

# BESHARA

ISSUE 2

SUMMER 1987

RUPERT SHELDRAKE	The Presence of the Past – Part 2
ABRAHAM ABADI	A Consideration of Anthropocentrism
RICHARD WADDINGTON	An Intimation of Beauty
ADAM DUPRÉ	The Meaning of Esoteric Education

£1.25  
\$2.50  
A\$4.00

# BESHARA

The Magazine of the Beshara Trust

Issue 2 Summer 1987

## CONTENTS

### News and Views

#### Our Common Future

The Other Economic Summit covers the Brundtland Report 2

#### Ecumenical Prayer

Peter Young on an Inter-Faith meeting on prayer 3

#### Philosophy and Science

A report on a lecture series in Oxford 3

#### The Visit of the Panchen Lama

5

#### Classifying Religious Experience

Martin Notcutt on the Alister Hardy Research Centre for Religious Experience 6

### Articles

Abraham Abadi – A Consideration of Anthropocentrism 7

Rupert Sheldrake – The Presence of the Past 11

Richard Twinch – Perception and the Mind 17

Richard Waddington – An Intimation of Beauty 19

Adam Dupré – The Meaning of Esoteric Education 21

### Reviews

Ted Pawloff on *The Living Economy* 23

Jane Clark on *Dialogues with Scientists and Sages* 26

Christopher Ryan on the film *Thérèse* and an exhibition of Greek frescoes and icons 27

### The Beshara Trust

What is the Difference? A Reaffirmation 30

The Beshara Trust Autumn Seminars 31

BESHARA is produced by the Beshara Trust, a registered educational charity No.263330. It was typeset using an Apple Macintosh computer and Laserwriter, produced by Designers and Partners of Oxford and printed by the Beshara Press.

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## EDITORIAL

Firstly, we would like to thank all those who have contacted us since the first issue of BESHARA appeared to express appreciation or to make comment. We welcome feed-back and hope that all our readers feel able to respond in this way.

In this issue, in addition to considering new ideas in the sciences and within the major religions, we also take a look at some of the new movements within economics. In future issues we hope to cover other aspects of the very great changes taking place in the world's financial structures – the implications, for instance, of the 'big bang' on the London Stock Exchange.

In his article beginning on page 21, Adam Dupré relates the story of the man who floated a rose on a glass of water, so signifying that "*he would displace no-one and nothing, but simply brought an added dimension to what was already there*". It is hard to think of a better description of the intentions of BESHARA in covering a diversity of topics and ideas.

It is not the aim to condemn or condone particular views, or to enter into 'debate' between different theories, be they 'holistic' or 'reductionist' or whatever. Beshara is concerned with unity, and a unifying perspective which recognises all points of view as expressions of one truth. As such, they all indicate a single, essential reality – and our attention is accordingly directed towards "*depth, not exclusivity*".

This kind of tolerance of different beliefs does not lead to "*a blend of the different approaches which would destroy the unique flavour of each in a tasteless mess*", as Peter Young says on page 3 in his article on prayer. Nor does it imply an uninformed tolerance in which 'anything goes'. Unity carries its own order, and true discrimination resides in conforming to this – a task which requires that we understand our own place in the order, and acknowledge the ego-centricity which, as pointed out in several articles in this issue, is implicit in much of our modern (particularly scientific) thought.

Jane Clark

### BESHARA

EDITOR: Jane Clark. ASSISTANT EDITORS: Alison Yiangou, Cecilia Twinch. PRODUCTION: Sophie Dupré. ADVERTISING: Lesley Abadi, Emma Elliott. COVER DESIGN: Lesley Abadi after a painting by Mondrian.

ADDRESSES: Editorial and Advertising – 24 Sidney Street, Oxford OX4 3AG. Subscriptions – The Beshara Trust, Beshara Sherborne, Stable Block, Sherborne, Nr. Cheltenham, Glos GL54 3DZ.

SUBSCRIPTION information on Page 27

# News and Views

## Our Common Future The Brundtland Report

*“In the middle of the 20th century, we saw our planet from space for the first time. Historians may eventually find that this vision had a greater impact on thought than did the Copernican revolution of the 16th century, which upset the human self-image by revealing that the Earth is not the centre of the universe.”*

This is the remarkable opening of **Our Common Future**, a no less remarkable document, generally known as **The Brundtland Report**, which was the focus of a “Campaign Teach-In” on May 2nd at Regents College, London as part of TOES 1987.

**T**OES stands for **The Other Economic Summit** and was established in 1984 as, initially, a one-off response to the London Economic Summit of the seven richest Western nations held in June of that year. The motivation for staging an ‘alternative’ Summit came from a deep perception that the sort of economic policies likely to be advocated at the London Summit were totally inadequate to combat the multiple and growing economic crises now besetting human societies worldwide. More, it was felt that much of the very basis of economic theory had now ceased to be useful and that a profound rethink was called for.

TOES 1984 drew 170 people from 16 countries and was widely reported both in the UK and abroad. It generated much enthusiasm due to the fact that here, at last, was a serious, expert forum committed to developing a New Economics more in line with the reality of the late 20th century.

It was followed by TOES 1985, which was attended by some 450 people from all continents. TOES 1986 was a one-day conference at the London School of Economics, after which a delegation went to Tokyo, where they forged valuable links with academics and those active in new economic initiatives.

**T**his year, TOES has changed from being a single Rally and Conference to become a series of events, of which this rally was the first. Others include a

conference on Urban Renewal in June and a series of expert seminars.

The re-evaluation of the directions in which our culture is moving at every level – material, social, ecological and spiritual – and the interdependence of these levels, which is the concern of TOES, is dramatically underlined by the Brundtland Report itself.

From the UN Stockholm Conference in 1972 to the publication of the World Conservation Strategy in 1980, awareness of the increasingly desperate state of the world’s natural and human environment has slowly, but surely, been rising. It was the need to make a comprehensive assessment of the whole situation which promoted the United Nations to set up the World Commission on the Environment and Development (named *The Brundtland Commission* after its chairman, Mrs Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway and former Environment Minister) in 1984.

The publication of its Report, after three years of deliberations, public meetings on five continents and study of the best available scientific evidence, took place in April (“Our Common Future” (OUP, £5.95)) It proposes that the present situation results from the equation of welfare and economic development with indiscriminate growth and an unquestioning belief in centralism, technology and scale. The solution, it suggests, lies in adopting a policy

of **conservation and sustainable development** (the key words of this teach-in) and goes on to outline the sort of radical, yet feasible, strategies that will lead to this end. The underlying principle, as the opening remarks indicate, is that there is only one world and one humanity, and the need to act accordingly.

**O**ne of the most striking things about both the commission, and the work of TOES in general, is the diversity of the people and the organisations involved. The sponsoring organisations of this event, for instance, included Friends of the Earth, Oxfam, Quaker Peace and Service, the United Nations Association, the World Development Movement and the World Wildlife Fund – a diversity surpassed only by that of the participants.

What unites them is the clear realisation of the need for fundamental and sweeping change, and an understanding that this must involve not only outward actions but also a re-evaluation of underlying motivation. The diversity of approaches as well as the urgency of the need is expressed in the closing lines of the Overview to the report – a document, it must be remembered, arrived at by active politicians with ties to specific and diverging constituencies and interests: *“The members of the World Commission on Environment and Development came from 21 very different nations. In our discussions, we disagreed as often on details and priorities. But despite our widely differing backgrounds and varying national and international responsibilities, we were able to agree to the lines along which change must be drawn.*

*We are unanimous in our conviction that the security, well-being and very survival of the planet depend on such changes, now.”* ▲

## Ecumenical Prayer

### A Report on an Inter-Faith Meeting on Prayer

*Peter Young, Principal of the Beshara School of Intensive Esoteric Education at Chisholme House was recently invited to participate, representing Beshara, in an Inter-Faith meeting on prayer.*

The invitation to the Abbey, Sutton Courtenay to participate in an Inter-Faith meeting was from the Rt. Reverend Stephen Verney, retired Suffragan Bishop of Repton. He and Mr Peter Talbot Willcox, a Christian businessman also present at the meeting, had been actively involved in Inter-Faith dialogues for some fifteen years. Mr Willcox, feeling that it might be more beneficial to pray simply together, had raised the further question of whether it was possible for followers of different traditions to pray together, and if so, in what form. This was the matter to which the meeting was addressed.

Representing various traditions were: The Swami Bhavyananda, Abbott of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre; Santacitto, a Buddhist Monk from the Amaravata Monastery; and Rabbi Montague from the Reformed Synagogue in Cardiff. Professor Hassan Askari was unfortunately unable to attend.

There was complete agreement that there was no point in creating a blend of the

different approaches to prayer, which would destroy the unique flavour and beauty of each in a tasteless mess. Neither should common ground be manufactured by isolating those factors which each of the different traditions had in common. Rather, the 'basis' or 'ground', real and universal, was there for the recognition in the existence of the One who is worshipped by all peoples everywhere. The real ecumenism is God's own. In Him alone is the real integration of beliefs and ways of prayer. The meeting had begun with a reading of St. Paul's Hymn to Love, and it was to Love's arena that the dialogue now turned as being both the source and point of purpose of prayer. It was in Love and for Love that prayer together found its meaning as a multi-faceted theophany of Beauty Itself.

Concerning the form that such prayer might take, it was agreed, in the words of Meister Eckhardt, that "When I pray for something, I do not pray" and that the best prayer was that which was an intimate dialogue with the One. Thus, if prayer was intimate dialogue, was our present

discussion not a form of prayer, since such a discussion had as its aim the same intent as prayer itself? The meaning of prayer had overflowed notional confines to engulf our present dialogue, and to appear as an infinite, all-pervading Act.

As the indispensable basis for such active prayer, it was deemed necessary that a time be set aside for silent prayer together. This we did, prior to which each representative showed and explained whatever object relating to his particular tradition he had brought with him. It was my privilege, representing no other than the tradition of Love, to have taken a copy of the **Fusus al-Hikam** by Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi. The title, the 'Bezels of Wisdom' was an allusion singularly apposite to the occasion. Because in the Reality which is the aim of the religions and yet Itself beyond religion is the Light which illuminates the multifarious facets. Here is the movement of the prayer, from Him in the existentiating Light of consciousness and to Him in the perfect reflection of existentiating luminescence.

Finally it was agreed that this meeting be the first of a series and that we should meet again in six months. ▲

## Philosophy and Science

### A report on a lecture series in Oxford

An interesting addition to the general debate on the relevance of science took place in Oxford during the winter months, with a series of lectures entitled "Philosophy and the New Physics", organised by Dr. Michael Lockwood under the auspices of the External Studies Department of the University.

The idea behind this series was that, whilst philosophy, since the turn of the century, has moved away from an essential concern

with the real issues of existence and occupied itself with the analysis of language, physics has found itself calling into question the classical notions of time, space and matter and the nature of the universe. It presents to humanity in the present day a real challenge, which asks us to re-examine our assumptions about existence, and demands an adequate metaphysics within which to understand the real order. This is a challenge which

modern philosophy could well take up.

Certainly, "Philosophy and the New Physics" gave an excellent view of some of the present horizons in physics, and the level of interest in the subject was shown by the attendance, which consistently numbered between 100 and 150 people. The principle thrust was towards examining the questions posed by the scientific revolution which took place between 1900 and 1930 with the ►

▷ development of quantum mechanics and Einstein's Theory of Relativity. It is interesting to see that these remain fundamentally unresolved, although the detail of the arguments has developed tremendously, and that their great implications are still being digested. The background to their emergence was outlined by **Dr Rom Harré** of Linacre College, Oxford, and the particularly rich and powerful insights of the Theory of Special Relativity were explored by the philosopher **Jeremy Butterfield** and the physicist **Julian Barbour** of the University of Pavia.

The metaphysical issues raised by quantum mechanics were exemplified in a debate, outlined by **Harvey Brown**, a lecturer in the Philosophy of Physics, between the two giants of the era, Neils Bohr and Albert Einstein, during the late 20's and early 30's; these became embodied in a number of 'paradoxes', one of which — concerning Shrodinger's cat — was admirably outlined by **Ian Aitchison** of Worcester College, Oxford. It seems that contemporary physicists can be roughly divided into three camps — those who follow Bohr and accept the conventional position that nature is fundamentally indeterminate; those like David Bohm who, following Einstein, hold that quantum mechanics is an incomplete theory and continue to search for the 'hidden variables' which determine quantum phenomena; and a new group who, following Everett, have developed a theory of 'parallel universes', which was outlined by the mathematician **David Deutsch**. The divergence of these points of view demonstrates how far physicists are from agreeing about the *meaning* of the extraordinary phenomena they have uncovered.

**I**n this respect, it is interesting to note that all three points of view are united in that finally they encounter the question of

consciousness — albeit in terms of the quantum nature of the brain of the 'observer' — as a kind of ceiling. **Roger Penrose**, Rouse Professor of Mathematics at Oxford, went so far as to argue that the future physics must incorporate consciousness, in some form, into its fundamental laws, and **Peter Atkins** (Lincoln College, Oxford), exploring the question of *Why Mathematics Works*, went even further and proposed that the physical world, mathematics and our consciousness share the same 'deep structure' and *may even be the same*.

**Q**uantum physics and relativity theory certainly do raise many questions of profound significance which in the past were considered the central concern of the philosopher. The acknowledgement of the importance of consciousness, however, takes the matter beyond the narrow confines of any particular discipline, be it physics or philosophy, and raises the widest and most profound questions that touch on the very essence of our humanity. This universal concern with the real nature of existence has sometimes been referred to, for want of a better term, as mysticism, and is perhaps best summarised in the Delphic exhortation, taken closely to heart by Socrates, "Know thyself".

Any discipline which begins and ends with the intellect inevitably adopts an egocentric position and it seems impossible for physicists at the moment to abandon the notion of the "I" as central to their understanding. This results in a curious dichotomy: on the one hand, scientific discoveries at the atomic and sub-atomic level suggest that matter as a solid, tangible quiddity does not exist, and that time is not the smooth linear progression implied by the clock. On the other hand, 'normal life' appears to proceed as before with all the same co-ordinates and perceptions. A new perspective within which these two levels can be

integrated in a *meaningful* way is clearly called for, and we suggest that it will inevitably be one which also questions the notion of the 'separate self'.

**T**he relationship of the new physics to religion and mysticism — and the philosophical ideas of physicists like Fred Hoyle and Paul Davies or the 'holistic' theories of David Bohm and Fritjof Capra — were not aired at all during this series. That many, indeed the majority, of scientists do not yet acknowledge the relevance of mysticism may be due to a misunderstanding of its nature, which they see as implying vague and emotionally loaded 'experiences'. There are signs, however, that this is changing: in an article which appeared simultaneously with these lectures in *Physics Education* (January 1987) the physicist and Nobel Prizewinner, **Professor Brian Josephson**, in a piece entitled *Physics and Spirituality; The Next Grand Unification?*, writes "The interpretation of what mystics have written is complicated by the fact that different mystics have used many different languages and different styles of description, while again different mystics have spoken on the basis of different levels of development. Indeed, more and more clarity of mind is necessary before the the subtler perceptions of mysticism can be understood and realised, **paralleling the way that clarity of mind is required in order to work with subtler mathematical concepts**. If one understands these facts.....one will...be able to recognise that there is indeed a **consistent body of knowledge that can be gained through this deeper means of introspection**". (our emphasis).

As the physicist increasingly sees the methodology and outcome of his own work reflected in the writings of the great mystics, so the mystic sees his vision, which is in conformity to the revelation and experiences of the Saints, corroborated by the discoveries of modern science. ▲

## The Visit of the Panchen Lama

Currently, two monks chosen by His Holiness The Dalai Lama are visiting the Benedictine monasteries of Britain in order to study Benedictine spiritual teaching. The visit forms part of a move towards a deeper ecumenism, initiated by both the Pope and the Dalai Lama by way of the "mutual exchange of valuable knowledge". They are the Panchen Yudol Lama, who conducts research for the Tibetan Council at Dharansala, and Ven. Thupten Tashi of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. They are accompanied throughout their itinerary, which will last until the autumn, by Dom Sylvester Houédard of Prinknash Abbey. In April, the monks also stayed at the Beshara School of Intensive Esoteric Education at Chisholme House.

Traditionally, the Panchen Lama was the head of the Tashi Lhumpo Monastery near Shigatse in Tibet. His title, an abbreviation of *Pandit Chenpo*, means "The Most Learned Lama". In past times, it was the Panchen Lama who was tutor to the young Dalai Lama, and who

conferred doctorates in Tibet.

Furthermore, it was with the Panchen Lama and his court that the first contact between Britain and Tibet was made, when Warren Hastings sent his embassy, led by George Bogel, to pay his respects. The Panchen Yudol Lama was able to return the visit at the tomb of Warren Hastings during his stay at Prinknash Abbey in Gloucestershire, when he visited Warren Hastings's house at Daylesford as the guest of Baron Thyssen, its present owner. This visit was arranged by Mr Grenville Collins, a Trustee of the Beshara Trust.

It is possible that the monks' stay may be extended, as guests of the Tibetan communities in this country, for the completion of the first phase of the new temple and college complex at the Kagyu Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre in Dumfriesshire in the autumn of 1988. Then, with the assistance of Dom Sylvester Houédard and the Benedictine Committee, the Tibetans will hold their first Inter-Faith Congress. ▲

## Mondrian

*Many people have commented upon the cover of BESHARA and asked about the painter who inspired it.*

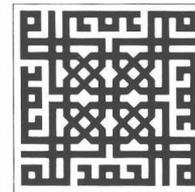
Mondrian was a founder of *de Stijl*, a group of painters, poets, town planners and architects whose emergence in Holland occurred in the aftermath of World War One. At this time, enormous changes in social and industrial life were taking place, and *de Stijl* made it their aim to express the 'New Age' of mass production in the fields of art and architecture.

Mondrian worked his way through representational art into impression- and expressionism, fauvism and works inspired by the landscape before settling on

an arrangement of straight lines and intersections. These gradually became more formal, until we see a canvas intersected by lines of equal widths making rectangles. Only the primary colours were used: red, blue and an intense yellow.

He approached painting through theories of an underlying unity which could be expressed in a flat plane. He used only straight lines and right angles, with no diagonals or symmetry intruding.

He spent the last years of his life in America. He wrote "*I always confine myself to expressing the universal, that is the eternal (closest to the spirit) and I do so in the simplest of external forms in order to be able to express the inner meaning as lightly veiled as possible*". ▲



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## BESHARA MAGAZINE

welcomes letters to the editor, contributions and suggestions from its readers.

For the September issue, please write, by August 3rd 1987, to:

*The Editor*  
*BESHARA Magazine*  
*24 Sidney Street*  
*Oxford OX4 3AG, England.*

## Classifying Religious Experience

Martin Notcutt on the Alister Hardy Research Centre for Religious Experience

*“As far back as I can remember I have never had a sense of separation from the spiritual force I now choose to call God.....From the age of about 6 to 12 in places of quiet and desolation this feeling of ‘oneness’ often passed to a state of ‘listening’. I mean by listening that I was suddenly alerted to something that was going to happen. What followed was a tremendous feeling of exaltation in which time stood still.”*

*“At one time I reached utter despair and wept and prayed to God for mercy, insincerely and without faith in a reply. That night I stood with other patients in the grounds waiting to be let into our ward. It was a very cold night with many stars. Suddenly someone stood beside me in a dusty brown robe and a voice said, “Mad or sane, you are one of my sheep.” I never spoke to anyone of this but ever since (twenty years) it has been the pivot of my life. I realise that the form of the vision and the words I heard were the result of my educational and cultural background but the voice, though closer than my own heartbeat, was entirely separate from me.”*

*Short extracts from the files of the Alister Hardy Research Centre.*

Most scientific accounts of religion and religious experience tend to try to explain them away. But a retired biologist put the matter on a new footing when he proposed to accept people's statements about their experiences as meaningful facts.

How many people in the modern world report religious or transcendent experiences? What do people mean when they say they have had one of these experiences? What sort of things do they describe? How do they interpret them? What effects do they have on their lives? Are the people

who have them more likely to be happy or unhappy, mentally unbalanced or stable, members of religious institutions or not? Until the establishment of the Religious Experience Research Unit by Sir Alister Hardy in 1969 almost no answers could be given to questions such as these.

Throughout a long career as a marine biologist, Sir Alister Hardy maintained that man's capacity for religious awareness was natural to him, like the capacity for language. He thought it could be studied as an evolving biological attribute which is of the greatest importance for human survival. He found in his studies that consciousness plays a role in evolution, and believed that the spiritual nature of man was a reality which ought not to be ignored by biology if it was to be a complete science.

Sir Alister certainly reached the top of his scientific profession - he was appointed professor of Zoology at Hull in 1928, Professor of Natural History at Aberdeen in 1942 and held the Linacre Chair of Zoology at Oxford University from 1946 to 1961. He received many academic awards for his work and in 1957 was knighted for his contribution to marine biology.

In 1963, at the age of 69, he retired from this line of activity. As the Gifford Lecturer at the University of Aberdeen he developed his views on religion in two series of lectures, which were published in 1965 and 1966 as **The Living Stream** (sub-titled 'A restatement of evolution theory and its relation to the spirit of man') and **The Divine Flame** (an essay towards a natural history of religion).

In 1969 he set up the Religious Experience Unit at Manchester College, Oxford. The purpose of this was to establish the basis for a scientific study of religious

experience by collecting and classifying accounts of experience, much as the Victorian naturalists collected specimens and classified them to form the basis of modern biology. He first raised the funds for this enterprise by lecture tours in Britain and America – and it has never been funded by the University.

As a first move, he advertised and appealed widely for people to send him examples of religious experience and achieved a tremendous response, receiving more than 3,000 communications in quite a short time.

The next step was to develop a system to catalogue the different descriptions of such experiences. At first Sir Alister had thought that they might be able to be classed in a hierarchical system like biological specimens. It was soon found, however, that such a system would not work and in the end they arrived at a provisional system of identifying the different elements found in the accounts of religious experiences by means of twelve main categories.

As well as trying to build up a qualitative picture of religious experience, Hardy was interested in collecting quantitative information by means of questionnaires. Among other things, a question originally framed by Hardy became incorporated in an annual National Opinion Poll survey of adults in Britain. Repeated national polls in Britain and in the United States indicate that between a third and a half of people feel that they have experienced a presence or power beyond their everyday selves.

Hardy retired as Director of the Unit in 1976, but he did not stop. In **Darwin and the Spirit of Man**, published in 1984, in his 89th year, he continued to press the case for a new understanding of the relationship between science and religion. In 1985, shortly before he died, he was named as the winner of the Templeton Prize. This is awarded annually for Progress in Religion. The

prize included a substantial cash element, and this boosted the activity of the Unit, now named the Alister Hardy Research Centre.

Located at Oxford but no longer attached to any College, the Centre at present supports the activities of three researchers. One is working on the use of computers in analysing and classifying written accounts of religious or transcendent experiences. A second is doing a doctoral study on the relationship between religious experience and schizophrenia. A third is studying religious experiences among nurses in two British hospitals.

The centre is now headed by David Hay, another zoologist and a lecturer at Nottingham University. He is currently taking a sabbatical, which he is devoting to raising support for the Centre, and to setting up the first stage of a ten year programme.

**T**his research programme seeks to build on the preliminary findings of the Centre. They hope to extend enquiries to a variety of cultures, in-depth studies of specific groups and individuals, and considerations of the conceptual implications.

As Sir Alister Hardy put it in **The Spiritual Nature of Man**, *"It seems to me that the main characteristics of man's spiritual and religious experiences are shown in his feelings for a transcendent reality which frequently manifest themselves in early childhood; a feeling that 'Something Other' than the self can actually be sensed; a desire to personalise this presence into a deity and to have a private I-Thou relationship with it, communicating with prayer."* *"I like to think that our studies at the...Unit are not only helping....to build up an academic knowledge towards a better understanding of the spiritual nature of man, but that they are..... also providing the evidence which..... may induce others to make the act of faith which is expressed in the words of Jesus, 'Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and ye shall find.'" ▲*

## THE ALISTER HARDY RESEARCH CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

The Centre invites new members. Members will receive copies of newsletters and invitations to seminars and lectures.

Books published by the centre are also available, including:

**The Divine Flame – Sir Alister Hardy**  
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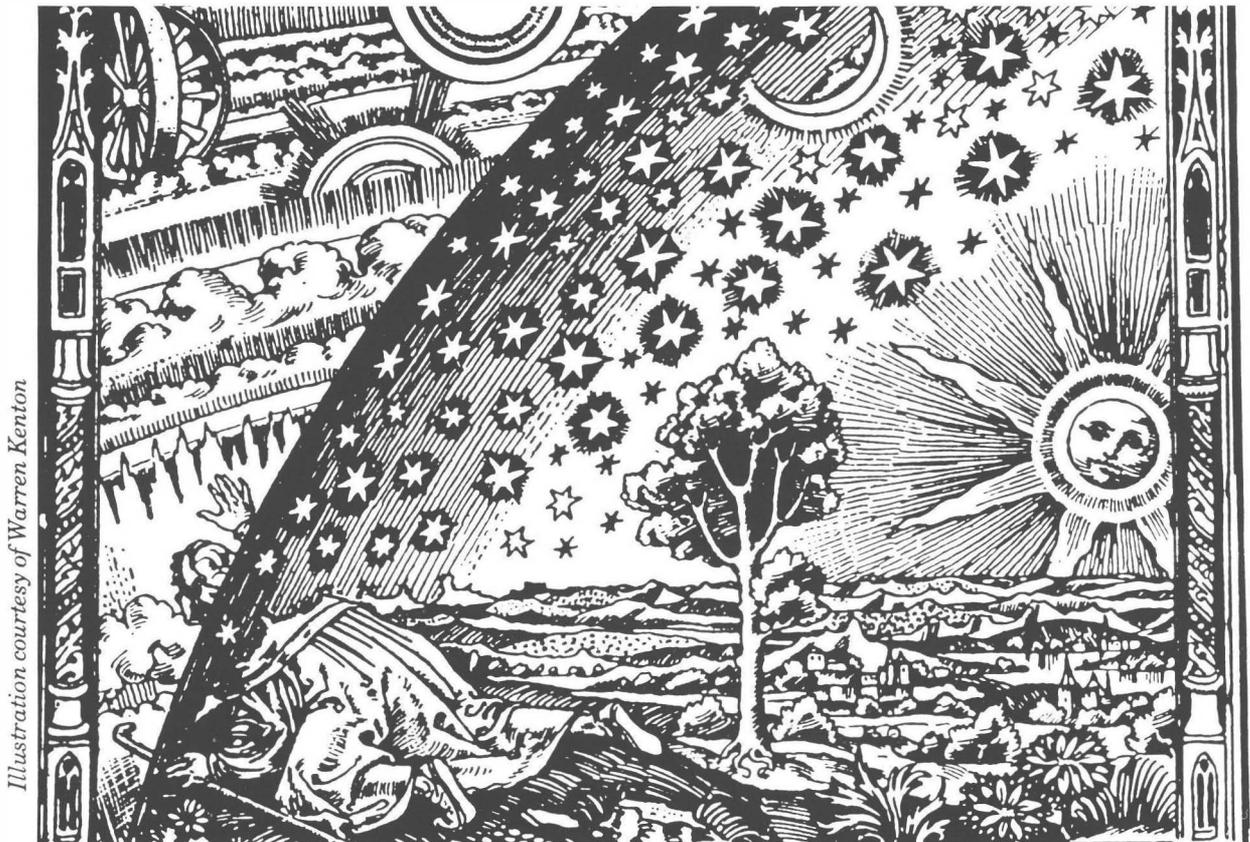


Illustration courtesy of Warren Kenton

## A Consideration of Anthropocentrism

Some thoughts from Abraham Abadi following a recent television programme

The core of any philosophy which introduces mankind as integrating a collectivity of facts through reason is an expression of the **Anthropocentric Principle**, whose reality is the manifest consciousness of God as the Self of Man. When this principle is formulated through the perspective of an investigative discipline which is imposed upon it, the results of this correlation reflect its premises, so that its particular applications may be either materialistic, psychological or holistic interpretations of reality.

Popular belief during the middle ages regarded the cosmos from *subjectivity*; by virtue of his identification of the heavenly bodies' appearance with the degrees of existence, man accepted his central position in nature and the responsibility which it necessitated with regard to God. For this reason, geocentrism had to become an essential part of the dogma of the church. In this light, the most profound outcome of the Galilean revolution was the undermining of mankind's perception of its origin. The emergence of *objectivism* – which asserted the independence of the observed object from the perception – prevented the realisation, inherent to geocentrism, that the observer is a

part of the investigated cosmos. So, inevitably, anthropocentrism ceased to be recognised *explicitly* and became *implicit* to the various disciplines due to their attempts at integration. Moreover, the notion of objectivism implies that measurement is the highest form of verification, a sophistry which eventually leads to empiricism.

The insistence upon the utilisation of factual observation as the only valid method of investigation reached a new depth in its attempt to achieve verification when Kant defined the demarcation between metaphysical and critical philosophy. The formulation of the latter emphasises that the

proper domain of philosophical investigation is the reflections of Reality in human thought which limits itself to factual understanding. Naturally, this discipline tends to centre the inquiry upon the processes of the intellect and the definition of its scope – and not upon Reality itself – since it adopts the maxim that thinking becomes truly philosophical when it turns back and examines itself. Kant himself, as well as the majority of twentieth century philosophers, consider critical philosophy to be anthropocentric, since on the one hand its subject is the intellect, while on the other it insists on avoiding issues such as the First Cause, or illumination, due to their ‘remoteness’ from man. An extreme form of this approach can be discerned in the later philosophy of Wittgenstein, since, in his continuous attempts to determine the limits of verifiable discourse, he abandoned even the generally accepted premise that Reality is reflected in the structure of language, simply because it could not be proven. If Kant regards factual understanding as the only thing which can be known – whereby he isolates the intellect from Revelation – Wittgenstein tries to seclude thought from Existence, since he suggests that language does not reflect the nature of Reality.

It is no wonder that this kind of anthropocentrism leaves man in various degrees of isolation from Meaning, each in accordance with the particular introspection it induces. It is anthropocentric in so far as it is preoccupied with man, but it is man as an *accident* rather than man at the centre of creation. For this reason, the most obvious incoherences in the context of this approach occur in the light of morality and aesthetics, neither of which it can encompass within the scope of its premises. Kant and Wittgenstein, for instance, regard them as facts which cannot be incorporated into their respective systems of factual knowledge, and yet they allocate for them a special position. Morality and aesthetics derive from the anthropocentric principle itself, and this being the case, they cannot be understood except from the vantage point of revealed metaphysics. Perhaps the most serious outcome of the anthropocentrism of critical philosophy is that it deprives man of an immediate sense of the meaning of life (though it suggests that he should determine it for himself) – an absence which he tends to consider an excuse for his atheism.

**O**bjectivism did not produce any of these difficulties in the context of the physical sciences until they were faced with the effects of elementary particles. The evidence of these effects motivated the formulation of a

model which described measurement as the interchange of momentum – an interchange which came to be accepted as the necessary result of any observation – so that physics had to recognise *indeterminism* as part of the empirical method. Subsequently, it was plunged into a domain which attracted numerous controversial philosophies. In this light, it is not surprising that, as a discipline which accepts the central role of the observer, physics should invite an expression of the anthropocentric principle.

The particular application – which was portrayed in a recent Horizon programme on BBC2 (May 18th 1987) named **The Anthropic Principle** – has been formulated in view of some of the anomalous findings relating to light interference. While this acknowledges the Anthropocentric Intention which is necessarily inherent to the astounding harmony of the instant of the genesis of the elements, since its depiction is based upon the maxim that consciousness is the result of the evolution of matter, it nevertheless entails the notion of coincidence. Therefore it attempts to disguise this obvious inconsistency by introducing the interchangeability of space and time, whereas evolution regards time as an irreversible progression. Evidently, ‘strong’ anthropocentrism (1) is an adaptation of the traditional argument from design, which is utilised in this case to prove that the universe is created for Man, while formerly this same argument used to be employed to demonstrate the existence of God.

**A** further development of this approach stems from the re-interpretation of the appearance of photons. As photons are generated during the collision of elementary particles, it is possibly hasty to presume that they function in a continuous fashion, especially when they tend to emerge in certain circumstances which, according to the postulates of modern physics, display indeterminacy. Hence, if the observed photons are not generated from within the system in question, ‘participatory’ anthropocentrism attributes their manifestation to the observation; that is, it asserts that **the observation causes the observed** in the sense that it shapes its appearance, and not in the sense that it effects its material substance.

This assertion implies another dimension in relation to the conclusions of ‘strong’ anthropocentrism, as it considers man to be an active agent within the process of matter’s evolution of consciousness. That is, in the interaction between perception and the observed system another mechanism has come into play in order to enable the observer

*(1) The Weak Anthropic Principle recognises a remarkable correlation between the laws of nature and the nature of man, which manifests as our ability to understand the physical universe.*

*The Strong Anthropic Principle says that the creation of the universe (in the ‘big bang’ for instance) necessarily entailed, or requires, the eventual appearance of an observer who could understand. ie. consciousness.*



- ▷ to add a feature, unknowingly, to the true structure of matter – his illusory originator. While simple awareness requires that its possessor should cognise its structure as it is, self-consciousness necessitates the expression of its interiority in a mode which reflects its self contemplation as an addition. It is this essential Truth which explains the intuitive leap from the assertions of 'strong' anthropocentrism – matter seeing itself as it is – to the conclusions of 'participatory' anthropocentrism – matter evolving self-consciousness through mankind. If this feeling was not implicit in the latter belief, the narrative concerning the exchange between God and Abraham – “*If I had not wished, you would not have been*”; “*If I had not been, You would not have been known*” – need not have been mentioned at the end of the programme.

**T**he distinction between the investigative disciplines which render anthropocentrism explicit and those which render it implicit resides in the degree of the intensity of questioning that they generate with regard to their own premises. The very nature of the explicit mode compels it to develop as a form

***‘The assertion of physical anthropocentrism establishes a point beyond which scientific enquiry cannot go, seeing that it implies that perception is irrevocable interference...’***

of self-contemplation, which tends to highlight the limitations of its scope. Implicit anthropocentrism, on the other hand, tends to regard its approach as limitless in its latitude, since it removes man from the centre of his perceptions, wherefore his premises are not recognised to be their products. The Rationalism of the seventeenth century which confused Pure Reason with the intellect and Newtonian science which engendered the prevailing belief that its approach will unravel the mysteries of the universe, are obvious examples of this trend. The assertion of physical anthropocentrism establishes a point beyond which scientific inquiry cannot reach, seeing that it implies that perception is an irrevocable interference by virtue of the inaccessibility of the observation itself for investigation. The logical outcome of this understanding is that matter cannot be known. Furthermore, the acknowledgement of an anthropocentric intention does cast a different light on the inexplicable spontaneity of the ‘big bang’; it is no wonder, then, that this theory has attracted so much criticism. ▲

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# The Presence of the Past

## Part 2 – Higher Level Fields

Rupert Sheldrake

*This article is taken from a seminar given by Dr. Rupert Sheldrake at Beshara Sherborne in November 1986. The first part, in which Dr. Sheldrake outlined his controversial theory of Morphic Resonance and the background to its development, appeared in the last issue of BESHARA.*

Now I want to consider the role of morphic fields in systems of organisation above the level of the individual organism. It is relatively plain sailing below the level of the organism because everybody recognises that the organism – the animal, the plant or the person – is a natural unity and within it there are other sub-unities or sub-organisms like the organs, and then within those, cells, and within them, molecules. There are different **nested hierarchies** of levels, boxes within boxes, each within the next. Some people do not like the word hierarchy for a variety of reasons, and there is an alternative that Arthur Koestler suggested – **holarchy** – which is a system of wholes within wholes, but nested hierarchy seems to me to be clearer. The lower level systems are not lower like tree diagrams of companies where you have the Chairman, the Board, etc. laid out in a hierarchical tree, but rather, the higher level of organisation includes the lower, so that the field of the organism includes, contains within it, the fields of the kidneys and the liver and the eyes and so on.

Now I feel that it makes quite good sense to think of this nested hierarchy of fields as going on beyond the level of the individual. Living organisms occur within the world in what are frequently referred to as eco-systems, ie. ecological systems which contain large numbers of species all interacting with each other to form a fairly stable ecological whole – a tropical rain forest, for example, contains many different species, with the animals depending upon the insects and on other animals which depend on particular sorts of trees, the trees depend on symbiotic organisms in the soil, and the soil depends on the decay of matter that falls on it, etc. If we think of given types of eco-systems as a living wholes, then it may be that they have morphic fields which co-ordinate what goes on within them. This could provide a new way of thinking about ecology which is more than just substituting the word **morphic field** for ecosystem. It would mean that the fields would have, by

morphic resonance, a kind of memory, and also, that similar eco-systems in different places will influence each other.

But the main topic I want to talk about now is the idea that there might be higher level fields in the human realm. But first, I want to go back to animal societies because it is easier to think clearly about them. People have always been interested and impressed by the social animals, and particularly by the social insects – bees, ants, wasps, and termites. These have societies of great complexity with great division of labour and apparent inter-connection among the members of the society. Personally, I find the termites the most spectacular. They build nests, often reaching ten feet high or more, with colonies involving many millions of insects, which last for decades even though each insect lasts for a much shorter time. They have a tremendous degree of co-ordination. If you damage a nest – by breaking a bit off it, for instance – then within a day or two, the termites repair the damage, a process which involves hundreds of little workers.

Each of these termites is very, very small compared with the size of the nest; they are also blind, so they can't see what they are doing. So the question is, how do they do it? How do tiny, blind creatures, each carrying a little blob of mud, put it in exactly the right place so that this vast structure is built? They do not have foremen and supervisors standing over them telling them what to do, nor are there termite architects with blueprints standing around directing the operations. Somehow the workers spontaneously know exactly what to do and where to put things, even if the nest is damaged in a way which may never have occurred before.

The queen, which is a much larger insect and much longer lived than the others, lies in a special queen cell, attended by many worker termites and spends most of her time laying eggs – vast numbers of eggs – and although some people think of the queen as the brain of the colony, she is not actually

- ▷ wandering around, checking up on what ought to be done or telling them what to do. She is very busy laying eggs. So it is a great mystery how they could possibly do this.

Part of the structure of the nests consists of arches, and these are constructed as columns which are built over and meet at the top. How do the two sides exactly co-ordinate so that they meet at the top? They can't see each other, being blind, and the idea that they do it by making tapping noises is not taken seriously by most experts in the field because there is so much tapping from all the other termites that the idea that you can have specific tapping signals, telling the two sets of termites what to do, is improbable. As in so many cases where animal behaviour presents apparently unfathomable mysteries, it is assumed that it must all be done by smell. How it is done no one has explained, but it is assumed that it must be smell because it can't be anything else. But even that has been experimentally refuted. In a fascin-

***'The plan is not inside the termites' brains or inside the individual termite – rather, they are inside the plan.'***

1. *The Soul of the White Ant* by E. Marais (1973). Penguin, Harmondsworth

2. *Thought Transference or What?* in *Birds* by E. Selous (1931). Constable, London.

3. *The Chorus Line Hypothesis of Manoeuvre Coordination in Avian Flocks* by W.K. Potts (1984). *Nature* 309, page 344-345.

4. *The human startle reaction time is about 140 milliseconds.*

ating book called THE SOUL OF THE WHITE ANT by Eugene Marais, the South African naturalist, first published in the 1920's, (1) he describes a whole series of experiments he did on termites. He damaged a termite nest by driving in a steel plate several feet across and several feet down, right through the termite mound and several feet underground, completely separating off one part of the nest. Some of the termites on one side were separated off from the queen and all the other termites. Termites on both side of the plate set to work to repair the damage and when he carefully removed the plate after they had finished, he found that all the arches, on both sides, were in perfect correspondence; they would have met if the plate had not been there. Somehow, the whole effort was perfectly co-ordinated even though there was a steel plate in the way preventing the transmission of smell.

The experiment has never been repeated – I don't know why because it seems to me to be one of the most interesting experiments that have been done this century on animal behaviour because the implications are so fascinating. I think that the most probable explanation is that there is morphic field for a termite nest, and the nest is shaped by the field, which is, as it were, around the whole nest, and the colony and the individual termites are guided by this collective field in what they do. The plan is not inside the

termites' brains or inside the individual termite – rather, *they* are inside the plan. The same kind of thing may well apply to bees' and wasps' nests, there being a kind of collective field within which the individuals exist.

As we move up the scale of nature to look at other kinds of animals, we find many other forms of collective behaviour which suggest the existence of collective fields. Many people have observed that flocks of birds – dunlins, for example, or starlings – move in a highly co-ordinated manner. For instance, when banking, a vast flock seems to turn as one bird, almost simultaneously. If a predator approaches, the entire flock can respond in an extraordinarily rapid manner, and in such a way that the birds do not crash into each other. How does this happen? Several naturalists have spent years observing this phenomenon in the field; in particular a man called Selous, a British naturalist, spent 30 years observing flock behaviour and came to the conclusion that there must be some kind of collective mind which enabled the birds to do this. He thought it all happened by a kind of group telepathy. Now he was a perfectly straightforward naturalist, he was just driven to this seemingly bizarre conclusion by his observation of the facts.(2)

A recent investigation of the behaviour of flock birds published last year by an American called Potts (3) involved taking very rapid exposures on ciné films of birds banking, mostly dunlins. Studying the film frame by frame, he discovered that the banking manoeuvre started in one place and spread through the flock, but it seemed to be able to start anywhere within the flock – the back, the side, the front – and that any bird seemed to be able to initiate it. There was not a leader that they were all following. Once it had started, what he calls a **manoeuvre wave** propagated through the flock at an extremely rapid rate – taking about 15 milliseconds from bird to bird. Now he determined the minimum reaction time of a dunlin in the laboratory by a somewhat crude method, as what he calls the "startle reaction time". To measure this, he put dunlins in a dark laboratory and let off a flash bulb near them. He then measured, by filming, how long it took them to have a startle reaction. It was found to take about 70 milliseconds (4). One assumes that this startle reaction time is as fast as they could respond to stimulus, but in manoeuvre waves, they were responding much, much faster. So, how does it happen? No-one knows. Thinking of these manoeuvre waves as taking place within a

morphic field seems to me to be far easier than the usual hypothesis, which is that the birds are looking at all the other birds, waiting to see which one starts moving, and then rapidly responding – responding, what is more, in just the right way. It is no good just accounting for the banking – the banking has to be at exactly the right speed and exactly the right angle if birds are not going to collide with the next bird – and the fact is that somehow they do not collide.

### Higher Level Fields in the Human Realm

There are many other phenomena involving herds of animals which seem to suggest fields. When we come to the human realm, it seems that we are no exception to this kind of collective behaviour. The places where this is most easily observable are in temporary social groups and this is because, if it's temporary, we notice the difference between that and other states.

One area where this has been studied quite considerably is in the behaviour of crowds and rioting mobs. There is a very interesting book called *CROWDS AND POWER* by Elias Canetti (5), the novelist, who spent years studying this. He produced a taxonomy of crowds, showing that there were various types and that they follow fairly predictable patterns of growth and behaviour. He shows that there is a kind of self-aggregating quality to what he calls 'open' crowds, which survive by growing. Once such a crowd exists, people are drawn to it, as if magnetically, just because it is a crowd and once they have joined, there is loss of individuality and the substitution of a 'mob mentality'; the whole crowd becomes extremely suggestible. Open crowds know no boundaries, their only urge is to grow, and locked doors, closed shops and barriers are nothing to them; they rampage through all these things, and the more it grows, the more people will join.

Another area in which a collective mentality takes over is in audiences. When we go to the theatre, we are prepared to give up our personal space and sit very close to total strangers, feeling quite comfortable about it. The actors talk about the audience "You were a lovely audience tonight", etc. and they think about it as a collective entity. And the audience responds to this, with laughs and applause. I have been talking recently to a number of actors and they seem to agree that the whole thing only works if the audience is in dim light; if you have bright lights, or if individuality can be asserted – by heckling or persistent coughing – it spoils the

group field phenomenon. Actors are certainly very aware of this phenomenon, as their whole success and career depends on their rapport with their audience.

These things may be very common in all sorts of situations, but a case where they take on a particular interest, I think, is in teams – sports team – where the different members behave in a co-ordinated way. School masters and others are fond of talking about 'team spirit' and team morale and this kind of thing, but what are team spirit and team morale? What exactly is going on in these collectives, with which we are all familiar, and where there is a division of labour? There is a fascinating book by Michael Murphy, the founder of the Esalen Institute in the United States called *THE PSYCHIC SIDE OF SPORTS* (6). Murphy, who is very keen on sport himself and a great marathon runner, is sure that in our Western societies at the present time, far more people reach mystical states of experience, or transcendent states of mind, through sport than through any other activity, and he thinks that this is part of the reason for their tremendous popularity. Far more people go to look at sport, or take part in sporting

5. *Crowds and Power* by E. Canetti (1973). Penguin, Harmondsworth

6. *The Psychic Side of Sport* by M Murphy and RA White (1978) Addison-Wesley, Reading, Mass. USA

***'...in our Western societies at the present time, far more people reach mystical states of experience, or transcendent states of mind, through sport than through any other activity'***

activities, than take part in explicitly mystical or religious activities. He thinks that, at least in team games, it is this sense of being absorbed into a greater whole which attracts. He has extraordinary accounts from American baseball players about how, when the game is going well, there is a sort of click and everybody seems to know where everyone else is, even though they may not be able to see them. The whole team works as a composite organism.

It is clear that these collective social fields can work for good or ill, and football hooliganism and rioting show them in their destructive aspect. But it is also clear that these forms of social bonds are probably at work on a subtler and longer term basis within normal societies – social groups, family groups, clans, tribes, national groups and so forth. It is harder for us to be aware of these because if we are in them all the time, we cease to notice them. Anyone who is concerned with group organisation, like personnel management in factories, is very much aware of these phenomena, and so are politicians, who refer to the 'mood of the country', and so on. They are things that



- ▷ everyone knows about, and knows to be important, but as there is not a scientific way of measuring them, they are considered nebulous and 'unscientific'. The field idea provides a framework for thinking about them which is quite helpful.

### Fields in Ritual and Religion

It is also clear that these collective forms of expression are very important in various religions. Many religions place a great emphasis on the collective, and are concerned not only with the individual in relation to God or the spiritual realm, but with the individual in relation to God and in relation to society and God in relation to the whole society, and not just the society of the living but of the dead as well. Society in most cultures is considered to include the dead as well as the living because it is recognised that the social and cultural forms are handed down from the ancestors. Society therefore has a collective existence which transcends that of the individual. This is very clear in the Christian Church, where the Church is referred to as *'the mystical body of Christ, which is the blessed company of all faithful people'* (in the words of the book of Common Prayer.) It includes not only the living members of the Church as part of what is called the 'mystical body' or mystical unit or mysterious unity, but also the dead; what is called, in the Apostle's creed, the Communion of Saints. A similar concept is found in many other traditions.

***'...these forms of social bonds are probably at work on a subtler and longer term basis within normal societies – social groups, family groups, clans, tribes, national groups and so forth'***

Now the influence of the ancestors and the connection to the past of the social, cultural and religious groups, is very often made explicit and expressed through rituals. Rituals are, all over the world and in all societies, conservative in nature. It is considered that for a ritual to be effective, it must be done the same way it has been done before in every aspect; the words should be said in the same way, and the language that is used is very often highly conservative – Sanskrit in Hindu mantras (a language that is no longer spoken as a living language); until recently, in the Roman Church, Latin; in the Russian church, old Slavic; in the Coptic Church in Egypt, old Egyptian. We also find a conservatism of ritual forms, vestments, mannerisms, expressions and practices.

It has always been believed that ritual forms, in some sense, connect the performers

with the performers of the original, primal act. For example, the Feast of the Passover, an important Jewish ritual, refers back to the first Passover when death swept through Egypt killing the first born of the Egyptians and their cattle. The Israelites were passed over because they had made a vicarious sacrifice of a lamb instead of their own first-born and smeared their doors with the blood of the lamb; they then ate this 'Passover' feast. The Feast of the Passover, which is still commemorated every year by the Jews, refers back to this primal Passover meal.

The sacrament of Holy Communion or the Eucharist in the Christian Church is within the same ritual tradition as the Passover. The crucifixion of Christ took place at the Passover; the Last Supper was a Passover dinner; the body and blood of Jesus in the communion service refer back to the sacrificial lamb and Jesus is the lamb of God – the *Agnus Dei* is sung or said just before the consumption of the bread and wine. So the whole Christian Mass refers back to the Last Supper and the Last Supper itself takes place within the context of the Passover, when this last and most dreadful curse of God was launched upon the Egyptians. In the Book of Revelation, incidentally, the pattern of the seven terminal curses to which the earth will be subjected – blood and fire and destruction – refer back to and are cross-referenced to those great curses which were visited upon the Egyptians and which enabled the blessing to fall upon the people of Israel. So we have here a whole pattern of blessings and curses and rituals and commemorative actions, which are going on at this very minute in this parish, connecting to patterns of things in the past. This is just one example – a particularly familiar one because it is from our own culture.

There are many secular rites too: Guy Fawkes, for example. The burning of bonfires on November 5th and the burning of the effigy of Guy Fawkes, is explicitly connected to the Gunpowder Plot. But that in turn, like so many rituals, goes back to an earlier pattern; in this case, the great Celtic Festival of the Dead. The beginning of the Celtic New Year was November 1st and the Festival of the Dead, with which the new year opened, was the festival when the living and the dead came together – a crack in time when the past and the present merged together and the ancestors became present. It is still the main festival of the dead; the eve of it is Halloween, November 1st is All Saints Day, (the commemoration of the blessed dead) and November 2nd is All Souls Day when, in the Anglican and Catholic Churches, Requiem

Masses are said for the repose of the souls of the departed. November 5th is a displaced version of the Fire Festival which occurred in that great Celtic Festival of the Dead, and the burning of Guy Fawkes is a relic of the festivals of the Celtic year – others being May Day and New Year. So even in this secular ritual, which is usually thought of as a kind of children's festival, there is a long history and elements which are quite conservative.

There are many, many examples of ritual, secular and sacred; all refer back to a primal act, but they are also believed to connect the participants to all the people who have performed the ritual before. They are an essential feature of connecting the present society with the ancestors in an explicit manner.

Now, if morphic resonance actually takes place, then we can see an explanation for the conservative nature of rituals. The fact that things are done in the same way, using the same words, actions and patterns of activity, will tend to place people in morphic resonance with those who have done it before, right back to the first time it was done. Through the ritual, the past will become present and there really will be a connection between the people doing the ritual now and those who did it the past. And the more similarly the ritual is done, the more people will 'tune in'. Without this sort of understanding, we tend to think of rituals in a rather superior way – that they are just superstitions, relics from the past, and that people cling to their empty forms blindly. This is the rationalist point of view, but I think that there may be much more to it than that. People have quite deep intuitive feelings about these things. To give an example, when the new alternative Book of Common Prayer was introduced into the Church of England, all in the modern up-to-date civil service English considered necessary to bring the thing into the modern world, a great many people felt that something had been lost. Many wrote letters to THE TIMES, including people who said they hardly ever went to church, but they felt strongly about this. Well, why? The people who wanted to keep the Book of Common Prayer were not really able to say why, whereas the people who wanted the modern form had all kinds of rational arguments; the opposition therefore seemed rather obscurantist. The concept of morphic resonance provides, in this case, an answer in favour of obscurantism; it does at least provide a different way of thinking about the matter.

It also makes it easier to think about the nature of initiation, which takes place in all

societies. There are, of course, initiations going on all the time, but there are certain kinds which are attended by rituals, which are rites of passage when someone moves from one social role to another. Social roles are, of course, defined by society, and one could think of them as having morphic fields which govern patterns of norms, expectations, behaviour. Rites of passage seem to be rituals associated with people moving into, tuning into or coming within, a new field of influence. They have a common structure, described again and again by anthropologists, all over the world; first, the old role is stripped away; then the initiate enters a kind of no-mans-land, called a liminal or threshold region, where they are not in either role, and this stage is often attended by danger, by trials and often by pain. And then they come out and enter into the new social role. Afterwards, they not only think of themselves as belonging to the new role, but all other members of the society recognise their new position. These rites of passage, therefore, are not just individual, but also social. We have many survivals in our own society, of which the most vigorous and obvious is marriage.

Finally, I would just like to mention the possible role of morphic resonance in the mantra and the use of sacred chants. It is believed in India, (and in many other parts of the world, but I will talk about India and Tibet) that there are certain sacred phrases, mantras, which when chanted have a particular power which will effect the state of mind, consciousness, of persons chanting them. They are also meant to 'tune in' the person to the entire tradition of people who have used the mantra before; people are initiated into mantras by gurus, or teachers,

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who have themselves been initiated by others, and so there is a whole lineage or transmission associated it. They are associated with meditative states; if a guru has used the mantra and by it, or through it, or when using it, has been in particular meditative states, then the disciple, through the mantra, will be able to access these states.

It is usually believed that the mantra should only be used within certain circumstances, and that if it is banded

▷ around in a dinner-table conversation, used casually or in the wrong circumstances, it will weaken its force. If one takes a morphic resonance view, this makes sense. When you use the mantra, you will tune into your own past states and the whole lineage using it. If you use it in inappropriate circumstances, when you next chant it or use it in a meditative context, you will pick up not only yourself and others in meditative states, but also these other occasions, and the specific tuning and force will be weakened.

**I**n the same way, we find within all religious traditions prohibitions on blasphemy, which is the inappropriate use of sacred words, which, like the inappropriate use of mantras, would tend to weaken their force and power. In the modern secular context, words are just words, they are just vibrations of the air and sacred words are no different from any other vibrations of the air, except that we subjectively happen to attach certain meanings to them, and certain people's sentiments may therefore be offended. There may well be a lot more to it than that. I think that the most important of these mantras in the Judaic/Christian/Islamic tradition is "Amin" or "Amen". It is a very old one, and

we find it in all three traditions. No-one seems quite sure why it's there; it is said to mean "So be it", but why is it at the end of every prayer, every psalm and every gloria? And incidentally, why is it the same word as the name of the great Egyptian God at the time when the Jews were in Egypt – Amen, the great God of Karnack, Luxor and Tut-Ankh-Amen. Tutankamen was named after that God, the Jews were there in Egypt building temples – is it a mere coincidence that they are the same word?

In all these ways – in the context of social and religious and ritual forms, in the context of social and collective behaviour in the human and animal realms – morphic resonance can cast a new light upon things. All the ideas that I have been suggesting in this session are tentative and speculative, and whether or not they are on the right lines would have to depend upon whether morphic resonance can be detected by experiment in other areas. But I hope that I have shown that by thinking about the presence of the past, it is possible to see many things in new ways. ▲



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# Perception and the Mind

Some thoughts from Richard Twinch following Rupert Sheldrake's seminar.

The adoption of a truly holistic point of view requires not only re-evaluation of preconceived notions, but the willingness to abandon all jealously guarded conceptions stemming from illusory dichotomies of the "I think therefore I am" variety. This is not only the preserve of the mystic but it has recently also become that of the scientist, who finds himself searching for answers to otherwise inexplicable effects. Prompted by the ideas of Dr. Rupert Sheldrake and others, my article in the last issue of BESHARA investigated the function of memory and the brain; this in turn prompts further questions of the wider function of mind and perception.

Dr. Sheldrake at his seminar at Beshara Sherborne in October 1986, raised questions with regard to visual perception. He explained that the 'official' view is that light rays are reflected from 'external' objects which, entering the eye, fire electrical impulses which are then transmitted to the visual cortex of the brain. Here great cunning is displayed, for, in seeing the image of the object within itself, the brain simultaneously projects that image outside by an act of illusion. Sheldrake hypothesises that indeed this is a most complex explanation for perceived 'facts'. An equally plausible, and eminently more straightforward approach, is, he says, that "Your image and my image are exactly where they are. The perceptual world is exactly where it seems to be. What happens is that mind fills perceptive space." This implies that the eye is for inward *and outward* projection. Whatever is perceived, the mind reaches. The implications are staggering, since such a view not only encompasses the smallest and greatest universes (to view cosmic strings or quarks, for instance, it is necessary for the mind to reach them), but also throws up wider questions such as "whose mind is it anyway?".

Staggering though this might be to western rationalist thought, it is accepted as natural within perennial wisdom. Indeed the word for eye in Arabic is 'ayn which translates as 'the source from which something flows out'. In traditional cultures great care is taken to avoid or protect a person from the malevolent gaze, often brought about through envy. Small babies are known to be particularly vulnerable and are shielded from strangers; in the Middle-East, it is polite, when seeing a baby or child, to remark to the parents, "What an ugly child" so as to avoid the risk of unconsciously attracting envy and thus 'evil eye'. Dr. Sheldrake, who has spent much time in India, is well aware of the reality of this effect, which manifests at times in acts of

apparent generosity. He found that casual 'polite' remarks such as "What a nice painting" would immediately cause the host to take the picture from the wall and give it to the guest in order to avoid the effects of envy. Such protocol in the past had led to whole palaces being given to an admiring (and scheming) ruler! The corollary of this is the desire to bring children under the benevolent gaze of the wise.

How then does one go about providing a scientific basis to corroborate what is traditionally well-known? The difficulty is that where there is no proven mechanism, unusual effects are ignored as random and insignificant. Such has been the case with the connection between illness and stress. Modern medicine is only just beginning to accept and investigate such a hypothesis, since it has only just provided itself with a mechanism to explain how brain-stress can interact with the body! (1). According to Sheldrake, research projects into the area of perceptual awareness can be counted "on the fingers of one badly mutilated hand". The subject has even been avoided by 'paraphysicists' who are more concerned with spoon-bending feats and more recently 'thought beaming' (2). Why is this? I am inclined to believe that, in mainstream science, any area of research is acceptable as long as it does not basically undermine the egocentric viewpoint, a viewpoint that is strengthened, rather than diminished, by 'will-power' experiments which start from the premise of one separate being acting upon another. Scientists are happy to leave wider questions to philosophers and psychologists and then dismiss them as 'subjective', whilst in a rather schizophrenic way abiding by the use of Quantum Theory which eliminated the separate 'objective' observer some 55 years ago!

Dr. Sheldrake's own preliminary researches into perceptual awareness, however, have concentrated on the well-known

1. *New Scientist*, 3rd May 1987. "Psychology and the Immune System" Dr Paul Martin.

2. *Sunday Times*, 3rd May - "Did Yuri Geller Bend the Will of Gorbachev".

▷ phenomenon of 'feeling' when one is being stared at. He has shown that some effects are repeatable, and he has even found one Dutch girl who had a well-developed awareness, having played the game as a child. This shows that awareness of two-way perception (the person perceived perceiving the perception of the perceiver) is in some way learnt or can be cultivated. It would seem that here is a valuable area for research.

**W**hat then is the purpose of perception and who is perceiving what? Here we move outside the scope of rational science into the realm of symbol, imagination and meaning. In *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, Alice, in the company of Tweedledum and Tweedledee, came across the Red King snoring.

3. The word *ayan* having the meaning both of essences and eyes.

"He's dreaming now," said Tweedledee "and what do you think he is dreaming about?" Alice said "Nobody can guess that." "Why, about you!" Tweedledee exclaimed, clapping his hands triumphantly. "And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?" "Where I am now, of course," said Alice "Not you!" Tweedledee retorted contemptuously. "You'd be nowhere. Why, you're only a sort of thing in his dream!"

***'To adopt a holistic viewpoint, it is necessary to accept that the individual has no separate existence, and, like Alice, submit to the reality of "being a sort of thing in a dream"'***

To adopt a holistic viewpoint, it is necessary to accept that the individual has no separate existence, and, like Alice, submit to the reality of "being a sort of thing in a dream". However, once over this hurdle the mystic (for that is what the observer has become) no longer perceives the phenomena as separate events but participates directly in a sympathetic concurrence where everything has an inner life; where all things perceive and are perceived by others within the Universal Mind. Here, all perceptions are



*The Red King snoring – one of Tenniel's illustrations to Alice in Wonderland*

fused into a single awareness – the awareness of the One Reality for Itself, for there is no other. What starts as a pawn becomes a Queen, nothingness is quantum-simultaneous with all-ness. Here the supersensory is regarded as normal, for how else could it be? What to the ignorant and unaware is a universe of random phenomena is known to be nothing but the Universal Mind, drawing out the 'scents of existence' from each individuation within that Mind. It is no coincidence that these individuations are known as the 'ayan' - the eyes.(3)

The magnitude and beauty of such perception is displayed in the story of The Prophet Muhammed and the great saint Uways Al-Karani who came to see him. Muhammed was away at the time and instead Uways spoke to the Prophet's wife; he sent greetings, and returned to the desert. On returning Muhammed heard of the visit and in agitation instructed his wife "Look into my eyes". He then rushed into the centre of the village and called everybody to come, telling them "Look into my eyes. These are the eyes that have looked into the eyes that have looked into the eyes of Uways al Karani". ▲

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# An Intimation of Beauty

A reflection on the saying "Indeed the Self is extremely beautiful and loves Beauty"

by Richard Waddington

*This article is a distillation of a seminar, entitled "Heart, Art and Architecture" which was given as part of the Beshara Trust autumn series in 1986.*

Without a doubt it is wonderful, an intimation of beauty. It exhilarates the heart in a way that transforms mundane experience. What appeared as dull is now luminous; what was ordinary is now extraordinary; what was haphazard, meaningless, matter-of-fact, every-day, prevalent with pervasive mediocrity, is now alive, imbued with meaning, glorious.

An intimation of beauty draws from the heart, before anything else, a sentiment of love. Before anything else, it dissolves the individual sense of self into Itself and expands the heart from the tyrannies of mundane concerns. It is as if that intimation is a mirror to a beauty within and that the love that flows is the movement of Self-recognition, unifying what seemed to be separate. It is like the unconfined joy of two close friends who meet after a lifetime apart.

Equally, without a doubt, it is wonderful when someone gives himself so totally to an action that the result also is an intimation of beauty. Twice wonderful: for the one who is complete through this act and for the one who marvels at the beautiful perfection so portrayed.

The subject of beauty is a real concern for anyone with a trace of sensitivity. Beauty is the one certain factor in life; but although certain in its real effect, it appears to be uncertain in its intangibility and elusiveness. It appears to be transitory and evades comprehension. The subject is perhaps frustrating for those who would call themselves 'artists'. It is ostensibly the fundamental factor of their activity and yet, because little understood, its requisites are largely misunderstood and its primordial position largely misrepresented, if not ignored. Its delicacies and delights are correspondingly rendered inaccessible.

If beauty appears to be an uncertain truth and a transitory mirage, it is because it unerringly mirrors the condition of the

places of perception to themselves and suffers, without loss, the inverted myopic conclusions of its perceivers. However, with an identical veracity and particular generosity, it rewards the eye which turns towards it for its own sake with certain vision beyond belief and faith, and beyond expectation.

Glorification in beauty is the only real satisfaction of the heart. The glorification of beauty is the best 'news' that anyone can give and anyone can receive; perhaps this, even, is the purpose of life – a life only alive in its service. This is a manner of living which is exemplified in the saying: "*The Man of Wisdom, whatever may happen, will never allow himself to be caught up in any one form or belief, for he is wise unto himself.*" (1)

Consider these images: the full moon – on a clear night – reflected over still water – lays out a cool path directly to every observer. This is a common experience and a simple truth. The magnificence of the sun is reflected in an object that transforms its splendour into a light that the constitution can bear – the light made visible in the mirror of the lake. For every observer there is a unique path.

The evident beauty so experienced may not be grasped in the waters of the lake; the image will shatter. Nor may it be analysed by flying to the moon – the process may be fascinating, the achievement tremendous, but the traveller will arrive to dust. Direct observation of the sun will burn up the retina, or those who attempt to reach it will find their faculties dissolved to plummet like Icarus to the earth; or if success in this purposeless pursuit was possible, the inevitable end would be immolation.

Beauty then is not located in a beautiful image. The beauty of architecture will not be found within the masonic mysteries of the cathedrals or mosques; at best might be found a science but ultimately dust. It will not be

(1) Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi.

▷ comprehended by the association of the individual mind. Beauty is not contained by any *thing*; although everything refers to it, nothing will reach it. Only beauty rings unquestionably true; not to the intellect contained within its own terms of reference – which is bewildered before beauty, its capacity overwhelmed in attempting to comprehend the incomprehensible – but to the heart, which alone has sufficient compass. Beauty inspires love; through self-surrender to loving, intimation may lead to a taste; the taste established, becoming habitual, eventually dissolves the self into the Self of Beauty.

2) *The Prophet*  
Mohammed

It is this Self, of which it was said well over a thousand years ago: *“Indeed the Self is extremely beautiful and loves Beauty.”* (2)

(3) *Giordano Bruno*

Throughout the ages people of sentiment and intelligence have been drawn to question why they are and what is their purpose. Some turn their backs on this question and bury their heads like the ostrich in sands of indifference. Some accept answers that do not require them to change; others accept answers that offer a framework for change. Some, however, will not allow themselves to be caught up in any form or belief, or even answer, because nothing

***‘The heart is both active and receptive: it is the beauty expressive and the beauty reflective.’***

limited satisfies the desire for freedom which prompts the heart in its pursuit of these questions. Then, their aim is a unity of being and an absolute truth; a truth that, being absolute, is absolutely the truth of every ‘situation’ imaginable or non-imaginable.

These ‘situations’ are existence without distortion, existence in time without temporality – perfect unique instants complete within themselves, yet portraying in relation to successive non-identical unique instants a continuum of change that is the macrocosmic instant of the universe. Each instant is a face of the beautiful in specific qualification, no other than it, combining in eternity and everlastingness to form a descriptive hologram of the Self of Beauty.

There is a theatre for such a display, of equivalent expanse yet within a setting that appears to be a thing among things, or a man among men. There is, identically, a place for man wherein his aim may be realized, or a place that is the orbit of the love

that these intimations engender. The theatre contains the play performed and receives the play conceived. This theatre is the heart of Man: *“At the crossroads of the horizon, there stands the Man.”* (3)

The heart knows that the ultimate truth is absolute beauty. Absoluteness means that there is, literally, nothing else than it. It is absolved by its own sheer being from the association of anything that might pretend to be else. Throughout the ages the stunning simplicity of this fact has been confirmed with the certainty of direct experience, by firm intuition and rigorous reason. That existence is beauty in infinite multiple reflection is too lucid a truth to be accepted easily by the rational mind, which has been conditioned to recognize and analyse conceptual structures, and which has usurped from the heart the primordial position as the ‘organ’ of perception and intelligence. The heart is both active and receptive: it is the beauty expressive and the beauty reflective. As such it contains all individuals as facets of its abundance and is contained by them in so far as they bear its seed as the kernel of their being. The existence of this relative world, then, is as a play within the theatre of the heart appearing on the projecting stage of the world of nature.

Certain people deny the absoluteness of beauty by disclaiming that “beauty is in the eye of the beholder”. It is, accordingly, psychological subjectivity, a sublimation of pleasurable genetic patterns; but is this not to subvert the purity of light by the opacity of the filter? They are overcome by their own disclaimers; it is precisely because beauty is in the ‘eye’ of the beholder that it is recognized. The beholder is as if between two beauties that are in fact one: a non-existent means to a sublime end, the fluid crystallization of an infinite interplay of light.

What is ‘other’ or ‘else’ is fabrication, self-identity, the whole morass of conditions, images, fantasies, ambitions, that we might associate as ourselves and with which we might be associated. Therefore, if the ‘elseness’ so described is eliminated through dissolution in the love of the most beautiful object of love, we are left with the beauty absolutely and the circle is complete. Thus is existence interfused by the essential truth of self-reflecting sheer beauty. The flavour of such passionate perfection is a mystery tasted by its lovers; for love alone beauty displays a universe of infinite nuance fit to receive its Self, as Man, to be its own lover.

Indeed this Self is extremely beautiful and loves Beauty. ▲

# The Meaning of Esoteric Education

Adam Dupré

**E**soteric education is not an ‘additional’ education. It does not concern the acquisition of a new skill, or a new range of information with a specific end in view (as one might study medicine to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to become a doctor). Rather it concerns the essential person and is more to do with the unfoldment of what is intrinsically human than with the development of any particular faculty.

**E**soteric education is, then, a matter of development, just like any other education, and it takes time and positive application. The point of the process is to bring into the fullness of consciousness the immediate experience of humanity’s fundamental Reality.

What is spoken of in this article is implied by all the world’s mystical or esoteric traditions. Every culture and civilisation has developed its own language – often religious, often outwardly philosophical in the form of its expression – to indicate the central core of meaning. This language is, effectively and paradoxically, a translation into human comprehension of what cannot be fully translated into human comprehension – a translation not as a *description* but as an *indication*.

A Benedictine monk recently pointed out, at a seminar at Beshara Sherborne, that what distinguishes man from animals is the capacity to know that there is a Reality beyond his own knowledge – in other words, he is the only creature who can know that there is *more*. Hence he can appreciate analogy as indication, rather than description. He can know that description is impossible when it pertains to absolute, infinite reality, and he can develop forms of expression (not only in words) to point at that which lies beyond all language.

**A**ll the traditions – whether Christian mystic, or Sufi, or Tibetan Buddhist, or Kabbalist or whatever – have in common that each has refined a language to indicate and lead on to the unfoldment of man’s profoundest potential. There is one important point to be made here and that is that we are not talking about speculative philosophy, but rather of the translation into a ready vehicle of human language of what is known immediately, beyond language, by those who

know.

Any expression has to have a form, and revelation to the level of human beings requires a vehicle suitable to its dignity. Once a vehicle of expression is established, it can be used by virtually anyone – just as anyone can in some sense ‘use’ a high precision tool, though only those with experience will know how to use it properly. Both the philosopher and the mystic make use of what has developed as a common language of expression; what is important is always the meaning that is conveyed by, or enshrined in it. Ibn ‘Arabi (1) apparently once said, “*What is left to us from tradition is merely words – it is up to us to find out what the words mean*”.

Human aspiration, human awareness of ‘more’, human movement from just ‘knowing about’ to really knowing, by ‘taste’, has led throughout history to a more and more subtle vernacular of the expression of mystical indications. Our own tradition in the West stems from the combination of Hellenic and Semitic thought-forms and expression. The language may develop from a combination of speculation and direct experience but in the case of the saint (or man of knowledge), the expression always comes from experience to the ready receptacle of language.

**T**his brings us to the central core of ‘mystics’, so to call them, who translate into human language what is beyond language, and who translate from immediate knowledge of what is beyond. In response, the student, in the process of esoteric education, is from his point of view imbibing something new. By attuning himself more and more to what is unknown (even, apparently, ‘other’) he approaches a real understanding. The unfoldment is a development through words

*1) Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi, the 12th century saint and mystic whose writings form the basis of study at the Beshara Schools of Intensive Esoteric Education.*



- ▷ to what is beyond words, to an attunement with what is of the essence of being human.

There is a story that a man of great and renowned wisdom came to a town known for its many great scholars. On hearing of the wise man's approach, the scholars grew anxious and began to fear for their reputations and positions. Accordingly, when the man drew close to the town, they sent him a messenger carrying a carefully balanced glass full to the brim with water, signifying that the town was full of wise men and there was no room for more. The visitor received the glass, and in silence floated a rose gently on the surface, signifying that he would displace no-one and nothing, but simply brought an added dimension to what was already there. It is vital to realise that esoteric education does not mean abandoning what is already given to one to do in the world – it is concerned with depth, not exclusivity.

To return to the core of wisdom pointed to by every mystical tradition, every real philosophy, and at the heart of all religion; among those who have written and spoken and taught on the matter, there is another distinction to be made, and a very important one. Traditionally, esoteric knowledge has been reserved for a very few. Although it has always been accessible to anyone who had the necessary inclination and perseverance, it has nevertheless been kept secret from the general public. Thus, the means of transmission was traditionally through teachers to their particular pupils. (And

***'Here the starting point is not ignorant man aspiring upwards. Here the starting point is the apex. The description is from the ultimate point of view'***

remember, when we say teaching, we are not talking about an accumulation of information, but about a development of the whole person, on all levels.) So the knowledge was expressed by those who knew, usually, from man's point of view, 'down here', leading on and 'up' to the Truth. This necessitated a guide at each step, and an understanding of the real identity of the guide came only gradually. This way is very difficult without a teacher.

However, there is another way, and this is from the top downwards, so to speak. Here the starting point is not ignorant man aspiring upwards. Here the starting point is the apex. The description is from the ultimate point of view. Though it is still accessible (not without help and resolution and patience) to

everyone who has the inclination to follow the thread – accessible because of man's ability to recognise that he does not know, therefore to understand beyond his present state – yet at the same time the demands are different from those of the traditional, step by step method of the teacher/pupil relationship. What is demanded in this way is an appreciation of the whole picture from the beginning. And the fundamental point is that there is only One Absolute Existence, which includes Its own relative expression as the universes.

If one can grasp the vastness, and indeed the Beauty, of such a vista, one is immediately placed, as relative creature, in a strange situation. One is no longer an acquisitive, quasi-autonomous, separate being wandering around trying to find something positive to do. Rather one is at the same time an expression of the One and Only Existence, and no other than It. One's real identity is, beyond words, images, ideas or description, no other than the Absolute Itself. This becomes more and more the fact of the situation, and one's task becomes to be aware of this as constantly as possible. Everything falls differently – values, perspectives, everything. Not least is the realisation that the only Guide to Reality is Reality Itself.

This, in essence, and all its consequent ramifications, is esoteric education. It usually demands study and conscious application; (I say usually because anything is possible and it can happen in an instant). It is different from the old traditionally understood teacher/pupil relationship. There is a movement now among humanity, a development many see as having become obvious in the 1960's in the West, for people to want more than the traditional path seems to offer. Like everything else, the movement goes in waves, but it appears to be inexorable.

The Beshara schools are an expression of this movement, an opportunity to immerse oneself for short periods of time in the matter of esoteric education with no distractions (it is important that it is for a short time, as these courses are not concerned with abstraction from the world, or an 'alternative' lifestyle). There are courses of all lengths, from six months to weekly evening study groups, each offering the opportunity of exposure to the central understanding of the reality of the meaning of humanity, and inviting one to follow this unfoldment of oneself, so that what is intrinsic becomes fully experienced. I should perhaps add, finally, that this is a private matter, a matter between each human being and God. ▲

# Reviews

## Books

### The Living Economy A New Economics in the Making

Edited by Paul Ekins  
Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986.  
£8.95 p/b, £20 h/b.

Reviewed by Ted Pawloff

During the 6th and 5th centuries BC, mankind underwent a global evolutionary transformation; the great monistic, monotheistic and rationalistic traditions – Taoism, Confucianism, the prophetic movement of Judaism, the Zoroastrian dispensation, Buddhism and the great philosophies of classical Greece – all arose virtually at the same time across the civilisations of that era. The intuition of the unity and order of existence which they embodied had direct and profound consequences for the way people lived: developments such as the establishment of democracy in Greece and the abandonment of the caste system in Buddhist India were integral to the new understanding of Man and the universe which lay at the heart of these new traditions.

Our modern world is the inheritor and descendant of that great transformation. But the process of evolution does not cease. We are now living at a time when another major change is taking place, the magnitude of which can only be compared to that of the classical period. Now, the very structure of our perception and thinking is beginning to be affected by the intuition of the singleness and wholeness of Being.

The significance of this book, in terms of both what it says and what it implies, has to be assessed against this global background. This is not some half-baked exhortation to adopt 'alternative' life-styles; nor is it a collection of well-meaning but hopelessly impractical utopian ideas.

Rather, it is precisely what the title and sub-titles suggest, an outline of a new economics for a new age.

The 'Living Economy', unlike the established system, is one that reflects the wholeness and interconnectness of human activity and natural processes; in it, the personal, social, ecological and spiritual dimensions of the whole cannot be arbitrarily disjoined from their 'economic' significance. As Paul Ekins says in his preface, "...it will become apparent that the New Economics is actually based on a different perception of reality itself, it embodies a change in outlook as fundamental as, say, the Copernican revolution in astronomy".

Such a new outlook can, however, only be validated by the depths of its theoretical insights and the significance of its practical implications, for without the maturity which naturally results in expression and action, it remains only a pious hope. To quote again from the preface: "*And this newness is not just in a normative sense, in the application of new attitudes and value judgements, important though these are. It also applies to positive economics, the study and measurement of economic 'reality'.*"

It is this which makes **The Living Economy** such an exciting, albeit challenging, read. It engenders hope and evokes delight by the consistent and sensitive application of a holistic perspective to a wide range of practical and theoretical problems.

The book has its origin in two years' work of **The Other Economic Summit** (TOES) which was initially set up as a response to the (largely cosmetic) summits of the richest Western nations and has developed into a focus for the theoretical work which is preparing for the transition to a

sustainable economic future. It is a distillation of over fifty papers given by a group of prominent and distinguished contributors to TOES conferences during 1984 and 1985, which soon drew the backing of such bodies as the World Health Organisation and the European Parliament.

The job of editing such weighty and diverse material cannot have been an easy one but Paul Ekins has achieved a remarkable result, both in terms of structure and textual cohesion.

The work is divided into three sections; the first is devoted to a critical review of conventional economic thought, and is entitled "**The Need for a New Economics**". This need is, of course, readily apparent to anyone who reflects that available resources should suffice to feed the world at the present time. But it is a different matter to demonstrate that current economic thinking is not only incapable of dealing with the massive and spiralling problems that the world faces (endemic unemployment, ecological fragility and decreasing resources, poverty, international debt, etc.) but indeed of perceiving or addressing these problems within its present frame of reference.

The focal point for this analysis is the fundamental tenet which forms the basis of economic practice and policy – and which is the expression of all the explicit and implicit assumptions of classical economics – namely, "*that growth is good and more is better*" (Paul Ekins, page 8). Edward Barbier (page 10) shows how the very way that resources have to be allocated in order to maximise growth is inherently self-defeating, and will, in the long run, intensify such problems as inflation and unemployment, for which growth is held up as the panacea. But the system does not only suffer from an increasing inbuilt inability to deliver what it

# The Beshara Trust

The Beshara Trust was set up in 1971 in England with the purpose of providing an environment where any person who wishes to establish a spiritual dimension in their life can come together with others to study and work towards this common aim.

The Trust runs two schools of esoteric education offering courses of varying lengths.

## Beshara Sherborne

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*For further information, and a programme of events, please contact:*

*Beshara Sherborne,  
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## Beshara School of Intensive Esoteric Education, Chisholme House

offers six month courses beginning in April and October each year.

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Roxburghshire, Scotland.  
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## Beshara Study Groups

are active throughout the UK and elsewhere. At present there are groups in

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USA – Los Angeles, San Francisco, Austen (Texas)

*For further information on any of these, please contact Beshara Sherborne.*

▷ promises; “...*the hypnotic focus of economics on money*” (Hazel Henderson, page 37) means that environmental degradation and resource depletion are not taken into account as such (Hartford Thomas, page 12) and that their consequences may even show up as an increase in GNP (Gross National Product), the standard measure of economic growth. For instance, pollution and degradation of green-belt areas result in the construction of ‘leisure facilities’, additional use of health care and social services, increased travel to more distant country areas and in the establishment of pollution control agencies and measures, etc. All this appears as new ‘economic’ activity in GNP calculations and is thus hailed by politicians and economists as part of the planned-for increase in national wealth.

Conventional economics is also blind to what is termed ‘the informal economy’ (eg. work within home and family, voluntary organisations, etc) which is estimated at 60% of GNP (Paul Sparrow, page 34) insofar as it can be given a cash value at all. Yet the moment some part of this is brought within the ‘GNP-monitised’ part of the economy, it is counted as a ‘gain’, even though no additional goods or services need actually be produced and regardless of possible loss of welfare (maternal care, home cooking, fresh produce, community health and social care, etc.)

Of indicators (such as GNP), Hazel Henderson says (page 37) “*Indicators only reflect our innermost core values and goals, measuring the development of our own understanding.*” Thus, as far as current thinking is concerned, it becomes clear that not only are the means whereby it seeks to achieve its ends inadequate, but the ends themselves are misconceived. The rigour, detail and cogency of the analysis in this section make the indictment of conventional economic approaches irrefutable.

The second section elaborates the New Economics as it has been developed so far and is appropriately called “**Putting People First**”. It is here that the exploratory nature of the exercise is most apparent. The pivot is a discussion of human needs which “*represents a departure from the traditional strategy of ‘basic needs’ satisfaction*” (Manfred Max-Neef, page 50) and “*is clearly related to perceptions of value and human motivation*” (Paul Ekins, page 62).

Around the question of needs is articulated a discussion of the nature of work, self-reliance and health and the possibility of setting up new indicators of (true) economic progress. To give an example of the kind of discussion in this section, Max-Neef, in his paper “*Human-Scale Economics: The Challenges Ahead*”, (page 45) proposes an analysis of human needs which distinguishes 9 fundamentals, ranging from subsistence and protection to meaning (identity) and freedom, which he distinguishes from their ‘satisfiers’ (eg. housing, food and income for subsistence). This facilitates discussion outside the traditional growth-based paradigm (which almost exclusively recognises material satisfiers as ‘needs’) and allows him “*to go so far as to say that one of the aspects that defines a culture is its choice of satisfiers. Whether a person belongs to a consumerist or an ascetic society, her fundamental human needs are the same. What changes is her choice of quantity and quality of satisfiers.*”

On the one hand, this sort of analysis equips the reader with tools to grapple with matters often regarded as intractable problems. On the other, it is here that the connection and dependence of the new economics on a holistic and spiritual understanding of man is most evident. As Willis Harman writes (“*The Role of Corporations*”, page 344) “*Underlying the well-documented recent strengthening, in most industrialised countries, of*

*‘inner-directed’ values (ecological, humane, spiritual) and the corresponding weakening of economic and status values, is a more subtle but more fundamental shift of beliefs.....Modern industrial society, like every other society in history, rests on some set of largely tacit, basic assumptions about who we are, what kind of universe we are in and what is ultimately important to us,.... a respiritualisation of Western society is taking place, but one more experiential and non-institutionalised, less fundamentalist and sacerdotal, than most of the historically familiar forms of religion.*”

The third section is entitled “**The New Economics in Action**”. I found it exhilarating reading, as it is a treasure trove of actual experiments, present-day impasses, possible models, real-life policies and motivations. Each of these has both practical bearing upon the situation ‘on the ground’ as well as further implications for the theory. It leaves one with the impression of something vibrant with life and seething with joyful creativity; and bears all the hallmarks of that fundamental change of vision with which so many people are trying to align themselves.

The book ends by saying; “*The New Economics is taking shape. Conceptually and practically, it is already within our grasp. We have the brains, the technology, the resources. Increasing numbers of people now share its values and attitudes. It already exists in the lives of those who live and work, not only for their own enrichment and personal development, but also in co-operation with and with consideration for others, society at large and the planet itself. When this awareness becomes the norm and is reflected in economic theory and practice at all levels, the The Living Economy will have arrived. And, in the broadest sense of the word, humanity will be the richer for it.*” ▲

## Dialogues with Scientists and Sages

### The Search for Unity

by Renée Weber

Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986.  
£7.95 p/b

Reviewed by Jane Clark

In the introductory essay to this book, Renée Weber says: *“There are few final conclusions in a dialogue because it is, by definition, open-ended, flowing and tentative. It explores rather than settles questions and allows for – demands – a participatory mode.....”*

It is the extent to which this kind of interchange is really achieved that makes this such an enjoyable and important book. In twelve conversations conducted by Renée Weber between 1979 and 1984 with four scientists at the forefront of what has become known as ‘The New Science’, and four contemporary mystics of stature, it covers subjects such as space, time, matter and consciousness, creativity, individuality, energy and life, the meaning of light, karma, compassion, and man’s place in the universe. These are all tackled with a lightness, depth of insight and lack of dogmatism which make it a fascinating read and which are, in a field so much in fashion at the moment, regrettably rare. Those who are unfamiliar with the ideas of the new science will find it an excellent introduction, whilst those with previous knowledge will find much that is new.

The quality of the conversation is largely due to Renée Weber herself, who brings passion and informed intelligence to her part in the dialogues and to her editing. More important, she has a principal commitment to a proper perspective; ie, to unity. In her introductory essay, she describes how her search for this unity and the ‘deep structure’ of things took her away from her first discipline of philosophy (which she says has now “*given up wrestling, as philosophy did*

*since the Greeks, with life’s great questions”*) to the study of contemporary science and finally to mysticism, which she sees as concerned with “a greater wholeness”. Her central tenet is that *“Aparallel principle drives both science and mysticism – the assumption that unity lies at the heart of our world and that it can be discovered and experienced by man”* (page 13). She believes that they are complementary activities, each with something to give the other – that *“science seeks to explain the mystery of being, mysticism to experience it”*

The scientific sections are dominated by the quantum physicist **David Bohm** who, in three separate conversations, discusses his theory of the Superimplicate order, the nature of creativity and the place of mathematics in science. He joins the biologist **Rupert Sheldrake** for one of the most interesting dialogues entitled “Matter as a Meaning Field”, in which they explore together the scientific concept of ‘the participatory universe’ – where every particle, even the electron, has an inner meaning and ‘a kind of consciousness’ – and expose, most enjoyably, the anthropomorphic nature of the mechanistic model of reality. Also interviewed are the Nobel prizewinner, **Ilya Prigogine** who, with his work on non-equilibrium structures and irreversible time, has pioneered a new, holistic approach to biological systems and **Stephen Hawking**, the ‘discoverer’ of black holes and leading light of Grand Unification Theory. At the beginning of each section, Renée Weber introduces her interviewee and gives a brief but lucid summary of his ideas.

The ‘sages’ are the Buddhists **Lama Govinda** – “On Matter and Maya” – and **His Holiness the Dalai Lama**, who explores the theme “Compassion as a Field of Emptiness”. The Benedictine monk and scholar, **Father Bede Griffiths**, who has spent the last 30

years in Southern India, speaks on the unity and synthesis of science, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism in a lovely conversation entitled “Sacred Simplicity” and **Krishnamurti**, in a dialogue he refused to have taped, denies the relevance of science not only to mysticism, but to human life at all at this stage of our evolution.

It is an indication of the openness of the dialogue that it allows for the expression of dissenting views; Stephen Hawking also disagrees with Renée Weber’s central tenet and is quoted as saying *“I think it’s a cop-out. If you find theoretical physics and mathematics too hard, you turn to mysticism”* (Page 210). His view that religion and mysticism become valid only where, or if, science fails – or that *“if there is an edge to the universe, there must be a God”* – is one that is held not only by many opponents to the dialogue between science and religion, but also by many supporters. It is to the credit of this book that a firmer grasp of the real nature of mysticism is exhibited overall. Renée Weber at one point refers to it as *“the science of the spirit”* and writes *“By the criterion of unity, science may be less ‘scientific’ than mysticism, which aims at a more comprehensive unification...Although the scientist wants to unify everything in one ultimate equation, he does not want to unify consistently, since he wants to leave himself out of that equation”* (page 10).

The greater perspective of the mystic is expressed beautifully by the Dalai Lama in the last dialogue where he says *“..without knowledge of consciousness, it is very difficult to have a thorough knowledge of matter”* (page 241). This conversation, entitled “Subtle Matter, Dense Matter”, is a three way discussion with David Bohm and is one of the gems of the book, demonstrating how much of value can be drawn out when a proper perspective is adopted and the participants are truly knowledgeable. It reflects

and exemplifies the greater dialogue between science and mysticism which is essential if the potential of our age is to be fulfilled; as His Holiness goes on : “ *And if you know the modern scientific explanation of matter, this could help to explain consciousness better.....if we have balanced knowledge, good knowledge about consciousness and good knowledge about matter, I think we will have a better human society.*” ▲

## Films

**Thérèse (PG)**

**Director : Alain Cavalier**  
**With Catherine Mouchet, Aurore Prieto, Sylvie Habault.**  
**France 1986. 90 mins.**

Reviewed by Christopher Ryan

**T**hérèse Martin was born in 1873, the ninth child of a pious Normandy couple. When 14 years old she was refused admittance to the rigorous Carmelite Order. Later, on a pilgrimage to Rome she pleaded with Pope Leo XIII and in 1889 she entered the convent at Lisieux. After a brilliant but brief flowering, she died of tuberculosis in 1897, a pure harmonic of her namesake, the great revivifier of the Carmelites, St. Teresa of Avila.

It is often difficult, when relating cases of intense spiritual ardour that are born within a specific religious or social framework, not to confuse the subjects' interior happenings, which are universal in their meaning, with their effects, in terms of 'popular history' that manifest from the unrestrained fervour of their contemporaries. Alain Cavalier's success with "Thérèse" lies in his simple conformity to the facts as written by Thérèse Martin herself and an unqualified recognition of that sentiment for Love which compelled her extraordinary life. By this

## BESHARA

Beshara magazine appears four times a year and is available only by subscription from the Beshara Trust and from selected newsagents and bookshops.

**The September Issue** will include

**Dr. R. W. J. Austin – Poverty and Self-Sufficiency**

Two poems by Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi newly translated by Dr. Austin, with his commentary.

**Richard Twinch – The Evolution/Devolution Conundrum**

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▷ adherence Cavalier has increased her influence beyond the confines of church and cloister to a position universal in its appreciation.

The life of Thérèse Martin, 'St. Thérèse of Lisieux', is one in which the fires of Divine Love burned from an early age. "To me, He has given His Infinite Mercy, and it is in this ineffable mirror that I contemplate His other attributes" she writes in her *l'Histoire d'une Ame*. If St. Thérèse herself situates her vision at this all-encompassing vantage point, then any attempt to portray her life needs to be intended likewise. Her determination to establish this Mercy as the arbiter of all her actions is echoed in the choice to which the viewer is invited: either to be an onlooker, and become engulfed in the apparent hardship and suffering of self-denial – "the first thirty years are the hardest" says one old nun; or to plunge in wholeheartedly with Thérèse, who, when exhorted to "keep knocking .....suffering is the key" rejoins with wilful rhetoric "Not love?".

The theme is mirrored also in the purity of the film's presentation. The plain grey backdrop of all the scenes, the poverty of prop, and a technique of filming reminiscent of 19th century photo-portraiture pondering the eyes and facial gestures, all gently draw in the viewer to this private contemplative world. Each scene-shift corresponds not so much to a chronological displacement, as to the changing 'moods' of the subject's vision. Time in the film takes on a qualitative dimension, engendered by the gradual dispensing with worldly supports, so that her death is presented to the viewer, by now fellow contemplative, as the return to its Author of one episode within an epic Infinity. Catherine Mouchet, in her first film, has submitted gracefully to the inherent vivacity which the title role demands, and conforms naturally to the spirit of Thérèse.

It is not a film to be taken lightly. Nor certainly should one imagine it as the harbinger of some kind of hagiolatrous revival. It seems inspired from that situation where sainthood, which is of Divine Possession, resides; and the hand which in this instance we call Thérèse is evident in this work. ▲

## Exhibitions

**From Byzantium to El Greco: Greek Frescoes and Icons**  
Royal Academy of Arts, London.

Reviewed by Christopher Ryan

At a time when the government in Athens is asserting control over the property of the Orthodox Church in Greece, and when even the future of the chair of Byzantine and Modern Greek at Oxford is in doubt, is it surprising that, as a threatened orchard will suddenly produce its finest crop, we now find set before us such sweet fruit?

London has recently been the setting for two excellent exhibitions. Axia's exquisite 'East Christian Art' exhibition at the Bernheimer Gallery, complemented by Mr Petsopoulos' splendid catalogue, ended on May 1st. and **From Byzantium to El Greco: Greek Frescoes and Icons** at the Royal Academy of Arts continued into June. The Virgin Kardiotissa (cat no. 35) alone made the visit to the latter worthwhile. Painted in the attitude of 'Glykophilousa' (literally: sweet kissing) by the celebrated Cretan Angelos, this Virgin and Child contains all the warmth of maternal sentiment of a Raphael Madonna while in no way compromising the transcendent dignity we are accustomed to find in an icon. Another significant theme of iconography was represented in an extraordinary double-sided icon of the Virgin Hodegetria (cat no. 8A). The

archetype of this image of Mary as "the one who leads the way" is the icon painted from life by St. Luke. The original had been venerated in Constantinople since the fifth century, and had survived the Iconoclasts and the devastation of the city by the Latins in 1204. It disappeared after the Ottoman Conquest of 1453, though some say it travelled to the monastery at Sumela in the Empire of Trebizond. In our icon the Virgin is shown in an attitude of intense withdrawal, from which manifests the extreme care and protecting fear for her son, the child Jesus, whom she supports in one hand and indicates with the other.

Iconography, a science with its roots in the principle that "God made man in His Own Image", never ceases to be relevant as the origin and prototype of all the theories and interpretations which have come down to us in the name of art. It is a timely reminder in the ever-infilled world of Warhol's *fifteen minutes of fame* to return to the simplicity and abidingness of the originals. Perhaps, even, we may penetrate into a greater reality, to that unpaintable Beauty, aloof and unattainable to the egocentric vision; or, as Professor Cyril Mango puts it in his essay "The Cult of Icons" printed in the exhibition catalogue, we may see how "the relation of an image to its model (or prototype) ... was intimate like that of a signet to its impression." Here the heart of the artist and the adorer alike become as wax to Beauty's imprint.

That these icons are now shown in an art gallery and not in a church is indicative of the universality of the images themselves. That they now find mankind where he is, on a street in London, with no less appropriateness than within a monastery wall, only emphasises the ubiquity of the Spirit they represent. ▲

# The Beshara Trust – News and Events

## What is the difference ? A Reaffirmation

When we were asked, all of us together, “Am I not your Lord?” did we not all answer “Indeed you are” in the form of a definite and complete corroboration and acquiescence. So indeed the unequivocal word was “Bela!”, which means: certainly, absolutely and categorically. It would seem that after such an affirmation, each time we say the same thing we should say the new affirmation with the same strength and stress and, above all, certitude as we did, most spontaneously and without reason or hesitation, confirmed and contained basically in the answer with which we have affirmed and are willing now to reaffirm with the same certainty.

The need, then, is for a recollection of the original premise and a repetition, in intensity at least, even if not in the words used.

This would unavoidably show itself through complete conformity to the Lord, at which point it makes no difference whether the responder is here or there, in this place or that; wherever or whenever he is, there is the face of God. An echo of this essential reaffirmation is apparent in the Easter celebrations of the Greek church where the rejoinder to the affirmation ‘Christ is risen’ (*Christos Anesti*) is ‘Indeed he is risen’ (*Alliethos Anesti*).

Reaffirmation is the fabric of the Third Esoteric Education Course to be run by the Chisholme Institute under the auspices of the Beshara Trust, and in conformity to the supplication of Ismael Hakki Bursevi (in the introduction to the *Fusus al Hikam* (1)) to “initiate your intention to the love of God according to ‘I was a Hidden Treasure and I Loved to be Known’”. Rather than provid-

ing fixed answers, the course poses questions that touch on the essential matter of what is meant by the Unity of Existence. The Answerer is apparent to the sincere questioner.

Those who have already attended both previous six month courses are invited to attend this period of reaffirmation as preparation for, and involvement in, the expansion of Beshara. It is clear that such expansion is not to do with the makings of organisation, which, like “*the best laid plans of mice and men gang aft aglay*” (according to Robbie Burns.) Rather, as Shakespeare puts it in *The Merchant of Venice* “*The quality of mercy is not strain’d*”. It is this insistent quality of “*not being strain’d*” that initiates and promotes expansion. This coincides with Ibn ‘Arabi’s explanation of the outward breath of the Compassionate Ipseity, the *nafas-er-Rahman*, which is itself Nature – not only that nature which surrounds us but what we bodily are. Reaffirmation is conscious conformity with, and in, the *nafas-er-Rahman*. When there is conformity, then the intention for expansion can be fulfilled, and love is kindled in the heart, the seat of vision.

Immediate vision precipitates action in service. When God appears as Merciful, then the conforming servant shows mercy; when He appears as Generous then generosity manifests; when as the Organiser then organisation follows, and so on, including all the infinite names and qualities.

Those of us who have studied for years and still keep Reality at arm’s length, waiting for a more fortuitous time – perhaps when our fortune has been made or the

immediacy of physical death threatens – are thrown into the whirlpool to sink or swim. It is no longer adequate to wait, but impossible to move without Divine Aid – “*God lends a helping hand – do not suffer sadness*” (Koran). There never was a whirlpool, never was the imaginary self with which we encumber ourselves – there is only His Ipseity, and it is to this that we are asked to wake up.

It can be no coincidence that Beshara is mentioned in the *Fusus al Hikam* of Ibn ‘Arabi, in the chapter concerning the **Wisdom of Uniqueness in the Word of Hud**, and arises in conjunction with the meeting of this prophet of the people of ‘Ad with the author of the *Fusus*. Hud corroborates the uniqueness of each individuation and the special face that God shows to each individual. We are told that “*for the creation there is no Beshara (good tidings) greater than this, that Hud with the Word of Truth, announced that Truth, God, is the Ipseity (essence) of all things*”.

There is no question of pantheism here either. Ibn ‘Arabi stresses that ‘things’ are illusory. What is *in* all things is the Essence of the Truth. Such announcement lies at the core of Beshara and the manner of its coming through Hud is explained by Ibn ‘Arabi as due to the fact that “*his ways and tastes..... were most suitable in the ways of tawhid, Unity in plurality*”. Ibn ‘Arabi later describes Hud as “*a man large among men, who is sweet of countenance, his conversation subtle, pleasurable and light*”.

There is nothing weak or feeble about such sweetness. Indeed it arises from strength (Hud being described as ‘*large among men*’). Nor is lightness of conversation to the detriment of the subject matter, which is weighty – rather it reflects the delicacy and tact necessary in talking of what is unlimited and

undefinable. If it is occasioned that the Beloved is veiled from the lover, this is described as Anger and hence 'fear' of the Lord is the proper response. A servant's pleasure lies in pleasing his Lord, whatever mode predominates at that instant, knowing in certainty that it is Mercy which is at the root of all expression, and that such benevolence is in itself sweet. Such is the manner of those for whom Beshara is dear, and in whose 'subtle, pleasurable and light' converse we are invited to participate.

*"If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all".*

(William Shakespeare 'Hamlet')

*(1) From the translation by Bulent Rauf, published by the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society.*

## Beshara Trust Seminar Series

The Beshara Seminars, initiated in 1985, will begin this year in July with visits by Dr. Rom Harré and Kathleen Raine. The idea behind these events is that speakers at the forefront of knowledge in their particular field are invited to Sherborne in order to stimulate an exploration and enriched appreciation of the meaning of the Unity of Being. The seminar format allows for an undogmatic and tolerant context conducive to this exchange.

**Dr. Harré**, Vice Principal of Linacre College, Oxford, will be giving a talk on a Friday evening, July 17th, entitled "**Ontology and Physics – the Case of Quantum Field Theory**". Dr. Harré is a leading Philosopher of Science and has written on "*The*

*Principles of Scientific Thinking*" and "*Great Scientific Experiments*" (1986). He will be followed by **Kathleen Raine**, a writer of international renown and doyenne of Blake scholars, who will be taking a weekend seminar entitled "**Nature – House of the Soul**". This weekend will be spent discussing and reading poetry that 'reflects the Spirit', including works by William Blake, Edwin Muir, Vernon Watkins and David Gascoyne.

Later on in the year, we look forward to a visit by **Paul Ekins**, Director of The Other Economic Summit and editor of the book **The Living Economy** which is reviewed on page 23 of this magazine. He will be taking a weekend seminar from September 25th, in which he will ►

**Please note in your diary**

**SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 1987**

**For the Annual General Meeting  
of The Beshara Trust**

This year, the Consultant and all the Trustees of the Beshara Trust will be at Sherborne for an Annual General Meeting. All are welcome to discuss the various projects which are being run by the Trust and to question the Trustees in order to inform themselves more fully of these activities.

The format for the day will be lunch, followed by an introductory talk by the Chairman of the Trust, Hugh Tollemache. Each Trustee will then chair a small group of visitors, and the subject for discussion by each of these groups will be entirely free. After tea we shall re-convene to discuss the thoughts of the various groups.

Participants are invited for lunch, tea and refreshments. We especially hope that many of those who have not had the opportunity to discuss the aims of Beshara with the Trustees will be able to attend.

**Further information on this event will be  
circulated in due course, but please keep this important day free.**

▷ be talking about the new models of economics which incorporate a holistic perspective.

Then in November, **Dr. Michael Shallis**, a lecturer in Physical Sciences from the University of Oxford Department of External Studies will be speaking on “**Science, Religion and The Symbolic World**”. Dr. Shallis, who is an astrophysicist by training, has written widely and his books include “*The Silicon Idol*” and “*On Time*” which has just been published by Penguin.

**T**he importance and potential of the seminars is unlimited, particularly where they concern the ongoing and exciting dialogue between the truths of spiritual intuition and the implications of the scientific discoveries. Professor Paul Davies has said that “*the theme of simplicity, beauty and wholeness recurs again and again as nature’s mysteries and subtleties are explored*”. This indicates that

scientific experimentation is reaching the threshold of a quality of appreciation which concurs with that of people whose writings and lives are informed and inspired by the Unity of Being. What at first may be apprehended as a concept, namely the Unity of Being, and experienced as an evanescent beauty, can be willingly and consciously re-integrated into the being of the individual self. As Bulent Rauf said in the last issue of BESHARA (“To Suggest a Vernacular”), “*this procedure [of integration] would demand a premise or a platform which would go beyond a formalised religion*”, and beyond the parameters of physics.

Mr Rauf goes on to comment that “*it is the required birthright of today that it should be allowed to benefit from a new expression of both religion and physics in the formulation of a new vision*”. **The Beshara Seminars exist not as a forum for comparative ideas,**

**but to facilitate the emergence of such a unifying and universal vision.**

Full details of the seminar programme are given on page 10.

## Announcements

### BESHARA FOUNDATION

Due to his immanent return to England, Richard Hornsby has resigned as President of the Beshara Foundation in the United States. Christopher Shelley has been appointed his successor.

### TURNING

The Sherborne Centre has now purchased the full-length version of the film **Turning**. Copies are available from Lyn Cullum at Sherborne.

## Notes on Contributors

### Rupert Sheldrake

read Natural Science and took a Ph.D in biochemistry at Cambridge as the Rosenheim Fellow of the Royal Society. He carried out research at Cambridge on the development of plants. He is consultant plant physiologist to the International Crops Research Institute in Hyderabad.

His book **A New Science of Life** appeared in 1981 and provoked a storm of controversy amongst scientists, being described by **Nature** as a “candidate for burning”.

### Richard Twinch

studied architecture at Cambridge and the Architectural Association and has attended both the introductory and advanced courses at the Beshara School of Intensive Education. He currently runs a specialist computer software business, is

computer correspondent to **Building Design** and acts as consultant on building technology.

### Richard Waddington

read architecture at Trinity Hall, Cambridge and at the Architectural Association. Since attending the courses of the Beshara School of Intensive Education, he has been in practice in the Cotswolds.

### Adam Dupré

took a degree in Theology at Kings College, London. He was director of studies at the Beshara School of Intensive Education for 3 years, has lectured in Australia and US and is Chairman of The Chisholme Institute. He now works in commerce.

### Abraham Abadi

studied mechanical engineering at the Israel Institute of

Technology. He has acted as coordinator of studies on several courses at the Beshara School of Intensive Esoteric Education and has published articles in the Journal of Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society. He currently works in industry.

### Ted Pawloff

was born in Leopoldville in the Belgium Congo (now Kinshasa, Zaire) and was educated in France, Austria and UK. He broke off a degree course in philosophy at Sussex University, travelled widely in Europe and Asia and has since attended three courses at the Beshara School of Intensive Esoteric Education. He is currently Managing Director of Beshara Press, which he started in 1975 as a one man operation and which in nine years he has built into a multi-million pound business employing more than 60 people.

