

Issue 152—January 2011

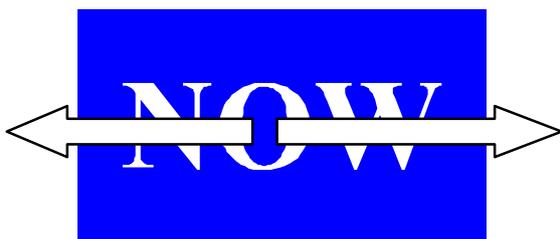
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Next Harding Meeting—Sunday 6 February 2011

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I have abandoned the practice of including a copy of the NOWletter with the email notification. I am filing it as a PDF document on the NOWletter archive page together with links to past copies, For more direct access and easy onscreen reading it is available on www.traherne.org. Thanks to this month's contributors and apologies to contributors who sent in material which does not appear here but which I plan to include in a later edition. Alan

The NOWletter appears between 8 and 12 times every year and is a vehicle for news and views about awakening to what is really going on. The content is based primarily on contributions from readers, either their own writing or examples of what moves or interests them. Subscription is free. Index of articles and back numbers from 1993 at:

<http://www.capacity.org/now/archive.htm>

The most recent HTML versions at www.traherne.org

I lifted this recent poem by Jim Clatfelter from the Look for Yourself email conference. The poem is followed by Jim's comments in reply to responses to his poem from participants in the conference.

A Brief History of Zen

All of a sudden
All fell into place
When Hui Neng saw
His original face

Centuries later
And out of the blue
Ernst Mach drew its likeness
One honest and true

Then Douglas E Harding
With minimal fuss
Revealed its location
To each one of us

The saga is over
And history's done
Now we can see
This original one

Hello Friends,

I'm glad you liked the brief history. Here's how I think about the four stanzas.

1. Hui Neng came up with the Original Face koan. That's all I care about him for this brief history. Here's my opinion. The idea that he was the Sixth Patriarch in a line from Bodhidharma who was also in a line back to the Buddha is just a part of the story the southern school of Chan and the Rinzai school of Zen tells about itself. I say forget all that. Hui Neng was an original. He was a Daoist, not a Buddhist.
2. Ernst Mach's first-person drawing is what revealed headlessness (the original face) to Douglas.
3. Douglas is obviously our link to this insight.
4. This is a nod to George Schloss and his idea that history had reached its end with the experiments Douglas shared with us. At last the vision

became available to each and every one of us. With the experiments, it's no longer about words. It's about seeing.

That's the essential history to me. It may be fanciful, but so are the stories the various schools of Zen tell about themselves. This is the one I fancy for myself.

Jim Clatfelter

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Letters to Carl by George Schloss

This is the second of the letter I am serializing in the NOWletter. All the letters are archived at the link below where individual letters or the complete volumes can be downloaded as PDF files. Hardcopies of the books from LULU.

<http://www.capacity.org/schloss/articles.htm>

Letter 2 – February 20, 2004 As agreed an attempt to get some of the material we've been talking about down on paper if only for the record. Speaking for myself (and, it goes without saying, for my Self as well) I'm delighted we've finally achieved a position—literally *the* position—to confirm what's oft been sought and thought and sometimes even taught, but was ne'er so well expressed till now, at least in language—certainly not in a word, even the Word. I refer, of course, to the claims of Seeing: how, no longer under house-arrest in heaven, God or a reasonable facsimile thereof has actually been spotted going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it in the company of, of all people, the devil (i.e. *deus* diminutive, *devilus*, the little one), a joint undertaking designed to blow both their covers to hell and so reveal via the saving grace of two-way looking exactly who they, that is, we are.

That being the case, I suggest we cut right to the chase and, by-passing the party of the first part, the experience, as being at once no-thing if not Self-evident and at the same time no-thing *and* Self-evident, head straight for the party of the second, the meaning of it all which in our so-called peoplehood is, like the proof of the pudding that lies only in the eating, not so simply and immediately recognizable. As Douglas puts it so succinctly on page 224 of the Hierarchy , “To realize this instantaneous Now, to live in the present moment, *taking no thought for to-morrow* or yesterday must be my first concern. And my second must be to find in this Now all my to-morrows and yesterdays.” If, as in the first instance, the experiments are, properly speaking, beyond discussion, then, on the principle that nature hates a vacuum but adores a void, mightn't it follow that the second will attempt to fill the gap if only by default? And so we have the spectacle of the exact Science of the 1st Person, the mode of our deliverance, extending its sheltering arms to its kissing

cousin, 1st Person History, the mode of its delivery, and by this act of all-encompassing inclusion reconciling the proof that pre-eminently goes without saying to the truth whose very life depends on it. But isn't that altogether the story of Headlessness, this marriage of opposites, of silence and speech, space and time, perception and conception, certainty and opinion, sacred and profane, providence and predestination, making in all One? And if all this seems a little too abstruse at the moment and too compressed for instant digestion, rest assured that like the patient British on their weather—"If you don't like it, wait a minute"—all will come clear, I dare say not only in time but in eternity too.

An example. You may have noticed I've taken the liberty of italicizing, in the Douglas quote above, the *no thought* in "*taking no thought for tomorrow*" and the *find* in "*my second must be to find in this Now*," the one, *pace* squirrels and beavers, in seeming contradiction to the other yet each, when you think of it—and being who we are how can we not?—doing what, in its own way, comes naturally. For if, in our fear of self-flattery, we didn't know better, which is too bad, we might almost be convinced it's the not-yet in hot pursuit of the Given, the already-here, that catches up with itSelf instead of the other way round, that in reality it's the hound of heaven who, its tongue hanging out, finally hits bottom and, rolling over, plays dead for the sake of its opposite number. That's assuming a zero can be said to have an opposite number. At any rate, like the proverbial flea-bitten mutt running around in circles only to end up its own you-know-what, thereby hangs a tale which, variously described as a Decline and Fall or the Death of God or the End of an Era if not an Age or even an Aeon or, God help us, even a World—all true incidentally—we're now equipped, thanks to the experiments, to classify quite simply as the end of history, this last, though a "consummation devoutly to be wished," not to be confused with its termination.

Concerning which, little did I dream over sixty years ago, long before I was entitled to dream, no less recognize, that dreams come true—that, indeed, that's what they're there for—when, along with *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, I discovered in Joyce's correspondence what, in effect, was to become his motto and mine if only by right of association: "History is a nightmare from which I'm trying to awaken"—little did I dream it was precisely *the* nightmare, the hell and chaos of modernity and all it entailed that was to provide the necessary catalyst to shock us into recognition, to wake us up and force us or at least me, when all else failed, to turn and look the other way. So let that be our watchword, the guiding light to what we do see revealed when we finally wake from sleep. *George*

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What is Love from Ignatius Udunuwara

(Philosophy Now magazine has introduced a monthly theme and asks readers to write in with a contribution on the subject of the month. The October/November theme was “What is Love?” There were eight responses and as I read I found them rather predictable in not getting to the heart of the matter until I got to the last letter which I think really hits the target and most timely, as it relates to some of the other input to this issue of the NOWletter. I reproduce it here with the permission of the author. Ed.)

The English metaphysician F.H. Bradley, who for a short period in the early twentieth century was hailed as Britain’s greatest philosopher, showed us that fundamentally, love is an experience beyond self: love is the experience of the Absolute. Whatever is your life, whether you are a motor mechanic, a dentist, or an astronaut, says Bradley, love is what you experience when you become aware what you really are – when the subject and the object becomes one, whole and indivisible. That is a ‘real’ experience – every other experience is a mere ‘appearance’. What you believe is real experience is like watching a 3D movie. It caters to your senses, it can be either pleasure or pain, but it is never an experience of deepest truth, as love is. The problem is that none of us can remain in the present because we live in time, and time is constantly changing. When we learn to stand still, not at the level of the body, but at the level of the mind, and become aware that we are not what we thought we were, then love may manifest itself in experience and become absolute for a simple split second, or more. In Buddhism this is called ‘Enlightenment’; in Christianity, ‘Heaven’; and in our ordinary day-to-day life, ‘Happiness’. So love is happiness experienced at the level of the mind, devoid of time, when you become one with the Universe, without cares, worries, pain or pleasure. Don’t seek it, go after it or chase it, simply experience it – then you will ‘know’ what love is.

Ignatius Udunuwara, Univ. of New England, NSW

All the love letters at: http://www.philosophynow.org/issue81/What_Is_Love

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Blistered Feet, Blissful Mind from Mark Beardmore

Review of a recent book by Ajahn ‘Tim’ Thanuttaro: “Blistered Feet, Blissful Mind”, by Tim Price, 2010, Illustrations by Victor Lunn-Rockliffe. Published by Headhunter Books. www.headhunterbooks.co.uk

Website: <http://blisteredfeet-blissfulmind.net/>

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7esJsXd4Qg>

This is an insider account of what it is to be a practising Buddhist monk in a western setting. A ‘Man of Kent’(1) and a Californian take a ‘tudong’(2) pilgrimage around the countryside of southeast England, and on their way they have many adventures and encounters with Maya the lord of illusion. With just the requisite three robes and bowl, and a few luxuries like sandals

and a map, these two monks set out on their journey relying on nothing more than faith and human kindness. Eschewing money (Buddhists monks are forbidden to even touch it), they are none the less well supported, and their very vulnerability allows for incredible awakenings to occur with the people they meet, both for monks and laity alike.

The tudong practice itself is a Tai derivative of the thirteen austere dhutangha practices that the Buddha allowed his monks to use to shake off one's delusions(3), and is used to describe those who adhere closely to the monastic discipline.

The very same situations occur as have occurred over the same 2500 years that the tradition has been in existence, proving that life situations haven't changed that much despite the materialistic development of modern society. Like the Buddha's meeting a monk that led him to take up the renunciant life of a Bhikkhu, so too have many sangha members today taken up the life after meeting monks on tudong.

The stories are made up using real life events, with names and places changed for obvious reasons, and also to allow the teaching to flow from the Hartwood(4), the spiritual hub from which these experiences were based. It also allows the true beauty of the Middle way to shine through in all its pristine clarity, bringing both laughter and tears of joy in equal volume.

The profundity of this book is in its teaching through simile and practical example; while one could compare it to the Jataka tales, the stories and folk tales of wisdom based on the Buddha's previous lives found in the ancient Buddhist cannon, it goes much further in imparting a real taste of what the practice is aiming for and in this it truly is a very rare gem indeed. Indeed it mirrors the stories the Buddha himself used in his teachings to explain the Dhamma to an incalcitrant mind.

If you are interested in finding out about the true and modern practice of Buddhism and meditation you will not find a better book. Equals maybe, but none better.

Mark Beardmore

1. A 'Man of Kent' comes from the east of the river Medway and a 'Kentish Man' from the area to the west of the river. (p.78)
2. Buddhist term for walking supported only by alms. See Bhikkhu Amaro's 1984 "Tudong: the Long Road North": http://abhayagiri.ehclients.com/pdf/books/Tudong_web-version.pdf
3. While the Buddha emphasised the Middle Path and avoidance of ascetic extremes, these practices of hardship, abstinence and frugality were allowed.
4. The 'fictional' name of the actual Buddhist centre in southern England.

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Making A Good Impression by Douglas Harding

(This December 1970 article was recently added to the www.headless.org website by Richard Lang)

Nowadays one hears so much about the need to become fully aware of how one strikes other people, and one even meets groups deliberately practising the art of self-presentation or projection. In my own experience, however, the need is all the other way round, and concern about self-projection is our main trouble.

Certainly as a child I had to learn how my behaviour looked to others, and how it required constant adjustments in the light of their reactions. Even more certainly, I had to discover that whereas, for myself as 1st person, I wasn't so much in the world as the world was in me, this was not at all how the world viewed me. As 3rd person, I was very small and local and unimportant. Indeed my growing up was really my cutting down to size, my inevitable shrinkage from cosmic dimensions to merely human ones, as I learned slowly and painfully to see myself as others saw me – or as I feared or hoped they did. But the tragedy was that I learned this necessary lesson only too well, and by the time I approached manhood I had altogether lost sight of what it was like being myself here at home, unprojected from this Centre. I had become truly eccentric and Self-alienated, and this gave me hell. Agreeing with society that I was that little, solid, opaque, boxed-up thing they saw and nothing else, I virtually became my appearance at (say) 6 feet; and What this was an appearance of, at 0 feet, the central Reality from which my myriad appearances stem, I was determined to overlook. I was sick, with a sickness that is all the more serious because it is practically universal, and all the more insidious because it is practically un-noticed.

When I don't see What I really am here to myself, I inevitably waste much time imagining how I appear to be over there to others, what they are making of me, how I'm going over, the face I'm presenting to them. And my self-concern, my lack of genuine interest in them, my anxiety to make a favourable impression, are enough to ruin that impression. Moreover my behaviour follows suit: my reactions grow bungling and nervy, and the self I present is worsened further. I'm very aware that I'm projecting badly. The whole enterprise is miserably self-defeating.

But when I do see What I really am here to myself, I find myself ceasing to care how I look over there. All that interests me now is what I actually find instead of what I imagine: I take myself exactly as given – as mere capacity or empty room – and others exactly as given – as filling this room with their fascinating shapes and colours and movements and speech. Now my new-found attention to and enjoyment of these others, along with my lack of anxiety about myself, ensure that my responses shall be much more sensitive, swift, spontaneous, and (in the long run) appropriate. No doubt the others are

better served now, but how I'm going down with them is none of my business. My business is what impression they are making here, and upon Whom.

The problem of social relationships is solved by seeing Who I really am. Satisfactory projection goes on out there only when it's allowed to look after itself, and I look after its infinitely resourceful Source right here. Such is my own experience, and I doubt whether I'm exceptional.

Douglas Harding

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Vijnanabhairava & Kokoro from Alan Mann

With thanks to Graham Crosby

One of the benefits of the Capacitie website is that I meet interesting people who drop into the site to check up on some of the content because of their parallel interests. A good example of the Fellowship of the Mystery as Traherne describes this very loose and relatively small community. A recent visitor to the site, Graham Crosby, dropped in because of his interest in the writing of John Wren-Lewis and, as a consequence of hitting on the site, gained a bonus by way of an immediate grasp of what Douglas Harding is asking us to apprehend. Our subsequent cyber-meetings led to an exchange of CDs and reopened a subject which I reported in an article about a meeting I had with Wren-Lewis in NOWletter 144.

I had asked John about the suitability of the word 'source' to describe the wide-awake openness revealed by the (Harding) experiments as it seemed to be a step further than I had taken. I asked him to explain. I recorded his reply and sent him a copy to check whether I had understood his explanation:

You (JWL) said, in reply to my question, that you would respond from your professional position as a mathematical physicist. You suggested the best way to address the issue was to regard totality as a field in which matter, energy and the field all play a part. Your view about the nature of this mysterious field, which your profession is beginning to acknowledge in various ways, might be just as well described as consciousness as anything else. You base this on your own awakening to an understanding of your place in the Totality as a particular expression of that field in relationship to all other manifestations. Consequently, you experience all such manifestations as a vibrating energy**, be they coffee tables, books, visitors or whatever.

Furthermore this energized 'glow' of so-called objective reality is reciprocal, there is a two-way apprehension, a mutuality of seer and seen. You went on to explain that the orthodox scientific approach excludes an essential element, that of feeling. And that this is certainly the case with supporters of the epiphenomenon viewpoint.

You find that awareness of this universal movement of being is

accompanied by a feeling best described as love. In spite of the transcendence of what we normally regard as the personal, this wider apprehension of 'what is' somehow retains what can only be described as a personal flavour. This reminded me of a comment by Andrew Cohen to the effect that when we come upon the impersonal we find it to be the most personal of all, and you reminded me he is an old friend of yours! So, to my original question. I gather that you are perfectly happy to describe this awakeness as Origin and this is confirmed by references in your articles, e.g., this from Dan Sutura's interview: "The Dark," he says that you say, "is constantly there, producing everything at every moment, from the big bang to the final whimper. When you die, the Dark in you lives on." John likens the whole space-time universe to a theatre in which eternity is playing out the "time game."

**You told me later that you would not have used the words vibrating energy to describe your experiencing of the world. You said it was a much more gentle business, rather as though the world around is saying 'Hello' in an atmosphere of love.

I was very energized by this description and I had absolutely no doubt of its truth as it reflected the sense of a reciprocal exchange with objects and the environment which I had experienced in meditation and on occasions of spontaneous 'awakenings'. I told John that I would have been completely mystified by his explanation if I myself hadn't fallen, on a couple of occasions, into the actuality, which he described. I said I could not claim it to have been exactly same but the description of the reciprocal flow, a sense of the aliveness of things, combined with the feeling of love was unmistakable. I mentioned this to Graham Crosby who recognized this as something of which he was aware and commented as follows:

Thankyou for directing me to your meeting with John Wren-Lewis. It is delightful to hear about the direct experiences of a contemporary Western mystic. When he talked about the universe constantly saying hello to him and your bewilderment about what he was hinting at particularly grabbed my attention. I know this happened in 2004 and all may have been revealed by now but it sent me off to look for a book that has been collecting dust in my bookcase for a while now but used to be a constant companion.

The book is Vijnanabhairava (Divine Consciousness), an 8th century text from the Kashmir Saivite tradition of Northern India which was only translated into English and published as late as 1979. It contains 112 dharanas, or centering techniques, or experiments, that will lead to the experience of the highest consciousness, the thought free state.

Dharana 82 states: 'Knowledge, desire etc. do not appear only within me, they appear everywhere in jars, trees, and other objects. Contemplating this, one becomes all-pervasive.'

The explanatory notes that follow say: In this verse, *iccha* or desire has reference to action. This verse points out the fact that *jnana* and *kriya* are not the monopoly only of the human being. They are universal, that is, common to everything in the universe. This dharana suggests that if one contemplates over the fact of knowledge (*jnana*)

and *kriya* (desire) being common to every existent in the universe, he will acquire the consciousness of unity. Man usually thinks that there is nothing in common between him and a jar, or tree, but if he comes to realize that *jnana* and *kriya* are the common characteristics of all manifestation, (animate, or inanimate) that all are co-sharers of this divine gift, he will shed his insularity and feel his kinship with all.

The sage Somananda of this tradition then goes on to say: "The jar is one with myself at the time of my desire to know, and therefore knows as one with myself. I am one with the jar in knowing. It is *Siva* himself who abides knowing Himself through all the existents." (The universe saying hello?)

Perhaps this accounts for your affinity with tree trunks, and vases. I once had the a very close encounter with an apple.

As this exchange with Graham was going on I listened to a Philosopher's Zone programme on the ABC in which I heard reference to a Japanese version of this phenomena. Here is an extract which covers the reference to Kokoro.

Alan Saunders: Well, we've been talking about world views. I want to look now at the indigenous philosophy of Japan. In many ways, Shinto was overshadowed by Buddhist and Confucian thought, but around the 18th century, there was a revival with the development of native studies. The scholar Motoori Norinaga was the driving force behind his. Can you tell us a little about him and his thinking?

Thomas Kasulis: Yes. He was first of all religiously strongly Shinto, down to the point of he believed that his parents who didn't have a child had prayed every day at a Shinto shrine and out of that he was born and seeing his very birth as sort of an act of the kami, or the gods. But the thing about him, in terms of sort of his thinking, is that he was trained as a philologist and a great scholar of the earliest forms of Japanese literature, much of which had been written in a writing system that most Japanese, in fact 99% of Japanese could have no idea what it said. And he sort of decoded this ancient language as a philologist and did remarkable work. But the reason he did this was, and this goes back to sort of his philosophical ideas, is that because he believed that language when it starts, is somehow this kind of conferring with reality, rather than referring to it. And if we could get at the original sense of what words meant, we could feel this kind of animistic immersion in what he called kokoro, a traditional Japanese word.

Kokoro is a kind of responsiveness that's built into everything. We are responsive, things are responsive, and even words are responsive. So that when we write a poem, it's somehow the coming together of my responsiveness, the subject matter's responsiveness, and the word's responsiveness. And this idea that became a basis for both his aesthetics and religious point of view, is that what we have to do is engage in this kind of responsive field, so that we can confer with and express reality with reality.

Alan Saunders: Well it sounds as though kokoro is not a word that lends itself to easy translation.

Thomas Kasulis: That's right. I mean the best I could do if I have to translate it, and I usually try not to, is to call it something like either a field of responsiveness, or from the personal standpoint of a person would be something like the mindful heart. So that there's the mist on the mountain, and you have to be aware of that mist, be mindful of it, and the mist is calling out to be expressed, and you have to be open to doing that, and then somehow the words come to you of their own.

The full transcript of the interview is available at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/philosopherszone/stories/2010/3017934.htm>

Thomas Kasulis is Professor of Comparative Studies at Ohio State University. He's the author of a number of books including Shinto - The Way Home and the forthcoming Engaging Japanese Philosophy.

I tend to look Eastwards for examples but the exchanges with Graham reminded me of the words Shakespeare put into the mouth of Duke Senior in *As You Like It*.

Duke S. 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 but 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 every thing.
 I would not change it.

WS

And here is David Bohm, in the famous interview with Rene Weber, putting forward another scientific proposal which is not unlike the Wren-Lewis version:

Bohm: Yes. So let me propose that also for consciousness: let me propose that consciousness is basically in the implicate order as all matter is and therefore it's not that consciousness is one thing and matter is another. Rather consciousness is a material process and consciousness is itself in the implicate order, as is all matter, and consciousness manifests in some explicate order, as does matter.

Weber: The difference between what we call matter and consciousness would be the state of density or subtlety?

Bohm: The state of subtlety. Consciousness is possibly a more subtle form of matter and movement, a more subtle aspect of the holomovement. In the non-manifests order there is no separation in space and time. In ordinary matter this is so and it's even more so for this subtle matter which is consciousness. Therefore, if we are separate it is because we are sticking largely to the manifest world as the basic reality where the whole point is to have separate units, relatively separate anyway, but interacting. In nonmanifest reality it's all interpenetrating, interconnected, one. So we say deep down the consciousness of mankind is one. This is a virtual certainty because even in the vacuum matter is one; and if we don't see this is because we are blinding ourselves to it.

Alan Mann

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The complete 'I AM' quotes. By Nisargadatta

This circular arrived from Robert Zandstra on 2 Jan 2011

Dear friends,

Thought you'd enjoy the complete set of 'I AM' quotes from Bombay sage Sri Nisargadatte Maharaj, in the form of an e-book. It is titled "I AM, The complete 'I am' quotes of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj", was prepared by Pradeep Apte and comprises 572 'I AM' quotes.

It's beautifully presented and supersedes "THE NISARGADATTA SONG OF 'I AM'", which was compiled by Jerry Katz (from nonduality.com)

This tidied-up presentation, also in pdf format, reduces the number of pages from the original 152 to 81 pages. Nisargadatta's instructions were not changed in any way.

Warm regards, Robert

<http://www.stillnessspeaks.com/images/uploaded/file/iamquotesofnisargadatta.pdf>

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Open letter to Wen Jiabao from Berry Dunston

Tenzin Tsundue, a Tibetan writer and activist based in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh wrote an open letter to the Chinese premier Wen Jiabao on his recent visit to India. I decided not to publish in full as I feel that whilst the

letter is worthy of consideration and well expressed , it crosses the line of what, and what not, this publication is meant to be about and I could so easily be drawn into the many noble causes already widely covered in the media and on the internet. The letter can be read on a number of websites, e.g.,

<http://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/?p=5826>

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/specials/coverage/jiabaovisit/An-open-letter-to-Wen-Jiabao-from-a-well-wisher/editorials/SP-Article10-638878.aspx>

So, by way of being the first to break this rule, I would like to express my admiration for the bravery of dissidents within China. The dangers they face is underlined by a catch phrase now sweeping the country “Sue me if you dare, my father is Li Gang”. This was said by the son of a police officer in Hebei alleged to have killed a student in a drink-driving accident. The father of the victim was ‘persuaded’ to withdraw charges.I know, I know “He who is without sin...etc”. (Reported in The Guardian)

Alan Mann

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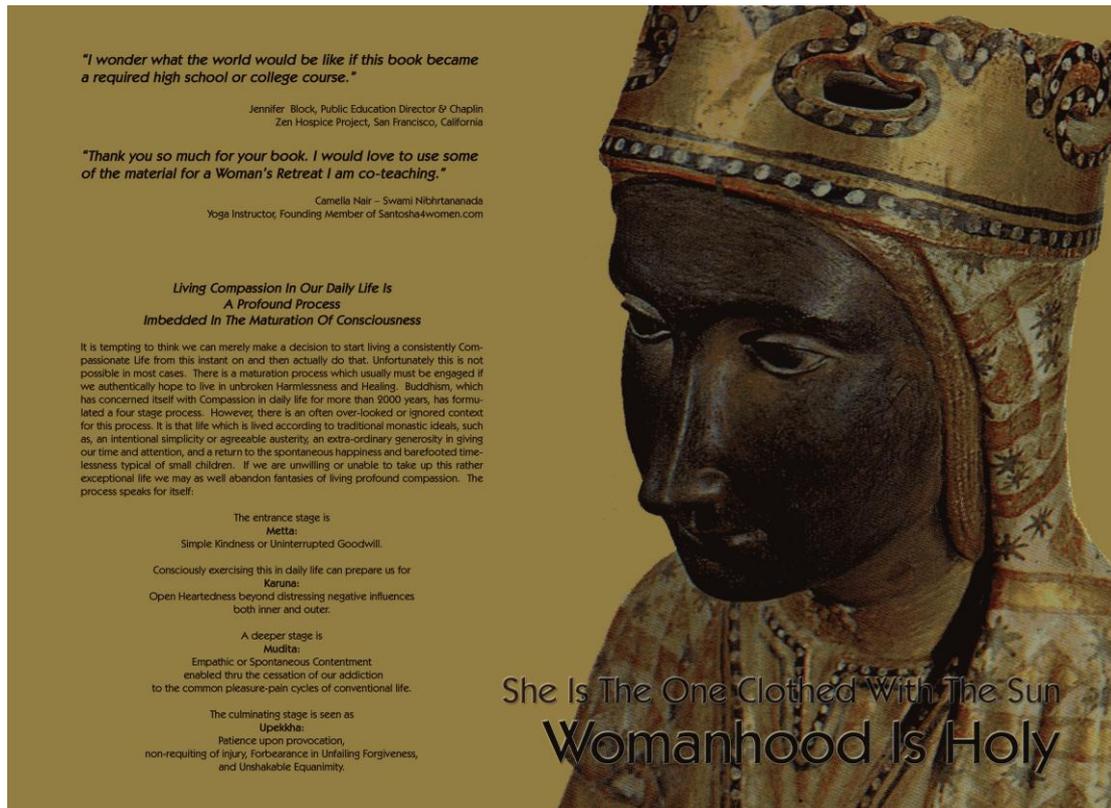
Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day

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. I knew not that they were born or should die; But all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day, and something infinite behind everything appeared which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The city seemed to stand in Eden, or to be built in Heaven. 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 spectator and enjoyer of it. I knew no churlish proprieties, nor bounds, nor divisions: but all proprieties* and divisions were mine: all treasures and the possessors of them. So that with much ado I was corrupted, and made to learn the dirty devices of this world. Which now I unlearn, and become, as it were, a little child again that I may enter into the Kingdom of God.

Traherne, Centuries 3/3

Traherne’s complete Centuries of Meditations is available as an iPod download for \$3.99 from the iTunes store.

Womanhood is Holy a new book by Greg Campbell



This is the cover of the latest book by Greg Campbell. Greg is a regular contributor as a result of selections of his poems I make from his earlier book *Living Barefoot Dying Consciously* or from emails he circulates to his friends, see sample below. The book is available in hard copy version from LULU for \$US7.78 plus postage or as a Free Download. He describes it as “A Condensed Occasionally Poetic Exploration of The Divinity of Humanity In a Stuttering Attempt to Reveal The Ultimate Truth of Women, Children, and Men”.

<http://www.lulu.com/product/file-download/womanhood-is-holy/13011096>

**I've had it with
the Fundamentalist Muslims and the Fundamentalist Christians and the
Fundamentalist Buddhists
getting in my face and claiming
their Way is the Only True Way.**

**You know why I say their way is
clearly not
the True Way ?**

**Very simple -
I look at the way
they treat their
Women.**

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Investigation/Inquiry from Colin Drake

Observing than Thinking.

Investigation/Inquiry = more: Noticing than Wondering

Experiment than Opinion

A critic recently said that they had ‘realized’ the deeper level of awareness but that this had caused no real change in their anxiety levels. This is because this ‘realization’ was intellectual rather than experiential, or because this had not been ‘cultivated’ by repeated investigation/inquiry. Realization can be the outcome of investigating the nature of experience, resulting from observing, or noticing, that thoughts/mental images/sensations are ephemeral objects which come and go within awareness, which is the constant conscious subjective presence. It is easy to notice this by just taking a few moments sitting quietly and experiencing that this is the case; by watching how these thoughts/mental images/sensations come and go, and appear in awareness which is already, and always, present. The logical outcome of this is that this unchanging presence is what we are, at the deepest level, within which our experiences of our mind/bodies (the flow of thoughts/mental images/sensations) come and go, appear and disappear, arise and subside.

This is also easy to notice, for when there is no thought/mental image there is no (experience of the) mind, and when there is no physical sensation there is no experience of the body. However awareness is always present, ready, as it were, to ‘see’ any thought/mental image/sensation that may arise. This realization requires observation, or noticing, more than thinking or wondering. Although wondering is a useful first step to initiate the investigation, and thinking may be a useful tool to draw conclusions about what has been discovered. Once this discovery has been made then one can devise ‘experiments’ to investigate this awareness in an attempt to uncover its ‘properties’. For example raise a thought, such as ‘Om Namah Shivaya’, and then check out the awareness of this thought:

1/ Observe whether any effort is required to be aware of any thought/mental image/sensation.

This readily reveals that this awareness is effortlessly present and effortlessly aware... It requires no effort by the mind/body and they cannot make it vanish however much effort they apply.

2/ Observe whether there is any choice in becoming aware of thoughts/mental images/sensations. This also reveals that this awareness is

choicelessly present and choicelessly aware. Once again it requires no choice of the body/mind and they cannot block it however they try. i.e. If you have a toothache there is effortless awareness of it and the mind/body cannot choose for this not to be the case. You may think that this is bad news but that is not the case, can you imagine if you had to make a choice whether you would like to be aware for every sensation that the body experiences! In fact be grateful that there is no effort or choice involved for awareness just to be...such ease and simplicity...which is not surprising for you are this awareness!

3/ Observe whether you can ever experience a time or place when awareness is not present. Even during sleep there is awareness of dreams, the quality of the sleep, and bodily sensations, in that if a noise is loud enough or a feeling (of pain or discomfort for instance) is strong enough it will bring the mind back to the conscious state, i.e. One will wake up... The natural conclusion to this is that for each of us awareness is omnipresent, i.e. always present. Once again be grateful that the mind/body is never required to search for this awareness, it is just always there, which of course is not surprising for one is this awareness.

4/ Next notice that this awareness is absolutely still for it is aware of the slightest movement of body or mind. For example we all know that to be completely 'aware' of what is going on around us in a busy environment we have to be completely still, just witnessing the activity.

5/ In the same vein this awareness can be 'seen' to be totally silent as it is aware of the slightest sound, the smallest thought. The natural conclusion to be drawn is that awareness is always in a state of perfect peace for complete stillness and total silence is perfect peace.

6/ Notice that awareness is omniscient, in that every thought/mental image/sensation appears in it, exists in it, is known by it, and disappears back into it. Before any particular thought or sensation there is effortless awareness of 'what is' (the sum of all thoughts and sensations occurring at any given instant), during the thought or sensation in question there is effortless awareness of it within 'what is', and then when it has gone there is still effortless awareness of 'what is'.

7/ Finally notice that every thought/mental image/sensation is 'seen' by the 'light' of awareness, i.e. awareness is radiant.

So now we have reached the 'Radiant, still, silent, omnipresent, omniscient, ocean of effortless, choiceless, awareness' (the Absolute without form or attributes) which, at the deepest level, we all are! Give up all striving, seeking and desiring, and just identify with This which you already are... Identification with This, rather than with body/mind (thought/mental images/sensations), gives instant peace for awareness is always 'still and silent' totally unaffected by whatever appears in it.

The point is that realization requires observation/experience rather than purely intellectual recognition. It's like the difference between seeing, smelling, feeling, bathing in and tasting the ocean, and reading about it in a book. Then it truly is a case of 'seeing is believing' which may lead to an 'opinion' which will be grounded in one's own discoveries. When it comes to

reality the only knowledge that is valid is that which is revealed to each one of us by direct experience and the easiest way for this direct experience to occur is by inquiring into the nature of experience itself.

Also the effect of 'awakening' to the reality of the deeper level of pure awareness will dissipate if one 'nods off' again and re-identifies with the mind/body. So one needs to continually inquire into, investigate and contemplate the nature of Self and Reality until this 'awakening' becomes established. It is only in this established awakening that all existential anxiety is banished.

My book *Beyond the Separate Self* aims to provide a framework in which this inquiry may be successfully undertaken. It may be sampled, and purchased, at www.nonduality.com .

Colin Drake

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The Master and his Emissary from Alan Mann

I read this book over a period of two months. It is far too comprehensive a work for me to try to review, not to mention the question of whether I'm qualified for such an enterprise. I have lifted the author's introductory comments from a website set up for that purpose and attached after my notes.

In *The Master and His Emissary* Iain McGilchrist explores the reasons for, and the evolutionary benefits and drawbacks of, our split brain, why the split? I thought it a very fine effort, comparable in scale of purpose to Gebser's *Ever Present Origin* which Dave Knowles gave me to read as an assignment some years ago. The title of the book, *The Master and His Emissary*, is drawn from a parable which the author attributes to Nietzsche although I'm almost certain I've also heard it referred to in Indian and Sufi writings. The Master, unable to cope effectively with the day-to-day operation of his domains appoints an emissary to go out and get the detailed operations under control. This the emissary duly does and with such efficiency and minimal interference from HQ that he completely forgets the boss and assumes he is in command.

Thus we have the Master as the brain's broad- brush, big picture, contextual right hemisphere and the emissary representing the grasping, detail loving, explanatory, analytical operation of the left hemisphere. We in the West, in particular, have become victims of our left brain success, the emissary has usurped the master with implications at both the general and personal levels.

McGilchrist is careful not to deny the need for both hemispheres and, in fact, quotes the Jill Bolte-Taylor story to show that left hemisphere shutdown can result in blissful identification with wholeness at the expense of speech and

the ability to recognise and relate to one another. A balanced integration is his theme and the overweighting of the left brain is a present, cultural problem for us. Unlike Gebser he doesn't seem to offer any means of restoring the balance other than to become aware of imbalance. I found in all this an interesting parallel with the work of Douglas Harding which provides the means of enjoying both first and third person perspectives by means of experiments which give us an opportunity to experience both the perspective of the 'master' and that of the 'emissary' and thereby set the scene for the integration McGilchrist argues is necessary.

That, in four paragraphs, is my take on the book, here now is the author and a couple of the links I found most useful amongst the wealth of web data available.

A brief description of The Master and his Emissary by the author. http://www.iainmcgilchrist.com/brief_description.asp

(Details of how to get a copy are also at this address. I ordered mine from the book depository at <http://www.bookdepository.co.uk> Ed.)

This book argues that the division of the brain into two hemispheres is essential to human existence, making possible incompatible versions of the world, with quite different priorities and values.

Most scientists long ago abandoned the attempt to understand why nature has so carefully segregated the hemispheres, or how to make coherent the large, and expanding, body of evidence about their differences. In fact to talk about the topic is to invite dismissal. Yet no one who knows anything about the area would dispute for an instant that there are significant differences: it's just that no-one seems to know why. And we now know that every type of function - including reason, emotion, language and imagery - is subserved not by one hemisphere alone, but by both.

This book argues that the differences lie not, as has been supposed, in the 'what' - which skills each hemisphere possesses - but in the 'how', the way in which each uses them, and to what end. But, like the brain itself, the relationship between the hemispheres is not symmetrical. The left hemisphere, though unaware of its dependence, could be thought of as an 'emissary' of the right hemisphere, valuable for taking on a role that the right hemisphere - the 'Master' - cannot itself afford to undertake. However it turns out that the emissary has his own will, and secretly believes himself to be superior to the Master. And he has the means to betray him. What he doesn't realize is that in doing so he will also betray himself.

The book begins by looking at the structure and function of the brain, and at the differences between the hemispheres, not only in attention and flexibility, but in attitudes to the implicit, the unique, and the personal, as well as the body, time, depth, music, metaphor, empathy, morality, certainty and the self. It suggests that the drive to language was not principally to do with communication or thought, but manipulation, the main aim of the left hemisphere, which manipulates the right hand. It shows the hemispheres as

no mere machines with functions, but underwriting whole, self-consistent, versions of the world. Through an examination of Western philosophy, art and literature, it reveals the uneasy relationship of the hemispheres being played out in the history of ideas, from ancient times until the present. It ends by suggesting that we may be about to witness the final triumph of the left hemisphere – at the expense of us all.

End of Iain McGilchrist's introductory note.

I heard about the book in the ABC programme All in the Mind Podcast at :
http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2010/06/aim_20100619.mp3

Transcript at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/allinthemind/stories/2010/2928822.htm>

There is a lot about the book on the web I thought a review for the Guardian by by Mary Midgley was the review I would like to have written myself:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2010/jan/02/1>

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