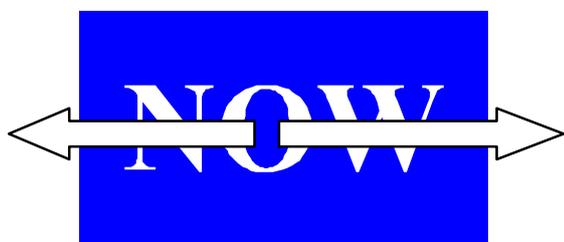


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**Next Greville Street Meeting – Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> February**

Thanks to the contributors to this issue and please let me have an ‘Unsubscribe’ email if you want me to remove your address from the list or a ‘Subscribe’ if you want to join the list.

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## **Alan Rowlands final work**

Alan Rowlands was one of the few people I have known who enjoyed the benefit of an interest in both Douglas Harding and Jiddu Krishnamurti. When Margot and I visited Alan at his Chelsea home in 2008 he was working on the re arrangement and completion Vaughan Williams 6<sup>th</sup> symphony for two pianos. Alan died shortly afterwards and I wondered if he'd completed the work.

A web search uncovered this Telegraph review by Simon Heffer from which I selected the following extract:

*When pondering which moment in history I should most like to have been present at, I have failed to decide between the first performance of the work, in the Albert Hall on April 21, 1948, or at the private play-through by Michael Mullinar, the pianist, at Vaughan Williams's house in Dorking in 1946. At least the many recordings and frequent performances of the symphony give us some idea of what the Albert Hall concert must have been like; but there has never been a recording of Mullinar's piano transcription, so one could only start to imagine how that experience was. It was a gathering that one of Vaughan Williams's friends, a refugee from the Nazis, had to leave swiftly when the play-through was complete, so overcome with emotion was he. This would not be an isolated response to the work: Deryck Cooke, an eminent critic, present at the Albert Hall premiere, felt incapable of applauding at the end because it seemed that the blood had frozen in his veins...*

*Now, though, we can start to understand how that very first moment of the work's life felt. Alan Rowlands, a distinguished pianist and teacher now in his eighties, has edited Mullinar's own arrangement of the work for two pianos and recorded it, for Albion Records, with Adrian Sims. To my mind, it is one of the greatest recordings of the composer's works. In this raw state one hears things in the symphony that one had never heard before – in my case in hundreds, probably thousands, of previous listenings.*

*Professor Rowlands had to do much editorial work on the third movement, revised by the composer two years after the first performance to give it more structure, but in this he has remained entirely faithful to the final score. He has made other "interpolations" where Mullinar's own transcription was unclear; but what we have here is this great symphony faithfully represented on two keyboards, and sounding almost frightening in its power.*

The full review can be read at:

**<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/simonheffer/7783238/Varieties-of-darkness-that-lit-up-my-life.html>**

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## **What Lies Within—From evil to enlightenment**

Gary Hipworth has published a revised and updated edition of his autobiography which is now available at a very reasonable price from the site:

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/392316> where you will find both how to get the book and a comprehensive introduction outlining his remarkable story:

Gary is well known to readers as a regular contributor to the NOWletter in our early days and he remains an occasional contributor today. You will find his articles in the NOWletter index at <http://www.capacity.org/now/archive.htm> .

One of Gary's regular themes is to point out how, in response to our disappointments, anxieties and concerns we tend to seek something better, which is all very well but more often than not, in focusing on this 'becoming better', we overlook our living being and the miracle of having happened at all. Coincidentally in this issue we include a quote from the Simon Critchley book pointing to the fact that we are often unable to notice something – because it is always before our eyes.

Well worth a read.

*Alan Mann*

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## **How I became an Epicurean from David C. Knowles**

My good friends know me as a man who loves books and, moreover, reading them and digesting their ideas. It was a curious subtitle that drew me to a book I discovered by chance in the library of my old home town, Leek in North Staffordshire when on holiday in the UK. It was called Philosophy as a Way of Life with the subtitle Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault by an unknown to me French philosopher called Pierre Hadot who seemed to be well-respected among his professional colleagues and, in fact, was a favourite philosopher of Michel Foucault and had introduced Ludwig Wittgenstein's thought into France. As I came to understand what Hadot described by spiritual exercises I was taken by the practical implications of what Hadot attributed to the ancient philosophies of Stoicism, Epicureanism & Scepticism – not just academic studies like philosophies today but more a commitment to a way of life which reduced the anxieties of life and indeed could lead to happiness. This was a far cry indeed from my recent fascination and finally, frustration with Phenomenology and I was so intrigued by Hadot's descriptions I ordered and read his What is Ancient Philosophy? for more on this revelation of "Philosophy as a Way of Life." Because Epicurus laid great emphasis on friendship, with which I was blessed and enjoyed, and because I realised the modern meaning of "epicurean" greatly misrepresented Epicurus' more austere definition of pleasure, I came to be most attracted to Epicureanism even

though I also admired the Stoic philosophy of Marcus Aurelius as revealed in his *Meditations*.

I wondered to myself whether anyone lived in modern times as an Epicurean.

By another fortunate chance, swayed by the number of references I had encountered to him, I had picked up the Penguin Classics selection of Michel de Montaigne's *Essays*, which enraptured me as they have done so many others with the eminently sensible way of life of this 16<sup>th</sup> century French nobleman and the captivating way he wrote about it and himself. It gradually emerged that he had been strongly influenced by Epicureanism and I later found out that Thomas Jefferson had also frankly described himself as an Epicurean.

So this was an initial answer to the question I had posed to myself.

I was shortly to discover a very practical and personal reason for openly subscribing to Epicureanism myself. It came about like this:

After I had physically recovered from a completely unexpected stroke I sustained on our back deck in 2002 I was equally unexpectedly subjected to inexplicable bouts of anxiety. I attributed this to "having the rug pulled out from underneath me" by the impact of the stroke on my fairly relaxed life at the time. It turns out this is known to be an occasional after-effect of a stroke but I was not forewarned and it hit me hard at the time. After some time it elapsed for the most part but was occasionally to re-surface from time to time. One particularly troublesome recent bout led me to search for psychological help and after a while settled on a practitioner of "ACT" – "Acceptance & Commitment Therapy" – a newly popular therapy appealing to me because it had a strong component of mindfulness in its approach and because I had simultaneously got more interested in training in mindfulness as a logical development of my other esoteric interests. Not only did I find the ACT sessions very effective, I found them very interesting and wanted to read more about the theory of this approach. The psychologist lent me Dr. Russ Harris's book *The Happiness Trap: Stop Struggling, Start Living* and, despite its "pop psych" appearance, I found it very interesting and oddly familiar in some way.

I suddenly realized that one of the aims of Epicureanism was *ataraxia* – a lucid state of robust tranquility, characterized by ongoing freedom from anxiety on the way to *eudaimonia* – the attainment of happiness or human flourishing. I excitedly mapped between the "spiritual exercises" of Epicureanism and the core principles of ACT in the following way:

*First:* the spiritual exercises of Epicureanism:

*prosoche:* attention to oneself and vigilance at every instant as for the Stoics

The fundamental attitude of the Stoic philosopher was *prosoche:* attention to oneself and vigilance at every instant. For the Stoics, the person who is "awake" is always perfectly conscious not only of what he *does*, but of what he *is*. ( Hadot, 1995 p. 130)

*taking a cosmic perspective*: “plunging oneself into the totality of the world”. Existence seems to the Epicurean to be pure chance, inexorably unique, he greets life like a kind of miracle, a gratuitous, unexpected gift of nature, and existence for him is a wonderful celebration

examination of the conscience

an encouragement of withdrawal from the political and administrative service of the state into sheltered communities of like-minded people ruled by friendship and by a common allegiance to Epicurus

rejection of active supernatural powers

death is literally nothing to us (“where we are, death is not; where death is, we are not”)

the good life is secured by kindness and friendship with those about you, and by moderation of appetite so that, although nothing is forbidden, he who measures his desires by the utilitarian standard and needs least has the firmest grasp on happiness.

*The fourfold remedy*:

The gods are not to be feared,

Death is not to be dreaded;

What is good is easy to acquire

What is bad is easy to bear.

And the famous *carpe diem*’ – “seize the day”

Yes, I reckon one could now live very profitably according to these tenets, just as Michel De Montaigne, Nietzsche, Kant, Wittgenstein, Albert Ellis, Christopher Hitchens, and Thomas Jefferson concluded.

*Next*: The six core principles of ACT:

Defusion: relating to your thoughts in a new way, so they have much less impact and influence over you. (= taking a cosmic perspective?)

Expansion: making room for unpleasant feelings, sensations, and urges, instead of trying to suppress them or push them away. (= *prosoche*?)

Connection: living in the present; focusing on and engaging fully in whatever you’re doing. (= *prosoche*?)

The Observing Self (= *prosoche*?)

Values (=examination of the conscience?)

Committed Action: *effective* action, guided by and motivated by your values. (= he who measures his desires by the utilitarian standard and needs least has the firmest grasp on happiness?)

At this point I believe I exclaimed: “By gum, ACT is applied Epicureanism!”

**I am happy to say I am an Epicurean.**

*(In response to my subsequent editorial query to Dave about what follows for him personally from the Hadot reference to the Stoics prosoche 'the person who is "awake" is always perfectly conscious not only of what he does, but of what he is' he replied: I have taken from Epicureanism is first of all a set of practical techniques to live a life without anxiety without resorting to regular psychology sessions and without drugs. Moreover it validates pleasure (in moderation) and particularly that found in friendship which other philosophies have largely overlooked. I guess it's now good to say that though I cannot subscribe to any religion I can now subscribe to a philosophy of life, a philosophy that seems to me as satisfying as any religion as well as being healthy for me!)*

**Bibliography:** A few notes here on sources here that are not referenced explicitly in the text.

Lucretius was a Roman Epicurean who wrote a 7,000 line poem (*The Nature of Things*) that explained Epicureanism.

Stephen Greenblatt's *The Swerve* is an entertaining story of how a surviving copy of *The Nature of Things* was discovered and, in his estimation, triggered the Renaissance.

Sarah Bakewell's *How to Live* is a fascinating exploration of Montaigne's way of life.

Anderson & Evans maintain very helpful websites.

Max Velmans has a very appealing view of how our consciousness could be considered as part of the universe (Taking the cosmic perspective).

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An anthology of seeing from Garry Booth

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## **The living Earth from Robert Penny**

Robert sent in this quotation from THE HIERARCHY OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, (big version) P 201

*Of this I am sure: no realisation of earth's living oneness is wasted, or fails to further that unity. To the extent that we bring to consciousness, not only our common human selfhood, and our common vital selfhood, but (beyond and including both of these) our common telluric selfhood, to that extent we serve the cause of peace on Earth.*

*But intellectual ascent is not enough: also needed is the ardour of a Richard Jeffries. "The rich blue of the unattainable flower of the sky drew my soul towards it and there it rested, for pure colour is rest of heart." "The great sun burning with light; the strong earth, dear earth; the warm sky, the pure air; the thought of ocean; the inexpressible beauty of all filled me with rapture, an ecstasy, an inflatus." The Story of My Heart is full of such passages.*

Shortly afterwards Sam Blight sent us this link to a remarkable website which provides an interesting perspective on the galaxy and a real feel for the cosmos:

<http://workshop.chromeexperiments.com/stars/>

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### **On Belief – William Samuel**

"It is difficult enough already for the few of us on earth who have been given the task of waging worldwide battle against the power of belief. Most tenacious among those beliefs is the insanity that one must be either a leader or a follower. Allness leads what? Singleness follows whom? The Seminal Idea discloses Identity to be nothing less than the Ineffable's very own Self-awareness! Every grain of sand and star in the heavens shouts the proof of this fact. Every flower that blooms and wild bird that flies verifies the changelessness of this fact. When the story is told properly--and listened to as a child listens--the individual awakens to DOMINION, to his birthright, his heritage from the beginning, and there is no more need of teachers." *William Samuel*

### **Overlooking the Obvious from Simon Critchley**

Here is an interesting quotation from *Continental Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* by Simon Critchley, particularly relevant to the Harding message.

In my view, what we can still learn from phenomenology is that when it comes to our primary and most significant access to persons and things – what we might call our entire stock of tacit, background know-how about the social world – we do not require causal scientific

explanations, or pseudo-scientific hypotheses in relation to obscure causes, but what I am tempted to call, thinking of Wittgenstein, clarificatory remarks. For example, ‘The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something – because it is always before one’s eyes)’. Clarificatory remarks bring into view features of our everyday life that were hidden but self-evident, and hidden because they were self-evident. They make these phenomena more perspicuous, change the aspect under which they are seen, and give to matters a new and surprising overview. In this sense, phenomenology is a reordering of what was tacitly known but went unnoticed; it permits us to relearn how to look at the world. Of course, viewing Heidegger’s work in this way does not sound as exciting as talking about the epochal donation of being in its withdrawal or whatever, but perhaps that sort of excitement is something we are best off without.

I thought... *‘The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something – because it is always before one’s eyes)’* ..as highly relevant to the widespread inability to apprehend the significance of the experiments. Alan

### **Message from Colin Drake**

Dear Fellow Explorers, I am happy to announce the publication of two new books: 'Awareness of Awareness - The Open Way' and 'Poetry From Awareness of Awareness'. Below is the index (the same for both books up to chapter 22), the introduction to the first book and the first poem from the second. These and my other books may be purchased from <http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/ColinDrake> Love, Colin

From Colin’s introduction:

This book is written as a stand-alone guide to Awakening and is composed of articles written since the publication of *Awakening and Beyond*. At the time I thought that this would be the last book, so much so that I told someone that *Love Loving Itself* (chapter 23 in the above book) was my final word. It certainly felt like it at the time. But since then the questions, discussions and answers have continued resulting in this book. As I have said before I have no control over this process for I do not choose to sit and write articles, they just emerge from my meditations and contemplations or in response to questions and discussions. There are long periods when no writing takes place and then sometimes I can hardly stop!

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## Without Images

the sight of the invisible  
 will be no blazing illumination  
 but inner sight I mean to say insight  
 which means seeing without images

the sight of the invisible  
 will be possible only to eyes large enough  
 or rather enlarged enough to see the sacred  
 everywhere

*James Charlton ©*

This Charlton poem reminded me of '*How matter of fact things look!*' in this oft quoted verse.

Misty rain on Mount Lu,  
 And waves surging on the river Che;  
 When you have not yet been there,  
 Many a regret surely you have;  
 But once there and homeward you wend,  
 How matter of fact things look!  
 Misty rain on Mount Lu,  
 And waves surging on the river Che.

*Su Tung-Po*

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## Thought by George Schloss

I bumped into Heinz Rahn at the theatre and we must have both been reading Hegel for some reason and it led me to dig around in the NOW archive which turned up some relevant material. I found my first letter from George Schloss. Two Hegels in the one day! From NOWletter 74 -- August 2001 Letters and Email

*The first letter arises from an exchange in Salisbury at the Harding gathering when George challenged the 'empty mind - anti-thought' approach which is common in seeker circles. For some reason I had thought Heidegger's 'Discourse on Thinking', which impressed me when I read it about 20 years ago, had a contribution to make. On re-reading I think not but it resulted in the following. Alan*

Dear Alan, I don't know that particular Heidegger. Although I've struggled through him from time to time I must admit to a terrible prejudice, not only about the portentous and, in my view, sometimes tortuous, even ridiculous prose, but his absolutely dreadful behavior during the Nazi episode. I mean terrible - betraying his teacher, Husserl, and his mistress, Hannah Arendt. Just awful. And then his so-called rehabilitation without so much as a mea culpa. As for thought, Traherne does it better. There's nothing more glorious than thought. After all, it's what we're doing now, what distinguishes us as a species. I think Hegel - certainly one of the most committed thinkers of all time and one of the most difficult - got it absolutely right. Like rings stored up in the bole of a tree "thinking" its story, we negate a quality in order to preserve it on a "higher" level. Just as I would claim that's what the experiments do as regards the great and even not so great religions of the world, so, too, they perform the same service as regards the philosophies. By locating them, literally putting them in their place and negating them in order to preserve them, or preserve in them what's worth preserving, they provide us with an absolute measure with which to judge their truth. The same goes for thought itself, all thought. By locating it, we don't diminish but, seeing it aright, ennoble it. Up to now, with a few rare exceptions, all the best of us have been able to do is think about thinking, with the result that, again with few exceptions, we tie ourselves up in knots. But now that we can see where thought's coming from and who it's coming from, we can sit back and admire accordingly. It all reminds me of those before-and-after photos you see in ads to lose weight and lighten up. Its head in the right place - thought, the ugly duckling, turns into a swan, the fat lady into a beauty. And after all, if taking only a bite from the Tree of Knowledge got us kicked out of the Garden, it wasn't until, almost starved to death, we ate the whole damned apple that, via the experiments, we were given a glimpse of the Heavenly Jerusalem. As St. Paul said, sin miraculously transformed into grace will show us the way home and home free. Just a thought. Best to you both, George. *George Schloss*

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### **Krishnamurti speaking—from the Terence Stamp article at:**

<http://krishnamurti-america.blogspot.com.au/2012/09/meetings-with-remarkable-man.html>

"What you are...what you actually are, is being. Being is not the mind thinking. Thinking is a movement, a motion. Being is the silence that precedes the motion. You cannot see it; you cannot grasp it because you *are* it. The feeling that you are. The unadorned naked awareness that is always there, rarely heeded, is what you always have been, always will be. Cannot *not* be. You can't look for it, because it *is* what is looking. It is like space, you can't see it but everything is *in* it. Everything *is* it. So I say to you, 'be aware when you are unaware' let its presence warm you, fill you. Be present in the Presence." He smiles the serene smile. How could I not believe him? It's okay. It's really O.K.

### **Dissolving the 'I' sense by Nisargadatta Maharaj**

"You must deal with the 'I'-sense if you want to be free of it. Watch it in operation and at peace, how it starts and when it ceases, what it wants and how it gets it, till you see clearly and understand fully. After all, all the Yogas, whatever their source and character, have only one aim: to save you from the calamity of separate existence, of being a meaningless dot in a vast and beautiful picture.

You suffer because you have alienated yourself from reality and now you seek an escape from this alienation. You cannot escape from your own obsessions. You can only cease nursing them.

It is because the 'I am' is false that it wants to continue. Reality need not continue—knowing itself indestructible, it is indifferent to the destruction of forms and expressions. To strengthen, and stabilize the 'I am' we do all sorts of things—all in vain, for the 'I am' is being rebuilt from moment to moment. It is unceasing work and the only radical solution is to dissolve the separative sense of 'I am such-and-such person' once and for good. Being remains, but not self-being." *Nisargadatta Maharaj*

### ***Alan Mann questioning the Nisargadatta conclusion.***

He says: Being remains, but not self-being, I equate his term self being with human being. Self being seems to remain albeit as a virtual self, but not as first person primary identification, it is now seen as the person in the mirror, as others see the person, as how I think of myself, as third person. It is relocated rather than obliterated—is it not?

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## **On Essence/Nonduality from Garry Booth**

Encouraged by Garry's (Garry Jackson) talk last Saturday on Sri Ramana Maharshi and Non duality , plus my own personal interest in this subject over last few years, I cobbled together some quotes or pointers from mystics and sages throughout the ages which I would like to share, see below. Although only words/ concepts/maps , not the actual "territory", they do resonate . Surprisingly, as late as last year I discovered that "Non-duality" or "esoteric spirituality" is at the core of all the major religions and at the core of indigenous spirituality and ancient mythology and now this treasure trove of knowledge has great meaning for me. With such a record, longevity and credibility I believe this must be the essence of spirituality and very close to the "truth", if not the truth - and for years I have been looking for the essence.

Inspired by Joseph Campbell's lifetime work on ancient and indigenous mythology, I can now imagine that this "truth" evolved in virtually all the cultures he studied throughout the world, even if the cultures had not intermingled . One can only surmise that the transition from animal to human - to self awareness - the mythical "Fall " – was the same catalyst and path for all early people to recall the truth, after all, they hadn't travelled so far from the truth. Early records suggest that our ancient forebear farmers reminisced about a "Golden Age" and a "Garden of Eden" and so the separation from "what is" spawned some wonderful ancient mythology pointing to "suchness of being" then hijacked by the ego leading to a plethora of dogmatic religious beliefs and alas the truth was lost. "Dis-ease" followed. Early Christians even talked about "Heaven on Earth" and I now know what they mean. Nonduality. Heaven is in our head.

Recently it occurred to me how a day can be viewed as a microcosm of a lifetime as many poets have done over the centuries . The fresh, innocent and energetic morning , the rather tired middle of day , the mellow afternoon leading to a wonderful sunset and a totally relaxed evening. It's almost like we "die" every night to be "reborn" in the morning, a cycle within a cycle. The outward journey and the homecoming

Which reminds me of the saying , "as in the macrocosm so in the microcosm" , and beautifully reflected in William Blake's enigmatic poem - "to see a World in a grain of sand ..... " From a scientific viewpoint all life is made of the same stuff as the planet and the cosmos and human beings have the biochemistry, microbiology and genetics that are proof our symbiotic evolution. Our DNA encodes our history from the 1<sup>st</sup> bacteria to human being - and also encodes our future . In the same vein every embryo develops through each of our previous animal stage incarnations as do our brains which contain reptilian, mammalian and neo cortex/human parts . Not to mention our incredible senses mapping the world out there, in here - as K said "the observer is the observed." Or the interconnectedness of quark, atom , cell, solar system , galaxy, cosmos - all suspended in timeless eternal cosmic consciousness and brought into being within our consciousness /awareness – in the present.

Every young baby is at one with the "truth" until conditioned otherwise. Every embryo over a 9 month gestation mimics our billion year evolution from fish, reptilian,

mammalian to human within the womb , and then in infancy, standing upright between 6-12 months mimicking our 1<sup>st</sup> cousins 1<sup>st</sup> step of several millions of years ago.

As Campbell said our life is one of Exile and Return—lost and found— the homecoming. Sorry I'm rambling on a bit, so here are the quotes:

“ When we stop regarding the unreal as real then reality alone will remain, and we will be that” ( ....can't find author )

“ With every increase in negation regarding God you come nearer to the apprehension of God” ....Rabbi Maimonides

“ God is being itself” ....

“ God is a verb” ....Rabbi David Cooper

“ The starting point is the path , the path is the goal, and the goal is the starting point”.

“ That which is extinguished “never was” and that which remains “never was not”

“ It's not a matter of belief but the death of the believer “ ... ..Ken Wilber

“ The flower does not *have* meaning, it is meaning” ....Alan Watts

“ Words and concepts have meaning only because they point to something other than themselves” .... Alan Watts

“ Meaning is found in being, nowhere else” .... John Greer

“ Those things hidden from the wise and learned have been revealed to the little children” ....Jesus

“ Why are you unhappy? Because 99.9% of everything you think and everything you do, is for yourself - and there isn't one”... Wei Wu Wei

“ Darkness is your candle” ...Rumi

“ We are all nobody going nowhere” ..... Ayya Khema”

“ It's not a matter of some individual doing some thing ; everything does everything” .... John Greer

“ You are life loving itself”

“ Look within thou art Buddha” .....Buddha

“ I am the true self in the heart of every creature” .....Krishna

“ The kingdom of God is within you” ..... Jesus

“ What you look for has already come” .....Jesus

“ The kingdom of the father is already spread out on the earth but you do not see it” .....Jesus

“ Be still and know I am God” .....Jesus

“ The entrance door to the sanctuary is inside you” .....Rumi

“ Don’t follow the advice of others, rather learn to listen to the voice within yourself” ..... Dogen

“ The eye through which I see God is the same eye through which God sees me” .....Meister Eckhart

“ And whose selflessness has qualified them to know the spiritual Ground of all being by direct acquaintance” ....Aldous Huxley

“ Our inmost ‘I’ is the perfect image of God” .....Thomas Merton

“ That which is extinguished *never was* while that which remains *never was not*” .....Ibn Arabi

“ Only the self knows the self” ..... Shankara

“ Nowhere to go and nothing to do” .....the boundaries fade and the illusion of ego is revealed..... to be what is”

“ God whose love and joy are present everywhere, can’t come and visit you unless you aren’t there” ..... AngelusSilesius

“ Man’s last and highest parting is when , for God’s sake he takes leave of God” ..... Meister Eckhart

“ God is a concept, and thus like self, incompatible with transcendence” .....John Greer

“ My amazement was amazed” .... Rumi *on transcendence*

“ Do not expect perfection....there is no perfection in transcendence” .....Nisargadatta *on transcendence*

“ There is no state of enlightened retirement, no experience of awakening that places us outside the truth of change” ...Jack Kornfield

“ All spiritual life exists in an alteration of gain and loss., pleasure and pain” .....Jack Kornfield

“ I am all orders of being, the circling galaxy, the evolutionary intelligence, the lift and falling away” .....Rumi

“ I am He whom I love and he whom I love is I” .... Mansur al-Hallaj ( and sadly was executed for saying so)

“ In this breaking through I find that God and I are both the same” .....Meister Eckhart ( and almost executed for saying so)

“ True enlightenment is the realisation not that there is a Tao to follow, but we ourselves are the Tao” ....Deng Ming-Dao

“ Remember it is only in the absence of self that our eyes open to the breathtaking truth we so keenly yearn for”

“ There is no pre-existing reality out there independent of the observer” .....John Greer

Namaste ,

*Garry Booth*

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### **The Individuation of God by Peter B. Todd from Alan Mann**

This is a personal response rather than an attempt to review what I found to be a particularly relevant contribution to the God debate. The author proposes a contemporary theology to replace the outdated version of orthodox Christianity as promoted by such organizations as Moore Theological College, the Vatican the evangelical nonconformist enthusiasts such as the Pentecostal churches not to mention their equivalents in Islam and Judaism. The simplistic and completely outdated view of what God is or might be provides such an easy target for evangelical atheism and is long overdue for replacement by what the author calls a third-millennium theology.

Peter Todd draws on a number of scientists who acknowledge the numinous component of our existence and consider it to be fundamental. Of the scientists he mentions I am most familiar with David Bohm and have long felt that Bohm's notion of the implicate order, which he also expressed as the self organizing principles of the universe, to be what is intended by the word God. The discoveries associated with quantum theory seem to be pointing to a meeting between science and religion and to an understanding of the true meaning of the word mystical as experiential rather than mysterious.

The author's case relies heavily on Dawkins to represent what Todd and I consider to be a very limited view of reality. Todd uses Dawkins in the same way Dawkins uses the creationists and biblical literalists, as prime example of a view that ignores the facts—very neat counter. I respect Dawkins as a scientist and writer and I've enjoyed reading his books in which I find a undeniable sense of wonder at the beauty and complexity of existence and I'm perplexed as to why he does not see this sense of wonder as a meeting point between what he thinks is a strictly scientific position and what would be regarded as a religious apprehension of our being.

After finishing the book I read an interview with Simon Blackburn in *Philosophy Now* magazine in which Blackburn presents an eloquent and reasoned argument for the non- existence of God. I found I could walk with him through every step of his argument. However, at the end of the interview I would like to have said to him “I agree with everything you have said, but now what about God?” And by that I mean I

agree that the God you have disposed of does not exist but what about the God that has evolved out of those early stirrings? How can I possibly hold these twin perspectives? The answer of course lies in what we mean by the word God and there is much to be said for dumping a word which has been so comprehensively demeaned by fundamentalism in all faiths.

What is the perspective that is open to the divine? The book handles this issue very comprehensively and I hunted for an example. Here is an extract which follows a marvelous quotation from Einstein:

Einstein's intuition seems to have been that both science and religion have a common ontological root, one which is not spatiotemporally bound. Perhaps, as I have discussed, this can be construed as Bohm's implicate order, the primordial, timeless archetypal cosmic ordering and regulating principles proposed by Pauli and Jung, or Pribram's holoflux transcending spacetime. The person who receives mystical enlightenment into the nature of things encodes such experiences in the form of either science or religion, which can in turn be construed as standing in a relationship of complementarity to one another rather than a relationship of mutual opposition and hostility as skeptics continue to argue in their one-sided devotion to materialism and chance. Page 150

Peter Todd provides compelling arguments for the experiential recognition of the sacred and how this innate sense of connection is now finding some correspondence in science.

One of the interesting suggestions in the Todd book was the comparison of the anthropomorphic God with the transitional objects of childhood; God, as commonly understood, a naïve, transitional state mistakenly assumed to be the final rather than an interim grasp on an unfolding revelation.

I had some difficulty with the title, *The Individuation of God*. The theology he proposes is a comprehensive and universal wholeness. The word individuation implies the development or coming together of a specific combination of conditions distinguishing the 'individuated' from its collective context, from all else, whereas his argument seems to be drawing our attention to a mindful wholeness and inseparable totality—an undivided allness rather than a refined some-thing. I couldn't see how God could possibly be individuated in that way. Then I reread his introduction which defines individuation as *...integration of the God archetype and timeless dimensions of the Self into conscious awareness*. So I take that as another way of saying we need a more meaningful understanding and definition of an unfolding, evolving God and that is what this book provides. In an ABC interview with Rachel Kohn Peter Todd explained the individuation of God as co-dependent with the individuation of man.

This hasty note does not do justice to a fine book which I will have to read again. I found it invaluable in making plain what the word God is pointing to or should be

pointing to. In the meantime we could do worse than see that what our regular contributor Greg Campbell is asserting when he tells us “there is only God”.

*Alan Mann*

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