met. He was a graduate student assistant in my courses on the History of Christian Thought and the Study of Religion. He completed a doctoral project on Canadian Pentecostal identity and experience now published with Wilfrid Laurier University Press as *The New Canadian Pentecostals*. He currently teaches as an Adjunct Professor at Master's College and Seminary, a Pentecostal institution.

Lauri Siirala is a friend and spiritual teacher. We met at Waterloo Lutheran University in the late 1960s. Born in Finland, his family came to the USA and then Canada in the 1960s. Lauri later worked in social services in Ontario until he returned to Finland in his 40s. He was deeply influenced by Eastern spiritual teachers and offers spiritual workshops, courses and meditative retreats in Finland, Europe and on a *gulet*/boat in the Aegean Sea off the coast of Turkey. He is a long-time friend.

Christopher F. J. Ross is an Associate Professor of Religion & Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University. Originally from England, he was educated at Durham and Edinburgh and did his doctorate at the University of Calgary.

With an expertise in psychological and spiritual development, he crosses these boundaries with skill and insight. We've know each other for many years. Christopher initiated a group reading Jung's *Red Book* in which I was an occasional participant. I have learned much concerning psychological types from Christopher.

Rob Menning McRae did a program in Independent Studies at the University of Waterloo focusing on Psychology East & West. I was on his review committee and was very impressed by his project on non-dualism (advaita) and psychology. Rob also travelled with me in India, fulfilling a life-long dream. He later did a program in Spiritual Care & Psychotherapy and is now working as a counselor. We have become friends.

A. K. Merchant has been a member of the Bahai community since 1975. Dr. Merchant currently holds the position of National Trustee, Lotus Temple & the Bahai Community of India, is the General Secretary of the Temple of Understanding in India and the Associate Secretary General of Global Warming Reduction Centre. One of the foremost interpreters of the Bahai Way, we have known each other since the 1990s and he always welcomes my students to the Lotus Temple in New Delhi, India.

Vic Froese was my student at Renison College and one of the first of my students to pursue graduate studies. He did a doctorate on the "father of modern theology" Friedrich Schleiermacher and then a Master's degree in Library Science. He worked in a seminary in Oklahoma before returning to Canada. He is now the Library Director at the Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He is a valued colleague and friend.

Roland Boer is a prolific and unconventional scholar on Marxism and Theology in the School of Humanities and Social Science at Newcastle University in Australia. We met at the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations in China in 2013. Initially influenced by Liberation Theology from Latin America, Boer has turned his attention to the neglected – and in his view misunderstood – dimensions of Marxist thought on religion. I have been fascinated by his writings and invited him to contribute to this

volume. His most recent, award-winning volume is *In the Vale of Tears: On Marxism and Theology*. As he has remarked, he is interested in "the radical and revolutionary aspects of Christianity."

Michael Purves-Smith was a long-time Professor of Music at Wilfrid Laurier University and a noted composer. His works have been performed in Canada, England, USA, France, Latvia, and Norway. He was also the conductor of the Wellington Winds for decades. We first came to know each other through our son's involvement in hockey and in relation to local environmental issues. While continuing to make music in his retirement, he has also written a stunning novel, *Rocky Mountain Locust*, *Opus I, Trio* though it is said to be written by M. I. Lastman.

Martin Brokenleg is a Lakota, an Anglican priest, a professor, and a co-founder of the Circle of Courage, the therapeutic philosophy built on belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity of Reclaiming Youth International. A member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota, he is currently at the Vancouver School of Theology. I came to know of him through another friend and was deeply impressed by his writings (*Reclaiming Youth at Risk*) and his contributions to aboriginal youth. He is also the founder of the Benedictine Canons and Prior of the Community of St. Aidan of Lindisfarne. He is a force to be reckoned with.

Richard A. S. Hall was born in England and educated in the USA (Boston University) and Canada (University of Toronto). We first met in Toronto in the late 70s when Richard was doing doctoral work on Jonathan Edwards. We became colleagues and friends. He has convened an annual conference on Jonathan Edwards in Northampton, Massachussetts, for years. He teaches at Fayetteville State University in North Carolina. His interests are in Jonathan Edwards, American philosophy and art history.

Daniel Moaz is someone I came to know when I joined a "scriptural reasoning group" in 2013. In that group, Jews, Christians, and Muslims seek to deepen their understanding of their own and each other's scriptures. It has been a remarkable experience for me. Daniel is a fine and prolific

scholar. He has a PhD from Strasbourg and now holds the position of Jewish Scholar in Residence at the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, soon to become a public seminary. His most recent book (co-edited with Harry Fox) is *From Something to Nothing: Jewish Mysticism in Contemporary Studies in Canada*. I consider him a friend as well as a colleague.

David Goa was educated at the University of Chicago and studied with Mircea Eliade, the preeminent historian of religion in the 20th century, and Paul Tillich, a leading 20th century theologian, he then returned to Alberta where he curated ground-breaking exhibitions with the Royal Alberta Museum for thirty years and lectured at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. He is a prolific scholar, including his recent *Christian Responsibility to Muslims,* and is currently the Director of the Ronning Centre for Religion and Public Life. We met at a conference in Konya, Turkey. I have learned much from David. He has been that rare gift of new friendship at an old age.

Jonathan Wells is a micro-biologist and a Unification theologian. He served in the US army in the mid-60s before returning to school at the University of California (Berkeley). When he refused to report for reserve duty because of his opposition to the Vietnam war, he was imprisoned in Leavenworth for 18 months. He then returned to the UCBerkeley to complete his degree. I first met Jonathan when he was studying at the Unification Seminary in Barrytown, New York. We later worked together in the New Ecumenical Research Association (New ERA) organizing international interfaith conferences. Jonathan went on to do a PhD at Yale in theology and then another PhD in biology at the University of California (Berkeley). His purpose was to challenge Darwinian evolutionary theory. His *Icons of Evolution: Science or Myth?* (2000), which draws on the work of biologists and scientists, was published to a storm of controversy. The controversy was mostly about his membership in the Unification Church and little about the actual content and argument of his book. He is a long-time friend and here he tells his story.

Wentu Xie is a Professor in the Department of Jewish Studies and

Interreligious Dialogue at Shandong University in Jinan China. He is also a Professor of Historical Theology at the China Evangelical Seminary in North America, located in California. I first met Prof. Xie when I visited Shandong University in 2012 to give some lectures on dialogue and the religions of India. I learned much from Professor Xie about Chinese Christianity.

Peter Frick is a colleague in Religious Studies at the University of Waterloo. Originally from Germany, Peter came to the university to study engineering, but switched to the study of religion. He did his doctoral studies on Philo of Alexandria. He later immersed himself in the study of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Now he is on the Bonhoeffer Studies Board and is deeply engaged with Liberation theology in Central America. He is a colleague and friend.

Wendy L. Fletcher is the Principal of Renison University College, a scholar and a noted artist. Before coming to Renison, she headed the Vancouver School of Theology. She descends from the peoples of Newfoundland, Ireland, Scotland and the Ojibway and Mohawk nations. An Anglican, she was educated at Huron College and the University of St. Michael's College. A gifted teacher, she has also been adopted into the Lakota and Haida peoples. She is a recent friend.

Frank Kaufmann has been a member of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, the original name of the organization founded by the Reverend Sun Myung Moon in Korea in 1954, since the early 1970s. He grew up in New York City and was educated at the Unification Theological Seminary and has his doctorate from Vanderbilt. He has headed many projects in the Unification movement, including the Council for the World's Religions and the *New World Encyclopedia*. We have collaborated on several interfaith events.

Shrivatsa Goswami lives in Jai Singh Ghera, a family ashram on the banks of the Jamuna River in Vrindavan, India. It is where Lord Krishna played his flute and danced in the moonlight with the *gopis*, the women who

herded the cows. He was educated at Benares Hindu University and the Centre for World Religions at Harvard. He has been my guide into the world of Krishna and Radha since the mid-1980s. He invited me to the Kumbha Mela in 1989 where I joined 15 million others celebrating this "Festival of the Pitcher." I returned in 2001 and 2013 for the Kumbha Mela. He has always welcomed our family to Jai Singh Ghera and to participate in the divine *lila* (play) of Krishna and Radha.

Benjamin Bryant is my oldest son. He grew up playing Dungeons and Dragons and computer games with his cousin, Todd. They also learned computer "languages" and wrote programs. He studied anthropology at the University of Toronto, participated in an international youth program in Spain, and has worked as a computer programmer in Washington D.C. He is still there, now with a leading security software company. He has travelled in India with me several times, most recently to the Kumbha Mela in 2013 where we joined 30 million others on the most auspicious day.

Jialu Xu was the Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, a Professor of Chinese Language, Dean & Vice-Chancellor of Beijing Normal University before becoming the Chair of the International Society for Chinese Language teaching. He is also the Founder of the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations. I first met Jialu Xu at the international Conference of the Confucius Institutes in Beijing in 2011. It was here that he gave the talk included in this volume. He then invited me to the Nishan Forum in 2012 that brought together over 200 scholars and religious leaders from 50 nations. It was held in Qufu, the birth place of Confucius.

Kurt Johnson and David Robert Ord are the co-authors of *The Coming Interspiritual Age* (2014). I first knew Kurt in the late 1970s and then we reconnected after 2000. He combines two passions in his one life: entomology and spirituality. He has written more than 200 scientific publications and is butterfly expert. He has also pursued spirituality as a monk and a social activist. His co-author is David Robert Ord, formerly

a Presbyterian minister but now the editorial director of Namaste Publishing. I have met David only once, and briefly. Together, they have written a remarkable volume on the future of interspirituality.

M. Darrol Bryant is the Director of the Centre for Dialogue and Spirituality at Renison University College in Waterloo, Ontario. He was educated at Concordia College, Harvard Divinity School, and the University of St. Michael's College. He has been a university teacher since 1967 and at Renison from 1973-2007. His passion is the living dialogue of religions. He has engaged Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Christians in their ashrams, monasteries, masjids, churches and temples in India, Japan, Korea, Turkey and elsewhere and, more recently, in Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist and Christian sites in China. The third edition of *Religion in a New Key*, his book on dialogue, was recently published. His next project is completing an encyclopedia on religion in the modern world. He is immensely grateful to the friends, former students, and colleagues who have contributed to the "Ways of the Spirit" project.