

### **Thomas Traherne 29C1**

You never enjoy the world aright till the sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens and crowned with the stars: and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold, and Kings in sceptres, you never enjoy the world.

*(Thomas Traherne 29C1)*

### **The Buddha**

"The head" said [the Buddha], "is Not-Understanding. The head is split in pieces and destroyed by Understanding, with its army of powers in support: confidence, mindfulness, meditation, and determination - energy. These are the powers that split heads." - Sutta Nipata Book V, Vatthugatha

*Chris McLean who was running one of his Focusing workshops during our meeting sent this to warm us up.*

### **1) Fa-ch'ang**

When the great Zen master Fa-ch'ang was dying, a squirrel screeched out on the roof.

"It's just this," he said, "and nothing more."

### **2) The Lore of certainty – George Schloss**

Sufism which, quite in accordance with eternal doctrine, distinguishes three very precise and very important stages towards personal liberation. I'm referring to the distinction it makes between what, in the reverse order of realization, it calls the Lore of Certainty, the Saying of it, the Eye of Certainty, the Seeing of it, and lastly the Truth of Certainty or the Being of it.

### **3) Richard Lang on Headless Workshops**

(In talking of gurus and their claims to having *the* truth or 'the one true way')

You point a finger - you hardly do anything - and from there on it's a dialogue between equals about who we all really are.

### **4) From John Updike's 'The Dogwood Tree (1962**

I reasoned thus: just as the paper is the basis for the marks upon it, might not events be contingent upon a never expressed (because featureless) ground? Is the true marvel of Sunday skaters the patterns of their pirouettes or the fact that they are silently upheld? Blankness is not emptiness; we may skate upon an intense radiance we do not see because we see nothing else. And in fact there is a colour, a quiet but tireless goodness that things at rest, like brick wall or a small stone, seem to affirm.

### **5) The Immediacy of Pure Presence**

Q Are there any orthodox or mainstream Western philosophers who recognise nonduality?

Ken Wilber. I always found it fascinating that both William James and Bertrand Russell agreed on this crucial issue, the nonduality of subject and object in the primacy of immediate awareness. I think this is funny, because if you can find something that these two agreed on, it might as well be coming straight from God, so I suppose we can embrace nonduality with a certain confidence. Russell talks about this in the last chapters of his great book *A History of Western Philosophy* where he discusses William James's notion of -radical empiricism. Now we have to be very careful with these terms because empiricism doesn't mean just sensory experience, it means experience itself, in any domain. It means immediate prehension, immediate experience,

immediate awareness. And William James set out to demonstrate that this pure nondual immediateness is the "basic stuff" of reality, so to speak, and that both subject and object, mind and body, inside and outside, are all derivative or secondary. They come later, they come after, the primacy of immediateness, which is the ultimate reality, as it were.

Q: So they both caught a glimpse of nonduality.

KW I think so, yes. it's fairly easy to catch at least a brief glimpse of nonduality. Most people can be "talked into it," as we were doing a moment ago, and at least get a little taste of it. And I think this is exactly what William James did with Bertrand Russell, in person, which is what Russell himself reports. Right after he says, "I am convinced that James was right on this matter," Russell adds, "I thought otherwise until he persuaded me of the truth of his doctrine." I think James just pointed it right out to him! See the mountain? Where is your mind? Mind and mountain . . . nondual!

#### **6) Traherne Select Meditations 4/66**

Till we see our nothing, we cannot understand the value of our Being

#### **7) Huang Po**

Our original Buddha Nature is void, omnipresent, silent, pure; it is glorious and mysterious peaceful joy – and that is all. Enter deeply into it by awaking to yourself. That which is where you are is it, in all its fullness, utterly complete.

#### **8) Freedom** Nishitani's *Religion and Nothingness*—Final section, SUNYATA AND HISTORY - P285

By freedom, we meant the true freedom that is not simply a matter of freedom of the will. When freedom is viewed as residing in the operations of will power that man is conscious of within himself, then it is already a freedom reflected on the field of self-consciousness and hence transferred out of the home-ground of freedom itself. Freedom as it is in itself is not simply subjective freedom. Subjective freedom, which is the cornerstone of so-called liberalism, is not yet rid of the self-centered mode of being of man himself. True freedom is, as noted earlier on, an absolute autonomy on the field of emptiness, where "there is nothing to rely on." And this is no different from making oneself into a nothingness in the service of all things. It is this that sets it apart from the freedom of atheistic existentialism expounded by Sartre and others.'

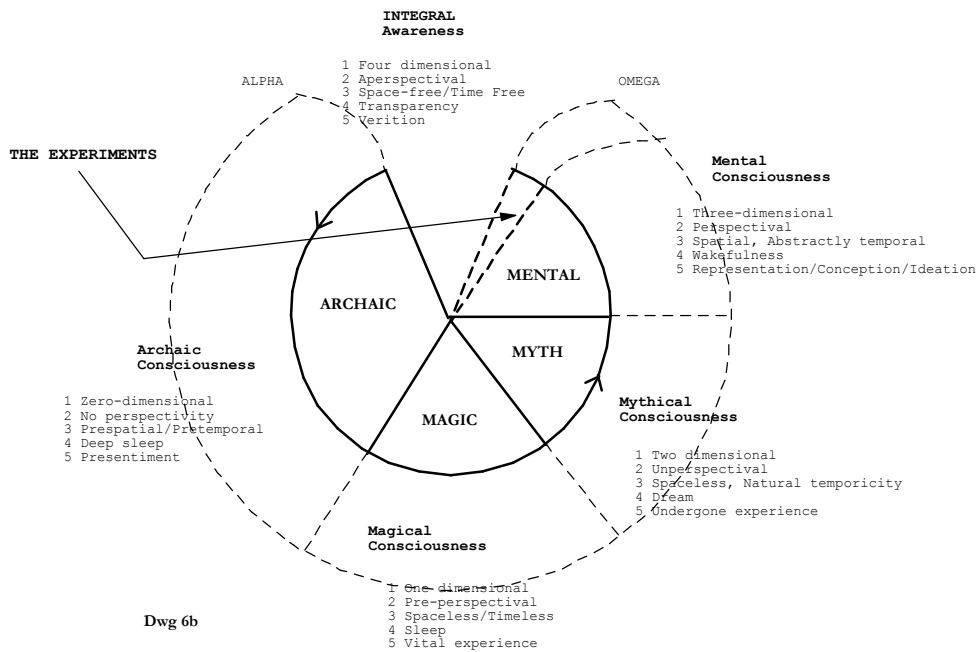
The same applies to equality. True equality is not simply a matter of an equality of human rights and the ownership of property. Such equality concerns man as the subject of desires and rights and comes down, in the final analysis, to the self-centered mode of being of man himself. It has yet to depart fundamentally from the principle of self-love. And therein the roots of discord and strife lie ever concealed. True equality, on the contrary, comes about in what we might call the reciprocal interchange of absolute inequality, such that the self and the other stand simultaneously in the position of absolute master and absolute servant with regard to one another. It is an equality in love.

Only on the field of emptiness does all of this become possible. Unless the thoughts and deeds of man one and all be located on such a field, the sorts of problems that beset humanity have no chance of ever really being solved. End of quote

## 9) Andrew Cohen

Consciousness is not some mysterious substance that exists beyond the self out there in the ether. It is simultaneously our self and intersubjectively ourselves – it is the part of our self that we are sharing with other selves. Consciousness is an intersubjective field that we all share. So for the intersubjective field to be able to evolve and develop, the consciousness that makes it up, which is your own, has to make room for this kind of subtle and profound and mysterious growth process to actually occur. The intersubjective field, which is the self, can and does develop according to the level of participation of those individuals who are actually passionately concerned with its development. So that's the context for serious spiritual inquiry. And the only way you can really engage with this practice is to allow yourself to not already know.

## 10) Schloss-Gebser Diagram from [www.capacitie.org](http://www.capacitie.org)



## 11) John Wren-Lewis

The main point I want to make here, however, is that perhaps the most extraordinary feature of eternity consciousness is that it doesn't feel extraordinary at all. It feels quintessentially natural that personal consciousness should be aware of its own Ground, while my first fifty-nine years of so-called 'normal' consciousness, in ignorance of that Ground, now seem like a kind of waking dream. It was as if I'd been entranced from birth into a collective nightmare of separate individuals struggling in an alien universe for survival, satisfaction and significance.

The website addresses for more information on the experiments and articles are:

<http://www.headless.org/>

<http://www.headless.org/English/main.html>