

## There is Another World But it is this One<sup>1</sup>

In the twentieth century, we constantly relearn things many poets and philosophers have always known. A fundamental truth we have regressed in this way is that what we see, the vision that we have, is an interaction between our own minds and the world around us. The world that we see exists in our minds that see it.

This is clear to me as I sit with my cat, looking out through an open window at the garden. If I concentrate as she does, I often react similarly; the rustle of leaves as a bird alights makes us both turn our heads. But she often seems to perceive things that I haven't noticed: and I relate, say, to a plane flying by in the sky that there is no need for her to pay attention to. I sit wishing that for a second I could feel and know the world as she does. I know it is a very different one from the world I live in — different colours, sounds, and above all, different meaning.

All creatures must carry their own world round with them. The elephant, the ant and the bird, though they may at any time be living in a similar space, must be experiencing totally dissimilar worlds, each one feeling like reality. The eye is merely an instrument; the world we see as reality is created in the mind, and the mind of each species and of each individual in that species is influenced and informed by experience and learning as well as biology.

Contemplation about the comparative experiences of animals and humans, and their ways of seeing sometimes appear in poetic form:

How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way,  
Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses five.<sup>2</sup>

Williams Blake's bold supposition that animals' perceptions may be superior in some ways to ours, again highlights the relativity of experience. Are we *limited* by the five senses? Are there many worlds and dimensions beyond those immediately available to us through smell, touch, sound, sight, taste?

Blake, that most remarkable and sensitive engraver, artist and poet, living out of

sympathy with the rationalism and greed of the eighteenth century Enlightenment world, is throughout his work putting forward the view that the world is quite other than the materialistic one seen by his contemporaries. If he were living today, in the nineteen nineties, he would be even more insistent on his view. The following words are most applicable to a society that systematically destroys the natural environment in the name of material progress:

'I know a Man may be happy in this world. And I know that This world is a World of Imagination and Vision. I see everything I paint in this World but Everybody does not see alike. To the eyes of the Miser a Guinea is more beautiful than the Sun, and a bag worn with the use of money has more beautiful proportions than a vine filled with Grapes. The Tree that moves some to tears of joy is in the Eyes of others only a green thing that stands in the way. Some see Nature all Ridicule and Deformity, and by them I shall not regulate my proportions: and some scarce see Nature at all. But to the eyes of the Man of Imagination, Nature is Imagination itself.'<sup>3</sup>

We are even more in a position to appreciate this, if we have eyes to see, through the brilliancy of some of the nature programmes on television. The amazing variety and invention of the world is made so much more available to us in this different medium. There are creatures almost too fantastic to seem feasible at the bottom of the sea or in remote places: there is undreamed-of natural drama, involving pain, fear and great vitality: and there exists a wonderful seemingly endless creativity of form, colour and style.<sup>4</sup>

Blake was of course putting forward a remarkable assertion throughout his long life, and that is that the world of the senses presents a pitifully limited picture of the nature of things. 'If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite'.<sup>5</sup> To many people in our materialistic age, such a statement will appear sheer fantasy. We have come to learn since the seventeenth century, with the development of empirical science which involves the notion of objective reality determined through the senses and tested through the senses and the experiments of others, that 'reality' is matter. It is only now, in the last part of the twentieth century, that a large minority of people are following the lead of many scientists and philosophers and questioning this taken-for-granted materiality of our world through New Age<sup>6</sup> thought. They are re-realising the lost understanding of other ages that 'reality' may be many layered.

In this paper I am considering our notions of the basic reality in the world, both at the present time and in former periods of our history. This is because I believe that we have developed in Western society a very particular and unusual view of 'how things are'. We have come to assume since the seventeenth century that the

world that we can perceive with our five senses is the only real world — one that can be investigated and known empirically. This means for many people that spiritual understanding comes to seem like fantasy or worse.

Universalist religion however assumes that spiritual sensibility is available to all people in whatever society; this religious sense may appear in the form of Churches of every kind, but the capacity for spiritual knowledge is universally found, and exists more fundamentally in people than in institutions. In the West it is hard for the dominant culture to accept this, as the 'first eye' of materialism or flesh and the 'second eye' of rationality are so much more taken for granted than the 'third eye' of the spirit within. It is more difficult in such a world for people to believe in either the existence or the validity of their inner knowledge, that of the spirit. It is part of the whole concept of the three eyes, which was postulated in the West by St Bonaventure, that all knowledge is illuminated by light. The *lumen exterius*, the exterior light, gives us knowledge of sense objects, and is the basis of all empirical science: the *lumen interius* gives us knowledge of rational and philosophical truths: the *lumen superius* is a vestige of God and here we find transcendence, beyond both sense and reason. Virtually all the formal knowledge now accepted by the education system in schools or universities — I write as a former teacher in a technological university — is of the first two kinds: wisdom and contemplation are not included in any sense in the curriculum: only reason and science, those less significant forms of knowing, are on our educational agenda.<sup>7</sup>

### *Dominant and Alternative views of reality*

There has been a great deal of work done in recent years on the nature of knowledge in society. In a wellknown and classic book written in the 1930s, *Ideology and Utopia*, Karl Mannheim postulates that in every society there is a dominant definition of reality expressing the worldview of the most powerful groups within that society — in other words, the dominant view is 'those complexes of ideas which direct activity towards the maintenance of the existing order'.<sup>8</sup> All the main institutions in that society, religious, scientific, educational, political, familial, will represent that dominant set of assumptions about the nature of the society and its picture of reality.

In Mannheim's analysis, there are always alternative pictures of reality waiting in the wings, some more powerful than others, but few of them strong enough to threaten the dominant ideology at that point. This situation is volatile in times of change. The utopian pictures are less threatening to those in power in periods of stability. 'A state of mind is utopian when it is incongruous with the state of reality within which it occurs'.<sup>9</sup> Some Utopias could be seen as premature truths, and the

history of both thought and belief could be perceived as an ever-changing pattern of competing pictures of the world, some strongly emerging at one time and dying at another, others constantly present but never becoming dominant, with ideas and models used and reused in different strands throughout history. Utopian ideas can clearly have a transforming influence on society; they can turn the world upsidedown. They are akin to Kuhn's notion of 'revolutionary science' when they are effective.<sup>10</sup> There is always another reality waiting to be born.

### *Universalism as Utopia*

Universalist religion has been traceable in most societies. It is defined in a pamphlet by Ralph Hetherington as having three main characteristics<sup>11</sup>: it is mystical and inspirational, based on personal experience of a religious reality and oneness as the basic reality of the world; it has a strong conviction that the nature of the human being is fundamentally benign, despite all the appearances in the world to the contrary; and it listens with respect to all religious teaching which is widely accepted, including the Christian and Buddhist scriptures, the Koran and the Gita. Such universalist experience may underlie the foundation of a particular Church, but it is prior to the development of that Church: indeed the church may obscure its original spirit. Such experience has never become a dominant ideology in a society; it has always been part of the Utopian vision. It has a further characteristic implied by its very name: universalism includes all, and it is the vision of an all-inclusive world, where no creature will be marginalised, repressed, killed or dominated because the spiritual experience and being of every creature is that which we should most value. Such a vision is well represented by Fichte in *The Vocation of Man*: 'in the mere consideration of the world as it is . . . there arises in me the wish, the desire — no, not the mere desire, but the absolute demand — for a better world. I cast a glance on present relations of men towards each other and towards nature; on the feebleness of their powers, on the strength of their desires and passions. A voice within me proclaims with irresistible conviction — "it is impossible that it can remain thus; it must become other and better".'<sup>12</sup> A desire for change seems inseparable from the universalist instinct.

We could see all churches as well as other social institutions as the imperfect containers of our visions. The context from which these spring remains utopian, and is the inspirations which we can find in ourselves, in our own inner wisdom which is at the heart of the universalist intuition.

We can find a world-wide intuitive sense of the spiritual basis of the human race and its religions not only in the Christian world, but also within other religions.

Gandhi wrote in 'Young India'<sup>13</sup>: 'Quite selfishly, as I wish to live in peace in the midst of a bellowing storm howling around me, I have been experimenting with myself and my friends by introducing religion into politics. Let me explain what I understand by religion. It is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion that transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself.'

The difference between any Church and this imminent and transcendent sense of the numinous, is similar to the difference we can see in the person between the personality, that we manifest and work through in society, and the soul, which is the ground of our being; it is the difference in the whole world between the particular, the varied, the institutional and the manifest on the one hand, and the simple, the universal and the latent, the potential, on the other. Aldous Huxley wrote his classic book on the Perennial Philosophy about the second one of these pairs; about the underground stream that runs through history, where the ground of the soul and the ground of God are one. William Penn declared that 'there is something nearer to us than Scripture, to wit, the word in the Heart from which all Scriptures come'.<sup>14</sup> The Chinese poet Lao Tzu saw the perennial philosophy as the eternal female, and we need to be constantly reminded of this in a patriarchal world:

The Valley Spirit never dies.  
It is called the mysterious Female  
And the doorway of the Mysterious Female  
Is the base from which Heaven and Earth spring.  
It is there within us all the time.  
Draw on it as you will, it never runs dry.<sup>15</sup>

### *The crucial seventeenth century*

Our own Western ideology was formed in the crucible of the years 1600–1700; in England that was in that warring combative period of the Civil Wars and their aftermath. During that period, people had begun to think of themselves as living in a different universe from the one assumed to exist in the middle ages.

'In 1500 educated people in Western Europe believed themselves to be living in the centre of a finite cosmos, at the mercy of supernatural forces beyond their

control, and certainly continually menaced by Satan and all his allies. By 1700 educated people in Western Europe for the most part believed themselves living in an infinite universe on a tiny planet in (elliptical) orbit round the sun, no longer menaced by Satan, and confident that power over the natural world lay within their grasp'.<sup>16</sup>

The movement that has dominated our thinking from that time to this is the excitement that indeed the natural world could lie within our grasp. That grasp is scientific, about the possibility of the control of the natural world, including ourselves. It is individualistic, valuing the separate person politically, economically and materially. It contains the ideas of growth and progress, with the assumption that the Western world is in the van of this progress. It values human rationality and objectivity, human inventiveness and technology. Human knowledge has come to seem so vast that it needs to be contained in disciplines and expertise. It is assumed that the outer world is different from the inner experience, that the 'outer' world is reality, the inner world of less significance. Even the inner experience is scientifically studied through psychology and psychoanalysis as though it were something that could be seen objectively from the outside.

Presently however there is a re-examination of all of these assumptions, sometimes led by the open-mindedness of the scientific framework, sometimes in opposition to the institutional power built up by the scientific establishment. The point of looking back to the pre-scientific ages is that we have come to realise that we may have lost valuable insights and ways of knowing along with the enormous strides we have also made. What we may have lost is a sense of proportion about what really matters in human and other life on earth. Human beings constantly rework old ideas, dig out material that seemed to be lost — the great flowering of the Renaissance owed its vitality to such a rediscovery — and the present time seems such a period. To dig away at the assumptions of our world and to examine other frameworks must now become an important part of academic, including religious, activity. It has the excitement of revisioning our taken-for-granted world, realising that each human being's world is her or his own personal conscious or unconscious invention, and also a reaction to a particular culture.

Right from the seventeenth century onwards, perceptive people have seen that our present world-view brings a disintegration of the comprehensive sense of harmony intrinsic to earlier societies. John Donne, that extraordinarily astute and fine poet put it thus in 1611:

The new philosophy calls all in doubt,  
The element of fire is quite put out;  
The sun is lost and the earth, and no man's wit

Can well direct him where to look for it.  
And freely men confess that this world's well spent,  
When in the planets and the firmament  
They seek so many new; they see that this  
Is crumbled out again to his atomies.

Perhaps it is only now that we are really re-addressing the issues raised in this poem, and re-examining the visions that we had to put by in the seventeenth century.

*What is this to do with universalism?*

It is easier to be in touch with the inner sense of reality, with one's own soul, if such a concept is part of the culture into which we are born. But that is not the case with us. It does seem that our culture is particularly fragmented, the inner from the outer, the religious from the scientific, the individual from the sense of community and the sense of the whole. Also materialism and the value of goods and property are the dominant currency in this society. Even 'equality' is usually seen exclusively in material terms. As Ananda Coomaraswamy wrote in the 1940s, 'the bases of modern civilisation are to such a degree rotten to the core that it has been forgotten even by the learned that man ever attempted to live otherwise than by bread alone'.<sup>17</sup>

However the universalist assumption that we are each the source of our own wisdom has not disappeared. The Alister Hardy Research Centre in Oxford now has evidence that the majority of people have some kind of mystical experience and some sense of the numinous.<sup>18</sup> The women's movement, which could be seen as a strong attempt to redress the strongly patriarchal (yang) values of our present world, stresses the valuation of our own knowledge and our own power; and many feminist writers are reconnecting to the spiritual basis of knowledge. Some are re-examining concepts of the nature of God and the spiritual, seeing — as Quakers have always done — the God within as being fundamental to our experience. God is envisaged, in a recent book by Sally McFague<sup>19</sup> as Mother, Lover, Friend, and the world pictured as God's Body by Grace Jantzen.<sup>20</sup>

Universalists should surely be most sympathetic to these attempts to re-picture the divine, to take our inner perceptions of spirituality and the soul seriously, and to see that the inner context of our knowledge can take many different outward, equally helpful, less conventional forms, ones that bring us up short and make us

gasp. Universalism can re-connect to a long history of thought and experience, because universalism is essentially concerned with the experience of all people in all societies, the sense of the numinous that is available to everyone. A fundamental part of universalism needs to be a relative indifference to forms. As Ibn el-'Arabi, the Sufi, wrote:

'My heart is capable of every form: it is a pasture for gazelles and a convent for Christian monks,  
And idol-temple and the pilgrim's Ka'ba (Mecca), and the tables of the Torah and the book of the Koran;  
I follow the religion of Love, whichever way his camels take; my religion and my faith is the true religion'<sup>21</sup>

#### *Harmony as an element in universalism*

The Chinese believed that right living always rested on a true sense of proportion about the nature of the world. The twin concepts of yin — the feminine, the synthesising, the passive — and yang — the aggressive, the masculine, the analytical and rational — expressed this understanding. Both have to be present for any person or any society to live in balance and without destruction.

It seems very clear that Western civilisation has an excess of Yang energy. Its ideas of progress, constant change, growth, overt control, belief in objectivity, all fall into the Yang definition. There is a belief in the necessity of action, and the controlling of conflict; a belief also that the Western way, with all its material advantages, that are undoubted, is right, is beneficial to the rest of the human race.

I therefore found it fascinating to discover the classical, medieval and Renaissance — the prescientific — notion of Harmony. I wonder whether this sense is related to the spirit of universalism: that there is, underlying all the differences and varieties of the societies and religions of the world, an essential truth that can be heard, if we have the patience, the perception and the humility to listen. It is certainly far closer to the Yin orientation than to the Yang, and may provide part of the balance which we so dramatically lack.

The Harmony that is described is on many levels. It is about the relationship of the mind to the body, and to health: a sense of harmony in the person is equivalent to health: disease is a lack of harmony, an imbalance. The person is seen as a microcosm of the world. There is the idea of a World-Soul: the earth itself is seen

as a creature, though this creature appears in many shapes: perhaps the human race is one creature, though we also appear as many forms; and there is an archetypal human soul, close perhaps to Jung's ideas of the collective unconscious. In both these senses, the micro description of the person, or the macro one of the universe, the soul is the underlying reality, the discrete objects that we see around us only the superficial forms. The similarity of the earth to the person is presented thus by Nicholas of Cusa, a fifteenth century mystic: 'And he (God) related one element with another that one must necessarily dwell in another. The earth, as Plato says, is like some vast animal whose bones are stones, whose veins are rivers, and whose hairs are the trees, and the animals that feed among those hairs of the earth are as the vermin to be found in the hair of beasts'.<sup>22</sup> Both the microcosm of the person and the macrocosm of the earth have specific bodily forms, and when they are in balance and in touch with their spiritual context, they are healthy. When they are out of touch, alienated, suffering from anomie (the words used by Marx and Durkheim about our present civilisation), they are sick and at war with themselves, not fundamentally at rest.

This Harmony, though ordered, contains the seeds of change, able to assist both the universe and the person to become what they are meant to be. 'Cusa compares the universe to a rose tree that is potential in winter and is developed and mature in summer. We know that God is beyond the seasons and thus the universe is not actual but potential in him, and it develops in true and physical reality while it is real within the divine present'.<sup>23</sup> Change then in both the person and the planet is a response to listening; it is a receptive perception rather than an active attempt at control. It requires sensitivity and awareness of the larger whole, rather than the individual enterprise which is the spirit of capitalism.

There is also in this conception a sense that everything is interlinked, and this has certainly become part of the modern ecology movement and also the peace movement. In the earlier notion of Harmony, the human being contained within him- or her-self all the elements of the world; what happens in one person is of significance to all. As John Donne so famously wrote at the beginning of the seventeenth century: 'No man is an island, intire of itselfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; if a Clod bee washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a Promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy friends or of thine owne were; any mans death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee'.<sup>24</sup>

This Harmony of course is represented most characteristically by music. Pythagoras, who originally most coherently expressed the notion of Harmony in the west, wrote that there is a four-fold harmony in the world: of the strings, of the body and soul, of the state and of the starry sky. The problem is that we are mostly not sensitive enough to hear any of these versions of harmony. It needs the perception of the Third Eye of the spirit, or of the inner ear that can hear sounds beyond those

of the senses. But music is the nearest we can get; it is beyond reason and words, and appeals to the deepest understanding and imagination.

The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, strategems and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus:  
Let no such man be trusted.<sup>25</sup>

Music and attunement represent a moral and spiritual quality for the human being too. It is the intuitive sense of proportion about living. All things can be experienced in the light of eternity, and that perception is essential to right living. For Leonardo da Vinci 'the harmony of one small song can evoke the truth of the harmony of the spheres'.<sup>26</sup>

This notion of Harmony does not deny conflict. It clearly and necessarily accepts, for instance, that animals in nature live from one another's death. But what it postulates is that all living creatures are part of a greater whole, and that oneness is beyond the material senses. Maybe human beings are peculiarly able, with contemplation, to relate to the immanent spirituality of all creation. Perhaps other creatures, however, as Blake hinted in the poem on page 1, know all this already; it may *only* be human beings who are alienated from their potential sense of being at home in the world if they do not use the third eye of the spirit. I read with pleasure and a sense of familiarity Carolly Erickson's statement in *The Medieval Vision*:

'To the Middle Ages truth was defined differently. It was not wedded to temporal existence, to the world of individual variables. To a medieval man or woman the world of sensation was only part of a much vaster pattern of unchanging and immortal reality that stretched out far beyond the boundaries of known time. Day-to-day experience occupied a finite place in this infinite scheme; it was only a pause between two eternities. The visionary imagination linked the finite with the infinite, and the imminent possibility of such a link made medieval people watchful for visions'.<sup>27</sup> As Morris Berman wrote, 'throughout the middle ages men and women continued to see the world primarily as a garment they wore rather than as a collection of discrete objects they confronted'.<sup>28</sup>

Here the writers have described a radically different perception of reality, one that offers a different view of our relationship with the living world, and of the spirit immanent in it.

*What is the significance of these ideas for us?*

Matthew Fox in his recent book *Original Blessing* — which is the opposite of the puritan conception of original sin — quotes at the beginning of his first chapter, Meister Eckhart: 'Every creature is a word of God and is a book about God'.<sup>29</sup> His whole book is about reconnecting to a sense of the world being a place in which we as humans can live creative and meaningful lives, without the modern senses of separateness and sin: 'we simply do not understand our place in the universe and have not the courage to admit it'.<sup>30</sup> We cannot connect to a sense of blessing and meaning by more and more technical knowledge. Instead we need to remember what we knew, as children, in past societies, before we became so split from our centred selves and lost the sense of balance. Again Fox quotes Eckhart: 'God is not found in the soul by adding anything but by a process of subtraction'.<sup>31</sup> In order to reconnect to a sense of wholeness we may have to unlearn much of what this limited society has taught us. Jung wrote: 'The art of letting things happen, action through non-action, letting go of oneself, as taught by Meister Eckhart, became for me the key opening the door to the way. We must be able to let things happen in the psyche. For us, this actually is an art of which few people know anything. Consciousness is forever interfering, helping, correcting, and negating, and never leaving the simple growth of the psychic processes in peace'.<sup>32</sup>

This statement perhaps sums up our three hundred year old problem. By concentrating on conscious action and control, we find it almost impossible as a society to connect to any real experience of harmony, of rest, of letting go. But without reconnecting to the 'Spirit of the Valley' which never runs dry, we are isolated and impoverished, in a world technologically sophisticated but basically and fundamentally split, within each individual, between sections of people — nations, races, sexes — and between the human race and the rest of creation. Hildegard of Bingen put forward the idea in the twelfth century that 'sin' is 'drying up' that true living is 'greening'.<sup>33</sup> Sometimes it seems that western society actively wants to commit suicide, taking this beautiful planet with us. Why else should we act as we do, searching for our individual self-interest and teaching our children to have little sense of the whole; making arms and destroying species; torturing people in prisons and animals in laboratories; searching for cures for disease, and giving little thought to the true basis of health and harmony?

The fundamental ideas behind universalist religion are of the ultimate wholeness of the human race — which is only conceivable if it has deep spiritual roots; of the spiritual sense that is available to all people of whatever religion or none; and of reverence for life. Everything that lives is holy. We tend to consider universalism as a major tendency *within* the Society of Friends. But perhaps Quakerism is, on the contrary, one strand of an ancient utopian stream of belief and experience which is present in every society in different forms: one that values the individual human

experience of the divine. This is suggested in Doublas Steere's Introduction to the SPCK Selected Writings on Quaker Spirituality: 'Although Quakerism has never explicitly formulated the matter in any major statement with which I am familiar, many Friends feel themselves part of something that is unwalled, that is a third force, that is neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant but a part of a Christian mystical stream that has nurtured and over and over again has renewed them all'.<sup>34</sup> It is part of the perennial philosophy that is present in all societies, which has a sense of the oneness of the whole world and of 'that of God in everyone'. It appreciates what is generally called 'mystical' experience as being a direct means of perceiving the possibility of Harmony.

Universalist groups within the Society of Friends are in a favourable position to unpack some of our religious and secular conventions and assumptions. We can relate directly to the alternative movements questioning the more materialist one-dimensional values of modern society. We can form part of a more deeply based, humbler, and better balanced shift of perception, which will allow another vision of reality to be born. Then perhaps the music of the harmony of the world will be heard, the astonishing beauty and variety of its creatures be truly seen, and we will all wake up at last to the soul of things.

### *Renaming the World*

On the day of the renaming of the world  
Cracks appeared on the surface of the earth,  
But instead of lava — there were flowers  
Pervasively perfumed, delicate, new.  
Pyramids — logically piled, gravely constructed,  
Laboriously hewn, vast solid,  
Illogically refuted gravity —  
Dismembering themselves,  
Formed instead stone circles  
And noticed equality of parts for the first time.

From afar the slow caravans  
Plodding their single-minded way  
Along trade routes, well-trodden, sign-posted,  
Faltered, — forgot their destination,  
Turned down leafy side-tracks,  
Picnicking, bathing, gossiping,  
Worst of all, fraternising with their rivals.

The stretched sinews of humanity quickened,  
Breath, touch, sight, sound,  
Owed a truer allegiance  
Moving to the pulse-beat  
Of hand-fast heart and head,  
And in the centre of an encircling rainbow  
Ashtoroth, Baal and Elohim  
Holding left and right hands  
Stepped in joyous rhythm  
An eternal dance.<sup>35</sup>

## References

1. There is a sentence 'There is another world, but it is in this one' attributed to Paul Eluard in Morris Berman's **The Re-enchantment of the world** p. 147 (Bantam Books, 1981). My title, which is derived from Eluard's idea, does not of course have the same meaning.
2. **William Blake**. ed. Geoffrey Keynes. Nonesuch ed. 1927. K. 150.
3. *Ibid.* K. 793.
4. See the thoughtful discussion of our constructions of nature in John Barnes' **Nature Green in Cell and Leaf** in **The Friends' Quarterly** October 1987, where he quotes Laurens Van Der Post: 'The concept of "Nature Red in Tooth and Claw" is not a law of the natural world but a projection of our inhumanity on it'. I am indebted for this point to Carol MacCormack. Also see QUG pamphlet No. 14.
5. Keynes op. cit. K. 154.
6. Much of this shift of perception in New Age thinking is described in James Hemmings' **A century of surprises** QUG pamphlet No. 11, 1987, or in Jack Mongar's talk published in **The Seeker**, Autumn 1987, **Scientific and Mystical approaches to wholeness**, or his QUG pamphlet No. 16.
7. See Ken Wilber's **Eye to Eye**. Anchor Books. 1983. Ch. 1.
8. Karl Mannheim. **Ideology and Utopia**. RKP. 1979. Preface p. xxiii.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Thomas Kuhn. **The structure of scientific revolutions**. University of Chicago Press. 1973. Postulates the concepts of 'normal' and 'revolutionary' science in the shift of paradigm.
11. R. Hetherington. **Universal Quakerism**. QUG Pamphlet No. 4, 1983.
12. Quoted in Ramashray Roy. **Self and Society; a study in Gandhian thought**. Sage. 1985.
13. **The writings of Gandhi. A selection edited by Ronald Duncan**. Faber, 1971, pp. 124-5. Extract from *Young India*. Vol. 11.
14. Quoted in Aldous Huxley. **The Perennial Philosophy**. Chatto & Windus. 1980 edition, p. 21.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 190.
16. Brian Easlea. **Witch-hunting, magic and the new philosophy. An introduction to the debates of the scientific revolution 1450-1750**. Harvester, 1980, p. 1.
17. Ananda Coomaraswamy. **The Bugbear of Literacy**. Perennial Books, 1979, p. 20.
18. See David Hay. **Exploring Inner Space**. Penguin, 1982.
19. Sally McFague. **Models of God**, 1986.
20. Grace Jantzen. **God's World, God's Body**. Darton, Longman & Todd, 1984.
21. Coomaraswamy, op. cit., p. 58.
22. Quoted in Dorothy Koenigsberger. **Renaissance Man and Creative Thinking**. Harvester, 1979, p. 119.
23. *Op. cit.*, p. 136.
24. John Donne. **Devotions**. Also quoted at the beginning of **For Whom the Bell Tolls** by Ernest Hemingway.
25. William Shakespeare. **Merchant of Venice**. Act V., 1.82.
26. Koenigsberger. op. cit., p. 62.
27. Carolly Erikson. **The Medieval Vision**. Ox.U.P. 1976, p. 215.
28. Morris Berman. **The Reenchantment of the World**. Bantam, 1984, p. 61.
29. Matthew Fox. **Original Blessing**. Bear & Co, 1983.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
33. **Illuminations of Hildegard of Bingen**. Bear & Co, 1985, Ch. 3.
34. SPCK. 1984, p. 7.
35. Poem by Grace Blindell, an English Friend (and friend).



#### Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Lorna Marsden, Josephine Teagle, Carol MacCormack and Anna Sutcliffe for their help with the first draft of this paper. I would also like to thank Ralph Hetherington and the Committee of the Quaker Universalist Group for their real interest, precise help, corrections and support.

#### Post Script

Pangur Ban, my cat, and I,  
We have fun together.  
He for mice and I for words  
Sit and watch together.

Medieval Latin Lyric, discovered by Helen Waddell