

## MOTE Poems - Final Collection

This is a collection of poems which I believe point to the apprehension of a wider view than we customarily experience. It was prepared for a *Men on the Edge* group meeting on 4 August 2021.

"The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth,  
From earth to heaven, and as imagination bodies forth  
The form of things unknown, the poet's pen  
turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing,  
A local habitation and a name."

**Mid. Sum. Nights Dream**

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### The Wider View 1

It is my view that there is nothing supernatural involved in the wider view. An opinion shared by Emily Dickinson who pointed this out, in a letter to her mentor Thomas Wentworth Higginson:

*I was thinking to-day, as I noticed, that the "Supernatural" was only the Natural disclosed.*

*Not "Revelation" 't is that waits,  
But our unfurnished eyes.*

And here is her Poem 959

A loss of something ever felt I-  
The first that I could recollect  
Bereft I was-of what I knew not  
Too young that any should suspect

A Mourner walked among the children  
I notwithstanding went about  
As one bemoaning a Dominion  
Itself the only Prince cast out-

Elder, Today, a session wiser  
And fainter, too, as Wiseness is-  
I find myself still softly searching  
For my Delinquent Palaces-

And a Suspicion, like a Finger  
Touches my Forehead now and then  
That I am looking oppositely  
For the site of the Kingdom of Heaven-  
Your Remedy is within you, but you do not sense it.  
Your Sickness is from you, but you do not perceive it.  
You Presume you are a small entity,

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## The Wider View 2

At a poetry weekend in 2003, organized by Ted Myers & Caroline Davis, we all went for a bit of a wander by the river, on the way back I was practising the 'observing the space in which objects appear' rather than the objects themselves. This made me late for the afternoon session which started with all participants picking a book from a box of poetry books and then selecting a poem to read to the group. As I riffled through the pile books one 'fell open' at the above, a poem I'd never read before. Alan.

What Birds Plunge Through Is Not The Intimate Space

What birds plunge through is not the intimate space  
in which you see all forms intensified.

(Out in the Open, you would be denied  
your self would disappear into that vastness.)  
Space reaches from us and construes the world:  
to know a tree, in its true element,  
throw inner space around it, from that pure  
abundance in you. Surround it with restraint.  
It has no limits. Not till it is held  
in your renouncing is it truly there.

Rainer Maria Rilke

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## The Wider View 3

**Sylvia Plath - From her poem Black Rook in Rainy Weather**

A certain minor light may still  
Leap incandescent  
Out Of kitchen table or chair  
As if a celestial burning took  
Possession Of the most obtuse Objects now and then—  
Thus hallowing an interval  
Otherwise inconsequent  
By bestowing largesse, honour,  
One might say love.

**Delmore Schwartz is "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine**

If you look long enough at anything  
It will become extremely interesting;  
If you look very long at anything  
It will become rich, manifold, fascinating:  
If you can look at anything for long enough,  
You will rejoice in the miracle of love,  
You will possess and be blessed by the marvellous blinding radiance  
of love, you will be radiance.

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## The Wider View 4

Both Goethe and Blake had something to say about the wider view and both, at different times, remarked that they were writing for future generations. Maybe they couldn't get their friends and colleagues to agree with them!

### Goethe

"There is a delicate empiricism which makes itself utterly identical with the object, thereby becoming true theory... The ultimate goal would be to grasp that everything in the realm of fact is already theory... Let us not seek for something beyond the phenomena – they themselves are the theory" (Goethe, 1988, p.307, quoted in Brady, 1998, p.98).

Explanatory note, source unknown. Goethe rightly remarks, every fact is already theory; that is to say, it is already seen in the light of a particular understanding. Goethe's approach to science emphasizes this perceptual encounter with the laws of nature and not their abstract or mechanical representation. While important for all forms of scientific inquiry, Goethe's understanding of science is especially useful for the developing science of consciousness where the phenomena of lived experience comprise the very field of study. Increasingly we will need to learn to "see" deeper and more subtle patterns within conscious experience.

### Blake

To see a world in a Grain of Sand,  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,  
And eternity in an hour.

"If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, Infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern."  
William Blake

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## The Wider View 5

Alan Gould writes: Traherne was a visionary Anglican. Judith Wright was a spiritually conflicted secular intellect. Yet the work of both, their very sense of themselves on the planet, are in accord with Traherne's discovery of self in his poem "Wonder": *I felt a vigor in my sense That was all spirit.*

### Reading Thomas Traherne – a poem by Judith Wright

Can I then lose myself,  
and losing find one word  
that, in the face of what you were,  
needs to be said or heard?  
--Or speak of what has come  
to your sad race  
that to your clear rejoicing  
we turn with such a face?  
With such a face, Traherne,  
as might make dumb

any but you, the man who knew  
how simply truth may come:  
who saw the depth of darkness  
shake, part and move,  
and from death' s centre the light' s ladder  
go up from love to Love.

I had read this poem a number of times without picking up Judith Wright's distinction between lower and upper case Love. I finally spotted it in reading Alan Gould's article on Traherne.

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## The Wider View 6

Shakespeare slipped his observations on the wider view, into the plays. Here are a couple of examples.

### **Duke Senior – Act 1, As You Like It**

**The Duke and his courtiers have been banished to the forest.**

Duke. Now, my co-mates and brothers in exile,  
Hath not old custom made this life more sweet  
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods  
More free from peril than the envious court?  
Here feel we not the penalty of Adam,  
The seasons' difference; as the icy fang  
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,  
Which when it bites and blows upon my body,  
Even till I shrink with cold, I smile and say  
'This is no flattery; these are counsellors  
That feelingly persuade me what I am.'  
Sweet are the uses of adversity,  
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;  
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,  
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.  
I would not change it.

### **Measure for Measure – Act 2 Scene 2**

(Shakespeare meets Douglas Harding)

ISABELLA defending her brother before Angelo.  
Could great men thunder  
As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet,  
For every pelting, petty officer  
Would use his heaven for thunder;  
Nothing but thunder! Merciful Heaven,  
Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt  
Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak

Than the soft myrtle: but man, proud man,  
Drest in a little brief authority,  
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,  
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
As make the angels weep; who, with our spleens,  
Would all themselves laugh mortal.

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## The Wider View 7

From "The Prelude" by William Wordsworth.

"Thus while the days flew by, and years passed on,  
From Nature and her overflowing soul,  
I had received so much, that all my thoughts  
Were steeped in feeling; I was only then  
Contented, when with bliss ineffable  
I felt the sentiment of Being spread  
O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still;  
O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought  
And human knowledge, to the human eye  
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart;  
O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts and sings,  
Or beats the gladsome air; o'er all that glides  
Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,  
And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not  
If high the transport, great the joy I felt,  
Communing in this sort through earth and heaven  
With every form of creature, as it looked  
Towards the Uncreated with a countenance  
Of adoration, with an eye of love.  
One song they sang, and it was audible,  
Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear,  
O'ercome by grosser prelude of that strain,  
Forgot its functions and slept undisturbed.  
If this be error, and another faith  
Find easier access to the pious mind,  
Yet were I grossly destitute of all  
Those human sentiments which make this earth  
So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice  
To speak of you, ye mountains and ye lakes  
And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds  
That dwell among the hills where I was born.  
If in my youth I have been pure in heart,  
If, mingling with the world, I am content  
With my own modest pleasures, and have lived"

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## The Wider View 8

I watched the ABC David Gulpilil film on 11 July. At one point Gulpilil, in a bush setting, says, "**If you sit down here, really quietly, the land will be talking to you**". This is a testable claim with a possible result demonstrating the consequence of what we have been describing as 'looking longer' and 'the wider view'. I assume it is what Heidegger means by his 'waiting on' as opposed to 'waiting for'. And I think that is what Owen Barfield means by 'original participation'. I describe it myself as 'immersed in the occasion', which, if I sit and 'listen' instead of pasting descriptions, labels and assumptions on everything around me, becomes a matter of participation, of reciprocal engagement, the occasion is seen as what I am and replaces my customary perspective of Alan, the detached observer of whatever is going on. I don't think it is a matter of either/or but of both, an opportunity to restore the overlooked aspect. Here is Wm. Wordsworth again.

### **From *Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey***

...And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things.

### **From *The Prelude: Book 2: School-time***

Oft in these moments such a holy calm  
Did overspread my soul, that I forgot  
That I had bodily eyes, and what I saw  
Appear'd like something in myself, a dream,  
A prospect in my mind.

Alan speaking: My Celtic forebears had a word for this — 'Awen'.

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## The Wider View 9

### **Ali ibn Abi Talib**

*The cousin and son-in-law of the prophet Muhammad, the fourth Caliph for Sunnis, and the first Imam for Shias, well known for his general knowledge, wisdom and eloquence. Most of the Sufi orders claim their descent from Ali.*

But within you is enfolded the entire universe.  
You are indeed the evident book,  
By whose alphabet the hidden becomes the manifest.  
Therefore, you have no need to look beyond yourself,  
What you seek is within you, if only you reflect.

### **From 'Paracelsus' By Robert Browning (1812–1889)**

TRUTH is within ourselves; it takes no rise  
From outward things, whate'er you may believe.  
There is an inmost centre in us all,  
Where truth abides in fullness; and around,  
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,  
This perfect, clear perception—which is truth.  
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh  
Binds it, and makes all error: and, to KNOW,  
Rather consists in opening out a way  
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape,  
Than in effecting entry for a light  
Supposed to be without.

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## The Wider View 10

If I had to choose one poem to support my case it would probably be this one. It underlines the difference between the knowing, my need to know, and simply being. I particularly like the way the girl explains she is listening 'like' the Orange tree not listening 'to' it.

### The Orange Tree by John Shaw Neilson

The young girl stood beside me. I  
Saw not what her young eyes could see:  
- A light, she said, not of the sky  
Lives somewhere in the Orange Tree.

- Is it, I said, of east or west?  
The heartbeat of a luminous boy  
Who with his faltering flute confessed  
Only the edges of his joy?

Was he, I said, borne to the blue  
In a mad escapade of Spring  
Ere he could make a fond adieu  
To his love in the blossoming?

- Listen! the young girl said. There calls  
No voice, no music beats on me;  
But it is almost sound: it falls  
This evening on the Orange Tree.

- Does he, I said, so fear the Spring  
Ere the white sap too far can climb?  
See in the full gold evening  
All happenings of the olden time?

Is he so goaded by the green?

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Does the compulsion of the dew  
Make him unknowable but keen  
Asking with beauty of the blue?

- Listen! the young girl said. For all  
Your hapless talk you fail to see  
There is a light, a step, a call  
This evening on the Orange Tree.

- Is it, I said, a waste of love  
Imperishably old in pain,  
Moving as an affrighted dove  
Under the sunlight or the rain?

Is it a fluttering heart that gave  
Too willingly and was reviled?  
Is it the stammering at a grave,  
The last word of a little child?

- Silence! the young girl said. Oh, why,  
Why will you talk to weary me?  
Plague me no longer now, for I  
Am listening like the Orange Tree.

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## The Wider View 11

### David Whyte from 'Everything is Waiting for You.'

Your great mistake is to act the drama  
as if you were alone. As if life  
were a progressive and cunning crime  
with no witness to the tiny hidden  
transgressions. To feel abandoned is to deny  
the intimacy of your surroundings. Surely,  
even you, at times, have felt the grand array;  
the swelling presence, and the chorus, crowding  
out your solo voice. You must note  
the way the soap dish enables you,  
or the window latch grants you freedom.  
Alertness is the hidden discipline of familiarity.  
The stairs are your mentor of things  
to come, the doors have always been there  
to frighten you and invite you,  
and the tiny speaker in the phone  
is your dream-ladder to divinity.  
Put down the weight of your aloneness and ease into the  
conversation. The kettle is singing  
even as it pours you a drink, the cooking pots  
have left their arrogant aloofness and  
seen the good in you at last. All the birds  
and creatures of the world are unutterably  
themselves. Everything is waiting for you.

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## The Wider View 12

We are too late for God and too early for Being  
Being's poem just begun is man...

Martin Heidegger

### Emily Dickinson—Poem 668

"Nature" is what we see—  
The Hill—the Afternoon—  
Squirrel—Eclipse— the Bumble bee—  
Nay—Nature is Heaven—  
Nature is what we hear—  
The Bobolink—the Sea—  
Thunder—the Cricket—  
Nay—Nature is Harmony—  
Nature is what we know—  
Yet have no art to say—  
So impotent Our Wisdom is  
To her Simplicity.



## Colin Oliver — Thought-Bees

If thoughts were bees, who would dare to shut them tight in the hive of the head?  
He who shatters this hive of pretence with the swift hammer of seeing,  
sees no box, no house, no door to lock. The spell of images is broken  
and the swarm breaks out to scatter in the world.  
The hive of nothingness brings to the world the honey of love,  
and thought-bees, watched by the queen of the eye, roam free.

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## The Wider View 13

### Andrew Shapiro

I am a window for the Light;  
our boundaries shatter as the Whole hugs its parts  
a lens through which You see Yourself as me,  
and through which I see myself as You  
There is only One Reality,  
the Singular Source and Substance of all Diversity...  
Blessed is the One who manifests as the Many  
When I am free from ancestors,  
free from traditions,  
free from truths, free from words,  
free from thoughts,  
free from even the need to be free  
there is Being\* and there I am not,  
Blessed is the One at the heart of my emptiness.

•        •        Andrew Shapiro is an American Rabbi. I have substituted the word Being for what in his poem he refers to as God. This to make it more relevant to my understanding of what I think is a very fine expression of the wider view, and in line with what Thomas Jackson had to say about the word 'God'.

***He speaks more fully and more safely, that saith, God is being itself, or perfection itself.....***

Thomas Jackson Doctor in Divinitie, Chaplaine to His Majestie in Ordinary, and Vicar of S. Nicolas Church in the Towne of Newcastle Upon Tyne. 1668

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## The Wider View 14

### **The Poet's Death— Rainer Maria Rilke**

He lay. His high-propped face could only peer  
in pale refusal at the silent cover,  
now that the world and all this knowledge of her,  
torn from the senses of her lover,  
had fallen back to the unfeeling year.

Those who had seen him living saw no trace  
of his deep unity with all that passes;  
for these, these valleys here, these meadow-grasses,  
these streams of running water, were his face.

Oh yes, his face was this remotest distance,  
that seeks him still and woos him in despair;  
and his mere mask, timidly dying there,  
tender and open, has no more consistence  
than broken fruit corrupting in the air.

### **From The Ballad of the White Horse — By G.K. Chesterton**

"I tell you naught for your comfort,  
Yea, naught for your desire,  
Save that the sky grows darker yet  
And the sea rises higher.

"Night shall be thrice night over you,  
And heaven an iron cope.  
Do you have joy without a cause,  
Yea, faith without a hope?"

### **Rainer Maria Rilke —End of 8th elegy**

And we: onlookers, always, everywhere,  
always looking into, never out of, everything.  
It fills us. We arrange it. It collapses.  
We arrange it again, and collapse ourselves.

Who has turned us round like this, so that,  
whatever we do, we always have the aspect  
of one who leaves?

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## The Wider View 15

The following is one of the most widely quoted pieces of Traherne's poems and writing. It is from his Centuries of Meditations written sometime in the middle of the 17th century. However, the references to this particular meditation usually exclude the final sentence, presumably because of the contradiction between the individual and undivided aspects. Something our recent postings have made clear, is not a matter of either-or but of both.

### Centuries of Meditations 3/3

The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold: the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me, their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things: The Men! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem! Immortal Cherubims! And young men glittering and sparkling Angels, and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels. . . . Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day. . . something infinite behind everything appeared which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. . . . The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine, as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the World was mine; and I the only enjoyer of it. I knew no churlish proprieties, nor bounds, nor divisions: but all proprieties (properties) and divisions were mine.

His lengthy poem '**My Spirit**' is a series of attempt to express the undivided aspect of our nature, which is my Wider View label, from which I extract verse 1 as an example:

My Naked Simple Life was I.  
That Act so Strongly Shind  
Upon the Earth, the Sea, the Skie,  
That was the Substance of My Mind.  
The Sence it self was I.  
I felt no Dross nor Matter in my Soul,  
No Brims nor Borders, such as in a Bowl  
We see, My Essence was Capacitie.  
That felt all Things.  
The Thought that Springs  
Therfrom's it self. It hath no other Wings  
To Spread abroad, nor Eys to see,  
Nor Hands Distinct to feel,  
Nor Knees to Kneel:  
But being Simple like the Deitie  
In its own Centre is a Sphere  
Not shut up here, but evry Where

'My Essence was Capacitie' reflects Shakespeare's 'glassy essence' mentioned in bulletin 6.

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## The Wider View 16

### **Song of Myself, 51 —Walt Whitman - 1819-1892**

The past and present wilt—I have fill'd them, emptied them.  
And proceed to fill my next fold of the future.

Listener up there! what have you to confide to me?  
Look in my face while I snuff the sidle of evening,  
(Talk honestly, no one else hears you, and I stay only a minute longer.)

Do I contradict myself?  
Very well then I contradict myself,  
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)

I concentrate toward them that are nigh, I wait on the door-slab.

Who has done his day's work? who will soonest be through with his supper?  
Who wishes to walk with me?

Will you speak before I am gone? will you prove already too late?

### **Toward the unknown Region— Walt Whitman**

Darest thou now, O Soul,  
Walk out with me toward the Unknown Region,  
Where neither ground is for the feet, nor any path to follow?

No map, there, nor guide,  
Nor voice sounding, nor touch of human hand,  
Nor face with blooming flesh, nor lips, nor eyes, are in that land.

I know it not, O Soul;  
Nor dost thou—all is a blank before us;  
All waits, undream'd of, in that region—that inaccessible land.

Till, when the ties loosen,  
All but the ties eternal, Time and Space,  
Nor darkness, gravitation, sense, nor any bounds, bound us.

Then we burst forth—we float,  
In Time and Space, O Soul—prepared for them;  
Equal, equipt at last—(O joy! O fruit of all!) them to fulfil, O Soul.

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