

The Wednesday



Magazine of the Wednesday Group at Albion Beatnik - Oxford

Editorial

Changing Views

We always assume that thoughts are free floating and that ideas come to the mind freely or when we will, but that may not be the case. There are some things that sociologists think could determine our thought, such as personal or social prejudices or, at a higher level, there is the hegemony of a paradigm. Could Post-Kantians have thought their thoughts without Kant? Could Medieval Philosophy start and keep going for centuries without Aristotle? Could analytical philosophy in the Twentieth Century have started and carried on without Mathematics and Science? But in all these cases and others, the starting point seems revolutionary but soon it becomes the dominant view and a paradigm sets in and limits creativity until it is challenged at its basic assumptions and then a new revolution will be initiated.

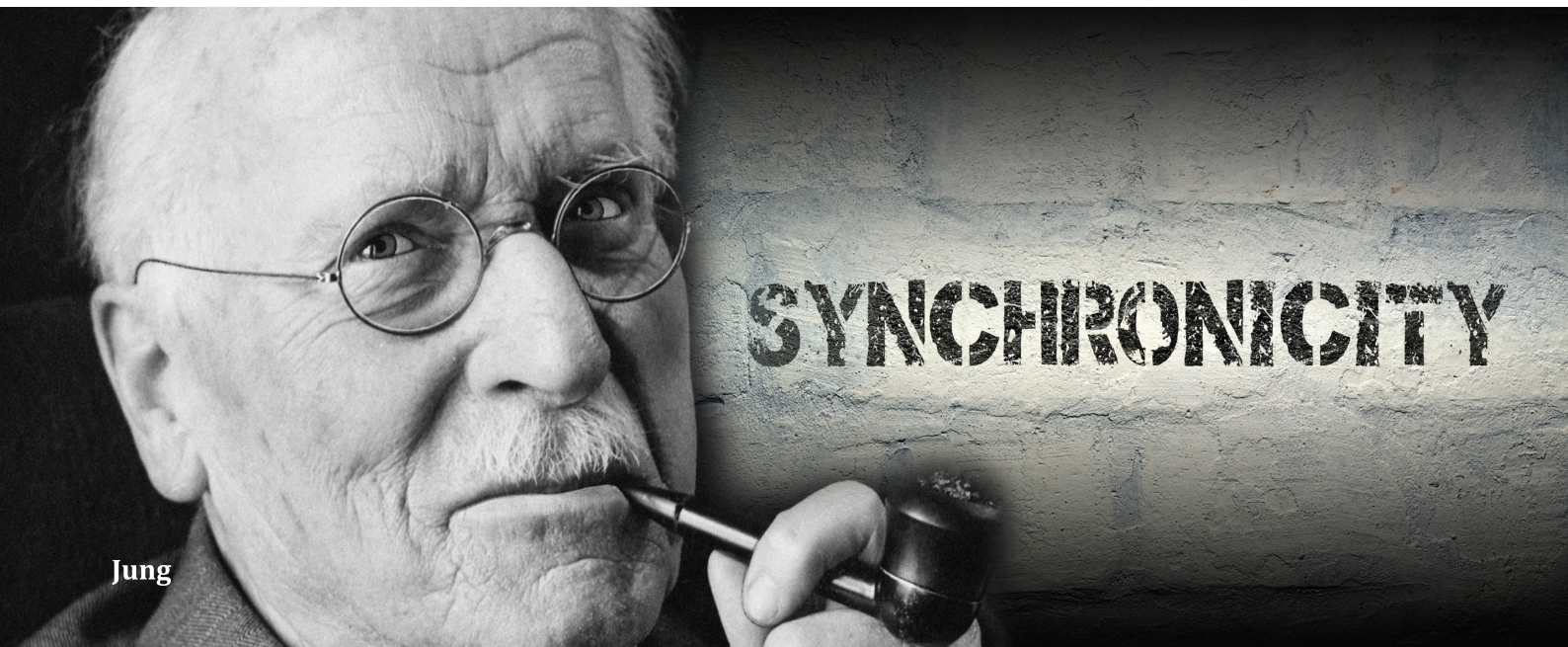
The process of adhering to a certain view could be personal and sub-conscious, but could also be an environment of thought. There are interesting anecdotes in the history of philosophy that illustrate this. I will keep to just one example from **Karl Popper**. He mentions in his memoirs that in 1936 he went with **Ayer to a lecture by Russell at the Aristotelian Society**. Russell, who was influenced by Hume, gave a lecture on "*The Limits of Empiricism*" using a **Kantian limitation on knowledge**. He maintained that **Induction** needs a **Principle of Induction** that could not be based on induction and this marks the limit of empiricism. Popper was encouraged to

make a comment and he stood up and said he didn't believe in induction or the Kantian limit Russell was proposing. But the audience "took it as a joke, and laughed." Popper made a second attempt at explaining his view. He challenged the view that **Scientific Knowledge** is a species of **Knowledge** in the ordinary sense of the word. For example, if one knows that it is raining, then it is true that it is raining. But "Scientific Knowledge" is hypothetical, and often not true, certain or probably true. This time the audience not only laughed but also clapped their hands.

Popper commented on the event by saying: "I wonder whether there was anybody there who suspected that not only did I seriously hold these views, but that, in due course, they would widely be regarded as commonplace." (*Unended Quest*, PP109-110).

There is a contrast between sticking to a point of view and labouring under its influence for a century and the more creative view that takes ideas to be provisionally correct and then reflects on them and moves beyond them. Of course, philosophy, unlike science, doesn't develop or move in a straight line and neither do politics or society. Perhaps this is a point of strength. It means that philosophy is more flexible and more susceptible to revising its assumption than science. Its job is to remind science of the need for such flexibility and not to be afflicted by the dogma that marks some scientific circles.

The Editor



Synchronicity

PETER WOOD

Do things happen accidentally and separate from each other or are they connected? Is there a scientific reason for the feeling of synchronicity of events? Is it a subjective or objective feeling? What did the psychologist Jung suggest and how his idea being received and modified over the decades? The following articles gives answer to these questions and many more:

2 **S**ynchronicity is the principle of meaningful relation between events that are synchronous but not causally connected. It comes from Late Latin *synchronus*, from Greek *sugkhronos*, from *syn* (a Latinised form of Greek *sun*: preposition - together) + *khronos* time + *-ity*, a noun suffix. **Jung coined the word for his theory of a principle of association between events that have no causal connection yet are meaningfully related.**

Jung's thoughts on this concept developed over his lifetime. The idea was very much at odds with his epoch and has continued to give rise to

much discussion: there is a continuing debate over both the use of the term (does it belong to Jung to keep?), and also the validity, applicability and significance of the principle itself.

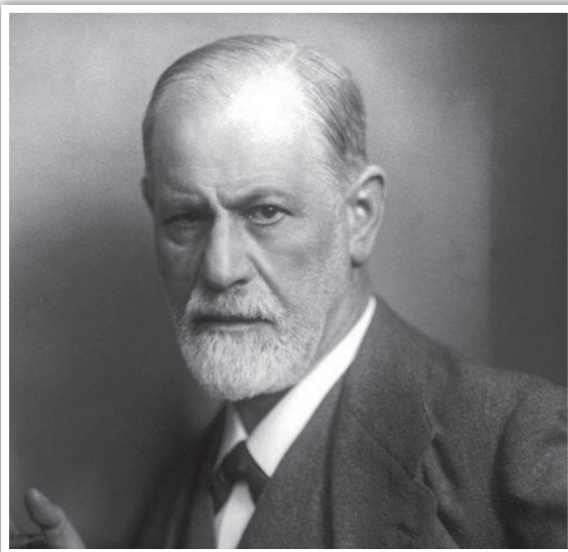
Jung was not, of course, the first - even in modern European history - to conceive of such connections. His forerunners include 'the classical idea of the *sympathy of all things*' as well as the medieval theory of *correspondentia*. Another precursor was **Leibnitz** (1646-1716), who conceived in his *Monadology* of a 'pre-established harmony,' an interconnection by which one who 'sees all can read in each thing what happens everywhere,' at all times and all places.

Input to the development of **Jung's concept of synchronicity also came from Einstein**, whose conversations about relativity inspired Jung in his intellectual journey into non-locality.

An important milestone was an empirical work by the biologist **Paul Kammerer**, entitled '*Theory of Seriality*' (1919), a formulation of the theory of acausal coincidences which is very close to Jung's own, but which did not include psychic events as the psychologists did.

Jung at first believed synchronic phenomenon to be relatively uncommon, bound to the constellation of an archetypal emotional situation. This refers to a highly-charged emotional situation, in particular any form of existential crisis - death or disaster or falling in love - which evokes an archetypal response from the unconscious. **Jung conceived of the archetype as being latent not only in the psyche of the experiencing individual but also in the external physical world, awaiting manifestation by force of the emotional charge of a situation.**

He wished for some objective, i.e. statistical, 'proof' of the validity of this theory. The idea he hit upon was that of an astrological investigation. It was of the essence of this test that Jung thought that it had been shown that in purely objective analyses of data astrology could *not* be proven. Thus, it was not a test of the astrological theory itself, but of the non-causal effect on the statistics



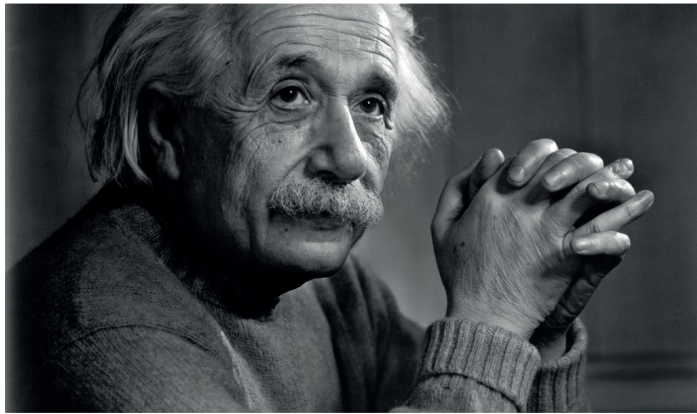
Freud

of the presence of the psyche of the one carrying out the test, i.e. in this case, of Jung himself. This was in line with the beliefs of other researchers in **parapsychology** at the time, who considered the expectations of the experimenter to be the decisive factor in producing a result (positive or negative). It was, as Jung said, an experiment on *himself*. And as far as this was concerned, he considered it successful. The results, though statistically flawed, appeared to show that, one way or another, synchronicity was 'at work'.

It was one of his patients, the physicist and Nobel Prize winner, **Wolfgang Pauli**, who persuaded Jung, after so many years, to write up his work on synchronicity, and it was Pauli who, in 1949, saw the first draft of Jung's redaction of his material. The public first came to know of this work in 1951 in an **Eranos lecture**, "*Über Synchronizität*" (*Eranos-Jahrbuch* 1951; Zurich: Rhein-Verlag, 1952). In a revised form, and together with a monograph by Pauli, this was published in 1952 under the title "Synchronizität als ein Prinzip akausaler Zusammenhänge": Jung & Pauli, '*Naturerklärung und Psyche*' (Studien aus dem C.G.Jung-Institut, IV, Rascher Verlag, Zurich). The English translation was published in 1955, Pauli's monograph being translated as 'The Influence of Archetypal Ideas on the Scientific Theories of Kepler' (see Jung CG & Pauli W, 1955, '*The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche*', Kegan Paul, London). In the English version, the chapter on the astrological experiment had been heavily re-worked and, importantly, the statistical errors were amended (though later German, and many English, versions do not, surprisingly, include these revisions).

Princeton University Press (New Jersey) later published Jung's unrevised 1952 monograph as ***Synchronicity: an acausal connecting principle***, and included it in Volume 8 of the Collected Works of C. G. Jung: '*The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*'. Also included in this volume is an appendix entitled 'On Synchronicity,' which is a translation of Jung's 1951 Eranos lecture.

Jung was not always consistent in his use of the term, probably due to uncertainty as to both how restricted the term should be and also the area



Einstein

of experience in which it was a valid concept. **Freud's view of the matter (it was one of the subjects discussed in their correspondence) was that there was, indeed, an "undeniable cooperation of chance," but he considered the apparent phenomena to be the result of unconscious projection, and therefore of mere selective perception.**

At the heart of Jung's concept of the term was the idea that two separate events which have absolutely no causal connection between them may, nevertheless, have a real and genuine connection because of their meaning.

This is, of course, a very broad definition, one which indicates an understanding of the nature of reality which, indeed, most historical periods have probably espoused. By synchronicity, however, Jung, at times at least, wished to signify something much more specific, something he had come across in his professional work as a psychologist. This was **the coincidence of psychic and physical phenomena**, especially a coincidence which is particularly significant to the person involved. In the foreword to the Wilhelm-Baynes edition of *The I Ching* (1949), Jung stated that "synchronicity takes the coincidence of events in space and time as meaning something more than mere chance, namely a peculiar interdependence of objective events among themselves as well as with the subjective (psychic) states of the observer or observers." In "*Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*" (par. 858), he clarifies the situation further: Synchronicity,

he says, 'consists of two factors: (a) **An unconscious image comes into consciousness either directly (i.e., literally) or indirectly (symbolized or suggested) in the form of a dream, idea, or premonition.** (b) **An objective situation coincides with this content.'** The external element of the coincidence may be synchronous with, or posterior to, the inner experience. A typical synchronistic event would be an internal realisation of something which personally is highly significant to the individual at the same time as he or she sees an 'accidental' occurrence which appears to emphasise that very same inner state. Another common form is that of a vision or dream indicating something that is then confirmed in external reality.

The philosophical basis of Jung's view is that all of reality is interconnected, no matter what form it is in, whether material or psychic. Jung used the phrase '*unus mundus*'; i.e. the medieval conception of **the world as, at base, an undifferentiated unity wherein all aspects we perceive normally as separated or different** - the physical and the psychic; past, present, future - are, in reality, all one and unified. So, the extended dimensions of time and space are relative; they may dominate in the realm of consciousness, but when the individual descends towards an unconscious state and approaches the *unus mundus*, then the appearance of synchronistic phenomena is unhindered (perhaps this is why synchronicities have been associated with boundaries, cross-over points, and with the figure of *Hermes, the Trickster*). Aniela Jaffé goes as far as to assert that Jung's conception of a unity at the heart of all that is corresponds to an 'image of wholeness' which relates to 'the religious experience of an archetypal God-image in which the opposites are reconciled.'

It is important that these synchronicities are in no way directed or sought out by our conscious minds (Jung said that **synchronicity is never sought, but discovered** - though it may be connected with a matter we've been thinking about, rather than, as at times, completely out of the blue). Within, at least, the psychotherapeutic field, they are considered by many to be means of helping us focus on areas of the psyche which

are unconscious and undeveloped. In this view, they are aids to psychological and spiritual growth, often being connected to significant personal transformations. They can be of long-term import, indelible moments which impact us as revelations of the meaning of our lives as a whole - which, in fact, relates to their purpose as steps along the path towards individuation. **Victor Mansfield** calls them 'soul-making', and asserts that synchronicities are closely connected to our psychological wounds and sufferings: weak spots in our armour and doorways to our souls, they allow the possibility of transformation.

Synchronicities are not always described as positive or 'soul-making', however; it is said (by **Stephen J Davis**) that they may be experienced as negative, even malefic, associated with a response of incomprehension or antipathy, or pernicious or calamitous experiences, though whether or not these instances can truly be described as synchronistic is debatable. They have also been considered (by **Michael W. Clark**) as 'ethically neutral', like a blind force of nature.

An alternative, sceptical approach (by **Stephen Hladkyj**) to the phenomena of significant coincidences is that subjective meaningfulness - which, in this view, objectively, isn't, in fact, there - is read into events by the experiencing individual, who then matches his or her own identity with the imaginary 'story' they find themselves in. In this view, synchronicity is really a matter of picking up appropriate bits of life to weave a story around us and give us a sense of significance.

Of course, the degree of significance inherent in **any instance of synchronicity can only be judged by the individual concerned: it is a matter of subjective perception and therefore always open to the risk of misinterpretation or having a 'mere' coincidence being turned into something more than it is.** When we are involved in creative mental activities, for example, apparent synchronicities may arise (both artistic and scientific 'felicities') which some definitions of the term might exclude. Indeed, moving even further in that direction, **the**



Wolfgang Pauli

entire creative artistic and scientific explosion of the 1960's has been seen as an example of synchronicity; moreover, synchronistic instantaneity has been posited as **a new form of historical interpretation** (replacing linear causality) which better matches the development of **McLuhan's world of global universal electronic connectivity**, where an environment of immediacy and "synaesthetic discontinuous integral consciousness" re-engenders a collective tribal awareness. **Some think that synchronicities and the interconnections they manifest are rapidly increasing at this time, and will continue to do so until we are all one unified world.** There is a magazine devoted to these developments and also to education in their proper use (*Synchronicity Times*: see: <http://www.ropi.net/st/>).

As we can see, since Jung introduced it to psychology, the term has had bestowed upon it a multitude of different usages that, to say the least, are not identical with Jung's own. Sometimes the new meaning seems to bear only the faintest of connections to the original. For instance, the term is being employed to mean a particular type of combination of music with images. As one source says: 'The match formed by a piece of visual imagery (video tape or film) with an unrelated piece of music, which forms a new and different experience from that originally intended by either work ... specifically music that evokes a surreal, or psychedelic, feel, that is intensified by the

Psychology

pairing'. It is not, I suppose, surprising that as a buzz word in the business world it has also acquired a somewhat distinctive meaning. It appears to signify something like 'temporal synergy' (*An Introduction to Synchronicities*: <http://www.xnet.com/~arkiver//synch/synch.shtml>). Others have tried to approach it in a more scientific temper: it has been subjected to information theory.

Misconceptions are probably inherent in such a word, the borders of which are so difficult to discern, but synchronicity, probably due to its wide dissemination in best-selling books (e.g. *The Celestine Prophecy*, Redfield), as well as its use as the name of a rock album by **The Police**, has become a word of very loose usage indeed. **Jung's essentially psychological term has been correspondingly / proportionally extended in popular usage to match the width of its currency and now includes just about all parapsychological, and even loosely related, phenomena, from horary astrology to tarot cards, from luck to destiny, intuition to 'questioning the Bible.'** At times, it appears to mean little more than 'synchronous,' 'significant,' or 'mystical' (depending on the *proclivities* of the user). The concept of synchronicity has been resorted to as a useful umbrella term to cover all such matters. In this way, it has come to indicate the entire providential schema of the universe, god, and everything, both in broad terms and in the moment-to-moment working out of life. It can be looked to to protect us and keep us from harm. **It can be presumed to have access to absolute knowledge (far beyond that which the conscious ego is capable of obtaining),** able to present us with the answer to any question at any time. It has been interpreted as **an intuitive feeling of being in harmony with the universe**, as an 'experience of the simplicities of life,' of 'knowing that there is a reason why,' and 'going with the flow'. **In brief, it is life experienced as meaningful and harmonious.**

Clearly, when synchronicity is considered in this way, a type of experience is being alluded to which is mystical or religious. Appropriately, it is frequently represented by **the Taoist Yin-Yang symbol, indicating the harmonious**



Leibniz

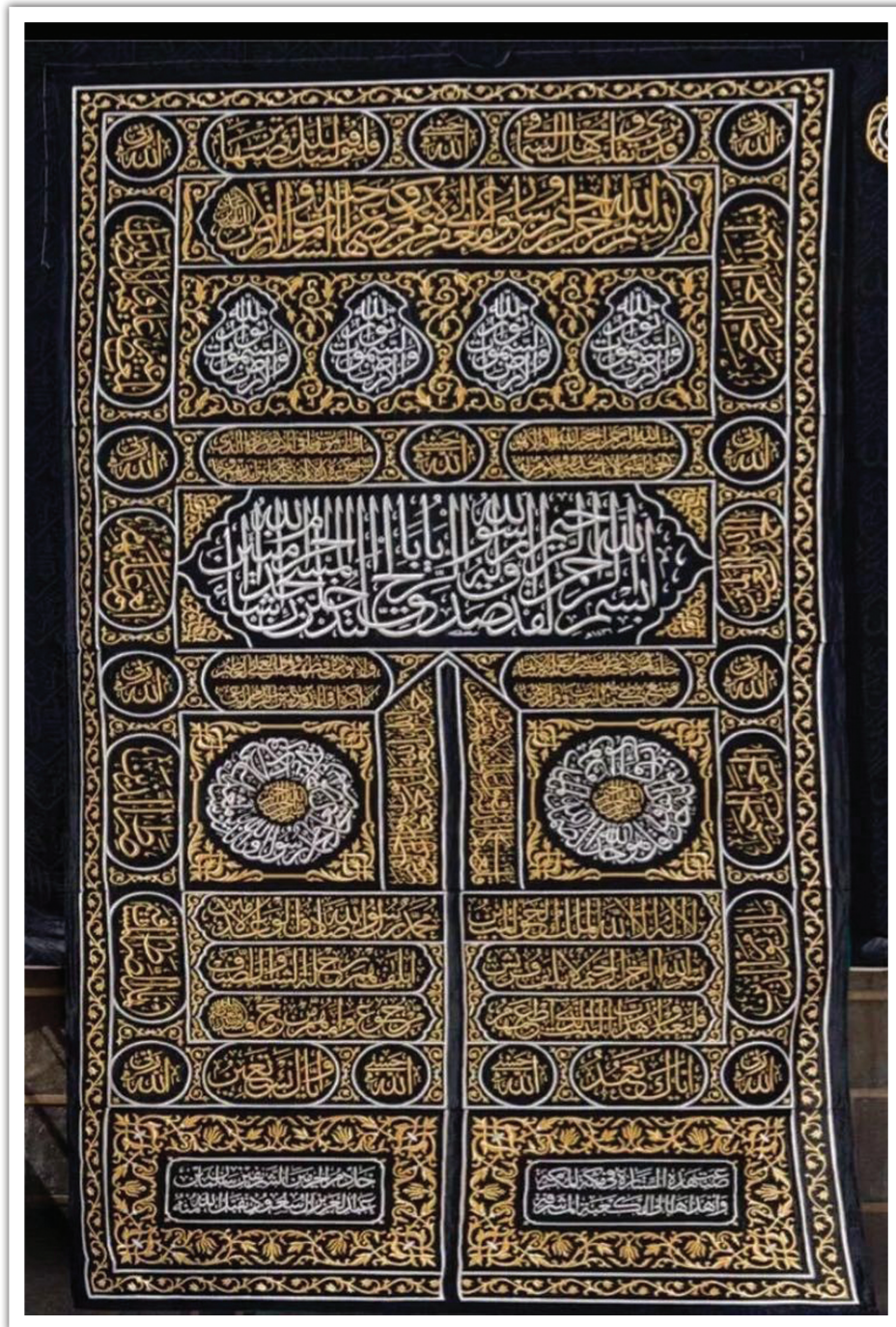
balance of natural energies. When viewed religiously, it can be taken as a principle that steers one's life; indeed, some believe that synchronicities are happening all the time, even that they include every single minute detail of our lives: the sigh of a passer-by, the duration of a shadow, the unnoticed chink of a fallen penny. If we would only open ourselves to their presence, we would see that everything is touched with mystery and meaning.

The view of the nature of reality which underlies the concept of synchronicity is, of course, in direct contrast with the usual modern 'scientific' worldview accepted by most western people. It evokes the usually ridiculed idea of magical correspondences. Synchronicity is thus a challenge to the beliefs of the majority of individuals living in the developed world. **The idea that all things are interconnected, that other realities permeate that of space-time which we inhabit, that the nature of our reality is symbolic and replete with signs and significance, has, however, been the accepted conventional viewpoint of most ages and epochs of world history, including that of the west until a few centuries ago.** And it was only that long ago that a philosopher of genius quoted a doctor of genius who, two Millennia before him, had stated: 'All things conspire and are sympathetic.' (Leibniz, 'A Specimen of Discoveries About Marvellous Secrets of Nature in General,' in 'Philosophical Writings,' Dent (Everyman), 1973, p.78).

(Some references were deleted for shortage of space)

Pilgrimage

Al-kiswa (The Cover)



Nearly three million Muslims from all over the world will be performing the Hajj (Pilgrimage) to the Kaaba, in Mecca, this year on the 1st of September. Above is part of the cover of the Kaaba known as al-Kiswa, embroidered with golden threads. Al-Kiswa gets changed every year a day before the Hajj. It previously used to be sent to the Kaaba from different Muslim countries but it is now made in Mecca.

Notes on the Wednesday Meeting 23rd of Aug 2017

One of the topics that has been discussed is the thought of **Owen Barfield**. The specific point was Barfield's relation to **Rudolf Steiner** and how Barfield understood Steiner. It turned out that Barfield endorsed Steiner's view that Consciousness passes through three stages: original Participation when Consciousness and Nature are one (or Identity), the division of Subject-Object with the Ego affirming itself and the Ego's identification with its thought (such as, I am right, you are wrong), and finally Re-establishment of Identity of Self and World again. The development of Consciousness is not the Victorian idea of Progress but the deepening of Consciousness.

The relationship between Barfield and fellow Inklingsian **C. S. Lewis** was also mentioned.

Between 1925-1930, C.S. Lewis and his best friend, Owen Barfield, conducted a lengthy philosophical exchange they affectionately called their "**Great War**." Its topic was the question whether imagination or reason was the better organ for discovering truth — Barfield passionately arguing that the imagination could reach truths inaccessible to reason, Lewis that the imagination was an unreliable organ in need of guidance and regulation by reason and authority. Recently, the *[Journal of Inklings Studies](https://inklings-studies.org/about/supplements/)* published the missing texts of the Great War as a special supplementary issue of the journal (<https://inklings-studies.org/about/supplements/>). There was also a difference in their interpretation of Christianity. Lewis, who was atheist in his early life and moved to theism under the influence of his close friend **Tolkien**. Lewis and Barfield had their differences on the interpretation of Christianity.



C. S. Lewis

Coping with death: recently, the founder member of the group, **David Clough**, has lost his daughter **Laura** to a brain tumour, at the age of 32. She studied Classics at Oxford and was interested in philosophy and art. She left sketches and paintings that were displayed at the reception after her funeral. Our sincere condolences to her husband **Mike** and her parents. David raised the problem of coping with death and how he and his wife **Joy** coped with it. They are all strong believers and that is a source of comfort. He lamented that society has lost its ability to cope with death and accepting the fact of death.

Few other topics were mentioned but not fully discussed: the different views of the Self, the Higher Self (Nietzsche), the Deeper Self (Jung), the collapse of metaphysics in recent theology, the implication of the



De Caputo

Nietzschean idea of the *Death of God* for theology as has been expanded by thinkers such as **Vattimo, De Caputo and Karen Armstrong**. The question of meaning in the works of Becket and the interpretation of Paul Ricoeur.

Paul Cockburn added the following comment on our last meeting:

There is a criticism that our **magazine** is not interested in modern philosophy. I think there is a reason for this. **Modern philosophy is not in a good state**, and it must be said that the Ancient Greek philosophers, for instance, produced philosophical writings which are still very relevant to modern times. So, there is nothing wrong in finding wisdom in the writings of 'old' philosophers – they considered fundamental questions with refreshing honesty, open to big questions and big answers. In the Western world now the dominance of analytical philosophy, itself dominated by science, has largely stultified any really useful debate on the big issues. Of course, there are good reasons for this in terms of the success of the scientific method, but philosophy now has a major role to play in



Karen Armstrong

addressing issues such as value and meaning which science just cannot address. **So now is the time to re-assess many of the great philosophers of the past and see if what they say relates to the modern world. Some of these philosophers such as Macmurray and Barfield are actually 20th century philosophers who have been air-brushed out of history and current philosophical debate, so they are not so old.**

Modern philosophy of course is not all bad. Continental philosophy does deal with the self, feminism and gender issues and politics including colonialism and post-colonialism, which perhaps were not dealt with so much in the past.

And then there is the question of religion. Can it be assumed that there is no God? Was Nietzsche right in his views on the death of God and his attack on the foundations of morality? For us, **the Wednesday group**, these questions are still open, and nothing is ruled out.

Rahim Hassan and Paul Cockburn

Self and Soul: a dialogue

What is incorruptible must also be ingenerable. The soul, therefore, if immortal, existed before our birth: And if the former existence nowise concerned us, neither will the latter.

David Hume,
'On the Immortality of the Soul'

*O who shall me deliver whole
From bonds of this tyrannic soul
Which, stretch'd upright, impales me so
That mine own precipice I go?*

Andrew Marvell, *'A Dialogue Between the Soul and the Body'*

I fall in love with Mary Smith. How should I react after she has first used the Replicator? I claim both that I would and that I ought to love her Replica. This is not the 'ought' of morality. On the best conception of the best kind of love, I ought to love this individual. She is fully psychologically continuous with the Mary Smith I loved, and she has an exactly similar body. If I do not love Mary Smith's Replica, this could only be for one of several bad reasons.

Derek Parfit, *'Reasons and Persons'*

CHRIS NORRIS*



Not love unless all detail falls away.
Not love unless
 the detail fades till they're
Self's essence or the soul of selflessness.

That's the refrain those spirit-seekers share.
That's the refrain
 of those who'd acquiesce
In counting self well lost for spirit's gain,

As who should say: <give up all you possess>;
As who should say
 'let love not appertain
To any gift the loved one might display>.

Beyond compare, soul-celebrants ordain.
Beyond compare
 since by subtraction they
Can safely pass as 'nothing to declare'.

Still let's confess what doubts it keeps at bay.
Still let's confess
 that essences so rare
And superfine may lack a home address.

A higher plane is their pied-à-terre,
A higher plane
 though vacant when you press
The door-bell or seek entrance there in vain.

Love every trait and cherish their largesse.
Love every trait
 and glory to profane
That soul-space sealed against the light of day.

You've gifts to spare so let profusion reign!
You've gifts to spare
 so many that we'll pay
No fitting tribute with a hermit's prayer.

What's not to bless in your life-resumé?
What's not to bless
 when talent, native flair,
And true distinction brings such life-success?

***Chris Norris** is *Distinguished Research
Professor in Philosophy*
at Cardiff University





Not but there's pain and griefs you've had to bear.
Not but there's pain
 such as, at times, we guess
As rumours tell of some past hurricane.

Feign though you may they linger none the less.
Feign though you may
 still those against-the-grain
Face-clouding moments bring a touch of grey.

Yet they fall square with maps of you-terrain.
Yet they fall square
 with that whole mixed array
Of self-marks that soul's acolytes forswear.

Some fear excess of these leads love astray.
Some fear excess
 and say to lovers: pare
The range down small lest self with soul should mess.

Why then abstain though they bid us beware?
Why then abstain
 from striving to express
What far outruns our striving to explain?

Why take such care to sever soul from brain?
Why take such care
 with notions that betray
How far aslant from personhood we err?

Let's simply say each craves its own redress.
Let's simply say
 they form a tangled skein
Yet shun the soul-talk lest it underplay

Self-threads we'd stress, like strands of DNA,
Self-threads we'd stress
 though not (how tropes ensnare!)
Gene-strands but threads of strength, love, tenderness.

My last quatrain (high time!) but don't despair.
My last quatrain
 so best accept it: yes,
Words fall short, rhymes run out, but you remain.



Friedrich is no weak-minded impressionist

DIANNE COCKBURN

Following on from the article and comments in Issue 4 (PP. 14-15), I feel the writer is being rather dismissive here. I would like to point out that the Impressionists in the late 1800s were appreciating the world in a new way. They were not looking for the 'meaning of life', they were more concerned with the 'here and now'. Europe was feeling much more settled; Germany was lately unified and France a republic. Friedrich painting in the early 1800 had faced a very different world.

As with many things in art one needs an open mind to accept changes in ideas and ways of presenting them. To suggest Impressionists are 'weak-minded' is to miss the point. They were living in a different age and their concern was not meaning, but energy and vitality. They represented life itself, there on the canvas – creating a living, breathing object.

Each artist, not 'copying from nature', but dynamically presenting a precious creation.

But why does this happen in the late 1800s? Because many developments in the worlds of art and science come together at this point. Scientifically, it was an expanding world:

- Darwin over-turning religious concepts
- Goethes (1810) work on the physiological effect of opposed colour
- Hering in 1892 on 'Opponent Colour Theory' allowing colour to physically work on the canvas
- The introduction of paint tubes enabling work to be done 'en plein air'.

Impressionist painters now found beauty in the commonplace and the labour of the common man. One might ask how Friedrich would have painted if he had himself been born into the late 1800s?



Moon Rise by the Sea

Visiting Mount Grace: A Carthusian Monastery in Yorkshire

PAUL COCKBURN

What are we drawn to on our journey through life? What do we tune into? It is often the case that when we visit a particular place we are struck and perhaps changed by its story. We visit monuments, homes of the famous perhaps, and reflect on the events and people who lived there. Here is a visit to *Mount Grace* in York, England.

I visited Mount Grace in Yorkshire in August this year; a well-preserved **Carthusian Catholic monastery**. The exceptional spiritual discipline of the Carthusians was well known in 16th century Britain in the reign of **Henry the Eighth**. The monasteries did continue to attract recruits right up to their dissolution. Only a few monks and nuns

lived in conspicuous luxury, but most were comfortably fed and housed by the standards of the time, and few any longer set standards of ascetic piety or religious observance.

The Carthusians were loyal to the Pope and would not renounce their loyalty to the Pope when ordered to do so by Henry 8th in 1536.



The Old Ruins



Mary and the Child depicted as a Cross

Henry asked **Thomas Cromwell** to deal with them, and he had the leader of the Carthusians in London and other Carthusian monks in London killed. He then gave pensions to all the other Carthusian monks and closed their monasteries down, confiscating their lands and riches. The monasteries were often destroyed, or looted for their lead, and in some cases the stones were used to build houses in London and other cities. Some monastic buildings were converted to other uses, some became parish churches or cathedrals.

At **Mount Grace**, the monastery has been well preserved since the 1530s because the man who was granted the site did not pull it down or destroy it because his parents and grandparents were buried in the graveyard. It is now a ruin, but a very impressive ruin with the remains of all the monks living quarters clearly visible. The ruins have a stately home in front of them, and this is also interesting to visit because in the 19th century it was refurbished by **William Morris**.

The monks all had small two storey houses with gardens. Their food was delivered to them in the house. They lived as hermits. Their life was contemplative and silent, coming together in the central church only at night for nocturnal services and on Sundays or feast days. They did practical jobs such as spinning wool and each house had a garden.

Today, the monastery of **Grand Chartreuse** in the French Alps is still the Motherhouse of the Carthusian Order. The monks of this monastery are involved in producing liqueur, but their strict rules have never been relaxed. Visits from outsiders are not possible into the Grande Chartreuse itself, but the 2005 documentary film '**Into Great Silence**' gave a fascinating insight into life within the hermitage.

I was struck by the preserved spirituality of Mount Grace, set as it was in a beautiful setting in the North York moors. In the old church, now open to the elements, there was a lovely statue of **Mary and the Christ-child** lifted up in her arms.

The Wednesday



Editor:

Dr. Rahim Hassan

Contributors:

Paul Cockburn

Chris Norris

Dianne Cockburn

Fred Cousins

Paolo Enock

Barbara Vellacott

Raymond Ellison

David Burridge

Stephen Hirstenstein

Peter Wood

Ranjini Ghosh

Designer:

Sala Karam

Contact Us:

rahimhassan@hotmail.co.uk

Telephone: 077 5241 5923

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Website: Currently unavailable

The Wednesday



Magazine of the Wednesday Group at Albion Beatnik - Oxford

Written by friends.. for friends



Please keep your articles, artwork,
poems and other contributions coming.
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rahimhassan@hotmail.co.uk



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