

book reviews

Books in this section can be purchased via the Network web site (www.scimednet.org) from Amazon.co.uk and the Network will receive a 10% commission. In addition, the Network receives a 5% commission on all sales if you log on through our web site!

science/philosophy of science

A Hard Question of Fundamental Definition

Chris Allen

QUANTUM PHYSICS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

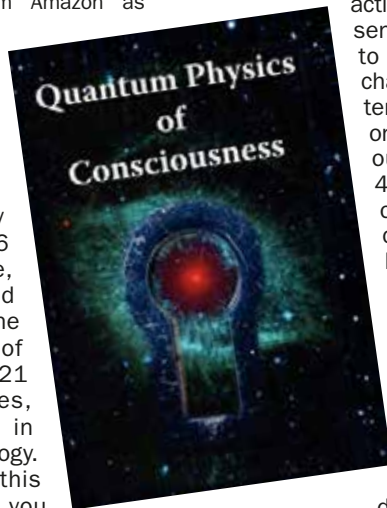
Authors: Various (Contents Selected from Volumes 3 and 14 of the Journal of Cosmology)

Cosmology Science Publishers, 300 pp., £24.45, p/b - ISBN-13: 978-0-9829-55277 from Amazon. It is also available from Amazon as a downloadable e-book for £4.99

Criticism is said to be the currency of the world; that being so, it is not difficult to understand why there is such rich diversity of opinion in the 16 reviews—10 positive, 6 critical—to be found on Amazon.com of the paperback version of this collection of 21 peer-reviewed articles, originally published in the *Journal of Cosmology*. Make no mistake, this book is like Bovril; you either love it or hate it!

And it's hard work; you have to make the effort to gain at least a rudimentary understanding of Quantum Mechanics to get much benefit out of it. It's also expensive in paperback form.

Nevertheless, having parted company with a fiver, I consider the e-book version to be the most interesting and—for the most part—best written piece of non-fiction I have ever downloaded. It is well illustrated with plenty of useful diagrams. There are also quite a few equations, but not a super abundance to put you off. Many of the contributors are leading researchers in the field and have diverse backgrounds: Computer Science, Philosophy, Theology as well as Physics. Some of the most difficult age old questions such as free will vs. determinism, the relationship between mind and brain, the true nature of reality and the possibility of a spiritual dimension to life are addressed in fresh and compelling ways from a quantum perspective.



Nevertheless, for the purposes of writing a balanced appraisal, I found it profitable to study what others have to say, particularly the detractors. And their main bone of contention seems to be one of establishing agreement on a fundamental definition of consciousness ... Or rather the failure to do so because it's a notoriously difficult thing to do. It's like trying to define life. We recognize it easily enough but can't say what it is. In humans it seems to manifest itself as an awareness of one's surrounding and other people, as well as the ability to be able to pay attention in order to interact. Memory must come into it as far as personal identity is concerned also ... intentionality ... purposeful

action ... responsiveness to sensory input ... reaction to painful stimulus and changes in environmental temperature. However, as one of the articles points out, there are at least 40 different viewpoints or definitions of consciousness currently being bandied about!

So if people can't seem to come to a consensus as to what consciousness actually is ... or so the argument goes ... you can't use one set of inadequately defined processes to

explain away another set, in other words, the mysteries of Quantum Mechanics which are impossible to reconcile with terms of classical cause and effect. And therefore the critics argue you can't hijack the new Physics to provide confirmation of extrasensory perception, paranormal phenomena or ancient Indian philosophies.

Maybe the doubters are right and, in fact, one of the contributors attempts a deconstruction of the topic by providing an explanation of Quantum Reality by leaving out considerations of consciousness all together. But this approach comes at a price. He ends up not only with an unsettling but also a counter intuitive conclusion as he freely admits himself.

My personal sympathies are with those who seem to think that it is worth making the effort to tighten up definitions—no matter how difficult—look at the evidence dispassionately and, if necessary, be prepared to go beyond the limitations of the existing

scientific and medical world view. This, after all, is the mission statement of the SMN, is it not? And so, to that extent, I found the article of most interest to be that of Dr Edgar Mitchell (Apollo Astronaut—6th man to walk on the Moon) and Robert Staretz on *The Quantum Hologram and the Nature of Consciousness*

The Quantum Hologram or QH for short is a comparatively new model of information processing in Nature. The authors believe that not only is it strongly supported by evidence but also that it provides a basis for understanding consciousness. They argue that it elevates the role of information to the same fundamental status as is currently enjoyed by matter and energy in the mainstream scientific world view. They further speculate that the QH is Nature's infinitely vast information storage and retrieval system that's been around since the beginning of time ... I found this suggestion brought the *Brahman* or *Absolute* of Advaita Vedanta tradition of Indian Philosophy to mind.

The authors point out that consciousness and the relationship of mind to the brain have been regarded as hard questions which Western science has preferred to kick into the long grass and leave to philosophers and theologians ... well ... until quite recently. And much of the present research effort to find some answers to these most taxing questions rests on a questionable assumption, that of Epiphenomenalism ... the notion that consciousness or mind if you will ... is the by-product of and is entirely confined to processes within the brain. Nevertheless, the authors suggest that there is a considerable amount of accumulating experimental and anecdotal evidence to suggest otherwise.

At its most basic level, they argue that consciousness is associated with a sense of separation and awareness of the surrounding environment and that it's fair to say that it is associated with the ability to process, to store and or act on information gathered from the outside world. From that point of view, they question whether consciousness is restricted to a functioning brain. Are, for instance, microscopic organisms such as viruses, amoebae and algae conscious in some primitive sense?

Clearly whilst not possessing brains, nervous systems or even neurons, somehow these simple entities do

display rudimentary awareness, intentionality and the capacity to manipulate their environment. And furthermore, there is now strong evidence to suggest that even **non-living** particles at the molecular, atomic and subatomic levels also seem to be aware of their environment and to be able in a purposeful way to interact with it by means of the quantum phenomena of non-locality and entanglement.

So could it be, they ask, that the most basic level of consciousness originates with these ubiquitous quantum events throughout the world of organic and inorganic matter? If so, this suggests that, in essence, we live in a participatory universe; there is no such thing as pure objectivity or separation.

Or to put it more succinctly they offer a Sanskrit proverb from antiquity:

“God sleeps in the minerals, awakens in plants, walks in animals and thinks in man.”

Chris Allen is a retired Technical Author with a degree in Physics and many years of experience working as a contractor in such industries as Avionics, Defence and Transport. He is a crime writer specialising in unusual and well researched fiction. He is also a hypnotherapist and has a lifelong interest in military history, jurisprudence, criminology and Advaita Vedanta philosophy. Web site: www.cach.co.uk

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO COLOUR APPEARANCE AROUND THE EARTH. Rainbow, Halos, Dawn and Dusk

Johannes Köhl

Adonis Science Books, 183 pp., \$30, p/b - ISBN 978 - 0932776 - 48 - 8 www.adonispress.org

This book explores the captivating colours that appear in the atmosphere of the earth: coronas, glories, halos, rainbows, dawn and dusk. It invites the reader to observe these ephemeral appearances with renewed attention and understanding. In addition, it introduces us to little-known key events in Goethe's life that were intimately related to his scientific pursuits and his deep experience of colour.

The text moves fluently between natural observations and suggested experiments while the photographs encapsulate the best examples of these. We can constantly relate our own experiences in nature to what is exemplified here. Anything not immediately familiar in the discussion is compensated for by the quality of the pictures and the memories of one's own atmospheric and colour impressions.

The book's aim is to be a bridge, or many coloured bow, spanning the physics of atmospheric colour and a spiritual approach to them. I believe nature observers, thinkers, and scientists will all be rewarded by the multi-faceted approach used here.

Gradually, over the first five chapters, a range of phenomena is described and ordered to give a complete survey of what Goethe called the physical colours, the colours which arise from colourless conditions. Transparent prisms, and raindrops are the most commonly known of this type of colour formation. They arise also through fine dust, misty condensation and thin films for example. Structure and geometry are the determining factors rather than intrinsic colouration. The systematic investigation of the phenomena here presented in no way diminishes one's expectation and anticipation for further experiences. On the contrary, the explicit wish is that it may be possible to “touch your eyes with the magic wand of knowing what to see”.

All types of physical colour, indeed all types of colour formation known to physics, occur in the transparent life-supporting air between the illuminated earth and the darkness of space. The concept ‘turbidity’—possibly unfamiliar to some audiences—is used here to define the fine and varied material elements that bring about the interaction of light and dark, and thus the subtle mediating role of the atmosphere is made clear. It is the kind of understanding that is both intellectually satisfying and yet leaves us free to experience the phenomena on all levels of our being.

So there follows naturally a chapter on the “sensory-moral effects” of atmospheric colours, where the fullness of human experience is included in the sequence of observations. From coronas to dawn and dusk a process of integration towards wholeness parallels the range of experiences already described: knowledge and experience flow together: “In composite situations with colour phenomena like the rainbow, or dawn and dusk, the human being is integrated, part of the whole.” At special moments we can even think that Nature builds her own temple around us, within us, and within the world all at once.

The book continues with a very readable overview of Goethe's Colour Theory. Important references and generous acknowledgements are made to Goethe scholars who sought to justify and uphold the scientific character of Goethe's method. A bold and clear conclusion is arrived at: the process for colour appearance as described in Goethe's theory of colours is symbolic of the process of gaining insight—the appearance of truth in the world through human thinking.

In this context, we can consider that the translation of this book into English has an extra cultural significance. Only one third of Goethe's colour theory has ever, to this day, been published in English. The translators of the Didactic part decided, back in 1837, not to publish the Polemical and Historical parts of the work. Goethe's sometimes vehement criticism of Newton's colour theory was judged irrelevant for a British audience!

Newton laid the foundations for mechanical physics and in the process divided human experience from invisible movement processes in space and time. What he called “corpuscles” of light, and today would be called electromagnetic oscillations, are supposed to constitute the real ‘outer’ world which stimulates our ‘inner’ colour perceptions. Deeper thought reveals this to be an impossible world view- and that is why Rudolf Steiner devoted so much time to its refutation while he worked to champion Goethe's original scientific approach.

A mechanical view of the world is however very useful for developing machine technology and so we see today the tremendous success of a science that bypasses the qualities of our experience for a world of measurements, movements, and forces. The scientific work here being reviewed is an example of a new kind of science aiming for conscious participation at all levels of our being, not only for explanation or technical control.

The book invites us to consider that it was Goethe's urge to defend human nature that made him “so astonishingly polemical about conventional Newtonian theory”. For Goethe the whole issue of the theory of colour was inextricably bound up with a profound and fundamental understanding of the nature of human insight and its appearance in the world.

Johannes Köhl then takes a conciliatory approach showing that both conventional physics and a Goethean approach can complement each other's standpoint: “From each perspective one can learn about the other's point of view. There is something to be gained from each, to the benefit of both.”

Following the notable crescendo of the previous chapters, a refreshing narrative is then woven together from Goethe's letters and poems, describing the place of the Theory of Colours in Goethe's biography. Impressed by Goethe's boldest statements and his positive confidence, many of us have long felt certain that some holistic experience must have occurred within him. Here it has been located and imaginatively reconstructed. Like all true experiences of this kind it was largely inexpressible, except perhaps to his most intimate friends, but it later came to expression in his poetry. That

such an experience was an impulse for the beginning of Goethe's scientific studies is a wonderful discovery.

A wonderful concluding chapter titled "The Earth's Atmosphere as the Natural Abode of Colour" brings together the book's achievement, and invites us to consider the meaning and mystery of our situation as colour beholders.

After this, Chapter 10 is called an appendix as it contains something for scientific specialists, rather than simply for the person who loves colour. There are indications for future research and references to new developments in colour experiments which have already become fruitful in the educational sphere. In particular, the symmetry of both the methods of Goethe and Newton, and the polarity in colour itself, can be revealed by producing both the light and dark spectra simultaneously for example in prism experiments and with colour mixing. Traditional school experiments are certainly enhanced by this I am sure that Goethe would have smiled to see these technical extensions and illustrations of his work.

Goethe's poem "Dedication" rounds off the book, in a fine 1851 translation. Perhaps our understanding of this beautiful piece of writing has been widened through knowing its biographical context. The feeling is that we have come closer to Goethe, even as we appreciate the vista into the future inspired by the new relationship to Nature which he pioneered.

I found this book to be a useful handbook for accompanying ongoing participation in the special events of atmospheric colour appearance, a stimulus for deepening a contemplative approach to these experiences, and indeed part of that profound work towards wholeness in science.

Alex Murrell is a *Physics and Mathematics Teacher at a Rudolf Steiner School in Gloucestershire with a long interest in the criticisms of Sir Isaac Newton by William Blake in England and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in Germany, and how these criticisms can be made fruitful in the practice of science.*

Metaphors and Mysteries: on the limits of science

Oliver Robinson

SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY: MAKING ROOM FOR FAITH IN THE AGE OF SCIENCE

Michael Ruse

Cambridge University Press, 2014, 269 pp., £15.99, p/b - ISBN 978-1-107-12345-6

Michael Ruse is a British philosopher and vocal proponent of science. He often debates proponents of intelligent design, leading the charge for Darwin. He also believes that science has clear limits on what it can ever know, and that it leaves room for religious faith. His book *Science and Spirituality: Making Room for Faith in the Age of Science* sets out some arguments for this position. The choice of the term 'spirituality' in the title is a curious one, as the term is barely mentioned at all in the book (I couldn't find a single instance). The book, we find out in the Introduction, is actually about science and Christianity, and whether it's possible to be a scientist and a Christian. I sensed that the use of the word spirituality in the title may have been an editorial decision, to tap into a particular market even though the term is poorly suited to a book that focuses on one particular religion, and furthermore that doesn't define spirituality or use the term. Yet the book is an interesting read despite the ill-suited title, particularly if you are interested in the hidden root metaphors that underpin science.

Of the eight chapters that comprise the book between introduction and conclusion, four explore the role of metaphor in science, and how the basic root metaphor for knowing the world around us has changed from world-as-organism in ancient Greece to world-as-machine in the modern era. In ancient Greece, both Plato and Aristotle saw the universe as animated by purpose and sentience, and saw all things being functional parts of an organismic whole, like the organs are functional parts of the physical body. Thus finding something's purpose was central to understanding it. In the modern era, removing God from the world and conceiving of Him as pure transcendent spirit allowed the world to be seen as his artefact, which in turn led to the rise of the machine metaphor. The universe was God's machine, created for his purpose using maths and rational design. To understand the universe was to understand its mechanical workings. Ruse traces the rise of the machine metaphor through physics into biology (e.g. Dawkins' selfish gene 'survival machines'), and then into the use of the computer metaphor in psychology to understand the mind.

Ruse concludes that because science rests on metaphor to make sense of the universe, it is fundamentally limited, because the root metaphors that science deploys are inappropriate for some questions and leave subjectivity all over what may appear to be objective descriptions. Metaphors are given by us, yet without them we are blind, as the world needs a frame of reference - but much of the world of science is invisible. No one has seen an electron. No one has seen gravity. We infer these by their effects, so their nature is alluded to metaphorically.

In Chapter 5, having reviewed the question of metaphors in science, Ruse goes on to explore the kinds of questions that mechanistic science cannot answer. These include: Why is there something rather than nothing? Why does anything exist at all? Why does maths describe the basic structuring of the universe? What is the right thing to do, morally speaking? Why are we conscious beings, not unconscious machines? What is the point of it all? The machine metaphor fails in these areas, because they require reasoning that is not causal and based on mechanisms.

In Chapter 6, Ruse briefly explores alternatives in science and philosophy to the mechanistic approach, in a chapter titled 'Organicism'. Here he outlines how some scientists and philosophers have re-invigorated the Greek 'world-as-organism' metaphor by exploring how natural phenomena show examples of higher order, purpose and intelligence. He traces this through Romanticism, philosophers such as Spinoza and Schelling, then biologists such as Steven Jay Gould and Brian Goodwin, as well as holistic philosophies of Henri Bergson and Hans Driesch, and the physics of David Bohm, the emergentism of Stuart Kauffman and the Gaia hypothesis of Lovelock. All of these allude to a universe that is directional and intrinsically meaningful. Ruse moves over these ideas and thinkers with brevity, mainly to explore that there are other options available to the machine metaphor in the contemporary world. He studiously avoids the word spirituality in this chapter.

In Chapter 7, entitled 'God', Ruse starts with his review of Christian ideas and whether they fit with science. Ruse sets out his agenda for this chapter by explaining that Christianity deals with the questions that science struggles with, and uses non-scientific language and symbolism precisely because the questions themselves are non-scientific, and rightfully so. He runs us through the problem of evil, God's omniscience, miracles, and human freedom, stating that all may elude science's grasp so are acceptable Christian concerns. In Chapter 8, the survey of Christian concepts continues with morality, souls and life after death. Ruse reaches the

conclusion that “in the light of modern science you can be a Christian”, because the core claims of religion are beyond science. However, he asserts that it is only possible if you understand that “theological understanding is always on the move” and that much of Christianity needs revising.

A question that Ruse does not address is why, despite propounding that Christianity and science are complementary, he is not a Christian. Clearly he thinks it is problematic as a belief system, or else he would adopt it. He has left an elephant in the proverbial room: his own non-Christian spirituality. Why no mention of that?

All-you-need-to-know about the brain

Gunnel Minnett

30-SECOND BRAIN - The 50 Most Mind-blowing Ideas in Neuroscience

Edited by Anil Seth, Foreword by Chris Frith

Icon Books, 2015, 160 pp., £14.99, h/b - ISBN 978-18483167-8

Neuroscience is a new and very exciting area of research that looks at the brain and its central role, particularly for human beings who rely on a versatile brain to survive. The human brain is the most sophisticated and complex entity we've ever encountered. It is our 'central processor', the part that coordinates just about everything we do and who we are. Not only can neuroscience help explaining psychology, it is also involved in 'operating' the mind. Understanding the brain may, therefore, contribute to answer the eternal question of consciousness, what it is, where it comes from and why we have it.

Research in this area has gone through a veritable explosion in the last decades. The development of technology that can scan the 'live' brain has enabled a lot of new discoveries, opening the road to far more sophisticated studies. The mapping of our genome has also contributed to a whole new area of brain research.

To keep up with all the new developments may be beyond most of us. The literature is generally very technical and demands a certain level of previous knowledge. So to find a book that offers short, accessible explanations to a number of concepts in neuroscience is a real find. Although the explanation of

each concept is limited to one page, they are written by experts in each field and in a language accessible to all. Each chapter also has a page of glossary that can be used as a quick reference and reminder when reading other books on the brain.

The various chapters cover; how the brain is built, the most important brain theories, the mapping of the brain, consciousness, perception and cognition. There are also short presentations of the main scientists in this field. The book is nicely presented in hard cover with a number of illustrations. But to be true to its modern 'bullet-point-approach', it should perhaps have been an e-book or come with its own app. This would have been more appropriate for its modern twitter style presentation of data. Still it is a very good source of information for anyone interested in getting updated on the latest development in this field.

*Gunnel Minnett is the author of **Breath and Spirit**.*

Improving Child-Rearing: Great Ideas - But No Policy!

Steve Minnett, PhD

THE FIRST IDEA: How Symbols, Language & Intelligence Evolved from our Primate Ancestors to Modern Humans

Stanley I. Greenspan, M.D. & Stuart G. Shanker, D.Phil., Da Capo Press, 2009, 513 pp., £12.99, p/b - ISBN: 978-0-73820-680-6

This (as they say in literary circles) is a book of two halves: the first half promotes the thesis that what makes us human is not pre-programmed information embedded in our genes, but the quality of the attachment relationship between caregiver and infant. Where this is good enough, it enables us to avoid what they call 'catastrophic' emotions, which would lead to immediate action, often of a violent nature. This gap between emotional reaction and action, this period of affect regulation, is (the authors claim) the origin of symbols. Symbols are generated by 'prolonged chains of emotional signalling' (not necessarily linguistic) between caregiver and infant. The invention of symbols enabled human language and many forms of human intelligence to develop.

To continue the literary theme, I found myself frequently punching

the air in agreement with this thesis, which has the potency to crack the hegemony of the vulgar forms of genetic determinism, so often found these days in the mass media. This jubilation was, admittedly, tempered by the authors' (to me, curious) lack of reference to a number of scientific developments which (in my view) would strongly support their thesis: in the 450+ pages of their text, I could find no reference to; a) Epigenetics, b) affect researchers, such as Jaak Panksepp & c) developmental psychologists, such as Daniel Siegel. A possible explanation for this could be the authors' commitment to cultural-religious conservatism, as in this quote: "At their personal core, children will require a very strong grounding in their immediate cultural and/or religious values. This core will need to be strong enough to sustain and support cultural and/or religious values ..." (p. 454)

The disappointing second 'half' of the book consists of the authors' efforts at so-called 'policy' recommendations. Towards the end of the book they simply list a variety of highly desirable circumstances in regard to child-rearing; children and families should not be subject to stress, parents should have the time and space to engaged in 'prolonged chains of emotional signalling' with their children, relations between caregiver and infant should be nurtured and protected by the wider society, etc ... You don't have to be a radical social critic to recognised that these ideal goals are very rarely, if ever, achieved in modern Western societies. What is profoundly disappointing is that the authors appear to believe that the act of listing desirable outcomes contributes in some way to their achievement. It's the equivalent of a deeply indebted person announcing that from now on they're going to earn £300,000 a year - but having no idea where this income is going to come from.

medicine-health

More Evidence-Based Outrage

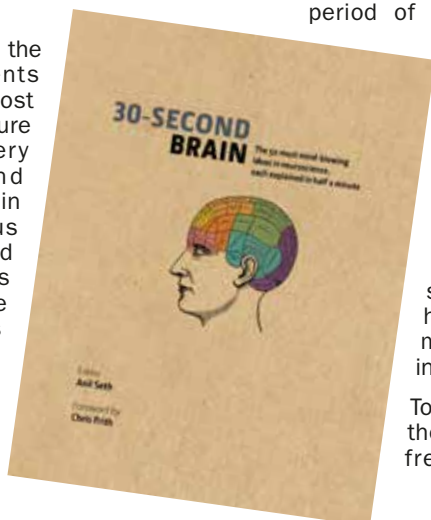
David Lorimer

DEADLY PSYCHIATRY AND ORGANISED DENIAL

Peter C. Gotzsche

People Press, 2015, 372 pp., DKr249.95, p/b - ISBN 9-788-7715-96236

Last April I reviewed Peter Gotzsche's earlier book *Deadly Medicines and Organised Crime*, which was a systematic exposition of the corruption of the medical system through the pervasive influence of the pharmaceutical industry that effectively controls education, journals, regulation



and governments, the last as a function of their obsession with economic growth. That book - which won the BMA 'basis of medicine' book prize in 2014 - contained a chapter on psychotropic drugs, which is the main topic of this new and equally hard-hitting book. As a reminder of the author's credentials, he co-founded the Cochrane Collaboration in 1993 and established the Nordic Cochrane Centre in Copenhagen as well as being professor in clinical research design and analysis at the University of Copenhagen. As a whistleblower, he has made himself extremely unpopular with the industry.

Two of the pillars of the conventional psychiatric approach using psychotropic drugs are the diagnostic categories in DSM-V and the biological approach that hypothesises that many mental disorders arise from chemical imbalances in the brain. Gotzsche argues that psychiatry has created a world full of erroneous ideas based on poor science and pseudoscience, 'particularly in relation to the validity of diagnoses, the effects of diseases on the brain, and the effects of drugs on patients.' He quotes the homepage of the American Psychiatric Association on depression that 'antidepressants may be prescribed to correct imbalances in the levels of chemicals in the brain. These medications are not sedatives, uppers or tranquilizers. Neither are they habit-forming. Generally, antidepressant medications have no stimulating effect on those not experiencing depression.' Gotzsche explains in detail that all these statements are wrong and yet they are an official pronouncement from the main psychiatric professional association in the US. This shows how deeply some of the myths have penetrated.

Contrary to this official view, it is the antipsychotic drugs themselves that cause brain damage, nor the so-called disease (p. 233). They lead to persistent personality changes with cognitive decline and emotional flatness long after patients have come off the drugs. Moreover, a 2012 survey by the Royal College of Psychiatrists about coming off antidepressants showed that 63% reported withdrawal symptoms, the most common of which was anxiety. This sometimes leads to a confusion between the withdrawal symptoms and a relapse, which is then used as justification for keeping the patient permanently on medication. The so-called disease is always to blame, not the pill. This leads to the startling conclusion that the apparent chronicity in mental disorders is in fact an artefact of the medications themselves (p. 246). Nearly 50% of Finns were still taking an SSRI five years after prescription while the median duration of an untreated depression is only three months (p. 257). The last 50 years of increasingly sophisticated treatments have in fact increased the burden of

mental disorders, partly by creating new categories that did not exist before and by medicalising everyday human suffering (p. 299). There is also a large discrepancy between what psychiatrists and their patients think about their treatments. Most patients regard antidepressants and antipsychotics as more often harmful than beneficial and nearly 80% of one survey regarded antidepressants as addictive. Another important factor here is that the biological approach is associated with a mechanistic understanding of the human being, a view rejected by many enlightened practitioners and evidenced by the large membership of the spirituality and psychiatry special interest group at the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

The book covers a vast range of themes and conditions including depression, anxiety, ADHD, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, dementia, electroshock, psychotherapy, drugs and the brain, withdrawal, corruption of people and science, and forced treatment. Besides analysis of clinical trials and research studies, the author also provides illustrative cases that add a human dimension to these tragedies. These make clear that in some instances sharp mood changes and even suicides are associated with SSRIs, and the main culprit is akathisia - the profession tends to associate this with the disease when it is in fact clear that it is an effect of the drug (p. 92). The detail makes harrowing reading, not only for suicide but also for homicide.

So far as the organised denial of the title is concerned, it is easy to understand how trainees are initiated into a biochemical mindset and a series of assumptions (p. 14), all of which Gotzsche shows to be mistaken. They lead in turn to overdiagnosis and overtreatment, and categorisation can readily become a self-fulfilling prophecy. He characterises senior psychiatrists who are in the pocket of the industry as silverbacks suffering from collective, organised denial, of which the author gives many telling examples. More seriously, he shows how antipsychotics and antidepressants are responsible for an extra 500,000 deaths a year in the US and the EU (p. 310) - hence the deadly psychiatry of the title. So we have a situation whereby otherwise well-meaning physicians are complicit in a corrupt system that actually harms their patients. Gotzsche rather drastically advocates a reduction of our current usage of psychotropic drugs by 98% and the introduction of other proven therapies instead (p. 306). At the end of the book, he advises both patients and doctors on what they can do. As I said in my previous review, nothing short of a revolution is required in this field, and informed patients can undoubtedly play an important role. However, the financial interests involved are so enormous

and their hold on the medical system so tight, that it is hard to see how this will change in the short term, although spiralling costs may shift government policy towards prevention. In any event, I would encourage both general readers and health professionals to read and reflect on the implications of this powerful evidence-based study. See also www.deadlymedicines.dk and www.bmj.com/content/350/bmj.h2435/rr-4 and a September 2015 conference on this topic - www.cepuke.org/moreharmthangood/ - can be accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8eIk8kuf7tth1gV1HApHOg>.

Healing Wisdom

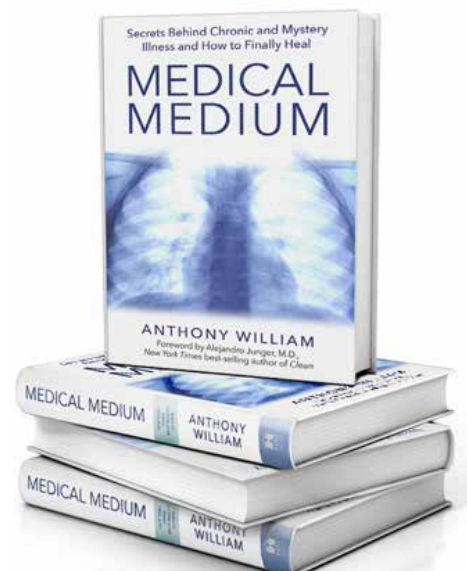
David Lorimer

MEDICAL MEDIUM (www.medicalmedium.org)

Anthony William

Hay House, 2015, 264 pp., £12.99, p/b - ISBN 978-1-78180-536-7

Anthony William is the Edgar Cayce of our time in terms of the intuitive diagnostic scans he gives people, pinpointing their health challenges and advising them on a healing course to take, often after years of frustration and misdiagnoses - especially when it comes to chronic and mystery illnesses whose incidence has multiplied over the last 30 years. It is also a time of quickening when we are accessing more spiritual wisdom at many levels; it is as if the invisible world is trying to get as much as it can through to us so as to enable our evolution. The book begins with his startling experience as a four-year old when he sees a brown-robed man standing behind his grandmother and is ordered to put his hand on her chest and say 'lung cancer'. Of course he has no idea what this means, but his grandmother goes for a check-up and finds that the being is right. The next morning, he hears the voice of the being saying that he is the Spirit of the Most High and more specifically a word



– compassion. Such living words are energy sources, the highest of which is God or Love.

Anthony then describes his training period and finds that he is able to scan or read people's conditions, which is rather overwhelming if sitting in a bus or a cinema; nor do people always welcome his interventions. When he gets food poisoning, the being tells him to eat pears from his grandfather's garden and he makes a full recovery. He is also told to stand on graves in cemeteries and tune in so as to discover what the people died from, which helps refine his talent. While caddying on the golf course he is able to tell players what is wrong with them, and his gift even extends to knowing what is wrong with cars when the mechanics are stumped. All this imposes a burdensome responsibility on the teenage Anthony, who has a few brushes with death when he ignores his mentor's advice. When scanning the body, Anthony sees through a bright light, but he can also scan the heart, soul and spirit for different levels of distress.

Parts Two and Three are devoted to a detailed discussion of chronic mystery illnesses with telling case histories. What he calls the hidden epidemic covers chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, MS, rheumatoid arthritis and hypothyroidism. He then goes on to a range of other conditions: Type 2 diabetes, hypoglycaemia, adrenal fatigue, candida, migraines, shingles (some 30 variants here), hyperactivity disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, premenstrual syndrome, the menopause and Lyme disease. In each case he explains the underlying causes of the condition and what people can do about it. He attributes a major role to the Epstein-Barr virus with 60 or so variants, six groups and five stages of illness as it drills further into the tissues and organs. All this is explained with the utmost clarity and indeed authority. He also insists that the body does not attack itself, so that auto-immune conditions are a misnomer. In rheumatoid arthritis, for instance, the body is in fact trying to defend itself so that giving anti-inflammatory and/or immuno-suppressant drugs is inappropriate. Instead, Anthony proposes simple natural methods. He sees our accumulating toxic load as a real threat to our health and pins the responsibility for Alzheimer's disease firmly on mercury, which was used so disastrously in the 19th century and which has accumulated in the food chain, not to mention its presence in dental fillings and vaccines. In a number of places, he proposes a research agenda to test his hypotheses, so this could be a valuable source of suggestions to young and daring researchers. When it comes to Lyme disease, much in the

news this year, he identifies a number of triggers while insisting that it is in fact a viral condition.

The third part on healing can profitably be read and applied by everyone. It begins with gut health and freeing the brain from toxins, then suggestions of what not to eat, the importance of fruit, a 28-day cleanse with raw fruits and vegetables, and finally suggestions for soul healing and communication with angels. Here again there are some fundamental insights and helpful recommendations. Rather than leaky gut, he uses the expression ammonia permeability, explaining how the gas can drift into your bloodstream with all sorts of adverse effects while also breaking down the hydrochloric acid in your stomach. In order to restore this, Anthony suggests pure celery juice. He explains that sprouts are an excellent source of probiotics, as are unwashed organic vegetables, while probiotics in yoghurt may be destroyed by your stomach acid. Commenting on the fashion for fermented foods he prefers sprouts, as the bacteria associated with fermentation are those of decay. He gives specific advice on heavy metal detox and recommends regular juice fasts using celery, cucumber and apples. His advice on what not to eat will dismay some readers, including as it does eggs, farmed fish, dairy and gluten besides corn products, soya and MSG. Then fresh fruits are high in anti-oxidants and he advises ignoring people who condemn fruit sugar along with other forms.

The final part on soul healing contains some beautiful suggestions for being in the woods and tuning into trees, swimming, watching waves, birds and bees, sunbathing, contemplating sunsets and the stars, picking fruit and gardening. He also suggests that we affirm that we work for God, which gives a very different perspective on everyday life. The final chapter is devoted to angels and their spiritual guidance – easing our minds, rebuilding our spirits and souls, healing our bodies. He lists 21 essential angels that we can call upon – literally, as he insists on the need to speak out loud with real focus – especially given the amount of negativity they have to transform on Earth. Then Anthony explains that there are many more Unknown Angels ready to help and gives corresponding case histories. His final advice is to keep the faith: 'you deserve to live a good life. A good life exists for you. This remarkable book is a rare gift on many levels and you will be doing yourself and those close to you a great favour if you order it now.'

philosophy-religion

Meaningful Ritual in a Secular World

David Lorimer

RE-ENCHANTING THE FOREST

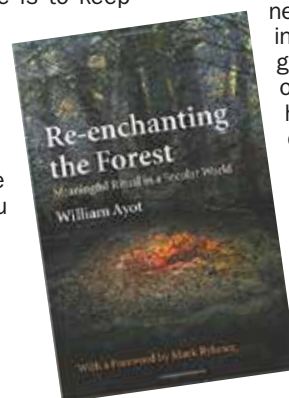
William Ayot

Vala Publishing, 2015, 195 pp., £12.99, p/b – ISBN 978-1-908363-14-5

Picking up this book, the first thing the reader notices is the fulsome tributes by many leading people from different disciplines, including a foreword by actor Mark Rylance. Read on, and you will certainly not be disappointed by this remarkable account both of the author's life and the way in which he came into ritual. His childhood was challenging, to say the least. His father died of a heart attack just after a terrible row when Ayot said he could never forgive him. He worked in the gaming industry for 20 years before gradually finding his path, where reconnecting with the village of his childhood was an important step. After this break with his father, he made a pyre of his childhood objects and set it on fire – perhaps a classic example of a ritual of separation.

He defines rituals of three kinds: continuity, alignment and growth, within a context of ceremony and ceremonial objects. Spaces and places are also important in terms of liminality and the sacred. He then sets out the stages of ritual in terms of setting an intention, preparation, opening and invocation, action and expression, closure and grounding. He draws on extensive experience with native elders such as Malidoma Somé and it is clear to me that he has tapped an important need in our time when rituals and initiation have all but disappeared except in degraded forms. Readers of Nelson Mandela's autobiography will remember his initiation and its function. Related to this is pilgrimage, and Ayot describes turning up at St Cross Hospital near Winchester and asking for his Wayfarer's Dole, which turned out to be a small square of sliced bread with a pottery beaker of ale on a wooden platter.

He gives moving examples of rituals he has conducted with individuals and small groups, showing how this can enable the true expression of feelings and a capacity to move on into a new form of life. Sometimes this involves staying out all night and greeting the sunrise as a symbol of new life. He also describes his own rather harrowing vision quest. He argues that the lack of rituals in our culture leaves us both entangled and bereft, so that the more rituals we create or reinstate, the better our psychospiritual and emotional health (p. 96).



An important place for him is Albion Pond in New England, where his wife Juliet first took him for a proper holiday - it took him some time to slow down and relax into the landscape, but this was profoundly therapeutic and put him in touch with both deeper and more primitive aspects of his nature - it reminded me of Thoreau. We can become more alive by opening up and really paying attention in nature, as he shows with an experience of communicating with a badger. In the public sphere, he comments on the extraordinary phenomenon of the death of Diana Princess of Wales when there was an upwelling of spontaneous grieving rituals, and on the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, which touched a chord in everyone who witnessed it. He also recounts a moving experience with Rowan Williams, with his capacity for lovingly holding individuals and groups in his benign attention during a poetry reading.

Some of the commentators on the book had also experienced the work of Robert Bly (*Iron Man*) in the 1990s, which was about what it meant to be a man. The title refers to developing a sense of kinship with nature by creating a relationship through our feeling nature. Those of my generation are now called upon to become elders, but there is no widely available ceremony to mark this fact, even though we badly need ritual elders with a modicum of life wisdom. Ayot's friend, Jeremy Thres, devised exactly such a powerful ritual for him, which turned out to be an intense experience of death and rebirth. He finds that, in reconciling himself to death, he had rediscovered life. He ends with the resonant words for this stage: life is a shedding, simplicity is best. Maybe it is also significant that I unconsciously sighed so often while reading this potent narrative, feeling that it responded to a longing for a deeper sense of connection also identified in the work of Mircea Eliade in his book *Rites and Symbols of Initiation*.

A Bulgarian Sage

Ravi Ravindra

PROPHET FOR OUR TIMES: The Life & Teachings of Peter Deunov

Edited by David Lorimer

Foreword by Dr Wayne W. Dyer

Hay House, 2015, 272 pp., £12.99, p/b—ISBN 978-1-78180-591-6

This is a welcome new edition of the book published more than twenty-five years ago about the great spiritual teacher Peter Deunov. Master Deunov (1864-1944), clearly a great luminary emerging from the Western tradition, deserves to be much more known than he is. His life and teachings have been little known perhaps owing to the

Communist rule which was imposed on Bulgaria for decades.

The editor, David Lorimer, presents the teachings of Peter Deunov succinctly and with clarity and insight. He came in contact with the teachings of the Bulgarian Master more than thirty years ago and has been actively involved in this work ever since. David is very familiar with the spiritual heritage of the whole world and recognizes the quality brought by Master Deunov.

Peter Deunov—his spiritual name was Beinsa Douno—was a great and inspiring teacher of eternal wisdom, embodying tremendous profundity and great simplicity. His teachings provide practical aids for living in harmony with the earth, with fellow human beings and with God. His way of looking at life was through what he called Divine Love, the love that never changes and never varies. He very much emphasized the mystical meaning of esoteric Christianity, not simply believing this or that, but actually living the teachings of Christ by a subtle gnosis, emphasising loving God, loving fellow human beings and one's enemies.

It is a historical fact that the official keepers of a religious tradition are often at odds with those who wish to fulfil the tradition. The more organized a religion is the greater is this tension. Christ himself was accused of destroying the tradition whereas, as he said, he came to fulfil it. Peter Deunov himself was persecuted by the Bulgarian clergy and was treated as a traitor to the Church. He said, "They stir the people against me and say that I am defiling the name of God, that I am undermining the authority of the Holy Church. My question is: Where is your God? Where is the Son? The Son of God is the son of love. Where is your love? I can see no trace of love anywhere."

To underscore the importance and profundity of the teaching of Peter Deunov, let me quote only two of his remarks:

"If anyone asks me, 'Why do you love and serve God?' I shall say, 'Because God loves me.' Service and work are always the way to respond to love. Love works."

"We preach the Christ of Love, which supports and fills every heart; we preach the Christ of Wisdom, which illuminates every mind; we preach the Christ of Truth, which liberates and elevates the world."

David Lorimer deserves our gratitude for bringing the teaching of Master Peter Deunov to a wider public. The world will be a better place if more of us could follow his teachings.

Ravi Ravindra is author of *The Pilgrim Soul: A Path to the Sacred Transcending World Religions*

An Esoteric Quest

David Lorimer

THE LOST TEACHINGS OF THE CATHARS

Andrew Phillip Smith

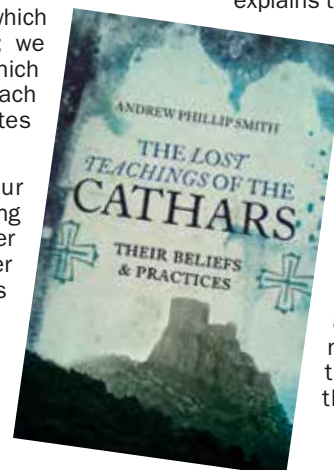
Watkins, 2015, 260 pp., £10.99, p/b—ISBN 978-1-78028-715-7

Living down in Cathar country makes one aware of the extent to which it is the brand of the region. There is the Sentier Cathare, Cathar castles and even - rather ironically given their ascetic way of life - Cathar restaurants with their Menu Cathare. I have been interested in the Cathars for over 30 years and have read a good deal of literature, both in English and French as there is a Centre d'Etudes Cathares in Carcassonne. In the 90s, Tobias Churton made an interesting series of programmes on the Gnostics, one of which was about the Cathars and gave a little background on the Occitan culture and civilisation, which was effectively destroyed by the Albigensian Crusade in the 13th century. One should also remember that the troubadours came from this area - Puivert Castle is only 15 minutes away and has wonderful bosses of musicians playing contemporary instruments.

Andrew Phillip Smith is the editor of *The Gnostic* and author of several books on Gnosticism, esotericism and early Christianity including *The Lost Teachings of the Gnostics*, which has a chapter on the Cathars. Smith is right that there is a good deal of confusion about the Cathars, depending on which sources and books you have read and whether your spiritual home is Rennes-le-Chateau or Montsegur. In this even-handed study, he explains the history and doctrines of Catharism and the influence that they have had through various forms of what one might call neo-Catharism. Beginning with the history, he documents the military campaigns and slaughters extending over a period of some 50 years and devastating the people, the countryside and the culture. Some features of Catharism, such as the respect for women, were already embedded in the Occitan culture and in the idealisation of women in troubadour songs. Women had equal status as initiates or Parfaites, although Smith explains that in the scheme

of rebirth, one's final incarnation should be as a man.

He recounts the roles of St Bernard and St Dominic as well as the Knights Templar and the various noble families of the area under the Counts of



Toulouse. These include notable individuals such as Guilhabert de Castres, Bertrand Marty and Esclarmonde de Foix. The Inquisition, established in 1231, was perhaps the first systematic example of a police state approach using fear and intimidation whereby neighbours were encouraged to spy and report on each other. The Cathars or good men and women regarded themselves as inheritors of the true Christianity and the Church as corrupt. Pope Innocent III certainly recognised this and excoriated, among others, the Archbishop of Narbonne for his corrupt behaviour. The Cathars, on the other hand - and as St Bernard observed - led exemplary lives that inspired the people around them. It was just that they had the 'wrong' beliefs, particularly about God and the nature of Jesus Christ. Smith points out, quite rightly, that dualism arose as a way of approaching the problem of evil or theodicy. Looking around at the world, one can easily argue that it had been created by the demiurge rather than a good God.

Smith explains this metaphysical background, the fall of the angels and beliefs about the soul, spirit and Mary Magdalene. On this last point, he argues that this association has an independent source from the region, rather than being inherited from Catharism as such. He goes on to discuss the various rites used by the Cathars, including the consolamentum, which doubled up as ordination for the Parfait and extreme function for the believer. The preparation to become a Parfait was arduous and their regime strict. The Lord's Prayer played a central role, as did the gospel of John, in common with other Gnostic traditions such as the Bogomils, with whom the Cathars were linked. They made one adjustment to the Lord's Prayer, using the term supersubstantial bread rather than bread in its natural form. They were vegetarians (although in those days this also meant eating fish because it was not considered that fish had souls), a practice that was linked to their belief in reincarnation - about which there is a separate chapter. In discussing the work of Ian Stevenson he seems unaware of the many cases from other investigators from cultures where reincarnation is not the norm.

An account of Montsegur and its fall in 1244 is followed by a very informative discussion of the subsequent history of the movement and its central characters. Smith then goes on to the lineage behind the Cathars going back to Mani. He also discusses other esoteric movements that followed on. There is then a big gap until the mid-19th century, which initiated the Cathar revival. A key person was Napoleon Peyrat (1809-1881), who wrote a five volume history of the Albigenses. There is a sympathetic but critical account of the movements initiated by Deodat

Roché, Antonin Gadal, Otto Rahn and others. I know more about Gadal, and there is no doubt that it is difficult to disentangle the various strands of his interpretation, but they do rest on an initiatic understanding of the spiritual journey related to some of the caves that the author says he has not visited. The principal of these is the so-called Bethlehem cave, where the winter solstice sun directly strikes the huge altar stone. There is another cave further along the same slope where the sun climbs above the craggy rocks opposite and shines directly down into a cave representing the penetration of the feminine by the masculine - these probably go back much further than the Cathars. He rightly remarks at the end of this chapter that without the efforts of the neo-Cathars they might have remained a relatively neglected episode in 13th century history while they represent a renewal of the spirit and an ever present protest against spiritual materialism. There are also a couple of interesting pages on the influence of the Cathars on Simone Weil.

I found Smith equally even-handed in his treatment of Dr Arthur Guirdham, through his writings many have become acquainted with the Cathars (he was an SMN member). He is critical of some of the inconsistencies within the books, but feels that his form of neo-Catharism is perhaps the closest to the original. He concludes that the Cathars are perched somewhere between history and mystery. Smith has done general readers a great service in this thorough and well researched book.

psychology-consciousness studies

Over the Threshold

David Lorimer

DYING – A TRANSITION

Monika Renz

Columbia University Press, 2015, 164 pp., £26, h/b – ISBN 978-0-231-17088-8

Last month Peter Fenwick and I both spoke at a conference on death and dying in Elche, Spain. In our own ways we were articulating our understanding of death as transition rather than extinction. Soon after I returned I received this seminal book on the death process by Monika Renz, a Swiss psychotherapist, music therapist, theologian and spiritual care-giver who has been head of the psycho-oncology unit at St Gallen Hospital since 1998. She bases this

quite remarkable phenomenological study on accompanying 1,000 cancer patients through death. The book is full of spiritual insight and sensitive understanding and should be required reading for anyone in the field and for the general reader seeking a more profound insight into the death process and its relationship to spiritual transformation in terms of transcending ego-identity. There is a wealth of significant detail for the attentive reader, aspects of which we would be wise to apply to our own situation in the present. My copy is heavily underlined.

Renz's model presents three fundamental phases of dying corresponding to anthropological work carried out by Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner on rites of passage: pre-transition, transition through an inner threshold and post-transition. In this way she goes beyond the five stages of Kubler-Ross, which are mainly about coming to terms with death. While dying we still have a choice of orientation towards having or being, fear or trust, power or relatedness, but the process itself as described is inexorable, stripping away the pretensions and structures of the ego and dramatically transforming perception. After the ordeal and affliction of facing the primal fear of dissolution (not normally part of NDE reports), patients emerge into a space of peace, acceptance, dignity and tranquillity characterised by connectedness and even luminosity. It is at once a spiritual and archetypal process. Renz takes the reader in detail through these phases, adding advice about what helps and giving individual case histories as well as summaries of the main features of each phase.

For the caregiver this means learning to listen and understand a new language of symbolism, becoming sensitive to the immediate spiritual needs of the patient. Caregivers will find the book extraordinarily helpful and affirming, all the more so if they share the author's spiritual outlook. A key theme is dignity, which Renz feels is an inviolable feature of being human, regardless of one's physical state; in this respect, it is more than self-determination. Spiritually and theologically, she believes, we are part of a large whole, and death provides an encounter with the numinous, the dying of the I into the Thou, into the Light, into the I Am. At the first stage, reconciliation with family members is very important as well as letting go of false masks. Music can play a significant role and the dying are open to sublime perceptions beyond the physical world.

Renz then gives more detail on metaphors of transition as well as sites of transition in terms of fear, struggle,



acceptance, family processes and maturation. There are abysses, tunnels, storms and chasms, all of which can be traversed. Then after the crossing is light and peace, the overcoming of division. She observes that those to whom faith means trust and affirmation are better able to navigate the process, but that dogmas need to be let go of. Caregivers and family members need to respect the wish to depart but they can empathise with blocks that may prevent departure or processes that will hasten it. Renz's sensitive and occasionally dramatic interventions often enable her patients to move to the next stage.

Renz reports and says little about the afterlife, preferring to focus on the dying process – one might have expected some mention of deathbed visions as part of the transformation of perception. However, she does touch on three aspects of the beyond: backwards or forwards, relationship vs being and the question of a higher order of meaning – suffering and redemption. She states in her poetic epilogue that we all find our way home, falling into trust. In all of this there are important messages for the living about dying (to the ego) before you die and arriving at a state of reconciliation through forgiveness, if necessary. Individualistic self-sufficiency is ultimately an illusion: we are deeply connected to life and to each other, and in dying we become very dependent, surrendering ourselves to the transformative power of the death process. Still, as she says, we act and are acted upon. This powerful book plumbs the existential depths of our ultimate transformation.

A Post-Materialist Science of Consciousness

David Lorimer

DEATH MAKES LIFE POSSIBLE

Marilyn Schlitz

Sounds True, 2015, 245 pp., \$17.95, p/b – ISBN 978-1-6220-34161

If this review were charades, I would indicate that it is both a book and a documentary film, which brings some of its central themes alive with interviews from a wide range of disciplines and viewpoints. The title came from Deepak Chopra, who contributes the foreword. As it happens, I am writing this review in front of a fire at Cawdor Castle where one of the participants in the seminar used as a point of departure the masterpiece by Gauguin entitled 'Where do we come from, Who are we and where are we going' (no question marks..). This insightful book grapples with these central existential questions, and especially with the nature of transformation. Impermanence implies constant change, the death of the old and the birth of the new, which is going on in our bodies all the time.

Deepak asserts that nothing is created or destroyed, only transformed – why should this not apply to human life as well? Each new form is another potential to be unfolded and fulfilled as a unique expression of life.

Marilyn tackles the topic of death at a fundamental level, situating her discussion in the context of the tension between materialist and post-materialist theories of mind and consciousness. The vast majority of scientists still seem to believe that consciousness is produced by the brain and is extinguished at death. As this book makes clear, there is a large body of evidence suggesting that consciousness continues in some form after the death of the physical body so we have the emergence at the intersection between science and religion of a new evidence-based spirituality that has been a central concern of the Network since its inception over 40 years ago and the publication of Raymond Moody's *Life after Life* in 1975.

The many interviews bring a great deal of wisdom and insight to bear on the various aspects of death discussed. A centrepiece of the film is the death of Lee Lipsenthal at the age of 53. He shows great courage in the face of his terminal illness as he gradually loses control of his bodily functions and is filled with gratitude for the life and love he has experienced. We frequently transform only in response to crisis, as a number of case histories show, but we do not need to wait for a crisis to begin our preparations for our eventual departure, as Marilyn shows. Spiritual practices are important and can help shift our perspective from the independent me to the interdependent we so that we can live more deeply and fully, playing our part in a collective transformation.

This can lead to a widening of our identity beyond familiar roles, as Satish Kumar points out. Although our small identity does not survive death, we are all expressions of something larger, of life itself. Out of fear and ignorance the ego grasps and clings, while we are called upon to expand, let go and transform: 'Life never ends. It's only the form that changes.' Many writers also point out the relationship between fear of death and fear of really living and fully expressing beauty, intelligence,

love and joy. We can also ask ourselves the four questions of Lauren Artress: 'are you deepening your compassion? Are you learning to be less judgmental? Are you learning to be more patient? And is there a way you are finding to be of service in the world?' If we imagine ourselves on our deathbeds we can more easily distinguish the essential from the inessential and live in the present so as to have fewer regrets when the time comes.

The overall impact of this informative and wise book is to deepen the reader's engagement not only with death but also with life as it is lived in the present from moment to moment. Too many of us postpone or avoid facing death until the last moment and try to shelter our families from it. Then we can take life for granted, busying ourselves with immediate concerns with no consideration of the deeper picture as revealed not only by cutting-edge science but with our unprecedented access to the world's spiritual traditions. As Marilyn puts it, we can all become more awake, willing and engaged (AWE) and help form a new model for living and dying as part of our collective metamorphosis.

The Codes of Destiny

Jon and Troya Turner

CELESTIAL TWINS

Elizabetha Levin, Ph.D.

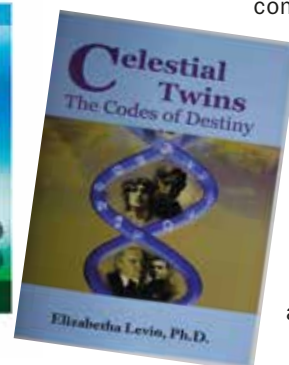
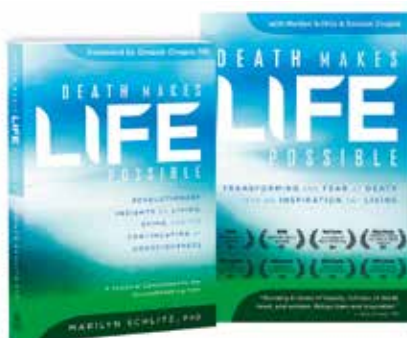
Astrolog Publishing House Hod Hasharon, Israel, 2014, p/b. ISBN 978-65494-3543 (Also in Hebrew & Russian)

For me the two most striking questions from these comparative stories are:

1. Why do bad things happen to good people?
2. Can it be that the non-genetic temporal Theta-factor is even stronger than all the known factors responsible for shaping our personalities and lives?

Elizabetha Levin, Ph.D.

In decades of reading and reviewing books, occasionally one comes to hand which is exceptional: *Celestial Twins: The Codes of Destiny* is such a sparkling gem. Academic, Dr. Elizabetha Levin, has pioneered a new and fascinating Research Field which she calls the *Effect of Celestial Twins (ECT)* combining Prebirth Psychology and Astrology and including History and Biography. Her ventures into the vastness of her meticulous research began some 20 years ago when she had a severe accident



while on a skiing holiday in Germany. Reading through old papers about Nazis leaders Hermann Goering and Hitler's Number 2 Alfred Rosenberg, Levin discovered an interesting detail; both were born on the same day, January 12, in the same year, 1893. Peeking her Academic curiosity, tracing key events in the lives of both men, Levin recognized very clear parallels for both Capricorns. These discoveries lead to two decades of intense research into the provable birth times and lifetime patterns of illustrious individuals born on the same day and year. Geography did not show as significant as some of her candidates were born on the same country, most in different countries. The main factor for life-paths events appeared to come from much higher realms; the positions of the very stars shining in the heavenly spheres above the Celestial Twins as first breaths enlivened their new born bodies.

Through what she calls the Theta Factor, Levin ThrothroughTTarticulately invites readers to share her discoveries with a brief foundation into the disciplines we explore together and the strict parameters of the methodology she uses in her research.

Throughout history there have been speculations about the Astrological impacts on human beings but there has never been scientifically based evidence of such possible phenomena until Levin's precise methodological investigations. For us, coming from the field of Prebirth Psychology without any background in Astrology, the most delightful aspect of reading *Celestial Twins* is to read Levin's comprehensive descriptions of the lives of her research candidates.

Illustrative of what Levin hypothesizes as the *Theta Factor*, through the 12 Signs of the Zodiac, readers are drawn into the lives of Cancerian 'Lost at Sea' writer Ernest Hemingway, Libran 'King of Life' Oscar Wilde, political icon Tauran Nancy Astor, Sagittarian King George VI, and 'Master of Sound' musical genius Pablo Casals. We were particularly moved by the revelations in Levin's exploration into the twinship in the lives of Leo 'Explorers of the Human Soul' Psychologist/Philosopher Carl Gustav Jung and Poet/Philosopher Antonio Machado. Commenting on the possibilities of Astrology, Jung once wrote: "I dare say that we shall one day discover a good deal of knowledge that has been intuitively projected in the Heavens." Levin's research may bring Jung's insight a little bit closer.

Commenting on the link between Astrology and modern holistic theories in Physics, Levin quotes Theoretical Physicist David Bohm: "...the two things are internally related to each other - so that knowing the truth about one thing would ultimately involve knowing the truth about all things and promoting the good of one thing would involve the

good of all things." Levin delves deeper through Bohm's *Holomovement Theory* in which he suggests that each region of space time contains the total order of the Universe. This includes the past, the present and future. According to Bohm, by analogy to a hologram, in which any portion of it contains information on the whole object imaged, so also any portion of the implicate reality involves every other portion and contains the total structure of the Universe, the whole. In this concept no human act, no element of life or of environment is an island, any more than is an individual person. If mind and matter arise from the common ground and are therefore indirectly immanent in each other, the changers in any part of the Universe are as if reflected in all the other parts.

While some personalities explored in *Celestial Twins* are recognizable leaders in their fields, the discovery of lesser known 20th Century giants in the human panorama is a satisfying discovery and revelation for the reader. *Celestial Twins: The Codes of Destiny*, available in English, Hebrew and Russian, is an altogether stimulating and satisfying visit into the mind of an energetic and encompassing intellect exploring and inviting future explorations into new frontiers in contemporary sciences. itle

Jon RG & Troya GN Turner, *Grootebroek, The Netherlands*

Whole-Self@quicknet.nl

Psycho-Spiritual Literacy

David Lorimer

HEALING THE WESTERN SOUL

Judith S. Miller

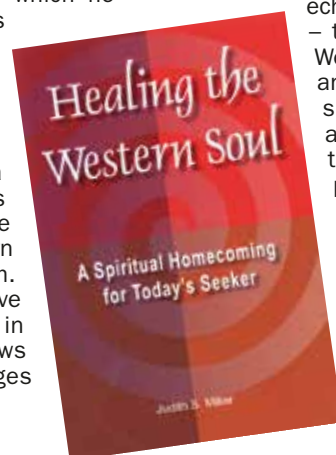
Paragon House, 2015, 234 pp., \$14.95, p/b.

Some readers will recall the observation by CG Jung in his *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* to the effect that the fundamental challenge for his patients in the second half of life was the development of a spiritual outlook. Although Jung wrote about the *I Ching* and *The Secret of the Golden Flower* as well as researching yoga and Indian philosophy, he felt that Westerners should look for spiritual resources within their own tradition, advice which he himself applied in his studies of alchemy and Gnosticism. In this important book about spiritual homecoming for today's seeker, Judith Miller explores the modern search for meaning in a society that has lost its traditional anchors and where many are embracing Eastern paths, especially Buddhism. She shows that the collective unconscious as revealed in her patients' dreams throws up traditional Western images and archetypes.

The three parts explore our Western spiritual angst, spiritual roots and spiritual path, drawing on Evelyn Underhill's classic book, *Mysticism*, first published in 1911. The attitude of being spiritual but not religious leaves the seeker unmoored and exposed to elements of the shadow that come up along with the advent of light. Spiritual and psychological unfolding are closely related in this respect so that therapists and mentors are there to support a process; and it is crucial that they understand what is going on in spiritual terms. Miller shows how our prevalent world views of conservative pre-modern, scientific modern and relativistic postmodern are all poor guides to understanding spiritual unfoldment and, more critically, spiritual emergency. She recounts asking a question of Dr S at a conference and being denounced by him with the words never to engage in any conversation with patients about things that are not real – at which point he stormed off the stage. Diagnosing spiritual emergence as a chemical imbalance in the brain or as psychopathology can be enormously damaging. Miller illustrates this with stories of a boy being sectioned for his visions and a woman being given medication after she saw light around her dying husband. This kind of psycho-spiritual illiteracy is predictable within these world views but reveals a huge shortcoming in our medical and psychological education.

Miller is also familiar with the work of Stan Grof as another pioneer at the psycho-spiritual interface. She is rightly critical of New Age failures to engage with the shadow and shows how her clients do not always understand the significance of their own experiences. She illustrates some points from her own experience, for instance a rather extraordinary balloon synchronicity with a friend – where the inner and outer worlds meet. The second part looks at our experiences of God as the Self, Oneness and the Other as Thou. This leads into an exploration of our mystical ground, including the sacred marriage. In our quest for spiritual identity, 'when you live out of your authentic self, you contact the extreme point where your human nature touches the Absolute.' It is crucial, in Miller's view – and this also echoes Albert Schweitzer – to remember that the Western path is active and choice-based, and seeks to integrate and transcend duality through a process of purification based on intent and deep commitment to the process.

Miller compresses Underhill's five stages into three – awakening, illumination and



union. She explains and illustrates the challenges of each stage, for instance the death of the ego and the dark night of the soul. We discover who we are at a deeper level and are able to connect to our inner strength so as to access healing and transformation. We come to realise, as Chief Black Elk puts it, that at the centre of the Universe dwells the Great Spirit, and that this centre is really everywhere, it is within each of us.' This is what Ravi Ravindra calls the first person universal. The summary message of the book could not be more important in terms of a new psycho-spiritual world view. The material and spiritual will both be acknowledged, it will be understood that the soul needs healing and that breakdowns and breakthroughs are part of the process. Experiences of expanded consciousness will be trusted and validated. The adoption of this outlook will represent a huge step forward for psychospiritual health and this book makes a significant staging post and should as such be compulsory reading for traditionally trained mental health professionals.

Spiritual Alchemy

David Lorimer

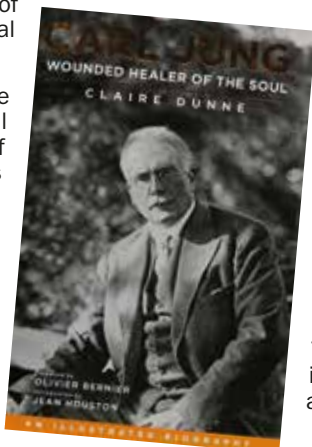
CARL JUNG: WOUNDED HEALER OF THE SOUL

Claire Dunne

Watkins, 2015, 272 pp., £16.99, p/b - ISBN 978-1-78028-831-4

I imagine that C.G. Jung has exerted a considerable influence on many readers of this Review – this is certainly true in my own case. I was fortunate enough to inherit from a mentor his Collected Works and read his correspondence over 20 years ago. This is a new edition of a book first published in 2000 and updated following the publication of his *Red Book* in 2010. It is illustrated not only with photographs but also with selected paintings illustrating the themes, some of which are taken from the *Red Book* and show Jung to be a notable artist. Particularly striking is the juxtaposition between a painting of the cornered shadow and a remarkable mandala, which appears only a few pages on. The book makes extensive use of quotations from Jung and his associates and conveys a vivid impression of his life and spiritual journey.

Dunne sees the three essential components of Jung's work as applied to human life that we need to become a complete self to live whole, that God needs man to mirror his creation and help it evolve, and that the whole human



being is open to God as co-creator. Jung himself embodied these principles and felt that a force of nature expressed itself through him as a channel. He stated that 'we count for something only because of the essential we embody, and if we do not embody that, life is wasted.' This means that we are related to something infinite beyond us, experiencing ourselves as both limited and eternal - a point reinforced by Jean Houston in her introduction.

The individuation process involves both knowing (gnosis) and alchemy or transformation. Already as a young man, Jung emphasised the importance of knowing rather than believing in a conversation with his pastor father. Much later in life, he was famously to state that he knew that God existed in an interview with John Freeman. For Jung, this meant following his own path and intuition, inevitably leading to a break from Freud and his descent into the unconscious just before the First World War. He realised that his life was both an individual and collective - indeed universal - expression, which is why his journey speaks to us today. Dunne sensitively explains the complementary roles of his wife Emma and Toni Wolff, quoting some fascinating letters from Emma to Freud. She shows extraordinary generosity of spirit in accepting both the role of Toni and the fact that guests and friends were invariably much more interested in Jung himself.

In 1923, Jung began constructing his retreat at Bollingen, where he was most himself in a Zen-like simplicity: 'I have done without electricity, and tend the fireplace and stove myself. Evenings, I light the old lamps. There is no running water, and I pump the water from the well. I chop the wood and cook the food. These simple acts make man simple; and how difficult it is to be simple!' He lives in a timeless zone 'in modest harmony with nature' - a phrase more resonant of Taoism. Visitors recall his absolute attention to the task in hand - in one case washing his blue jeans. In very cold weather he wore a long Oriental robe, looking every inch the alchemist as he concocted a sauce with 16 ingredients and enjoyed a companionable silence over good food and wine. Helena Henderson recalls that he gave the feeling that life is a good thing - 'something even more precious to me than anything he put on paper.' It was perhaps typical of the man that, two days before he died, he told his son Franz to find a really good bottle of wine in the cellar.

The principal women in his life died in 1953 and 1955, so he spent

the last few years as a widower. During this time, he collaborated with Aniela Jaffe on *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* - as editor, Jaffe found that only the spiritual essence of his life's experience remained in his memory, and he remarked that 'the way I am and the way I write are a unity. All my ideas and all my endeavours are myself.' There is a mystery at the heart of life as one unfolds one's potential and holds opposites in tension, especially when encountering the numinous. This is reflected in his late book *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, the combining of what had been separated, whether in sexuality, mysticism or alchemy in the mystic wedding. In this respect, he felt that the role of the individual as distinct from the collective is a critical one and that we each have an important role to enact. He uses the telling analogy of the rhizome below the ground, whose true life is invisible. The expression or incarnation appears above the surface and returns to the source in due time only to reappear at another time and in another place. The genius of this beautiful book is the way that it helps readers to reflect in depth on their own journeys.

Archetype and Psyche in Crisis and Growth

David Lorimer

WALKING SHADOWS

Tim Read (SMN)

Muswell Hill Press, 2014, 338 pp., no price given, p/b - ISBN 978-1-90899-509-4

In this bold book, Tim Read skilfully navigates the SMN guidelines of intuitive insight and rational analysis by combining his own psycho-spiritual journey with his extensive psychiatric experience of spiritual emergence and emergency, especially in relation to both positive and negative numinous experiences. The three parts explore intense states of meaning, self, shadow and us, and working with the numinous. He begins by giving two contrasting case histories before providing some theoretical background with Plato's Cave and Jung's archetypal voyage into the unconscious. This scheme already puts him beyond the narrow focus of the prevailing neural model and within a context of meaning. He further explores archetypal crises and presents what he calls a biopsychosocial archetypal model (BPSA) to make sense of his own experiences as well as those of his patients. He coins the term high or low archetypal penetrance to characterise different psychic contents. This leads on to a discussion



of synchronicity and a meaning field drawing on the work of David Bohm, with his implicate and explicate orders. His model provides a much richer framework of interpretation.

As the Chinese point out, crisis is both a danger and an opportunity, as Tim experienced personally and in his work at the Crisis Intervention Service where patients need real understanding from the physicians, not simply a neurochemical intervention. The breakdown can potentially lead to a breakthrough, and again Tim steps outside orthodoxy by discussing the impact of kundalini experience while respecting cases where more orthodox approaches may be helpful. He observes that genetic inheritance predisposing to mood disorders might also predispose to a raising of archetypal penetrance. We are all on a transformative journey, whether we understand this in terms of the Grail, the Self or the Hero's Journey - and correspondingly open to pitfalls and periods of darkness within. This also involves facing the shadow, integrating masculine and feminine and negotiating ego death and midlife crisis. Here he brings in the work of Stan Grof, with whom he has done extensive training both with his perinatal and holotropic breathing work. He puts this work on a par with Jung. At the other end of the scale, he encourages physicians not to neglect basic attitudes like kindness.

The third part begins with a chapter on death, including remembrance of previous lives and archetypal dimensions. It is very moving to read about the death of his sister Philippa and her beautiful story about a crystal bowl as a symbol of her life. The gems of her soul experience eventually fill this crystal bowl in spite of her suffering. Tim then moves on to mindfulness and relates his experience at a darkness retreat involving four days and three nights of wearing a thick blindfold. This was a revealing and transformative experience, the kind that needs extensive integration. He also worked with Roger Woolger where he had a vivid past life memory that he did not interpret literally, but rather as a resonance of meaning that could perhaps be taken further by Jungian active imagination, alongside which he includes shamanism and the work of Robert Monroe. In all this work, it is important not to confuse levels and understand the symbolism. He applies his principles of mindset, setting and integration to his discussion of psychedelics as a gateway to the numinous and increasing archetypal penetrance. Integration, he believes, is always critical otherwise one is like the subject of the TS Eliot poem who had the experience but missed the meaning. Tim finishes with a chapter on holotropic breathwork and gives the last word to Rumi about the importance of fulfilling one's existential task. This is certainly important but I missed

a concluding chapter bringing all Tim's insights together. However, he has written an important book that should inform the work of all mental health professionals.

Other Orders of Being

David Lorimer

LIGHT CHANGES

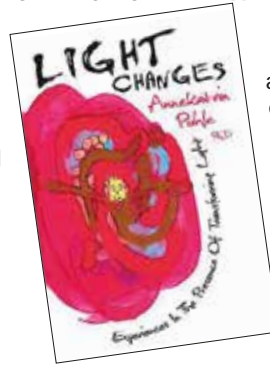
Annekatriin Puhle PhD

White Crow Books, 2013, 253 pp., £14.99, p/b - ISBN 978-1908733184.

Subtitled 'Experiences in the Presence of Transforming Light', this collection of over 800 cases spanning more than 100 years of research makes fascinating reading and opens up new vistas on the many dimensions of human existence, especially in relation to death. Unusual light phenomena have been documented for centuries in religion and mysticism and it is interesting to learn that there are 2,746 references to angels in the Bible – about a third of the cases here involve angelic beings. The author distinguishes 21 light forms in her phenomenological analysis, all of which are illustrated in the representative case histories. Many of these are from existing literature but there are also some cases directly reported to the author.

Following a discussion of the case collection, the book moves on to consider the percipients, the phenomena and the meaning attributed to these experiences. The bulk of the book is devoted to eight main classifications of cases, which are then presented and discussed. A number of striking cases involve angels protecting people in dangerous situations and 16% report information conveyed unknown to the percipient. Tommy was abducted and murdered in a hit and run incident, following which his family received a message about where he was killed and the fact that they would still find his blood there if they hurried. They went to the place specified and indeed found blood. A further sequence of messages enabled the police to track down and convict the killer. In another case a girl's grandmother died and appeared to her in a dream to tell her where she had hidden her Christmas present at the bottom of a box. These kinds of cases can potentially be ascribed to Super-ESP but they contain a sense of agency which in my view makes such an explanation unlikely. Light is sometimes seen around dying people, and the dead can appear in forms of light to reassure their loved ones that they are OK. Saints are often seen with light seemingly emanating from their bodies. Reading the cases as a whole indicates that our physical existence is interwoven with other usually invisible orders of being.

Puhle devotes the last part of the book to exploring the significance of the case histories. She distinguishes between six



antecedent variables or variations of light experiences and a further six consequent variables about the meaning of the experiences including comfort and impact. She then analyses these 12 factors

in terms of their occurrence, which shows a prevalence of meaning in 91% of cases, an experience of a light form in 76% and a sense of comfort in 58% followed by impact at 42%. The first-hand cases also reflect this relative prevalence of factors. In summary, Puhle observes that 'light thus works as a connecting link to the source of life, to life energy, and unlimited love. It creates an inner and outer balance, and fills or envelops its protégé with harmony and peace.' This concluding observation is consistent with many other sources, including the recent popular books by Anita Moorjani and Eben Alexander. This is nicely rounded off with a quotation from the theologian Hans Kung – who has himself investigated such experiences – that he expects to die into the light. This spiritual message could not be more important at a time when the violence in the world seems to become more intense and demands of spiritual people a response nevertheless affirming the primacy of love, as revealed in this extensive collection of cases. As Pitirim Sorokin observed around 1920 when he was imprisoned by both sides in St Petersburg, violence only ever calls forth answering violence, so we are challenged to insist that love still calls forth love. We can also remember Whitehead's remark that the instability of evil is the moral order of the world.

Psychical Research and Spirituality

David Lorimer

MANY MANSIONS (1943)

LYCHGATE (1945)

THE DARK STAR (1951)

GOD'S MAGIC (1960)

Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding

White Crow Books, 2013 – see www.whitecrowbooks.com

Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding (1882-1970) was educated at Winchester and was already a pilot at the outbreak of the First World War. In 1936, he took command of the RAF and was responsible for successful strategy in winning the Battle of Britain in 1940. His tactic was not to engage the Luftwaffe until their planes were over

England, and he had a detailed defence plan in the background. He is therefore credited for victory, but was removed from his post for political reasons a few months later. The quotations below may help explain why – he was known as “Stuffy” owing to a lack of humour. Sir Frederick Pile writes that he was “.....a difficult man, a self opinionated man, a most determined man, and a man who knew more than anybody about all aspects of aerial warfare.” He therefore made many enemies through his blunt manner. Sir Douglas Bader was one of those instrumental in removing him, but he later admitted that “without his vision, his planning, his singleness of purpose, and his complete disregard for personal aggrandizement, Fighter Command might have been unable to win the Battle of Britain in the summer of 1940.”

After his summary dismissal, he sent the following heartfelt note to his officers:

My dear Fighter Boys,

In sending you this, my last message, I wish I could say all that is in my heart. I cannot hope to surpass the simple eloquence of the Prime Minister's words, "Never before has so much been owed by so many to so few." The debt remains and will increase.

In saying good-bye to you I want you to know how continually you have been in my thoughts, and that, though our direct connection may be severed, I may yet be able to help you in your gallant fight.

Good-bye to you and God bless you all.

Dowding's wife had died in 1920, and I am not sure what influence this had on his becoming a spiritualist. These four books are the result of his reading and personal investigation. Of course, like many of the pioneering SPR scientists such as Sir Oliver Lodge, many of his skeptical friends thought he had lost his marbles, and he needed the very qualities of single-mindedness and determination referred to above in putting up with scorn and ridicule. People like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had the same experience during the 1920s. The first of these books is based on reading rather than experience, but he takes a common sense and practical view, as one would expect, writing that the book is written for ordinary men by an ordinary man. This was shortly after the Church of England had suppressed a favourable report into spiritualism. He uses Lodge's book *Raymond* about the death of his son in First World War as one of the principal sources. He expects readers to arrive at their own conclusions on the basis of the evidence he adduces.

A key feature of all four books is transcripts of accounts of servicemen - many in the RAF - describing their experience of death in vivid terms. Most did not immediately realise that they

had died and some found themselves in a no man's land and therefore in need of help. This rescue work therefore becomes an important function of Dowding's group. His subjects describe themselves as more alive than before. By contrast, one high-ranking person found himself in a hovel after death and when enquiring how this could be, a messenger told him that this was all the material he had sent over... More generally, Dowding discusses the subtle bodies and spheres of continuing existence. He is impressed by the writings of W. Stainton Moses on a more spiritual level, and adds many inspiring addresses from one of his sources, Z. It is also clear from the perceptions of clairvoyants that Dowding was performing an important spiritual function by speaking from various platforms.

Lychgate is based more on his own experience and it is here that he realises the enormous power of thought, of which prayer is a concentrated version. This enables us to tune into Light and Love and make our own contribution to positive human evolution. He comes to accept the existence of reincarnation as well as the reality of a spiritual world beyond the material - he often remarks how his work is designed to counter the materialism of his time. Not surprisingly, supports the power of the Silent Minute. His vision is that a combination of the ancient mysteries and Christianity can form the basis of a world religion that will satisfy the aspirations of the mystic and the intelligence of the scientist. He always presents his theories as working hypotheses but does profess astonishment at the general lack of interest in life after death among the public; he is also critical of the Church's rather woolly pronouncements on the subject. He is convinced, as I also am, that if it is clearly demonstrated to those who believe in extinction at physical death that they are wrong, it must have some effect on the way they lead their lives.

As the reader will see, two of the books were written during the chaos of Second World War. Given his military seniority, it is interesting that he observes that between nations there is neither adequate morality nor any agreed code of behaviour, which he highlights as the weakness of systems of international organisation. He advocates an international code of conduct as a basis for universal international law. Metaphysically, this corresponds to what he calls the illusion of separateness in that we are all parts of God and therefore of one another. The psychic and spiritual message of these books is as important as ever and it is good to see them back in print, especially this year as the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

Had he lived a little longer, Dowding would undoubtedly have been a Network Member like his friend Air Marshal

Sir Victor Goddard (1897-1987) who described Dowding as 'by far the most important British commander of the entire war.' Goddard had a fascinating experience in 1936 when he was flying over a near derelict airfield in Scotland and suddenly had an accurate vision of how this place was to be in for five years time, with yellow mono planes being wheeled out by mechanics in blue overalls, neither of which had come in at the time. For a detailed account see www.llewellyn.com or search in Google under Sir Victor Goddard where this is on the front page.

ecology-futures studies

Global Revolution and the Healing of Love

David Lorimer

TERRA NOVA Dieter Duhm

Verlag Meiga, 2015, 244 pp., £12.80, h/b – ISBN 978-3-927266-54-4

The central theme of this visionary yet practical book is how we generate a new form of humaneness based on trust and mutual support. In the late 1960s, the author was a Marxist activist, but he realised that Marxism did not address the inner aspect of life from which outer patterns of behaviour emerge. This led him to found a community in 1978, which moved to become Tamera in Portugal in 1995. In the introduction, he states that the human being is the cause of his own failure because he disregarded some essential aspects of his own inner world - the driving powers of the soul, libidinous longings, sexuality and animality, spiritual powers, hopes and fears. His thesis is that a transformation of the inner world will lead to a corresponding outer transformation - a critical aspect of our story but then our outer structures also shape our inner world and draw out certain features of human nature. As this year has shown only too clearly, we live within a matrix of fear and violence portrayed by the media, even if most of us are in fact living peacefully in our own communities. I'm sure he is right in regarding the community or group as a microcosm of human existence, containing as it does light and dark elements. It is important to remind ourselves, as Aldous Huxley pointed out in 1942, that a humane goal cannot be reached through inhumane means. Whatever the short-term imperatives, violence will create further violence in a spiral of destruction.



We need to reflect deeply on what it means to choose life and trust and to realise our inherent interconnectedness as expressions of one life and one consciousness. We are deeply embedded in a morphic field of fear (Duhm uses the word morphogenetic, but Rupert Sheldrake himself would use 'morphic' in this wider context) - primarily fear of loss and separation at a deep unconscious level, where so many horrific images of war and suffering are stored. An important part of his thesis and the work of Tamera is that our patriarchal society and institutions have for centuries suppressed women's sexuality (Riane Eisler has written extensively about this) in systems of domination and possession. This requires a freeing up of love and sexuality based on real contact and trust rather than exploitation. Duhm makes a deep connection between lying, betrayal, fear and violence in love with their corresponding expression in war - all this destroys trust and therefore openness to love and compassion. This applies especially to bringing up children, who need this atmosphere of love in order to flourish.

The second section on concrete utopia explains how we can create a new morphic field from the inside out. He gives some remarkable examples from Satprem to illustrate that our thoughts and feelings shape how the outer world reacts to us. He calls this acting through the 'inner operator' or higher self corresponding to the sacred matrix or cosmic pattern of life also represented in our culture by the power of Christ. A further manifestation is Ananda or joy, which enables a harmonious relationship in Tamera between humans and nature, even those we normally regard as pests. The overall vision is of a new humanity on a healed Earth and it is critical to articulate and hold this vision - as embodied in communities like Tamera - as a field to attract its own realisation. It can only start small and grow, like all seeds in nature.

The third part spells out in more detail how the Earth and humanity can be healed, as has happened for instance at Tamera due to their water retention scheme that has regenerated the previously arid area. Life is inherently healing and the entelechy of each organism contains its own blueprint for development. Duhm describes the processes for the development of trust and solidarity used at Tamera for the healing of love and the freeing of sexual expression as well as the recognition that our human challenges are universal. He summarises these in a series of guidelines and more general ethical principles all based on the primacy of love - especially the deep soul connection - for human flourishing. Nonviolent human culture has to be based on truth, mutual support, responsible participation in the community, transparency, reliability and care for the animal world. At an emotional level this means

becoming free of reactivity so that the spiritual powers of the universe can act through you.

The fourth part explains the global healing biotopes or cells, of which the Tamera community is one. These are anchored in the universal powers of life and creation, taking 'a determined, non-negotiable stand for life.' Members shift from an individual to a community identity and become more radically themselves as they drop the need to be normal in society's terms. This goes way beyond the collectivism associated with Marxism and its emphasis on social conditioning. As people reveal themselves and are really seen, they are loved for who they are. They also magnetise around a higher spiritual ideal. In our time we not only need a strong vision of hope and love but a practical demonstration of its reality. This visionary book and the Tamera community are beacons of our new possibilities and give us a compass direction to the creation of a more trusting world to which our young people can aspire.

Available from www.terranova.tamera.org so that Amazon does not pocket the profit!

The Theological Climate

John Reader

A POLITICAL THEOLOGY OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Michael S. Northcott

SPCK Publishing, 2014, 344 pp., £19.99, p/b - ISBN -978-0-2810723-23

Michael Northcott has published on the environmental crisis before, this is possibly his most important book. It is based on research carried out between 2008 and 2011 - and one always has to note these dates as external events in this area shift so swiftly - but is brought up to date with reference to Bruno Latour's Gifford Lectures from early 2013. It is notable not simply because of the depth of scholarship, but also because Northcott does employ some of the important philosophical resources, Latour, Stengers and Whitehead, that many others in the theological world have yet to register. As we shall see however, his conclusions in the final section of the book are perhaps less convincing, but do serve to raise the central questions.

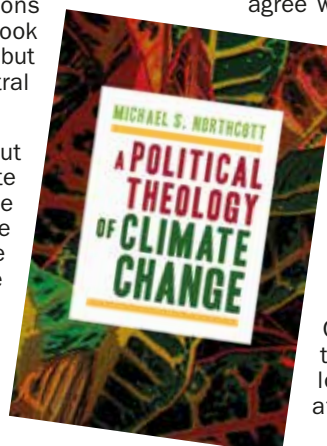
Chapter 1 begins to lay out the contours of the debate and presents many of the disturbing details of the consequences of climate change. These include not only the physical impact of the predicted rise in temperatures and subsequent rise in sea levels, and therefore threat

to major centres such as London, New York and Tokyo, but also the potential for conflict created by carbon wars and the struggles to access vital resources. As many national security agencies now acknowledge in their planning, climate change presents as big a threat to global stability as international terrorism. Hence the CIA is quoted as saying that climate change "will produce consequences that exceed the capacity of the affected societies or global systems to manage". Northcott also correctly tackles the vexed subject of the climate deniers and recent attempts to discredit the scientists who point towards the dangers now facing the planet, and argues that this is a politics, and indeed a political theology, not simply a natural scientific theory: "because, like the Apocalyptic of the New Testament, it indicates the imminence of a moment of judgement on the present form of civilization, and the end of an era in which humans expanded their influence over the earth without regards to planetary limits and without apparent consequences".

As Latour has noted, climate scientists are surprised to be called lobbyists by climate deniers, but they should not be so as they need to recognize the political dimension of their findings and reports. The rest of the chapter enters into discussion of the categorization of the different eras of human activity, the Anthropocene; Agrarianism; the Christocene, and then moves into Latour's examination of "the modern" which is premised upon a division between culture and nature; between subject and object, and between matter and bodies. "Nature is made new by being turned into scientific facts, and so brought under the power of knowledge through the mediation of experimental physics, chemistry and biology. Culture is made new as the sphere of moral and political fabrication... to be modern is to affirm this new separation of powers". It is this separation that needs to be challenged, as to be modern is to deny that the weather is political, or that politics influences the climate. Otherwise the claims of the climate scientists will appear an "incomprehensible hybrid". Climate science requires a politics which is cosmic and not merely rational. I would agree with Northcott that the

work of writers such as Latour and Whitehead is now essential as we come to terms with needing to portray a different relationship between nature and culture and between the human and the non-human.

Chapter Two pursues these themes by looking in particular at the pivotal and



damaging role that coal plays in climate change, working with the arguments of James Hansen that “coal-fired power stations are the single greatest threat to civilization and all life on our planet”. Coal is still the largest remaining fossil fuel reserve of carbon dioxide, and could power the planet for another 200 years at the present rate of energy use. New coal-fired electric power plants are being built in Brazil, China, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, South Africa and Turkey. The impact of this is likely to be disastrous, if Hansen is correct. Worldwide, more than 1200 new coal-fired power stations are planned in the next 20 years. We are reminded of the effects of coal and smog in the recent past in London and indeed the social impact of mining itself on various communities. Northcott then links this to developments in modern physics and our understandings of space and time, moving into an important discussion of Whitehead’s critique of the culture-nature divide, using especially his concept of the “fallacy of misplaced concreteness” to analyse how the idea of the market has taken on an inappropriate significance. We need to understand ourselves as “composite beings in the universe... in the process of becoming and not as a collation of fixed or stable entities”.

Chapter Three takes us into perhaps the more familiar territory of our dependence upon oil and the arguments about peak oil, before turning this time to Vico as another source of criticism of the nature-culture divide.

Chapter Four follows this up with discussion of the “cult of carbon” and some of the proposed means of trying to alleviate this – most of which are seen as simply a way of shifting the problems rather than addressing them directly. Markets in carbon indulgences are not to be promoted as a real solution. Political approaches such as Marxism are examined, but, again, this is viewed as being promethean, and based on the assumption that humans can solve all the problems through their own powers of control. The climate crisis reveals the limitations of both capitalism and Marxism.

So, as we then see in Chapter Five, can our hopes be pinned on international negotiations and the influence of human reason as various agreements are hammered out (and then invariably not fully implemented even when compromise decisions are reached)? Northcott is not optimistic: “If climate change is not only a scientific datum but a shaper of social and political experience, then liberal democratic capitalism is itself built upon an illusion: the illusion that the corporately sustained engine of economic growth can spread freedom and material prosperity to all seven billion humans on the planet... provided they acknowledge the supremacy of Enlightenment

reason, and, in particular, economic rationality, as the means to progress the human condition”. In many ways this summarizes Northcott’s argument throughout the book.

What is Northcott’s solution though? Chapters Six and Seven move into more explicitly theological territory, and here I find him less convincing. There is quite a surprising, to my mind anyway, discussion of the work of Carl Schmitt on the long crisis of global capitalism and use of his critiques of both liberalism and romanticism: “Schmitt locates the political in the interstices between air, earth, and sea, and in the agential role of earthly forces in the formation of the borders and laws of nations, and hence of the political”. One of the dilemmas in all responses to climate change is how much weight is to be placed on influencing international politics and how much to try to change individual behaviour, or should we simply promote concepts such as resilience as the only way to adapt to what now seems inevitable? Where do we go from here and to what extent can traditional Christianity contribute to proposed solutions? Northcott talks about “virtues for living in the Anthropocene” with a discussion of MacIntyre and the need for moral communities. The examples given are those of Transition Towns (now Transition Initiatives in fact) and Eco-Congregations, although he does acknowledge that these, in themselves, are never going to be enough to tackle the global scale of the problems.

The final chapter addresses the questions of revolutionary messianism and the end of empire, and concludes with a long section on William Blake: “consciousness is embodied and mediated through the sensory and imaginative apprehension of the material world, and this includes consciousness of divinity as well as nature and humanity”. Even Hardt and Negri and their concept of “the multitude” become part of the debate, all of which is fine, but does feel rather like clutching at straws.

Having said that, I would recommend this book as a crucial contribution to a debate that political and public theology has yet to take seriously enough, and especially commend Northcott’s use of Latour and Whitehead as central philosophical sources as we struggle to work towards a new understanding of the relation between nature and culture, the human and the non-human. He is surely right that this is now a vital subject for Political Theology.

John Reader is Associate Research Fellow with the William Temple Foundation, University of Chester and Rector

of the Ironstone Benefice in the Oxford Diocese. Publications include *Heterotopia* co-written with Caroline Baillie and Jens Kabo: *A Philosophy of Christian Materialism: Entangled Fidelities and the Public Good* co-written with Chris Baker and Tom James.

Paris and the Survival of Civilisation

David Lorimer

UNPRECEDENTED

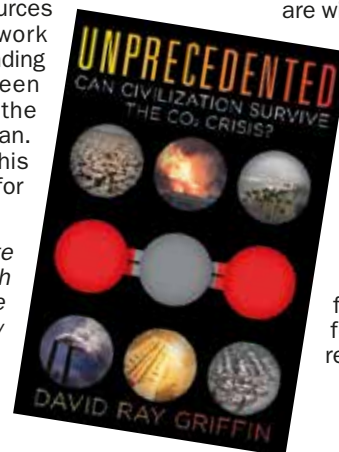
David Ray Griffin

Clarity Press, 2015, 515 pp., \$34.95, p/b – ISBN 978-0-9860769-0-9

Reactions to the recent Paris climate accord have been broadly positive, although with many reservations owing to its structure and lack of binding commitments. Elizabeth Kolbert, whose book *The Sixth Extinction* I review in books in brief, wrote in the New York Times that it was probably the best agreement that could have been brokered in the circumstances while remarking that those who say it was a triumph and those who insist it was a sham - like James Hansen - are both right. *Private Eye* humorously summarises the drift in its latest issue, remarking that ‘there were standing ovations all round in Paris last night, as 194 world leaders applauded themselves for having agreed on what they all agreed was the most historic agreement ever agreed in the history of the world.’

In his latest book, David Ray Griffin brings his meticulous scholarship and critical acumen to a completely new field, with 75 pages of notes covering every aspect of climate change that one can think of. He originally made his name in philosophy and religion, especially with respect to Whitehead, and he has also written on parapsychology. More recently, he has written over 10 books on 9/11, most of which I have reviewed in these pages. It is an extraordinary achievement to have mastered the climate change literature so thoroughly and produce a highly acclaimed book asking if civilisation can survive the CO2 crisis. At the beginning of the book, he quotes Nobel prize winner Sherwood Rowland as saying: ‘what’s the use of having developed a science well enough to make predictions if, in the end, all we are willing to do is stand around and wait for them to come true?’ This quote effectively frames Griffin’s analysis.

The book is in three parts: unprecedented threats, covering extreme weather, heatwaves, droughts and fires, storms, sea level rise, fresh water shortage, food shortage, climate refugees, climate wars and



ecosystem collapse and extinction. The second part addresses unprecedented challenges and failures: climate change denial, media failure, political failure, moral challenge, religious challenge and economic challenge. Part three spells out what can be done in terms of the transition to clean energy, the abolition of dirty energy and mobilisation. In some ways, Griffin builds on the work of Lester Brown and his formulation of Plan B, although he cleverly adds Plan C. Plan A is business as usual, which is not really a plan at all, while Plan B spells out the necessary mobilisation process and action that can avert environmental catastrophe. Plan C is the wait-and-see option which, in the end, is not very different from Plan A. This leaves Plan B as the only truly rational and moral option, but it requires a fundamental change of course that will not be initiated by our current political systems.

Drawing on authoritative sources, Griffin spells out in the first part the catalogue of evidence for climate disruption, focusing primarily on the US but bringing in evidence from other parts of the world as well. Because we are used to thinking in linear terms, it is more difficult for us to understand that global warming may be a systemic cause of many of the disruptions he describes. Some of the later chapters illustrate the effects of the earlier ones when it comes to water and food shortages. There is a separate chapter on climate refugees, which Sir Crispin Tickell was warning about 20 years ago. Here Griffin gives a particularly interesting example concerning Syria. We already know that the whole region is under pressure so far as water is concerned, and Syria suffered a terrible drought between 2006 and 2011. This led to widespread crop failures and death of livestock, reducing 2 to 3 million of Syria's 10 million rural inhabitants to extreme poverty. Government policy further exacerbated water shortages and it seems plausible that the government's failure to respond to this humanitarian crisis was a trigger of the uprising. At the end of each chapter, Griffin spells out clearly the options of Plans A, B and C so that the reader becomes progressively more convinced that we must find a way of implementing Plan B.

The second part opens with a discussion of climate change denial, which is largely linked to oil interests, particularly Exxon Mobil. Griffin lists the principal scientists and institutions supported by the industry, and has some eye-opening quotes from informed politicians. He compares the denial campaign with that of the cigarette industry, and could also have cited the current tactics of the food industry in relation to obesity. He goes on to document the failure of the media and politicians, commenting on the huge gap between the public's understanding of the situation and the scientific understanding, which has

actually widened over the last five years. The main reason for media and political failure is a combination of the power of money and 'economism', which frames the whole analysis in terms of the growth of the existing system, in spite of warnings from distinguished academics like Lord Stern, whose views have become more urgent since the publication of his initial study in 2006. Science has been overruled by politics and short-term economics and I'm sure Jonathan Pershing is right to remark that the politics of negotiations do not speak in any way to what *has* to be done. A very important factor is intergenerational justice, which reinforces the moral case for immediate action. Griffin also shows how various apocalyptic theological perspectives do not help the situation: if you rely on God to intervene or you are expecting the end of the world, then climate change can fulfil these aspirations.

The third part goes into considerable detail about the possible transition to clean energy, using a variety of technologies and showing that the world could be powered by such technologies by 2050. German figures have already reached one third. Forecasts for keeping global warming within 2 degrees mean that we can only burn a further 565 gigatons of carbon, while the known reserves of fossil fuels are 2795 gigatons. This means keeping 4/5 of these reserves in the ground. Needless to say, the fossil fuel companies have no intention of doing this, so governments will have to act more vigorously on the carbon front and by removing fossil fuel subsidies. Griffin shows that none of our existing fossil fuel technologies are clean enough to make a difference. Like Lester Brown, he advocates mass mobilisation to address the overall challenge. This gives a unique role to the President of the United States, but equally the office is hemmed in by campaign funds given by fossil fuel and other interests. Griffin spells out the clear and present danger that we face and details a series of policies that reverse the trends. In doing this, he goes further than Brown by showing what various sectors of society can contribute, including leaders at state and city levels.

So we come back to Paris and the agreement. Elizabeth Kolbert thinks that the media have a special role to play in keeping world leaders up to the mark in fulfilling their obligations and aspirations. We do not yet have a collective sense of emergency that is conveyed in this powerful book, so the question becomes how this will come about. There is always wiggle room in associating a systemic cause with a particular effect, so perhaps our best bet is to support every effort we can not only to move towards clean energy but also to support projects that regenerate our ecosystems, especially in relation to agriculture, and reduce our

ecological footprint. This also means a major campaign on contraception and women's education so as to reduce family size as population and consumption together determine our overall impact on the environment.

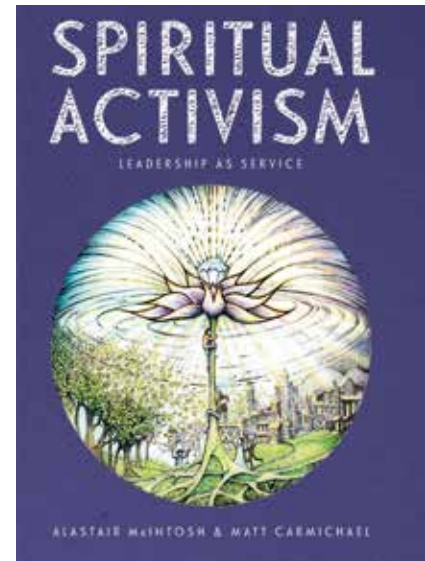
Leadership as Service

David Lorimer

SPIRITUAL ACTIVISM

Alastair McIntosh (SMN) and Matt Carmichael

Green Books, 2015, 223 pp., £19.99, h/b – ISBN 978-0-85784-300-5



As I mention in my review of *Terra Nova* in this section, Dieter Duhm's experience of Marxism in the 1960s was that politics alone was not enough, and had to be underpinned by spirituality and community. The authors of this thoughtful and practical book, which originates in a university course, have not only taken this on board but help others tread a path where action is informed not only by spirituality in general, but by spiritual practice and psychological understanding. The ten chapters cover the nature of activism and spirituality, the implications of higher consciousness and the structure of the psyche, leadership and consciousness-raising, the pitfalls of cults and charisma, the practice of nonviolence, the psychodynamics of campaigning and some examples of deeper practice that can inform our action.

To be an activist is not comfortable: it involves standing apart from and holding a mirror to society, having ascertained one's position on an issue and taken the decision to act in a particular way. One becomes part of a group with its own psychodynamics that need to be understood for effective campaigning. As the authors note, spirituality involves values, an inner life and an intrinsic relationship between knowing, being

and doing. To be authentic in this respect means living from the heart and manifesting love in all situations, however challenging. The authors give a number of experiences of their own, including a rather dramatic encounter with RD Laing on Iona. They justify both spirituality and the relevance of higher consciousness before exploring the structure of the psyche with particular reference to Freud, Jung and Maslow, but also to Assagioli, Reich and Alice Miller.

I found their discussion of movers and movements very helpful, and especially the definition of conscientisation as 'the raising of the consciousness and conscience through action and reflection so that people think critically about their lives, enabling transformation towards a fuller humanisation.' They use power-with rather than power-over, although these relationships can be very complex within the group, for instance between visionaries and managers. I also liked the definition of a prophet as 'a visionary who gives outward witness to an inner calling', often highlighting social or environmental injustice. They relate this role both to the shaman and the bard. The chapter on cults contains some useful caveats in terms of group dynamics and the downside of charisma.

Their discussion on nonviolence draws on the work of Joanna Macy and also Walter Wink, whom I had not come across. His myth of redemptive violence is very relevant to our current situation in the Middle East and indeed the political reaction to it, that 'violence saves, that war brings peace, that might makes right.' However, this all takes place within what Wink called the domination system characterising Western societies. Perhaps our greatest spiritual challenge as a species is breaking this spiral of violence, which is where authentic nonviolence comes in. The authors see this as the delegitimisation of legitimate power through choosing suffering in preference to the perpetuation of violence. This is the moral power of those, like Gandhi, who choose this path of *satyagraha* or truth force. They give examples from a number of traditions, including Mohammed himself in one of the excellent case studies at the end of each chapter – these also include Julia Butterfly Hill, Desmond Tutu, Gerard Winstanley and Sojourner Truth.

The last two chapters provide further tools for the activist including circles of trust for feedback and growth, the importance of eldership and the need to work on inner transformation and maintain one's integrity. Alastair tells a delightful story about a pedlar coming to the door in Darjeeling with the number of offerings, among which was a Buddhist prayer wheel. The man pronounced the formula *Om mane padme hum*, and when Alastair asked him what these words really meant, he

replied 'God come to my heart'. The authors also explain how to practise the *metta* meditation for compassion, extending it not only to friends but also strangers and those we dislike. Alastair recounts a significant dream that uncannily mirrors the situation of one of the workshop attendees.

Many readers will find themselves somewhere between the spiritual and the activist part of the title. Regardless of where you are, this book will help infuse your activism with spirituality or awaken your spirituality to the need for a more active expression. We are all in the business of relating inner knowing and being to outer action and need to gain the maximum clarity in this respect if our motives and actions are to be consistent and anchored in moral values and ethical principles. The book takes the reader on an inspiring and hopeful journey.

For further details see www.alastairmcintosh.com/spiritualactivism/

No More Theorising: Feel the Change

Keith Beasley

LEADING FROM THE EMERGING FUTURE: From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies

Otto Scharmer & Katrin Kaufer

Berrett-Koehler, 2013, 287 pp.,
£16.10, p/b – ISBN 978-16050-99262

Any book that quotes Thich Nhat Hanh and Master Nan's reinterpretation of Confucius's *Great Learning* in a discourse on the evolution of Economics and Business has to be worth at least a second look. In fact I read it (very nearly) cover to cover. As someone who fine-tuned the art of rapid reading and scanning of books during my PhD, this is huge compliment to Otto Scharmer (a senior lecturer at MIT) and Katrin Kaufer, co-founder with Scharmer, of the Presencing Institute.

Charting the formation of the ecological, social and spiritual-cultural divides, the authors identify the underlying disconnects in the various systems that have, until recently, kept the world's governments and businesses running. This message is not new, but this presentation of it is both succinct, readable and, most importantly, offers a solution that not just satisfies logic but also heart and soul. Even more usefully, they include many real-world examples of how their 'presencing' and 'Theory U' approaches have led to major shifts in how old-paradigm organisations have become shining examples of what can happen when all parties co-sense and work with the new future which they are convinced is emerging. In many ways this book reflects many of the themes of my own thesis: how courage and

compassion, feeling a situation from another's perspective and connecting to our common humanity is essential in changing behaviours.

The trouble with many books, no matter how insightful or full of worthwhile ideas they might be, is that they're taken in as facts and theories and remain in our minds as just that and no more. This book practices what it preaches: describing a way of co-creating a more aware, connected, future; enabling and encouraging the application of the theory in the real world and daily lives. It does this in a number of ways. Firstly it is linked to a free on-line course which itself is linked to U-Lab (see www.presencing.com/ulab/overview) which encourages students of the course to meet with fellow students in their locality and apply the theory to their own communities or organisations.

Secondly, each chapter includes a 'Conclusion and Practices' section which prompts you, the reader and student, to reflect on key issues and personalise the ideas presented in a journal. Then you are asked to share your perspective with your group and suggest ways of 'prototyping' what you've learnt, in your own office, home, organisation or community. Thus, the gist of the text, which emphasis experiential, inner engagement over objective analysis, is immediately grounded in practical application.

There are, of course, many alternative approaches to the specific processes and techniques offered by Scharmer & Kaufer, but they do admit that the intent in such activities is usually far more important than the detailed procedures. That being said, the exercises given and support provided by U-Lab and its local hubs, when added to the theories and insights in this book, together offer a rare, workable, approach to turning an ego-based organisation to one in tune with the needs of society and the planet as a whole. If the idea of an 'emerging future', to replace our current dying reality, appeals to you, then don't just read this book: open your heart and mind and you'll find others you can work with to co-create it!

Keith Beasley is course director at the *Body Mind Institute* (www.bodymindinstitute.com)



General

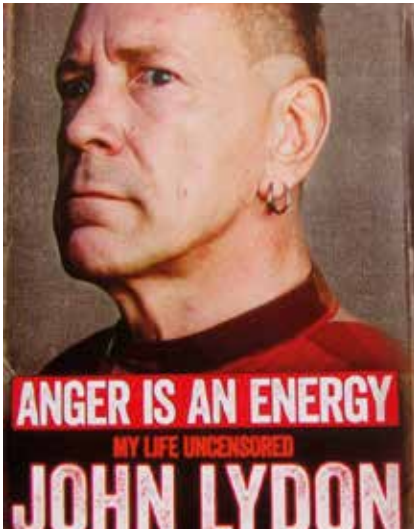
Anger Management

Martin Lockley

ANGER IS AN ENERGY:
MY LIFE UNCENSORED

John Lydon

Harper Collins 2014, 536 pp., \$US 28.99, h/b - ISBN 978-0-06-240021-5



Much as I love my thrice-annual copy of the Network magazine, I find the articles and book reviews, while fascinating, sometimes thematically rather similar, dealing with, among other things, sometimes hard-to-define, alternative world views, and intractable problems of consciousness. These are perhaps issues that “tend” [that word again] to be of interest to a certain generation ... “talking about my generation.” Thoughtful people, including SMN readers, probably mostly work unobtrusively to make their communities and world a better place. But there are others who are a little more obtrusive if not at times “in your face.” But isn’t it the slings and arrows of outrageous individuals and movements that wake us from complacency and challenge us to evaluate the state of the world and how we can go about changing it, hopefully for the better? [The good old thesis-antithesis-synthesis cycle applies here].

Since many SMN members are psychologists and psychiatrists, what dost thou think of the thesis that *Anger is an Energy*, the title of the new autobiography of John Lydon (AKA Johnny Rotten of the *Sex Pistols*)? This is surely a question of some psychological import. I hasten to add that I never “got” the punk thing at all, rather I was enamoured of the hippie generation, naively believing its adherents would make the world a better place, and maybe they, or at least some of them, have. But,... what makes a young man, or a young generation, angry, and how does it

affect society? Johnny Lydon, was brought up in extreme poverty, in the grimy, bombed out and “deprived” inner city parts of London around Benwell Road, stomping ground for Arsenal fans [‘arse an’ all], and street-aggressive hooligans from both home and away. A combination of rat-infested filth and meningitis put six year-old Johnny into a coma for the best part of a year. [As the Monty Python upper-class toffs might joke - “you were lucky”]. Johnny came out of this unconsciousness not knowing himself or his family [‘e were lucky, haha!]. Now that’s an early identity crisis! Actually his family members were a nice, doing-their-best lot, always playing their “enormous record collection.” In order for Johnny to snap out of his recent comatose state, the doctors actually advised being “brusque” with him. That’s a genteel word. As Johnny puts it his parents were “advised never to let up on me, never mollycoddle me, or baby me, because if I fell into a lazy-arse way... I’d never resolve my issues. And being agitated got me to think. Agitation’s a powerful tool sometimes.”

Johnny’s excursion into the unconscious left at least some psychic legacy, he knew when his grandfather died, and ran to tell his parents. He had intellectual leanings, loved history in school and became a great reader, Dostoyevsky at age 11. But despite his intellectual promise his teachers were mean to him. He found “that fella” Oscar Wilde outrageously funny, getting at society’s faults, as well as his own. Any Brit born just post-WW II will likely identify with an upbringing in the 1950s and 1960s, warts and all. Johnny had more than his share, including a gob full of rotten teeth, hence the nickname. One was brutally yanked out by a dentist with medieval skills. Although his parents loved the Beatles he hated all that “she loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah stuff” and their matching hairdos. Instead he “loved Rachmaninov,” “Rimsky-Korsakov banging-of-the-piano” and all manner of pure and impure sounds. “After meningitis came another nightmare and a half... - adolescence!” When he dyed his hair green his dad said “Get out of the house, you look like a Brussels sprout!” But “Johnny wears what he wants” [title of chapter 3] and liked “street culture” and being a “fairground attraction.” Elsewhere he says “I can take influence but I can’t take teaching. It goes back to school really. Don’t tell me what to do, tell me how to do it.”

Johnny is opinionated, and admits it, usually in a naïve “Oi likes this and Oi don’t like dat” kinda way. As the Sex Pistols began to form, playing rough beer-soaked nightspots for pennies he says “As for musicality who gives a damn? It was the bravery of what they were attempting to do” that counted in a sea of “spoiled kids in bands.” The anger energy is part of the nightmare of

adolescence, mixed in with jealousy and inverted snobbery. The Beatles may, have been spoilt in Johnny’s opinion, by the music industry, after initial success brought in big money, but they came from the same deprived roots. And later when Johnny met Paul he thought him a lovely guy. Inevitably the *Sex Pistols* anti-authoritarian, into-the-inferno-style drew the attention of the media, and mostly its scandalmongers. Johnny says they effectively stimulated the birth of the worst British-style, paparazzi parasites. Who needs to be outrageous when they are telling the most outrageous lies about you? “Infamy, they’ve all got it in for me!” Plenty of seed material there, given the Pistols’ famous tracks *Anarchy in the UK* and the infamous version of *God Save the Queen*. Parliament even debated charging the *Pistols* with treason! But scandals are scandals and infamous *Pistols* band member Sid Vicious, a heroin addict and son of a heroin addict mother (who gave him the drug as a birthday present) eventually killed his heroin addict girlfriend in New York before he died of an overdose. Johnny was different, and although not averse to “speed” as a youngster, and plenty of boozy parties, he despised heroin users, saying “they’ve lost their soul” and have lifeless eyes. Johnny was no squeaky clean saint but he usually liked to go on stage “relatively” sober. He espoused general empathy for the disadvantaged and said of Sid that he “used drugs to cover up his sense of inadequacy.”

With the demise of the *Pistols* (and Sid Vicious) Johnny formed *Public Image Ltd.* (PiL) named after Muriel Sparks novel *Public Image* about how “the publicity machine turns an average actress into a monstrous diva.” [More literary pedigree]? Here I might dabble, as Johnny does, in some psychology. What turns a shy post-comatose kid into a society-confronting rebel? Well perhaps it is obvious, the need to overcome insecurity and prove oneself, and to remind society that all is not well in deprived communities. If they (the system) are out to get you it can make you paranoid, or as the reversed, ironic version goes: “just because you’re paranoid, it doesn’t mean they’re not out to get you.” SMN readers may, at times, find the choice language a bit choice and repetitive [I did] but Johnny says he don’t mind insulting and being insulted (street culture) just as long as you don’t lie, especially about me. Balanced against this one finds some gems of naïve humour and wry observation. Johnny is “just a human being trying to explain his place in the world.” “Irony [he says] will always be there because that’s the greatest achievement in the English language, and ... sadly lacking in other cultures.” *Anger is an Energy* is a big book, 500+ pages, and it chronicles, Johnny’s growth, without his loss of naivety and childish enthusiasm for

new experiences, as he began to travel internationally, and even settle in Los Angeles first as a legal resident then, recently, as a citizen.

His childish naivety is exemplified in his endearing response to sunshine; it was if he discovered, in his 50s, that California is in fact a sunny, golden land of opportunity without the dreary disadvantages of the British climate. It took him a while to adjust to the lifestyle of "getting up early and enjoying the sunrise and sunset...more thrilling than anything a squalid disco in Sheffield can offer." Likewise, because, after decades in the industry Johnny was on his way to being an elder statesman, it "absolutely shocked" him that big name people of status had respect for him. And he began to work with some of them. But, you guessed it, he still rails against the conventions of the music industry, MTV and its "vacuous pop." "If you had anything poignant in your lyrics, MTV would find a way to cancel you out." He even rails against the Band Aid movement as "celebrity branding" saying you should be able to help starving and orphaned kids "without a pop star's name on it."

On another level Johnny combats his insecurity with a naïve form of amusing, if sometimes repetitive, self-congratulation for himself and his cronies. "I'm glad to report that I came out of my own self-analysis rather favourably." As a part of the peripheral LA celebrity establishment Johnny began get offers of TV spots. He acts a little ambivalent about involvement with the "establishment" but his partner Nora who he endearingly loves to bits helps him decide. He ends up suddenly discovering the wide world of nature and doing things like *John Lydon's Shark Attack* and *John Lydon Goes Ape*. Again the naïve enthusiasm is endearing as if the street culture kid is discovering the natural world for this first time, which he is.

Yes he swims in cages to film *Great White Sharks* and goes, like David Attenborough before him, to film chimps and gorillas. His accounts of these adventures are hilarious. Being told we could learn a lot from chimps he says "I learned they are bloody dangerous. They are football hooligans par excellence! They know how to throw rocks... After two years old you can't ...train them, they will not have it. But then I'm untrainable too." He asked if they hit us can we hit them back? The answer was no, but they are allowed to "get up on tree branches.. and piss on you...laughing their heads of... little sods." When getting close to a silver back gorilla he was told "never stare at them." "That's all well and fine [says Johnny] but when you got multicolored stripes in your hair, they're gonna stare at you.... What was I supposed to be here? A two-bob David Attenborough." Johnny and Nora became foster parents to her real grandkids, two wild, semi-

illiterate adolescent twins brought up in Rastafarian Jamaica by her daughter Ari Up from the punk band the Slits. They took the job more seriously than mum, recognising that "they're going to make foolish mistakes, and look like daft twats, but that's the privilege of youth." They had to learn new concepts of guidance and boundaries.

So *Anger is an Energy* but it can be "managed." A deprived street kid can become a two-bob David Attenborough and guide his foster grand kids away from the Rasta-punk circuit. Johnny was a daft twat in his day and now may be merely an endearingly daft senior citizen going into new things "wide eyed, and as dumb as a plank of wood." But hey why not? That is sometimes how you strive beyond, or break out from your "alleged capabilities." In the 1970s the Pistols *God Save the Queen* was treasonable, angry energy. In 2012 it was iconic British culture featured in the Olympic opening ceremony! Wot-on-erf?

Professor Martin Lockley is emeritus professor of geology and consciousness studies at the University of Colorado, Denver.

A Co-inherent Pattern

Nicholas Colloff

CHARLES WILLIAMS: THE THIRD INKLING

Grevel Lindop

Oxford University Press, 2015, 493 pp., £25, h/b - ISBN 978-0-19-928415-3

Grevel Lindop's new and excellent biography opens with Charles Williams, who, by poverty, was forced to abandon his formal education at seventeen, lecturing to spellbound, ever increasing, audiences at Oxford University in 1940. He was allowed to lecture only because it was wartime when the normal rules and expectations did not apply or could be judiciously bent.

Would Williams' reputation have been more ascendant and sustained if a university had been his sustenance and support, as it was for his friends C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien? Probably not for Williams, with the exception of 'The Inklings', found Oxford somewhat 'sterile', preferring the imaginative bustle of his native London but being more popular, and better remunerated would have!

For Williams' work had to be produced alongside a full time job at the urbane but ferociously busy London branch of the Oxford University Press supplemented by part-time lecturing, hack work and jobbing journalism. It often, even at its best, carried the air of

being somewhat unfinished, a brilliance of ideas and insight, let down by their never quite becoming fully incarnated in the best forms of expression (or of argument). There was never time for the final reflective polishing.

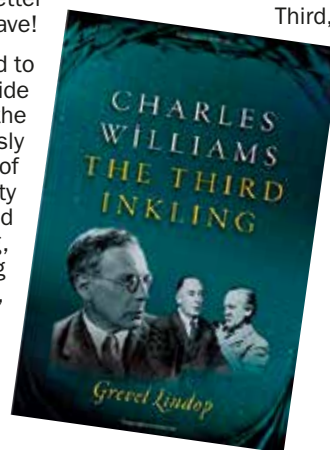
But what brilliance despite polish? A poet, a novelist and a critic of the first rank, waiting to be rediscovered; and, a theologian and occultist too! A man who asked you not merely to learn about poetry or enjoy a novel but to learn from them, to be changed by them. Poetry, he once said, should live in the blood and the bones. Its' rhythm yours.

What do we learn if we do?

First, as his friend, T.S. Eliot, noted, that the world is strange. What we take for 'ordinary' reality carries within and beyond it both the uncanny and the wonderful, if we attend aright. Sometimes it can be unnerving: "A room, a street, a field becomes unsure. The edge of possibility of utter alienation intrudes...". Sometimes it can be revelatory, "A hand lighting a cigarette is the explanation of everything, a foot stepping from a train is the rock of all existence". There is another world yet it is enfolded, enfolds this one - a sacred world whose lineaments are best explored through a consciousness attuned to the imaginal (and the magical). An exploration that will delight in paradox for the ultimate nature of things always eludes full expression.

Second, this strangeness carries within it possibilities of both good and evil and these are objective properties of the world not social constructs. These possibilities are best displayed in his remarkable fiction that carries the surface nature of occult thrillers deepened out into profound meditations on metaphysics, most especially on the choices we face in pursuing or surrendering power. My own favourite is 'The Greater Trumps' which in the portrayal of one of its character's, Aunt Sybil, is, I think, one of the most remarkable achievements in literature of seeking to depict the saintly (a challenge to many, greater artists, one thinks immediately of Dostoyevsky's repeated failures). Williams too matches any writer in his depiction of evil not least because he is honest enough to note all the attractions it had for himself.

Third, was his notion of substitution, one that he practised and encouraged others to practice. This recognised that a person might be carrying a burden too great for them - psychological or physical - such as an anxiety over a forthcoming event. The person would offer to 'take it from them', imaginatively suffer it, and because more detached



from it, contain it better. The sufferer would be relieved. Whether from suggestion or actuality, many who tried this path reported that it helped, and made of it a life long practice (however strange others might think this to be in a secularised age).

And, finally, substitution was believed to work because we are all one of another, 'co-inherent' was the word Williams used. We are all created in the likeness of God, individual and particular, but each as thread woven on a common shared weft, each contributing their specificity to wider whole, for good or ill, and yet to final glory, it is hoped.

This patterning of thoughts is embedded and illuminated in Lindop's comprehensive, compassionate and honest telling of Williams' life.

A life not untroubled - a complex marriage of mismatched but necessary halves, a failure to be a consistent or caring father, the constant searching after money; and, most challengingly, his tendency, becoming necessity, of falling in love with young women and entering a rich troubling fantasy life with them. Rich because most of the woman themselves emerged, though not unscathed, with a long lasting gratitude for what they had received in understanding and life. Troubling because, though apparently unconsummated, they were deeply coloured by sadomasochistic fantasy that sometimes resulted in the infliction of punishment and pain. These though, with caveats, consensual, were undoubtedly manipulative and, for Williams, increasingly addictive. These fantasies Williams came to believe were necessary for his art but like many believed necessities we will never know.

These shadows sit alongside a compelling portrait of a man who was fundamentally given to generosity and care; and was consistently inspirational. As W. H. Auden wrote, "for the first time in my life I felt myself in the presence of personal sanctity... in the presence of this man...I did not feel ashamed (as on meeting other good men). I felt transformed into a person who was incapable of doing or thinking anything base or unloving. (I later discovered that he had had a similar effect on many people)".

This wonderful biography can serve to remind us that there is no glib equation of 'holiness' with 'wholeness' and that the saint lives with both their brokenness and their woundings too. It also reminds what gifted and neglected author Williams is; and, hopefully, will help mend that and bring him into better regard.

Nicholas Colloff studied theology and philosophy at London and Oxford. He is the director of the Argidius Foundation in Switzerland.

Uncommon Sense

David Lorimer

AN INTELLIGENT PERSON'S GUIDE TO EDUCATION

Tony Little

Bloomsbury, 2015, 264 pp., £16.99, h/b - ISBN 978-1-4729-1311-1

Some readers may know that Tony Little has just retired as Head Master of Eton College - this very engaging book is his formal educational swansong, although he will still be involved in many aspects of education, and indeed a new Centre for Innovation has just been opened and named after him. He was a year behind me at Eton and we met up again when he was teaching at Tonbridge where I shared a flat with him on my teaching practice in the late 1970s. The Provost Lord Waldegrave has hailed Tony as one of the great Head Masters of Eton, held in high esteem and affection. This wise and humane book will show the reader why and will appeal equally to educationalists, parents and teachers.

Along with many others, including colleagues at the Birmingham University Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, Tony is very critical of the measurement culture in schools, while recognising its value. He frequently quotes AC Benson, an Eton beak from 100 years ago, with whom he shares a basic educational outlook - for instance the value of dedication and that great teachers use their heads but teach from the heart. He begins by considering what schools are for, using an enlightening exercise taken from Benjamin Franklin about the very different priorities of education for Native Americans. He regards the measurement culture as a way of increasing the dependency of the pupil on the teacher and therefore limiting the scope for creative inspiration - pupils are cleverly funnelled through the exam system. Tony is radical in suggesting the abolition of GCSEs so that we come to rely on a final rather than intermediary outcome of education. What really matters in a school is the people and the quality of their relationships. This constitutes the school ethos, which is apparent at Eton from a very early painting of a classroom scene dating from 1520 where the quotation reads (in Latin) 'the excellence of the teacher is to identify the differences in talents of pupils.'

His two chapters on adolescence, then on sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll are really excellent and can be profitably read by all concerned parents. He quotes a wonderful letter from John McConnell, a housemaster in my day, sketching the drastic changes that often take place around the age of 15 but stressing that 'at this moment when he seems to need you least, he needs you most.' Indeed, listening and being open and supportive is absolutely critical for parents. Tony also brings to bear some

interesting neurobiology that helps explain some of the changes going on in the adolescent brain. He is therefore sympathetic to the boy who, when asked why he acted in a bizarre fashion, replies that he didn't know why he did it. This chapter finishes with some very good practical tips for parents. Tony is equally sensible when addressing the issues of sex, drink and drugs, again with some very good advice.

This leads on to a chapter on character and discipline and enables him to explain the philosophy of education to be found at Eton. He recommends treating teenagers with trust, even though they may frequently let people down. He advocates giving them an opportunity to lead, to learn to deal with failure and to encourage ambition. He draws on his experience of a peculiar Eton tradition called the Bill, where boys are directly disciplined by the head - this gave him an opportunity to convey and discuss values. In addition, he made himself available for half an hour in the morning for any boy to come and see him - about four a day took advantage of this for a variety of reasons.

The next chapters discuss the importance of imagination and originality before moving on to a consideration of spirituality, which for him is represented by wonder. He stresses the importance of a sense of belonging as well as making space for both traditional religion and what he calls spiritual humanism. It is refreshing to find a chapter devoted to ways of encouraging reading at different ages - my tutor used to read aloud to us, and I remember the *Aeneid*, the *Iliad* and *Barchester Towers* from that time. He then has his own list of books that every bright 16-year-old should read. It is an interesting compilation.

Tony gives some inspiring examples of schools that have been turned around and of his own experience of visiting all sorts of different types of establishment. Establishing high expectations is critical, then engendering a sense of accountability, responsibility and ownership. There are then chapters on the relative merits of boarding and co-ed, based on his own varied experiences. He describes how he sees the role of a head with some amusing examples and telling advice, such as when he was told never to say yes in a corridor and, if accused by an individual teacher of some shortcoming, to ask the person concerned to provide six other people making the same complaint. He has equally wise words on dealing with support staff, parents, governors and former pupils. Finally, he has 10 key questions to ask of any school, which would be a good approach for any parent considering their own choice. The book is an instructive, illuminating and often amusing read.

Undercurrents of Feeling

David Lorimer

CONSOLATIONS

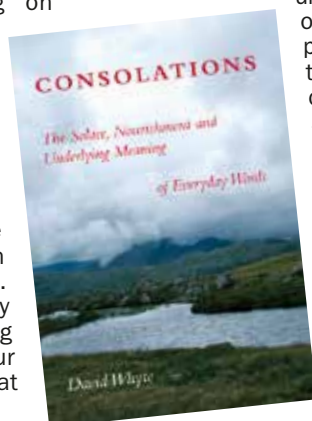
David Whyte

Many Rivers Press, 2015, \$22, p/b – ISBN 978-1-932887-34-1

David Whyte is an internationally acclaimed poet who also speaks in a business context. I remember him at the 1997 State of the World Forum in San Francisco, reciting some of his own poems to great effect, often repeating lines twice so that the listener could absorb them fully. This book is unusual in having no introduction or blurb – just a subtitle ‘the solace, nourishment and underlying meaning of everyday words.’ The cover of damp low cloud conveys something of the tone. Commentaries on the words are arranged alphabetically, beginning with alone and ending with work. Just to give a flavour, there is anger, beauty, besieged, crisis, despair, forgiveness, gratitude, heartbreak, honesty, longing, nostalgia, pain, regret, robustness, shadow, silence, unconditional, vulnerability and withdrawal. There are just two jokers in the pack: Istanbul and Rome, the first standing for a bridge and meeting point near Troy and the second the eternal city ‘only in the sense that disappearance is eternal’. Whyte sees Rome as a series of interpretations of the past attempted by each fleeting present, a centre of spiritual materialism that celebrates the insubstantiality of human striving - decay and disappearance.

While life is certainly transient, we are always alive in the present. At one level we are indeed alone, but that does not mean that we are lonely, and we long to belong. Whyte evokes the besieged nature of modern life while noting that attention to beauty can bring a moment of self forgetfulness, a foretaste of giving up the self at death. Our imperfections mean that we are always in need of forgiveness and compassion, even absolution at the end. There is a keen sense of suffering running through the book, for instance in the reflection on heartbreak and caring deeply. There is also a celebration of life in joy and generosity.

Readers are bound to find some reflections more sympathetic than others, depending on their temperament and experience of life and the extent to which they feel that they act on life or are acted upon. For Whyte, love seems just out of reach, silence is frightening as an intimation of the end. He sees vulnerability as an abiding undercurrent of our natural state, so that



the only choice we have is how we inhabit this in terms of loss and death. There are also other lives we might have lived had we chosen differently. He invites us as pilgrims to this unceasing tidal and seasonal becoming.’ We are made of movement, and yet there is a stillness at the heart. This beautifully written book provides readers with an emotional mirror in which the tones of our lives are reflected – as the subtitle suggests, there is indeed solace and nourishment in these everyday words. www.davidwhyte.com

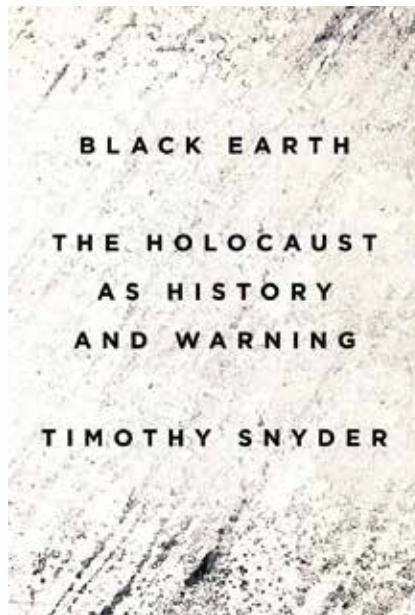
What Caused the Holocaust?

Steve Minnett, PhD

BLACK EARTH - the Holocaust as History & Warning

Timothy Snyder

Bodley Head, Random House, 2015, 480 pp, £13.99, p/b - ISBN-10: 184-792-3631



As its title implies, this is a very dark book about a very dark subject; the Holocaust and its causes. Snyder's innovative theory is that the immediate cause of the terrible, and almost unimaginably massive, slaughter of human beings which took place in Eastern Europe during the Second World War, was the destruction of the legitimate states which had existed in the region before the war; namely, and especially, Poland, the Baltic states, Czechoslovakia, Austria and the Western Soviet Union. For many of these states this was a ‘double destruction’; first by Soviet and then by Nazi invasions. Snyder's thesis is that this destruction created ‘zones of statelessness’ in

which the millions of people who lived within these areas were stripped of any concept of citizenship.

This disappearance of citizenship made these populations vulnerable to the murderous racial ideology of the Nazis: “When there was no state, no one was a citizen, and human life could be treated carelessly.” (p.220) The vast majority of those who were murdered were, of course, Jews and Snyder briefly considers a contending cause; anti-Semitism. He uses statistics, however, to refute this as the principal cause: in France, where there was a long and entrenched tradition of anti-Semitism, a sizeable majority of Jews survived the war, whereas in the Baltic states (which, in the pre-war period, were period renown for their tolerance toward Jews) virtually their entire Jewish population was wiped out during Nazi occupation.

There is, however, something I find both wrong and disturbing about this explanation: in Snyder's model, the Jews of Eastern Europe needed protection from effective states *because* (in the Nazi worldview) races will (inevitably and continually) engage in a merciless, life-and-death struggle with each other and the ‘morally correct’ outcome is that the strongest race should wipe out the weaker ones. I can agree with Snyder that at the particular historical juncture when the holocaust took place, this ‘state-protection’ was a practical necessity which clearly failed. What I find disturbing, however, is that Snyder appears to assume that there is something ‘natural’ (or perhaps ‘biological’) about this worldview, although he clearly condemns it from an ethical point of view.

He says, on the one hand, that the Nazis applied ‘the law of the jungle’ and on the other that Hitler conflated politics and science: Hitler posed, “ ... political problems as scientific ones and scientific problems as political ones.” (p.321) Snyder also says that; “to characterise Hitler as ... [a] racist underestimates the potential of Nazi ideas. His ideas about Jews and Slavs were not prejudices ... but rather emanations of a coherent worldview that contained the potential to change the world.” (p.321) Snyder states that, “ ... if states were destroyed, few of us would behave well.” (p.320). He also records the consistency of Hitler's worldview: when the tide of the war turned against the Germans, “Hitler decided, ‘the future belongs entirely to the stronger people of the east.’” (p.242)

What's wrong with all this? Well, it seems to imply that there's something ‘biologically natural’ about Hitler's racist worldview which only law and citizenship, backed up by powerful states, can protect us from. This is a very Nineteenth-Century, Social Darwinist view of ‘nature’: firstly, in modern times, there is no ‘scientific

concept of race' - 'race' is a social construct, based on ethnic divisions of culture and religion. Rather than protecting ourselves from the 'natural aggression' of other human groups behind the ramparts of Law and the state, we might rather ask; what makes people want to engage in mass murder of members of their own species?

The answer, I think, lies in centuries of pathological child-rearing. There is a growing body of scientific evidence to support this view. Pathological child-rearing practices were particularly prevalent in pre-war, Germanic Europe, and indeed, Hitler's own childhood was an extreme example of such appallingly negative parenting. Here, I believe, we can find the real and ultimate cause of the holocaust: pathological parenting had stripped the wartime generation of Germans of their instinctual aversion to the mass murder of members of their own species. Hitler's ideas about what was 'biologically natural' did **not** represent a 'coherent worldview' - they were the nightmares of a demented psychopath.

Steve Minett is a social scientist, author of **Gazing at the Stars** www.consciousnesstheories-minett.com

Ethnographies from between the Worlds

Paul Williams

TALKING WITH THE SPIRITS

Edited by Jack Hunter and David Luke (SMN)

Daily Grail Publishing, 2013, 364 pp., no price given, ISBN - 978-0-9874 224-4-6

This far-reaching collection of essays portrays the subtle differences in world-wide beliefs in the existence of spirits of the dead, and explains how their energy can be harnessed by the living to ease the pain of bereavement and cure illness. It is an eclectic collection based on research in countries all over the world, a must-read for those with an inclination to learn more about the mystical experience and the different ways in which the spirit can manifest itself through the intermediary of a medium. Its conclusions are based primarily on first-hand experience in the field, and we are told (Hunter) that the research 'seeks to take the first-hand experiences of fieldwork informants seriously, at face-value' and that 'the experience itself has validity and...such beliefs are not to be lightly brushed aside as necessarily irrational or unfounded'. This very proper emphasis on the importance and relevance of fieldwork is supported by wide and pertinent reference to earlier published material. One or two of the bibliographies are first-rate and provide a firm academic grounding to

the fieldwork which throughout is fresh and honest. In this respect the book is a valuable addition to what we know so far about the rôle of mediums and the identity of the widely differing spirits who possess them.

Contrasting Islam with Christianity, Stöckligt's paper, which has a wider remit than many of the others, rightly points out how Islam in Africa is not in conflict with traditional beliefs such as divination and magic, while Christianity has little acceptance of traditional world views. That may be the case for Africa, but once transferred to the New World the vestiges of each religion develop vibrances that can be harnessed for healing the sick. Maraldi (et al.) mention, albeit very sparingly, only three in Brazil: Arigó and Dr Fritz (who started their work in the 1950s), and the contemporary João de Deus (John of God). But sadly they go on to provide inconclusive evidence of John of God's successful healing because samples taken are lamentably small. We are given no idea of the size of his following; there is no mention of his web page which invites the healing process to begin on line; and we are left with no reliable indication as to how to evaluate his work.

This collection of papers prompts a host of unanswered questions, but what it leaves out highlights the area which must be addressed next. We already have enough documented evidence of what actually happens in a séance and how mediums in certain cultures effect astonishing cures, but what we need now is significantly more evidence and, by extension, a lot more funding. Among all the papers that make up this book Brazil emerges as the most fertile country in which to observe spiritual healers working alongside, not in conflict with, medical doctors in a united and determined effort to ascertain how much spiritual forces can contribute to the healing process. This could be the editors' next project but it will need substantially more resources and watertight evidence to make a convincing case.

Laboured language and unnecessarily obscure writing styles do little to reassure the reader or maintain his full attention. These essays on the whole are too long and would communicate their content more energetically if they contained less verbiage. Other shortfalls, such as the highly avoidable proof-reading errors and a number of misspellings of foreign languages, do the book no favours.

Dr Paul Williams is author of **Primitive Religion and Healing; The Banker who turned to Voodoo.**

The Living Dream

*What dream? My dream
Where all life's details
Connect to some and
To many — not yet to all.*

*This dream passes
Through time fleetingly.
Do 'I' have enough
Time for all?*

*In a far deeper place
Within the heart
The light of being
Is ever present.*

*Here all is one—
The living essence,
Radiant compassion
For all beings.*

*Joan/Juanita Skolimowski
(And all-pervading.)
(Compassionate awareness)*