



books in brief

David Lorimer

SCIENCE/PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

Transit of Venus 1631 to the Present by Nick Lomb

New South Publishing 2011, 228 pp., h/b.

Readers will probably be aware that the next transit of Venus will take place next year, and then not again in the lifetime of anyone currently living. These transits of Venus across the sun take place at intervals of about 120 years. This book describes observations from 1639, 1761, 1769 (with Captain Cook in the South Seas), 1874 and 1882, and finally 2004, the first to be observed with modern scientific instruments. It is full of fascinating detail and beautifully illustrated, enabling readers to understand the science of the day and pioneering spirit of those who organised various expeditions. Needless to say, the photographs from 2004 are quite spectacular, but there are also equally fascinating documents and illustrations from earlier times. Anyone wanting to know more about the Venus transit need look no further.

Neuroscience of Decision Making by Oshin Vartanian and David R. Mandel

Psychology Press 2011, 356 pp., £39.95, h/b.

As the title suggests, this is a technical volume at the intersection between the fields of behavioural decision research and neuroscience, providing a framework to distil theoretical models and key themes emerging from this research programme such as in risk and uncertainty, reward and loss, cooperation and trust, and goal directed decision-making. Neuroscientific approaches are now commonly used in behavioural research programmes. One of the interesting findings relates to higher order mental activities like reasoning, planning and problem solving are built on shared neural systems at the micro level. Applications of this research on judgement and decision will be seen not only in psychology but also in economics where rational decision-making is a major assumption.

Evolution, The Basics by Sherrie Lyons

Routledge 2011, 198 pp., £11.99, p/b.

One of a series of new books explaining the basics, in this case of evolution. The author explains the background to the changing world view brought about by Darwin before considering the development of the theory itself and its expansion into the modern synthesis. There is a fairly detailed discussion of ID, but strangely no mention of the anthropic principle behind it, which has many more subtle variations. There is a separate chapter on human evolution and a final one addressing the human future including the development of evolutionary ethics and the implications of mirror neurons - it is interesting to reflect that our self-

awareness may have evolved after our awareness of others. Not surprisingly in this context, there is no mention of Teilhard de Chardin and the wider implications of the evolution of consciousness.

The Art and Science of Light Bulb Moments by Tom Evans

O Books 2010, 152 pp., £11.99, p/b.

A practical guide to the nature and background of creativity drawing on a wide range of sources and experience. The idea is to enable the reader to generate ideas on demand and prevent inspiration from being blocked. Each section discusses the theme, provides some practical exercises and short tips. Meditation is recommended as a way of contacting the superconscious or Higher Self and various models of the mind of presented and explained, along with the relationship between conscious, unconscious and superconscious. The importance of dreams is also highlighted - the idea is to learn the art of what the author calls whole brain thinking and the whole mind not-thinking in order to operate on a new level including both the awakened and the merged mind.

Spatial Working Memory by Andre Vandierendonck and Arnaud Szmalec

Taylor & Francis 2011, 194 pp., £34.95, h/b.

A technical volume on spatial working memory, which is the ability to remember the location in which something is perceived and to recall series of visited locations. It is the first book to address this topic, range of theoretical and methodological angles.

MEDICINE/HEALTH

Anatomy & Physiology for Psychotherapists by Kathrin A. Stauffer

W. W. Norton and Company Ltd 2010, 260 pp., \$32.50, p/b.

The author of this interesting work was originally a biochemist who retrained as a body psychotherapist. The perspective of most psychotherapists acknowledges the close connection between body and mind, but many neglect the role of the body in mental health. The author explores the body in terms of our physical experience but also as a metaphor for our emotional life. The structure of the book interweaves developing case histories with the vital components of anatomy and physiology, beginning with cells and molecules before moving on to the nervous system, bones and joints, skin, the digestive system, connective tissue, the cardiovascular system, the endocrine and immune systems, reproductive system and finally the respiratory system. For example, the digestive system can also relate to emotional food and the transition from conscious to unconscious as automatic processes take over. The psychotherapist who reads this book will gain a fresh perspective on their work.

Work, Worklessness and the Political Economy of Healthby **Clare Bamba***Oxford University Press 2011, 242 pp., p/b.*

This book shifts the focus away from general lifestyle considerations to argue that work, or lack of it 'is the most important determinant of population health and health inequalities in advanced market democracies, and that this is a result of the role that work plays within the wider political economy of health.' The author addresses health hazards in the physical and psychosocial work environment, the impact of recession and unemployment on health and health-related worklessness. She also shows how different types of public policy interventions can mitigate health inequalities. Of particular interest to readers already engaged in public health.

Trauma Essentialsby **Babette Rothschild***W.W. Norton & Company Ltd 2011, 154 pp., £14.99, p/b.*

This book follows up on the author's earlier work in the same field focusing mainly on post-traumatic stress disorder, which first appeared as a diagnostic category in 1980. It is aimed both at professionals and clients, providing an overview of various types of psychological trauma and possible ways of treating it. The condition is defined, with a chapter on how PTSD affects the body and brain. She herself takes a psychotherapeutic approach, but covers other possible avenues including psychopharmacology and mindfulness meditation.

A Most Curious Detourby **Stuart Hepburn***Self Published 2010, 154 pp., £6.99, p/b.*

A friend sent me this remarkable book centred around the author's experience of having a stroke and gradually recovering from it, but finding himself physically dependent. Looking at the photos and reading the early part of the text, I soon realised that the author had been my meditation teacher in Edinburgh in the late 1970s. I had not heard of or seen him for over 30 years, so it was a surprise to find him turning up again in my life in my capacity as an editor. The training he gained with the Brahma Kumaris stood him in good stead during his confinement, and he was able to rediscover his capacity to meditate. The book sheds light not only on the courage in overcoming debilitating physical limitations, but also on the health service as one finds one's sense of self defined by others. An appendix of drawings and paintings also charts the change in his consciousness. It is an inspiring though somewhat searing narrative.

PHILOSOPHY/RELIGION**A New History of Western Philosophy**by **Anthony Quinton***Oxford, 2010, 1058 pp., £30, h/b.*

This magisterial work is not for the fainthearted, combining as it does four books and over 1,000 pages of analysis and exposition. The book is aimed at the 2nd or 3rd year undergraduate, but can be appreciated by general readers with some background in philosophy. The four parts cover ancient philosophy, mediaeval philosophy, the rise of modern philosophy and philosophy in the modern world. The treatment is systematic, as one would expect, with a

history of thought in each section, followed by a more detailed consideration of philosophical themes such as epistemology, metaphysics, mind and soul, ethics, aesthetics, language and political philosophy. The writer of a work of such scope has to be both a philosopher and historian and must be aware of the extent to which there is progress in philosophy or simply further iterations of a debate that has been running for centuries. The great works of the past come alive in each generation and are recontextualised accordingly. As Sir Anthony rightly points out, the kernel of the history of philosophy is exegesis involving close reading and interpretation of texts. This can be a matter of formulating philosophical understanding or more generally placing the work of particular thinker in relation to their time. This book is a monumental achievement both in terms of history and thematic analysis, and the undergraduate who mastered the contents would surely come out with a top degree.

The Wisdom of Pure Adventureby **Colin Mortlock***Outdoor Integrity Publishing Limited 2011, 67 pp., £4.50, p/b.*

I very much enjoyed Colin's previous book, *The Spirit of Adventure*, and this one too is a real gem with plenty of the wisdom implied in the title. Whitehead is quoted as saying that 'without adventure civilisation is in full decay', and one can understand what he meant, also with reference to the work of Kurt Hahn. Colin recounts a number of his own adventures, and the lessons learned from them. He has a strong sense of the presence of nature and the real meaning and adventure, so that his foundation (www.soaventure.org) has as its vision of to influence modern societies to become a global civilisation based on love and unity with nature. To that end, he proposes ten pillars of Wisdom including awareness, balance and wonder. Behind all this is a keen sense of love arising from experience with his late wife, and he concludes that love is also synonymous with unity, freedom, beauty, wisdom and goodness—an inspiring philosophy.

From Plato to Wittgensteinedited by **Mary Geach and Luke Gormally***Imprint Academic 2011, 249 pp., £17.95, p/b.*

Mary Geach is the daughter of Elizabeth Anscombe, who was professor of philosophy at Cambridge and a contemporary of Iris Murdoch and Mary Midgley. This volume is the third in the series and brings together twenty essays on a wide range of thinkers including Plato, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, Spinoza, Hume on causality and Wittgenstein. The writing is direct and penetrating with great clarity of exposition and the essays will be of great value to students of philosophy, really stimulating them to think.

365 Days of Wisdomby **Dadi Janki***O Books 2011, 367 pp., £12.99, p/b.*

Dadi Janki will be known to many readers as a founding member of the Brahma Kumaris, and a woman of extraordinary spiritual presence. This book is based on the proposition that the world will automatically become a better place when each individual becomes a better person. The content reflects twelve core values: cooperation, freedom, happiness, honesty, humility, love, peace, respect, responsibility, simplicity, tolerance and unity. Each day

addresses an aspect of one of these values with a short contemplation and an idea for its practical application. Personally, I would have preferred dates rather than Day 197 as we don't calculate the year in this way.

Symbols of Eternity

by Malcolm Stewart

Floris Books 2011, 215 pp., £20, p/b.

A beautifully illustrated sequel to the author's *Patterns of Eternity*, taking the reader on a journey through sacred sites around the world. The second part is an exposition of sacred geometry with particular reference to the Pythagorean seals, the Enneagram, the Fibonacci sequence, fractals and even the swastika. The third part focuses on the golden cube and its components, relating it to the geometry of the Temple. There is a final reflection on the Venus of Arles as a symbol of the One to which we all belong and of which we are all a part. There is a good deal of technical material in the book which will appeal to specialists and which will repay careful study by the general reader. It would have been useful to have an introduction giving the overall rationale of the book, which is not immediately clear, but the journey is very enjoyable.

The Pathway Beyond

by Jerome Stanley

iUniverse Inc 2011, 132 pp., \$12.95, p/b.

The mature reflections of a musician on the nature of life and knowledge from both a scientific and spiritual point of view and drawing on a wide range of references from Greek philosophy, Buddhism, Christianity and other thinkers such as Swedenborg, Thomas Merton, Teilhard, Whitehead and perhaps more unusually, Mary Baker Eddy. The author realises that our sense of rationality is a cultural construct, which also inclines us to reject elements that do not make sense within that framework. The author's take on spirituality is as a way of life chosen by an individual, which must nevertheless be expressed in language, often metaphorical rather than empirical. It is important to establish a pattern of spiritual practice and a corresponding study of sacred works. Intriguingly, one of the sources used by the author is my edited work *The Spirit of Science* and the holistic understanding of reality involving a personal search and exploration of unusual experiences. There is a small if flattering error on the final page, when a passage by Sir John Eccles is attributed to yours truly, but as a reflection on life and death I have no difficulty in owning it...

Precessional Time and the Evolution of Consciousness

by Richard Heath

Inner Traditions International 2011, 198 pp., \$16.95, p/b.

A book about how stories create the world that begins with an analysis of the structure of the story with its drama of challenge and response, conflict and resolution. Civilisations begin to develop forms of geometrical measurement in relation to Sun, Moon and seasons as a

way of rendering the cosmos intelligible and marking divisions of time. The author considers God as harmony in Aries, then the crisis of the mind machine in Pisces. Then he brings in Gurdjieff's ideas about the evolution of consciousness, remarking that consciousness cannot evolve unconsciously but requires an effort of will towards psychic integration - what Gurdjieff called the harmonious development of man. Is particularly interesting theme is the idea that impressions are a form of human food in the sense of experiences that remember themselves. The author explains an interesting practical system called Logo Visual Technology that turns impressions into creative action and - this is explained in a series of quite complex diagrams. We stand on the threshold of a new era in which we can make enhanced use of our capacities but in order to do so, we must first become conscious of them.

The Science of the Greater Jihad

by Charles Upton

Sophia Books 2011, 256 pp., \$16.95, p/b.

Subtitled 'essays in principal psychology', this book is about how psychology relates to the spiritual path, particularly esoteric Sufism but with insights drawn from Scholastic philosophy, Kabbalah, Buddhism, the Vedanta and William Blake. The basis of his 'pneumatic' psychology is the recognition of the tripartite composition of the human being as body, soul and Spirit. The aim is not adjustment to social norms, but rather 'to conform the psychic substance to the archetypal principles of the spiritual world', giving primacy to the sacred rather than the profane. This means the salvation of the soul and the transcendence of the ego. Contemplation, or the witnessing of the psyche in the objective light of the Spirit, is an essential practice, implying both piety and morality. Upton also covers the faculties of scholastic psychologists, namely thought, feeling, will, memory and imagination. Other themes include morality and Gnosis, dimensions of alchemy, the metaphysics of suffering and the mystery of forgiveness. It is a profound and timely exploration in the development of a more spiritual psychology.

Humanity 2.0. What it Means to be Human Past, Present and Future

by Steve Fuller

Palgrave 2011, 266 pp., £19.99, p/b.

Steve Fuller holds the chair of social epistemology at Warwick and in this book gives an overview of the way in which our understanding of humanity has been shaped historically, philosophically, scientifically and theologically. He sees humanity as poised between biology and ideology, reflecting the twin taboos in science of race and religion. Our perspectives on ourselves lie on a continuum between our animal bodies and disembodied notions of consciousness, mind or spirit, which can take different bodily forms. In Christianity, this polarity is expressed in the person of Christ as both human and divine. In its extreme dualism, Fuller characterises this as a bipolar disorder. He moves on to a detailed discussion of

DO YOU HAVE ANY PHOTOGRAPHS OF A NETWORK GROUP, WORKSHOP OR CONFERENCE? If so, please send them to Olly Robinson at olly@scimednet.org for publication in the Network Review

convergent technologies, nano-, bio- and info-, and their agenda to re-engineer the human, even to the extent of downloading the mind into some artificial and immortal form. He explores the roots of this view in the Abrahamic doctrine that we are created in the image and likeness of God. When humans become gods, we can then recreate ourselves in our own image. Our understanding of humanity is sure to evolve in the course of this century, and this book enables us to think critically about our prospects.

The Religion Virus

by Craig A. James

O Books, 2010, 208 pp., £11.99, p/b.

This book is billed as evolutionist's explanation of the hold of religion on humanity, applying the idea of the survival of the fittest not to mean the survival of truth but rather the survival of what people want to believe. This wishful thinking hypothesis is popular among atheists but does not address the experiential aspect of spirituality. The metaphor is mixed when the virus is also characterised as a memplex of different beliefs. This is one of the most interesting sections of the book, which posits a series of memes including those of the general purpose God, intolerance, monotheism and the abstract God. Of course, other ideas are also memes, and the author applies this to elements of the theory of evolution. One interesting observation is that overpopulation is an integral part of the selection process. Memes are in constant competition with each other and the author sees himself as having produced an inoculation against the religion virus. I would prefer to see religion itself evolve, but then believers are at different stages of faith, so the existing landscape is unlikely to change very quickly.

God's Light and Universal Principles for all Humanity

edited by Sidney Chang (SMN)

L. H. Europe 2007/11, 175 pp., p/b.

This book is the outcome of over 10 years of dedicated work by the editor and his team. Sidney has a personal story to tell when he was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome in the late 1980s and found relief in treatment that gave him 'God's Light' and turned his life around. The movement originated in Japan and is based on universal spiritual principles and a clear idea that God has a plan for the earth in which we can take part. This is characterised as a 'Yoko' civilisation where people are happy and live in harmony with nature and each other. The key qualities are gratitude and humility, cultivating a positive attitude and being of service. A considerable part of a book is devoted to the art of giving and receiving True Light, and the reader can appreciate the implications of a spiritual outlook applied to science, medicine and economics. The movement is one of many precursors of the new spiritually based culture and is unique in its emphasis on healing light. This book gives the best available overview.

Eastern Thought and the Gita

by Gerard D.C. Kuiken

Otam Books 2011, 610 pp., \$17.70, p/b.

I reviewed the antecedent to this magisterial work, *The Original Gita*, in 2007. This new book updates and incorporates the earlier one and includes an extra two parts. As before, the book begins with three brilliant short

chapters on the background of Indian thought in terms of the nature of thought itself, time and the polarity of life and death. The message of the Gita is that we can become free of pairs of opposites by realising that each pair includes a third element, namely difference. We can become aware that we are unlimited and omnipresent in our essence, even though we are by definition limited by the very nature of existence. Of particular interest is the complementarity between life and death, where physical life turns outwards towards form, while death turns inwards towards the formless. As Swedenborg pointed out 200 years ago, the inside thought is seen as the outside world - we see our own world. All this is explained within the context of reincarnation. The core of the Gita consists of 319 of the 700 verses, which are presented in a new translation and in the context of striving for Oneness. The next part forms a commentary, explaining the content in more detail, and this is followed by and a detailed transliteration with the original Sanskrit and underneath a literal translation and a more fluent expression of this translation. The final part is a Sanskrit dictionary of all the terms used in the Gita, so that the reader can understand the variations of meaning as expressed in the original verses. This is an extraordinary work of scholarship which will fascinate readers of one of the worlds greatest Scriptures. It will take pride of place next to Radhakrishnan's edition in my library.

Blowing Zen

by Ray Brooks

Sentient Publications 2000, 287 pp., \$15.95, p/b.

This book first appeared in 2000 and has become something of a classic in the field of spiritual autobiography. The title refers to the *shakuhachi*, a special Japanese bamboo flute, which proved to be the author's path towards spiritual realisation, also incorporating Zen while living in Tokyo. He recounts his dissolute life during his 20s then the sudden realisation that he was going nowhere and needed to change direction. The book is an engaging and illuminating account of his journey, elements of which many readers will recognise in themselves. Along the way, new need his various teachers and admire the obstacles he had to overcome. The rich narrative also conveys the spirit of Japanese culture including the period of *hanami* or the cherry blossom, which symbolises impermanence. The heart of the book, though, is the practice and mastery of the *shakuhachi* and the dedication and devotion required to reach concert standard. Now he plays all over the world - see www.blowingZen.net

The Silence of the Mind

by Ilie Cioara

O Books 2011, 135 pages, £9.99, p/b.

This will be a new name to readers, as it was to me. The author lived in Romania and was hunted down by the Communists after the War. This meant a prolonged period of confinement in a restricted space, which led in the first instance to an out of body experience, and subsequently to a process of spiritual enlightenment. On one occasion, he reaches state of pure consciousness, and experiences himself as a luminous dot in an ocean of luminous dots. He spent 6 years in prison and, on release, joins a spiritual group. He begins to practise self-knowing, discovering that watching the reactions of the mind dissipates its energies and releases the individual from self-imposed limitations.

Within the silence, a new mind appears, expanding into Infinity. The structure of the book consists of a series of poems and commentaries encouraging the reader to remain in the present. It makes ideal contemplative reading.

Messages of Life from Death Row

by Pierre Pradervand

Cygnus Books, 2009, 270 pp., £11.99, p/b.

"Together, we create a network of love, respect and compassion which will little by little cover the whole world" - Roger McGowen. Roger is African-American was on death row for nearly 20 years, and is still in prison. 1997, Pierre Pradervand, author of *The Gentle Art of Blessing* began corresponding with Roger, and the outcome is this extraordinary book, a testament to faith, love and resolve. In the introduction, Christiane Singer suggests that holiness is that invisible force that keeps the world together, a deliberate choice to be whole and to embrace life without condition and with an open heart. The message of this book is a message of love, life as an opportunity, happiness as a choice and the creation of reality through the way we interpret life. The book gives the background of Roger's life, and the letters date back to 1990, but most since 1997. The author uses the context of the book to discuss the death penalty itself, the nature of lethal injections, the number of inmates in American prisons (this has risen from less than 300,000 in 1980 to over 2 million in 2009, the equivalent of one quarter of the world prison population.) Just as with Mandela and Victor Frankl, one realises that fundamental spiritual work can be done in the direst circumstances - radiating an unconditional blessing to those around you.

A Dictionary of Western Alchemy

by Jordan Stratford

Quest Books 2011, 105 pp., \$17.95, p/b.

A very useful addition to the scholarly literature on alchemy with an interesting historical introduction including and analysis of whether it ever worked or could still work today. The author follows in the footsteps of Jung in making connections between Gnosticism and alchemy. The dictionary itself is mainly terminological with brief biographies of some famous practitioners, including Newton and Roger Bacon.

PSYCHOLOGY/PARAPSYCHOLOGY

Psychology of Success - A Practical Guide

by Alison & David Price

Icon Books Ltd 2011, 217 pp., £6.99, p/b.

A very useful handbook laid out with headings from the letters of the alphabet. The background includes positive psychology, motivational coaching, NLP and sports psychology. Each section begins with a quotation followed by some explanatory text and practical tips. Headings include daring to dream, effort, fear, self-belief, visualisation and going the extra mile. The format means that readers can dip in and out and read a little bit every day. The ideas are brought to life with some engaging stories and pithy quotations such as this one from Lawrence Peter: 'if you don't know where you're going, you'll probably end up someplace else.' The main drawback of these books, however good, is the temptation to read the next one rather than apply the content of the one you just read.

The New Psychology of Leadership

by S. Alexander Haslam, Stephen D. Reicher and Michael J. Platow

Psychology Press 2011, 267 pp., p/b.

A ground-breaking book on leadership analysing the old psychology of leadership in terms of great men and the cult of personality, the current psychology of leadership focusing on context and the contingency of the perfect match between individual and group before moving on to propose a new psychology of leadership. The authors highlight the theoretical and political deficiencies of individualistic models and identify five criteria for a useful psychology of leadership. The foundation of their new approach is social identity and self-categorisation, crucially the perception that leaders and followers understand themselves be members of the same in-group - hence leadership is a 'we thing.' Leaders must be seen as one of us, their actions must advance the interests of the in-group, they must craft a sense of common identity and finally embed the values and priorities of the group in social and political reality. These components comprise a new model of identity leadership that shapes beliefs, desires and priorities and make people want to do things on behalf the group.

Positive Psychology

by Alan Carr

Routledge 2011, 349 pp., £22.99, p/b.

The second edition of what is surely the best textbook on the science of happiness and human strengths, and strongly endorsed by other leading figures in the field. Updates include a new chapter on positive psychotherapy, further reports of research on character strengths and virtues and a discussion of emotional intelligence. The text is systematically set out with learning objectives, many charts and test scales which readers can work through as they progress. There is an interesting correlation between positive emotions and longevity, with one study of nuns reporting that 90% of the sample quarter with the most positive emotions in an essay written when they joined the order lived beyond the age of 85, compared with only 34% of the least happy quarter. The key themes are the nature of happiness, positive character traits, hope and optimism, flow, emotional intelligence, creativity and wisdom, positive self and positive relationships. Each of these topics is treated in detail and the book can be strongly recommended to the general reader as well as the student.

Shapeshifting into Higher Consciousness

by Llyn Roberts

O Books 2010, 241 pp., £12.99, p/b.

A book about healing and transforming yourself and our world using ancient shamanic techniques in a modern context. Shapeshifting literally means shifting into a different frame of consciousness and identifying more closely with the higher self. An important current in the book is harmonising with the Earth while at the same time discovering and empowering your higher purpose and accessing a transcendent self that persists across lifetimes. The last chapter is about shapeshifting into a New World, shifting the dream, changing reality and making it happen. There are many practical exercises based on some essential principles like respect for every living thing, relating consciously with the Earth and the Cosmos, and engaging transforming forces to empower our highest human potential.

Psychophonetics

by Robin Steele

Lindisfarne Books 2011, 307 pp., £20, p/b.

Psychophonetics is a therapeutic approach developed in the 1980s by Member Yehuda Tagar and emerging from his study of Rudolf Steiner's psychosophy and Yehuda's experience in social work and particularly in theatre, where he realised the power of non-verbal communication and techniques enabling people to access and understand their inner script so that they can re-write it on a journey towards inner freedom. Psychophonetics creates a safe and therapeutic space to enable the release and healing of past experience and memories. More recently, Yehuda has created courses on the art and science of empathy helping people to see, hear and know each other better through imagination, inspiration and intuition. The book introduces the background to psychophonetics and its development, highlighting the importance of the body as a way of knowing and a vehicle for helping people become aware of their soul experience and enhancing their self-knowledge. A unique feature is the application of sounds in therapy - some specific techniques are further explored in the second and practical half of the book, a series of twelve chapters covering themes such as self-parenting, grief, forgetting and remembering traumatic experiences, art expressing illness and pain, the transformation of anger and the challenges of depression and menopause. In one chapter written by Yehuda himself, he graphically describes the inner healing process of a client dying from cancer where she was able to release past experiences and make her transition in peace. This is an important landmark as the first book to explain this spiritual approach to therapy.

C.G.Jung and Nikolai Berdyaev

by Georg Nicolaus

Routledge 2011, 231 pp., £24.99, p/b.

I was given the works of Jung and Berdyaev by a mentor or of mine, Norman Cockburn, in the 1970s, and this is the first book, as far as I know, to compare their approaches to individuation and the person. As such, it will be of great interest to scholars of both men, but also to the general reader interested in human integration and fulfilment. A basic assumption of the book is that the decline of Christianity as a living spirituality or the dissolution of the Christian God image leads to a dissolution and fragmentation of personal identity, and that the work of these two thinkers is best understood in this context. Jung offers a psychological perspective on Christianity, while Berdyaev proposes a new form of Christian spirituality. They both address the question of soul, human freedom and creative self-expression, following a pattern of symbolic loss leading to mourning, leading in turn to a redefinition of self and the creation of meaning. The contents include an account of Berdyaev's life and an introduction to his philosophy, then the comparative treatment of their understanding of the person, epistemology, the God image, individuation and the ethics of creativity. The result is a brilliant and profound analysis of the modern human predicament and ways of transcending it through the creative expression of freedom. The book is particularly fascinating for its discussion of the central metaphors they use: the person as divine-human and the person as a complex of opposites - the first implies a kenosis so that the divine may live within, while the second entails an alchemical process of transformation.

Jung in the 21st Century Volume One

by John Ryan Haule

Routledge 2011, 295 pp., £23.99, p/b.

Subtitled 'evolution and archetype', this book considers Jung's work in relation to evolutionary psychology, evolutionary biology, archaeology, anthropology, neurobiology and ethology to put forward the argument that his thought is consilient with scientific discoveries in these fields in the 50 years since his death. Language is considered as a model archetype, while such forms are also expressed in the early cave art. The book moves on to consider Jung's model of the psyche and its neural substrate, looking at individuation, dreams and his theory of complexes. Here, for hermeneutic reasons, the author accepts a version of the mind-brain identity theory, which he subsequently finds inadequate in the second volume, although he already considers altered states and transformation in this volume. The third part looks at the history of consciousness from primates onwards with specific reference to ritual, demonstrating the cultural ubiquity of altered states of consciousness. The purpose of the book is to show that Jung was trying to build psychology on a firm scientific foundation and to rescue him from the accusation that he was a muddleheaded mystic. The author uses the term in a positive sense implying 'serious discipline that learns to use altered states of consciousness for psychological and spiritual development.' In this sense traditional mystics are what he calls accomplished polyphasic practitioners.

Jung in the 21st Century Volume Two

by John Ryan Haule

Routledge 2011, 233 pp., £23.99, p/b.

This second volume looks at synchronicity and science, beginning with a consideration of shamanism and the mastery of altered states. Part Two looks at the border zones of exact science, including various parapsychological research fields such as clairvoyance and psychokinesis. The author rightly concludes that the problem is not with the evidence so much as with the metaphysics that regards these border zones as illegitimate. It is often said that such experiences violate the laws of physics, but the laws of physics can neither prove nor disprove psi - the real violation is in fact of metaphysical assumptions, and the irony is that physics itself has violated these same metaphysical assumptions. The author expands his case to argue that there are four monumental realities which scientific materialism has no place for: life, intentionality, consciousness and parapsychology. Hence the need for a new metaphysics, which he proposes in the form of a psychoid field. In elaborating his argument, he makes no reference to the work of Ervin Laszlo but he does provide an interesting critical evaluation of Sheldrake. He also uses the work of Whitehead as a point of departure for his sketch of a universal psychoid field. In this volume, it becomes clear that mind-brain identity theory is totally inadequate and that an expanded view of consciousness is required along with a new metaphysic.

The Practical Psychic

by Noreen Renier

Adams Media 2011, 247 pp., \$14.95, p/b.

Some readers might find the title of this book off-putting, which would be a mistake. The author is a well-known psychic detective who has lectured for the FBI Academy.

The subtitle suggests that the book is no-nonsense guide to developing natural intuitive abilities and the book is grounded in a solid understanding of the way mind works, with plenty of exercises. There are chapters on telepathy, visualisation, healing, remote viewing and psychometry. This last capacity of reading objects is vital in the author's detective work, and she gives a couple of fascinating examples of cases that she has helped solve by tuning in, for instance, to clothes worn by victims or even objects left behind by the criminal. Sometimes she is able to identify the perpetrator from a series of photographs. Renier is surely right to say that awareness and development of all the mind's capabilities is critical to the future.

The High Heeled Guide to Spiritual Living

by Alice Grist

O Books 2010, 289 pp., £9.99, p/b.

As the title suggests, this book is aimed primarily at women but will appeal to all those seeking a spirituality grounded in everyday life. It begins by defining what spirituality is and is not, as a means of transforming our dualistic way of looking at the world. The author makes no claims to perfection, indeed sharing with the reader everyday inconveniences like losing her mobile phone or the more serious questioning following two car crashes. She emphasises the importance of freeing the mind, leading to the realisation that many of our challenges arise from our own mental patterns and the vagaries of the ego. There is a fascinating account of a friend's dead son communicating with his mother through her mobile phone and even sending messages to the author with a photo attachment. Another important connection is the natural world—sometimes animals and birds can be symbolic messengers. Alice has a special word for synchronicities, calling them non-coincidences to indicate that we need to pay attention to them and listen to our intuition. Readers are encouraged to view everything as an opportunity and thus enable themselves to live life to the full. A sparkling and instructive book.

FUTURE STUDIES/ECONOMICS/ECOLOGY

The Biodynamic Sowing and Planting Calendar 2012

by Maria & Matthias Thun

Floris Books 2011, 64 pp., £6.99, p/b.

Regular readers and gardeners will be familiar with this annual volume, which this year celebrates its 50th edition. For this reason, there is a biography of Maria and a fascinating description of the origins of the calendar. It turns out that her first experiment was on radishes, where she planted identical seeds on different days, and discovered that they grew into different shapes in terms of their leaf and root growth. This eventually led her to her fourfold classification of roots, leaves, flowers and fruit, after realising that the radishes changed their form whenever the moon moved from one constellation to another. As well as the calendar and moon cycle charts, there are short items on climate, bees and instructions for her 'barrel preparation.'

When Wine Tastes Best

by Maria and Matthias Thun

Floris Books, 2011, 48 pp., £3.99, p/b.

Based on the same principles, this small booklet translates the calendar for wine drinkers, and it turns out

that this Christmas day will be the first for three years to be a favourable day for drinking wine, but New Year's Eve does not look so good! The basic principle is that fruit and flower days are good, while those corresponding to leave and root should be avoided. At the back, there is an appendix giving the story of the first UK biodynamic wine by Roy Cook of Sedlescombe vineyard.

A Biodynamic Manual

by Pierre Masson

Floris Books 2011, 199 pp., £14.99, p/b.

The definitive practical manual for biodynamic farmers and gardeners, with a section on viticulture. There are detailed explanations on the preparation of horn manure, compost preparation, liquid and green manure, plant extracts, pest and weed control, then some products for stimulating and regulating plant health, and a section on the care of fruit trees. The key importance of the biodynamic method lies in the way that it works with life processes builds up the fertility and resilience of the soil. This leads to understanding of a farm or garden as a self-sustaining organism.

Pfeiffer's Introduction to Biodynamics

by Ehrenfried Pfeiffer

Floris Books 2011, 87 pp., £6.99, p/b.

A classic text by one of the earliest biodynamic farmers in North America. It begins with an introduction to Steiner's contribution to agriculture, going on to discuss the biodynamic preparations also covered in the book above. There is a succinct explanation of biodynamic principles and a biographical essay on the author. A very useful introduction.

Grow Small, Think Beautiful

edited by Stephan Harding

Floris Books 2011, 282 pp., £20, p/b.

Many readers will be familiar with Schumacher College and the role played by Brian Goodwin in establishing and MSC in holistic science. This volume is effectively a Schumacher College reader dedicated to Brian, with contributions from many of those who have taught there over the last 20 years. Here we have Satish Kumar on friendship for life, James Lovelock and Jules Cashford on Gaia, an explanation of systems thinking by Fritjof Capra, enlightened agriculture from Colin Tudge and other contributions on sustainability, new forms of money, energy conservation, localisation, deep ecology and new types of education. Of particular interest is the chapter on resilient economics to which Brian himself contributed. This leads to suggestions for the re-emergence of self-organising local communities, the encouragement of local food production and alternative local currencies, and stimulating the development of renewable energy networks. All this can be seen in action in the transition movement. In many ways, this volume is a companion to the SMN's *New Renaissance* and serves as an excellent introduction to the ecological worldview and its implications.

The Transition Companion

by Rob Hopkins

Green Books 2011, 320 pp., £19.95, p/b.

This is the third book on the Transition movement, and it is astonishing to think that the original Handbook only came out in 2008. Developments over the last three years have

been extensive as this model for a resilient grassroots response to peak oil and climate change has spread across the world as far afield as Brazil. The book describes current developments within our situation of rising oil prices and economic uncertainty. The heart of the book consists of 21 strategic and practical tools for transition under the headings of starting out, deepening, connecting, building and daring to dream. It is important to know how to run effective meetings, form a legal entity, finance your initiative, deal with conflict and communicate with the media. The book is beautifully set out and is essential reading for anyone already involved or wanting to get involved in the transition movement.

Growing, Older

by Joan Dye Gussow

Chelsea Green, 2010, 234 pp., \$17.95, p/b.

With the intriguing subtitle 'a chronicle of death, life and vegetables', this charming and lively book begins with the author coming to terms with the loss of her husband and forging a new identity while continuing her passion for gardening and food. Like many environmental activists, she has felt despair about our situation after internalising the implications of her nutritional ecology course. This encouraged her to live with possibilities while facing deeply disturbing truths about the state of the planet, something I now recognise myself. However, hopelessness is a abdication of responsibility encouraging disengagement at the very time when we all need to be engaged. The main appeal of the book consists in its pithy reflections on everyday life and the freedom of someone in her 80s who has fully come to terms with herself.

Tamera: A Model for the Future

by Leila Dregger

Central Books 2010, 136 pp., £18.95, h/b.

Tamera is a remarkable community in southern Portugal founded in the mid-1990s and providing and inspiration for new ways of life and the pioneering development of particular projects dealing with water, solar energy and education for peace. The book is vividly illustrated, with many vignettes about community members, which brings the whole story to life, providing inspiration for the reader. See www.tamera.org

A Better World is Possible

by Bruce Nixon

O Books 2011, 395 pp., £14.95, p/b.

A brilliant and comprehensive analysis of the biggest crisis in human history, based on the fact that our systems requiring continued economic growth are not working. The five main elements are climate change, peak everything (not just oil), the destruction of the ecosystems on which life depends, poverty and economic injustice, and continuing violence and war. The first part describes these aspects in detail in terms of system breakdown including nature of the financial crisis and the role of corporations in the global economy. The good news is that breakdowns often lead to breakthroughs and throw up the necessary leaders - most if not all current leaders are system-blind and are tied in to existing power structures. Nixon draws inspiration from Gandhi, who spelt out the dire implications of India industrialising along Western lines. Part Two provides a vision for a better future, including greening the world, transforming the system, a new model of money, unlocking democracy, reforming agriculture, creating sustainable facilities and ushering in peace. Readers may

think that they have read all this before, but this book brings things together in a remarkable way and makes it very clear that we all have to play an active part in politics at local, national and global levels. Change will not come from our existing leaders, but only through a renewal of participatory democracy exerting massive pressure from below. The pressure for such a mass movement will continue to build over the next few years.

Small is Beautiful in the 21st Century

by Diana Schumacher

Green Books 2011, 127 pp., £8.00, p/b.

A book about the legacy of EF Schumacher, an early member of the Network. It begins with a sketch of his life and the origins of the Schumacher Society, moving on to areas in which he has had a particular influence such as Third World development, food, agriculture and land use, small-scale technologies, a new economics and the transformation of industrial work. It becomes very clear that his influence has been and continues to be very extensive in all these areas, and it is safe to say that this influence will continue to grow well into the future. The question is the extent to which his ideas will enter more into the mainstream. And it is important not to forget the spiritual aspect of his work expressed in *A Guide for the Perplexed* - this receives less attention here, although it is mentioned in the final chapter in relation to a culture of nonviolence.

The Whole-Brain Path to Peace

by James Olson

Origin Press 2011, 335 pp., \$21.95, h/b.

Although the author does not reference Iain McGilchrist's work, the thesis of this book reflects his thinking in identifying an imbalance in our culture towards separatist and dualistic thinking characteristic of the left hemisphere of the brain. An initial chapter invites us to remember and recognise our fundamental identity and responsibility as God, and calls the reader to consider how a holistic, inclusive and integral perspective - including the analytical, dualistic and deconstructive side - can lead us towards both truth and healing. This involves an understanding of holons based on Ken Wilber's work, which he also applies to the American social and political situation, polarised as it is between Republicans and Democrats. The left hemisphere perspective encourages competition, while the right hemisphere favours cooperation - these need to be held in balance. Olson explains the differences in function and the need to be able both to zoom in on details and expand to see the whole picture. He sees the military-industrial-Congressional complex as inherently functioning through the competitive left hemisphere, seeing only its own interests and seeking to dominate the planet. A culture of peace has to use the whole brain, hence the title of the book and the subject of the last chapter. Peace is a different form of perception that seeks harmony and is ultimately an individual and collective choice.

EDUCATION

Transformative Innovation in Education

by Graham Leicester, Keir Bloomer, Denis Stewart

International Futures Forum 2011, 51 pp., p/b.

I have been a member of the International Futures Forum since its inception in 2001, during which time it has

undertaken a number of projects, including this one focused on the future of education in Scotland. Improvement of existing systems is simply not enough, so what we need is transformational change presented through the useful model of 3 horizons. H1 is the existing system with all its challenges, H2 consists of innovations in response to the shortcomings of H1, while H3 addresses the emergent transformation somewhere down the road. Standards-based reform can go some way, but Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence provides a point of departure for a more radical case study. The authors propose a six-point policy framework, which they have been discussing with senior figures. Anyone interested in the future of education should read this pamphlet.

GENERAL

The View Beyond

edited by Dave Patrick

Polair Publishing 2011, 287 pp., £11.99, p/b.

This volume gives a much deeper and broader picture of the work and significance of Sir Francis Bacon and his relevance for our time on the 450th anniversary of his birth. It shows that his project for the advancement of knowledge included an esoteric understanding that goes far beyond the current materialistic scientific worldview and mainstream interpretations of Bacon, which frequently misunderstand his intentions and ignore the esoteric background. The 24 essays in this volume cover a great deal of ground, and are not always consistent with each other. In this sense, it would have been helpful to have an editorial introduction summarising the contents. Early in the book we have contributions from Mark Rylance and from Peter Dawkins, who has made a lifelong study of Bacon. This helps the reader understand Bacon's agenda as it relates to education and the advancement of humanity. It also makes sense of the way in which the drama and poetry of Shakespeare fit into the overall schema. There are interesting parallels between Roger Bacon and Francis Bacon (indeed one essay insists that Francis is the reincarnation of Roger and goes on to talk about his identity as Count St Germain). Other fruitful comparisons include Rudolf Steiner and his relationship to modern science. The Francis Bacon Society provides a forum for continuing research on Bacon and many questions remain unanswered, partly owing to the use of codes and pseudonyms. As a whole, the book provides an essential missing dimension for a cultural renaissance emerging from Bacon's legacy to Western civilisation.

T.C. Lethbridge

by Terry Welbourn

O Books, 2011, 347 pp., £17.99, p/b.

I imagine that very few readers will have heard of Tom Lethbridge, unless they have come across him in *The Occult* by Colin Wilson, who contributes the introduction to this biography. Lethbridge was an archaeologist and curator of a Museum in Cambridge, but also went on a number of expeditions in the 20s and 30s. His key discovery was that objects and places have fields that can be measured through a long pendulum of up to 40 inches. He found that objects had a rate, that is to say the length in inches when the pendulum would rotate rather than swing freely. Fascinatingly, he discovered a corresponding rate beyond

40 inches, and hypothesised that this corresponded to a higher dimension—the rate for death being 40 inches. Like Bergson, he felt that the brain filtered out a great deal of information. His work also throws light on hauntings and atmospheres in various places such as battlefields or cliff tops where people have committed suicide and those walk along feel the urge to follow them.

Yew, A History

by Fred Hageneder

The History Press 2011, 320 pp., £20, p/b.

Correctly described by David Bellamy as a landmark work of great scholarship and the best monograph on a single plant species, this extraordinary and beautifully illustrated book will fascinate readers interested in trees in general and in the yew in particular. The two main parts cover nature and culture, in both cases comprehensively. This means chapters on evolution and climate history, on the structure of the tree in terms of roots, foliage, flowers, pollination, seeds and regeneration, along with discussion of mammals, birds, invertebrates and parasites associated with the yew. Culturally, the yew has played a central role as the symbol of immortality with its extensive associations with religious ritual, mysteries and history. In addition, mediaeval longbows were made of yew, and I even remember trying to fashion one myself from one of our trees. The extensive photographs convey the variety of species to the reader, adding to the texture of this remarkable book.

Be a Winner

by Richard Orr and Kenny Kemp

Mainstream, 2008, 208 pp., £9.99, p/b.

Subtitled 'achieve your goals with Scotland's sporting heroes' and written to inspire young people for the Olympics and the Commonwealth Games coming to Glasgow in 2014, this book provides guidance towards all kinds of achievement, not only sporting. The first chapter explains the I AM in formula of inspiration, ambition and motivation, with quotations from Sir Chris Hoy and many other prominent athletes. People see the winning performance, but not the years of work and endurance behind the medals. Talent without application won't cut it. Self-belief is critical, as Ellen MacArthur explains. You must also be competitive and show determination, daring and dedication. It is also important to remember that many of the lessons learned in training can be translated into the way you lead your life outside sport.

Temenos Academy Review 14, 2011

The Temenos Academy 2011, 349 pp., p/b.

The Temenos Academy Review contains the usual rich feast of philosophical and artistic material with essays, poems and book reviews. It is always good to see continuing contributions from the founder, Kathleen Raine, this time on Blake and England. The Prince of Wales contributes his speech on Islam and the Environment, which contains a certain amount of the argument of his book *Harmony*, reviewed elsewhere by David Cadman. Of special interest it is an essay by Joseph Milne on Nicholas of Cusa and Giordano Bruno, contrasting their visions of the Cosmos within the history of Western thought. There is also an engaging essay and by Ann Wroe on Shelley's spiritual quest, which encourages the reader to go back to Shelley and interpret his work in a different light. Another

significant essay by John Carey discusses Henri Corbin and the secret of the Grail. The Review always lives up to its aspiration that wisdom should be the goal of all education.

Handel's Messiah

by **Calvin R. Stapert**

Eerdmans, 2011, 173 pp., \$14.95, p/b.

Every reader of Network Review will be familiar with this work but probably, like me, know very little about his background and how it is in fact a phenomenon without parallel in musical history. The author discusses the parallel development of opera and oratorio in Italy and elsewhere in Europe before coming to Handel himself - an exact contemporary of JS Bach, famous for his Christmas and Easter oratorios. The libretto was supplied to Handel by Charles Jennens, and he famously completed the work in 3 weeks. Apparently this was not unusual, since the draft of the next work, *Samson*, was completed over the following 6 weeks. The first performance took place in Dublin and was universally acclaimed. An interesting point is that the *Messiah* was used for charitable fundraising from the beginning, with one contemporary remarking that the work had fed the hungry, clothed the naked and fostered the orphan. Handel died in 1759 and left £600—a staggering sum in those days—to provide a memorial in Westminster Abbey. 3,000 people attended his funeral. The book goes on to discuss performances through the ages, and there is an interesting section on the *Messiah* as an argument against 18th-century Deism. The last part forms a commentary on the work, which serves to enrich one's understanding of this sublime piece of music, the greatest performance of which I remember hearing in Winchester Cathedral.

Tales from the Woods

by **Felix Dennis**

Ebury Press, 2011, £9.99, p/b – with CD.

A new collection of poetry by Felix Dennis, whose work I must admit never having read before. This book praises English trees and the countryside in a series of delightful poems charmingly illustrated by Bill Sanderson. In addition, a CD accompanies the book. Many of the poems are

classically structured in terms of rhyme and rhythm. Here is the first stanza of *Autumn Harvest*:

*Wet leaves littering an unmown lawn;
Grey clouds scudding from the hills;
Coal black rooks in the rainsoaked fields;
Bluebottles dozing on the sills.*

Then the last stanza:

*Damp fog silvering the new ploughed field;
Urchins drowning in the brooks;
Deep armchairs by an ash log fire –
Baccy and bourbon and books!
(Urchin is an old word for hedgehog)*

A delightful book to read by a log fire, where I am actually sitting in my library.

DEATH AND DYING

Grieve No More Beloved

by **Ormond McGill**

The American Book Company Ltd 1995, 115 pp., h/b.

This book was given to me by a friend who knew the author, and it is currently out of print. It records communications received from his wife after she died, and as such contains much inspiring material giving the reader a better understanding of the post-mortem state. The overall journey is towards consciousness of the divine within or cosmic consciousness, when one moves beyond knowledge to a sense of knowing where one discovers that choicelessness - being fully aware - is real freedom. This is defined as freeing your Self from encasement in the body and recognising the perfection of Being. Other striking insights include that 'as long as you fear death, Existence will be your enemy'; and the explanation of the seven doorways of the ego. There are also descriptions of the dying process, very much consistent with the other literature. However, it would be a mistake to think that the book is just about death, rather it is a manual for self-realisation and contains great wisdom about life.



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