

P R O G N O S I S

V O L I I

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The PANTHEON OF IDEALISM

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Forward

This volume is not a scientific or a philosophical treatise, but a “readers digest” of classical and modern philosophy, which must be amalgamated into a new idealism, to save our species from self inflicted annihilation.

Classical philosophy, which I call ‘Greek,’ is the engine of our cultural evolution, Modern ‘technosophy’, doesn’t call itself philosophy and so I just refer to it as geek speak or just ‘geek.’ The only difference between Greek and geek is the lack of an ‘r’ -for reverence -in the latter-. The missing reverence divides physics and metaphysics.

The original Greek word ‘physic’ meant ‘nature’ including all its ineffable, inscrutable changes. The ‘meta’ in metaphysics originally meant to indicate what follows ‘physic’, hopefully not a post mortem.

Greeks

What the Greeks call logos and mythos, are parallel tracks which allow mind to figure out and wonder at the same time. There are three types of philosophers: those who believe in 'logos'; those who believe in 'mythos, and those who believe in the amalgamation of both. Those who believe only logos are often referred to as empiricists and materialists for whom there is no surreality, and no inner self. Those who believe only 'mythos' are often referred to theists, pantheists, pandeists, solipsists and absolute idealists, who insist there is no objective reality only subjective impressions that are surreal. These 'mythos' thinkers also resonate with Eastern philosophy, especially Indian philosophy which sees the real world as an illusion, "Maya." Those who believe in both mythos and logos are often referred to as dualists. Dualists are often deplored by both logos and mythos thinkers, but I see no other way to think about reality except in the context of surreality and I see no other way to think about surreality except in the context of reality.

(You will remember what is meant by 'reality' and 'surreality' from Volume I.)

Berkeley, a mythos philosopher in the 17th century, proved (to himself) that there were no objects outside of his subjective senses, no provable matter only mind; and then Hume, a logos philosopher, in the eighteenth century proved that there is no provable mind only sense data generated by real objects. Neither of these monists are in my Pantheon because they are extreme examples, and so I just mention them here at the beginning of our path through the forest.

If you read Volume I of this work, you will recall that my made up word "serendicity," is a portmanteau of "serendipity" and "synchronicity," to label a mystical messenger that puts one mind in touch with another, across space and time, just when the information turns things around. I had already written several drafts of this Reader's Digest of relevant philosophy when the serendicity genie dropped in my lap my old dog eared copy of Will Durant's Story of Philosophy. I was surprised to see the book was still with me after half a century and could not resist

having another look, and what I found amazed and inspired me all over again, and so I shall open the Pantheon of Idealism with Durant's immortal words. If you will take the time to sip these words slowly it could be a life changing experience.

Durant

"There is a pleasure in philosophy, and a lure even in the mirages of metaphysics, which every student feels until the coarse necessities of physical existence drag him from the heights of thought into the mart of economic strife again and again. Most of us have known some golden days in the June of life when philosophy was in fact what Plato calls it, "that dear delight"; when the love of a modestly elusive Truth seemed more glorious, incomparable, than the lust for the ways of the flesh and the dross of the world....Science seems always to advance, while philosophy seems always to lose ground. Yet this is only because philosophy accepts the hard and hazardous task of dealing with problems not yet open to the methods of science— problems like good and evil, beauty and ugliness, order and freedom, life and death. As soon as a field of inquiry yields knowledge susceptible of exact formulation; it is called science.

Every science begins as philosophy and ends as art; it arises in hypothesis and flows into achievement. Philosophy is a hypothetical interpretation of the unknown (as in metaphysics), or of the inexactly known (as in ethics or political philosophy); it is the front trench in the siege of truth. Science is the captured territory; and behind it are those secure regions in which knowledge and art build our imperfect and marvelous world.... Science is analytical description, philosophy is synthetic interpretation. Science wishes to resolve the whole into parts,... **Science tells us how to heal and how to kill; it reduces the death rate in retail and then kills us wholesale in war;**... in these days our means and instruments have multiplied ... our life is full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. ... Science without philosophy ...cannot save us from havoc and despair. metaphysics, which gets into so much trouble because it is not, like the other forms of philosophy, [is] an attempt to coordinate the real in the light of the ideal... the thought of Emersons, that when genius speaks to us we feel a ghostly reminiscence of having ourselves, in our distant youth, had vaguely this self-same thought which genius now speaks, but which we had not art or courage to clothe with form and utterance.

PRE-SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHERS

Thales of Miletus, (623-545 BC) was the founder of the Ionian school of philosophy. Ionia was a western satellite of Greece where Greek and Western philosophy began. I don't know much about Thales except that he is hailed as the father of philosophy by Aristotle, Bertrand Russell and Edmund Husserl, to name a few. Apparently he also invented Geometry which he used to measure the Egyptian pyramids. According to Bertrand Russell, A History of Western Philosophy, Thales got us thinking about the unity of all substance. Unity is surreal and substance is real. This unity may be the earliest known example of division, which is essential to multiplication. Thales's distinguished pupils include Anaximander, and, one of the most influential Greeks, Pythagoras.

Anaximander (610-546 BC) was the author of the first surviving lines of Western philosophy which spoke about the "Boundless" realm beyond geography. This is another early mention of what I have been calling surreality and the first recorded metaphysical

speculation. Anaximander gave us a real place to stand under while we try to understand surreality.

Pythagoras (570 BC), not to be confused with Protagoras, is the most famous of the Pre Socratics. Pythagoras converted the purely Eastern Orphic mysticism into a Western Metaphysics, by adding math to mystery. Thales's geometry and Anaximander's geography are sanctified by Pythagoras who made math both a science and a religion.

Unlike **Pro**tagoras who thought numbers could be misleading, **Py**thagoras saw math as a godsend from surreality, without which understanding reality would be impossible. Plato acknowledges Pythagoras's greatness but, for Plato 'figuring out' was not as important 'figuring in,' down to the deep self where knowledge awaits recall.

Pythagoras founded an esoteric society in Italy, in Croton, which is what is now Calabria. This just happens to be where my maternal grandparents come from. I could be Pythagoras's great, great,

great, however many generations it takes to make 2.5 millennia, grandson. Truth to tell I don't know much about his magic numbers. His mystical numerological rituals are faded legends now. Despite all the writing about Pythagoras, none of his own words or numbers were preserved. But we know enough to gratefully attribute to him the realization of symmetry, which is at the core of both art and science, not to mention the "super symmetry" at the end of string theory.

Probably the most famous Pythagorean legacy is his mystical right triangle, which we all had to learn in sophomore year of high school (the square of the hypotenuse of any right triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides, remember?). The very notion of symmetry reflects the mystical eternity of surreality. Changing times do not change mathematical truth. How long will math be true or in which countries are 2 and 2, 4, are silly questions, which make the idea of surreality not so silly and universal.

Maybe not as well known as the Pythagorean theorem, is the fact that his magic numbers mapped

a sonic symmetry, where certain wave lengths and frequencies resonate with internal a-priori conceptions of harmony. You could say Pythagoras 'discovered' harmony, but it would be more to his liking to say that Pythagoras 'uncovered' harmony. Any string player who presses a vibrating string to get different notes is squeezing surreality out of reality. His harmonic ratios reverberate through the centuries of all music, making the square dance of reality into a circle dance of surreality.

Pythagoreans practiced asceticism to achieve spiritual ascendance. The connection between ascetics and esthetics is still the most important and, at the same time, the most baffling truth in my belief system. There is no rhyme or reason as to why rhyme and rhythm are the rhizome that re-flourishes the harmony in our garden after the winter winds, but I'm grateful for every spring I get to enjoy.

Some scholars say that Pythagoras is responsible for the idea of the 'soul,' which found its way into Plato's thinking. Some scholars suggest that Pythagoras spent some time in India where he learned about Upanishads.

Albeit undefined, there is clearly a God, for the ancient Pythagoreans, who manages the challenge in game of life. For Pythagoreans, if you win the human race, you receive your eternal reward on the blessed isles of the moon. They couldn't have meant the real moon which we now know is anything but paradise. According to other scholars, Pythagoreans believed that souls went through a series of reincarnations, until they found the right path right here on earth.

Parmenides of Elea, (500 BC), was another voice from southern Italy that inspired Plato. Elea would have been in the Lucania region between Basilicata and Campania, in and around Naples which just happens to be where my paternal grand parents are from. [Had I put on my Harvard admissions essay that I was the progeny of Parmenides and Pythagoras, I wonder if that would have changed their quota for southern Italians. Truth to tell even northern Italians looked down on southern Italians, called "meridiani," a pejorative term. The fact that Pythagoras and Parmenides were meridiani never came up back then and it shouldn't matter now. This bogus association

with geographic borders keeps people screaming and making fools of themselves in sports arenas and killers on the battle fields.]

According to Bertrand Russell (Ibid), Parmenides believed that the higher you go, the more you see. The great vista shrinks change, and if you get up high enough, you would see that nothing really changes. Before Descartes and before Plato, Parmenides demonstrated that the long chain of events, which appears to be happening one link at a time, was all there at once, at the same time.

Parmenides reasoned that there must be a 'beyond' where things which haven't happened yet are hatching. Unlike Heraclitus, Parmenides believed that the fact that we can't find it does not mean it doesn't exist. Parmenides reasoned that there must be a supernatural intelligence. Parmenides may be the primary discoverer of Western monotheism, which no doubt influenced Plato, which no doubt influenced Christianity, which no doubt influenced me. In a very real sense there could be no Plato and no Western Philosophy and no me without Pythagoras and Parmenides.

Heraclitus (500 BC) is famous for saying “you can’t step into the same river twice” which is to say that life is changing right under your feet, so better learn to swim and dance and keep moving with the flow. His basic insight that ‘vital energy’ is the result of the tension of opposites had an influence on Platonism and Bergson (“elan vital”) and Jung (“enantiodromia.”). Heraclitus resonates, as well, with the Eastern flow metaphor, ying/yang. What we know of the Heraclitus philosophy comes, once again, not from his own writing, but from his being a straw man in the arguments of other philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle.

Scholars believe that the flux of Heraclitus gave rise to a phenomenology with a divine surrealism. “Poor witnesses for men are their eyes and ears if they have barbarian souls,” Plato made important contributions to the Heraclitan riverside. Plato’s banks provide certainty to contain the quantum uncertainty of the Heraclitan flux.

Democritus, (460-370 BC) was known in antiquity as the 'laughing philosopher' because of his emphasis on the value of 'cheerfulness.' He was also one of the two founders of the ancient atomist theory. He elaborated the materialist account of the natural world originated by his teacher Leucippus. The atomists held that there are small indivisible bodies from which everything else is composed, and that these move about in an infinite void. Democritus's importance to us is that he also saw a division between subjects and objects, where objects had properties such as size and shape, while subjects had only 'nomos,' subjective ideas about the objects such as color, shape etc. I'm guessing he might have known about Heraclitus.

Democritus posited a 'swerve' in the predetermined pattern of atomic energy which allows for free will, which is unique to humans. The 'swerve' is how ideas and choices from surreality condescend into reality. Epicurus, who we shall meet presently, was a pupil of Democritus. We owe to Epicurus the wiggle room he left in the predetermined order where we are free to make a difference in our own lives.

Democritus taught that the universe of atoms is infinite and eternal. The word a-tom in Greek means 'a'= no more; 'tom'- cuts. This turns out *not* to be true. Quantum mechanics did cut atoms and the cutting continues on into protons and neutrons and quarks and neutrinos and strings and God only knows whether we'll get to some thing that can't be cut any further.

Protagoras (490–420 BC), not to be confused with Pythagoras, was a skeptic. Protagoras is more important now, because it has become painfully clear that "man" who is the "measure of all things" can't keep his thumb off the scale. Protagoras predicted the current quantum quandary, where objectivity collapses into subjectivity. Protagoras's 'measurement man' heralds the mysterious chasm between the observer's consciousness and the observed material universe, reality and surreality. Divinity is immeasurably ineffable for Protagoras, as it is for me. One God plus two makes an oxymoronic trinity which is supposed to be beyond numbers. Divinity is not something that can be counted off or

counted on. I was surprised to discover in Plato's dialogue 'Protagoras' my pre-Socratic 'apophatic' theology, where Socrates questions Protagorean measurements. In the end, the only thing we can be certain of, philosophically, is uncertainty.

But I have Plato to thank for my belief that uncertainty cannot exist without a backdrop of certainty, somewhere beyond the flawed human perception of reality and his measure of truth.

Keeping in mind this Protagoran myopia, has the effect of keeping the mind open for the new physics and the new metaphysics.

PLATO

(429–347 B.C.)

There are Greek philosophers who came before and after Plato but Plato is where Western civilization begins. My virtual partners agree and especially Alfred North Whitehead, who famously said that all of Western philosophy is “footnotes to Plato.”

We had a lot to say about Plato in Volume I and here he is again; that is because he is at the hub of Western idealism. I may have said this before and I will probably say it again: ideals and ideas are a providence beyond provenance. Everything we do or make begins with an idea which is above and beyond reality. Man made things are real objects always inspired by surreal subjects.

Plato's dialogues would not have made it to publication in these times. Plato wrote for all mankind but the words were addressed to a very different audience familiar with the dialectic. Although the words were carefully translated into English by many scholars, the style requires some

additional translation. Plato's dialogues to the modern ear sound like badly written screenplays. Modern audiences expect to identify with fleshed out characters embroiled in a plot that is sufficiently complex to intrigue, entertain and distract, as we saw in our earlier discussion of EN. Plato's academy audiences came together not to be entertained and distracted by the pyrotechnics of crafted dramatic conflict but to be stimulated and enlightened by the didactics of the dialectic. Real lightening, not bogus thunder is what they expected from Socrates.

The most important Platonic character is Socrates. I believe that Socrates and the Gnostic Christ were cut from the same cloth. They were on the same page on which neither of them ever wrote anything down. But, thank God, Plato did.

Plato is a major influence in Gnostic Christianity and my belief in the God of love. He also framed the theodicy paradox for Leibniz and all future philosophers and theologians. In his dialogue Timaeus, Plato attributes the crafting of the universe to a lesser god, a "demiurge." As we saw in Volume I of this work, centuries later, the Gnostic Christian,

Valentinus, makes this demiurge, a Rube Goldberg, who made slips along the way in putting together our universe. Those Platonic demiurge slips make a slippery slope for the game of life. That is how, if not why, life is a challenge and not a curse. That's how the pothole caution signs came to be on the high road.

Evil for Plato is nothing more than ignorance, which is a hole that can be filled, but will never be completely filled as long as man is mortal. Nevertheless Plato expects that a few guardians (oligarchy of excellence) will climb out of the cesspool and lead the backfill effort. Socrates uses a climbing metaphor for human development which begins with the individual climb. That individual climb cannot be accomplished by climbing over the other climbers. You climb by continually enabling yourself not by disabling others (Plato's Apology). The corollary of that maxim is that enabling others enhances your own abilities. As I said earlier if you handle your troubles yourself, your self is magnified; if you pass them on, the troubles are magnified.

Plato hellenized the Jews, without ever having met them, and those hellenized Jews hellenized the Christians without having met them. Western civilization would not exist were it not for the Jews and Plato. Philo of Alexandria, a Jewish philosopher in the early first century, had a lot to do with the injection of Platonism into Jewish thought. Clement of Alexandria, a little later, was a major Platonic influence on the early Christian/Jews. Alexandria was the Platonic/ Judaeo/Christian/ Gnostic oasis in the bleak middle eastern desert of Yahweh.

The billions of minds that have been shaped by Platonic concepts probably never read a single page of the billions of words written by and about Plato. I can't say that I have read all there is to read, but enough to be intrigued by the notion of Plato's surreal 'forms.'

For Plato, "Forms" are an upper surreal gallery of idealized designs just out of reach, but close enough to inspire 'knock off' copies.

Without Plato there would be no Descartes. Without Descartes there would be no phenomenology.

Without phenomenology there would be no existentialism. Simply put, we have to learn to dance between the Platonic ever changing reality and the never changing surreality of Plato's ideal Forms.

Hanna Arendt has the best advice for how to live between the real and the ideal: "Prepare for the worst; expect the best; and take what comes."

ARISTOTLE

(384-322 BC)

Plato's school house was called the Academy; Aristotle's was called the Lyceum. Both labels are the foundation of the educational lexicon. Plato's school has a handbook written by Plato. Aristotle's handbook, if it can be called that, is a compendium of students lecture notes compiled after the fact.

Plato's pupil Aristotle went to great lengths to distinguish himself from his teacher. Aristotle adopts some Platonic beliefs in super-nature, but has different ideas about the connection between reality and surreality. Aristotle's followers introduced the word "meta-physics," but his metaphysics is really proto empiricism.

For Aristotle the Platonic surreal forms, are imbedded in real phenomena which can be **induced** from specific objective observation to form objective knowledge. For Plato knowledge is subjectively **deduced** from an imbedded connection to surreal 'Forms' to generate a fallible knowledge of reality.

For Aristotle data gathering comes first and then theories evolve rather than devolve. Aristotle is the father of empiricism and the scientific method. He spent twenty years or more at Plato's feet before he decided to stand on his own. The difference between Plato and Aristotle has become a cottage industry for philosophy professors. They argue about which one way street is best, induction or deduction. For our purposes induction and deduction are different directions between reality and surreality on a two way highway. There is a Platonic surreality for Aristotle, but there are differences in how it connects to reality. Those differences have shaped the history of Western civilization.

Plato's utopian communism under the auspices of enlightened guardians and/or philosopher kings was meant to control and educate the ignorant masses which cause all the disharmony up to the point where they come out of the dark cave and are sufficiently evolved to control themselves. In the meantime they were to be controlled by a moral and just elite.

For Aristotle elite control was not necessary or desirable as long as people had their own property protected by individual rights, including the right to discover real truths for themselves.

For most of the history of most cultures it looked like the Platonic paradigm was in play until the American revolution which was an paradigm shift toward Aristotle's reality energized by science and technology.

Lest this be too simple minded it wasn't completely either or. Aristotle's preclusion of femininity kept women in the kitchen and nursery for a long time, but that confinement now appears to be broken by Plato's unshackled women. Plato is the first and only thinker to realize that women could govern as well as men and women have clearly made their way into the ruling class.

Aristotle and Plato are not totally at odds on cosmology. Aristotle's causal chain is attached to Plato's grand design. Most importantly, between the two philosophies, there is some agreement on individual surreality.

Aristotle equates consciousness with the Platonic soul. In the treatise "On the Soul" (*peri psychēs*), Aristotle, or whoever took those notes, posits three kinds of "psyches" or souls: the vegetative soul, the sensitive soul, and the rational soul. The vegetative soul is found in lower sessile life forms; the sensitive soul is in higher motile animal life forms; and the rational soul is in humans, which can figure things out and communicate. The unique part of the human, rational soul is its "nous" (intellect) and *logos* (reason). This 'nous' is three layers of knowledge: 'phronesis,' 'techne' and 'episteme.' This just happens to resonate with my three folds in the sheet of Consciousness described in Volume I of this work. Aristotle believed that you have to love yourself before you can love your neighbor, or, as he put it "wickedness" results from self hatred.

I learned some of this from Aristotle and some from Bertrand Russell (*ibid*, ch 20),

EPICURUS

(323 BC)

Epicurus is one of the major philosophers in the Hellenistic period (323 BC-30BC). Of the over 300 works said to have been written by Epicurus about various subjects, the vast majority have been destroyed. Most of what we know about Epicurus is due to later authors, including Cicero. Epicurus would not be in the Pantheon at all except for one crucial insight that is so important for seniors like me who could become obsessed with death and then waste the last years waiting to die.

Epicurus taught that death is unimaginable so why fear something you can't even imagine. I tell myself that almost daily. For Epicurus the root of all suffering is fear of death; he points out that there is nothing to fear but fear itself (which may be where Churchill got the idea). Human beings are the only creatures who can think about death and unfortunately they imagine the worst horrors with no evidence, no rhyme or reason to back it up. This ignorant fear of death causes unnecessary anxiety,

which is repressed and then festers into self-destructive behaviors, hypocrisy and hate. I do believe, with Epicurus, that we should erase "the grim reaper" from our house of horrors. I don't deny death but I don't want to miss a moment of life dreading it.

As I said in Volume I of this work, you can look at the half empty glass with more or less 'furiousity' or curiosity, having to do with your acceptance of the ineffability of surreality. The curious life is much more pleasant than the furious life. According to a long line of distinguished followers, Epicurus taught that the point of all one's actions was to attain 'pleasure.' This is almost always misunderstood as hedonist pleasure. Epicurean delight is anything but instant gratification. Epicurus's "pleasure" was long-term pleasure more aptly described as "tranquility." This can only be accomplished by limiting desire and banishing dread. If you can do that you'll be a lot happier.

Epicurus and his followers were known for eating simple meals and discussing a wide range of philosophical subjects, which is quite the opposite of

what "epicurean" has come to mean. He openly allowed women and slaves to join his school. Epicurus asserted that philosophy's purpose is to help others attain happy, *eudaimonic*, lives characterized by peace and freedom from fear.

Freedom from fear is the ultimate peace of mind which Epicurus called "*ataraxia*." *Ataraxia* is the absence of pain, "*aponia*." He advocated that people were best able to pursue philosophy by living a self-sufficient life surrounded by friends. For Epicurus friendship, neighborly love, is an essential part of the solutions to minimize suffering. I certainly go along with that as long as we can remind ourselves that self love must precede neighborly love.

Epicurus taught that people should act ethically not because the gods punish or reward them for their actions but just so they won't be saddled with guilt feelings. Immoral behavior would inevitably lead to remorse weighing on their consciences and as a result, they would be prevented from attaining *ataraxia*. Epicurus considered himself an Aristotelian. Epicurus was even more empirical than Aristotle,

meaning he believed that the senses, by themselves, are a reliable source of knowledge about the world. Like Buddha centuries earlier, Epicurus wanted philosophy to address the problem of human suffering with only worldly human solutions. Like Buddha his solution had to do with will power and self control and, like Buddha, his prescription for the good (peaceful) life had no theological pre-conditions.

The good news, according to Epicurus, is that death is the end of both the body and sentience and therefore there is no pain. The bad news is that there is no connection to anything that came before or after sentience and pain.

There is nothing after the painless ending. Epicurus believes that faith is just a craving for an afterlife which does nothing but tarnish the luster of real life.

[Text 4: Letter to Menoecus: Diogenes Laertius 10.121-135]. For Epicurus it is pointless to ask the gods for help because divinity by definition has better things to do than bother with humanity. As you have probably already guessed, I don't agree with this part of Epicurus. Epicurus doesn't deny that there are

supernatural “Gods” and that they created the universe which includes humanity. While I can’t give you details on the connection between divinity and humanity, the idea that divinity would create a humanity and have nothing further to do with it, makes no sense. While his surreality is muddled I included him in the Pantheon because of his advice on reality.

Keeping fears and stress to a minimum is good advice for leading a peaceful life then or now. And I would agree that one should not obsess about the afterlife, or the soul, but denying it altogether leaves one at the point of pointlessness, where no one can stand or understand.

PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA

(20 BC)

Philo was a Hellenistic Jewish philosopher who lived in Alexandria. Alexandria was a Roman province in Egypt and an oasis of idealism, which deserves a book of its own. It was originally founded by Pharos, conquered by Alexander the Great, and then led by a succession of Roman Emperors. Maybe it was the Greek rationality which mixed in with the Egyptian mysticism, or maybe it was the nerdy Ptolomies or maybe it was the coastal air or something in the water; whatever it was; it was a magical time and place. It was the city that inspired Clement, Plotinus, Hierocles, Origen, Archimedes and Hypatia, the first female neoplatonist philosopher, and, of course, Philo.

Philo's philosophy of "oudeneia," suggests that each individual consciousness is a branch of divine consciousness. Philo maintained that the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) and Jewish law (which was still under development by the rabbis) are a divine blueprint for the pursuit of

individual enlightenment. The personal spiritualism Philo carved into the collective rituals of the Old Testament, is often overlooked. Oudeneia links personal spiritualism to inner revelation.

A century before Christ, the Jewish prophet Hillel was challenged by a prospective convert to recite the essential truths of the Tora while standing on one leg, and he did it. He condensed it all into the simple sentence also taught by Confucius and Buddha and Socrates before him and Christ after him and Kant after that. While standing on one leg Hillel said: "That which is hateful to you, do not do unto your fellow," which is another way of saying "love your neighbor as you love yourself." (Christ) and "don't do anything that you wouldn't want everyone else in the world doing" (Kant).

Philo was a contemporary of Christ, and it is one of the great mysteries that no connection can be found between these two great Jews, at least none that I found. It is not possible that two philosophical Jews had nothing to say to each other.

EPICETUS

(50 AD-135 AD)

For Epictetus you are not virtuous so that you can do good; you do good so that you can become virtuous. Epictetus brought Buddhism to Platonism and set Zeno's Stoicism on a course toward Christian Gnosticism. Whether or not he intended to do all that, I don't know, but it happened.

Like Socrates and Christ, Epictetus did not write anything down, which means, once again, we have to rely on the writings of his followers. Epictetus bases his philosophy of life on Socratic principles. I could find nothing conclusive to indicate that Epictetus knew about Christ or Christians in that first century AD. Nevertheless Russell and other scholars find a philosophical connection between the personal spiritualism of Epictetus's stoicism and Gnosticism.

I learned from the audio book [The Complete Stoicism Collection](#) that Epictetus sees life as a challenge to evolve from human bestiality to human

divinity, I guess you could say I have accepted that challenge. That's why I think I'm here doing what I do.

Epictetus worshiped Socrates. Thanks to that connection, self knowledge became part of the life challenge. There are numerous 'Stoical' references in early Christian writings and much later in the Jewish pantheism of Spinoza. But Epictetus is more Buddhist than Christian, in the sense that mastery of self control is the primary reason for being.

Put simply, Epictetus taught that the only thing we have control over is our inner reactions, and therefore that should be the main focus of self development. The actual process of self consciousness involves slowing down one's thought processes, stepping back to look before we leap, or as Epictetus put it: "Impression, wait for me a little. Let me see what you are, and what you represent," (2.18.24) [*Epictetus sayings are numbered in his Enchiridion and Discourses*].

Becoming aware of the illusive nature of our impressions requires constant and continuous self

scrutiny. That's how we develop and that's what we're here to do. We cannot find our way by numbing our senses but by imagining beyond them.

Stoicism, the name applied to his teachings, should not be confused with the modern use of the word, "stoical," which implies a non-responsive reaction to life's challenges. That is quite the opposite of what Epictetus was about.

Epictetan stoicism accepts reality for the jungle it is, but hacks out a peaceful campsite in the heart of that jungle.

Epictetus believes that will power is exclusive to the human species. "*Prohairesis*," gives us the unique power to choose, and most importantly to choose not to suffer.

This resonates with my mantra: life is a challenge, not a curse. And I think Epictetus would agree that the first step in that challenge is to know yourself (Socrates), and then to love yourself (Christ).

Epictetus believes that making the right choice is contagious. Epictetus would have no trouble

understanding Gladwell's tipping point as it applies positive developments as well as pandemics.

Epictetus draws a sharp distinction between the words of philosophy in a book and the philosophical deeds which lead to the happy life.

All learning is self taught. Epictetus says: "Have you not hands, fool? Has not God made them for you? Sit down now and pray your nose may not run! Or wipe it, rather, and do not blame God."

That 'up your nose' theology makes the point that 'God helps those who help themselves.' (Benjamin Franklin). Don't ask God to do what you should do yourself to avoid the inner effects of the outer world (*Enchiridion* 2).

Suffering is a bad habit which can be broken by practicing the opposite behavior: for instance, if one is quick tempered, one should accustom oneself to bearing insults with patience.

The challenge for me, and every human, is to do what I can with what I have. There is nothing you can

do about what is bound to happen, only in how you respond.

What we need is not a canned bedtime prayer but regular honest conversations between the lower and higher levels of your selves. This enables one to correct errors before they become ingrained. This is born out by the lives of some historic Epictetus fans, Marcus Aurelius, George Washington, Harry Truman, and Ronald Reagan to name a few.

The more we can do, the more we have to do, and the more we have to do, the more we can do. I learned about Epictetus mostly from Enchiridion & Discourses, available on 'Audible' audio books.

PLOTINUS

(204 – 270 AD)

Plotinus, invented the term “henosis” also know as “henology,” from the Greek word for unification. Henosis provides us a glimpse of the “One-ness” that unites the dual realms of reality and surreality. Of course, the separation is part of the illusion of real space and time we humans live in. But standing at the foot of the henosis bridge, mere mortals can see across the illusory chasm. This sounds like the geek ‘hyperspace’ and the modern geek unified theory of everything. Generally speaking, geeks have not made the connection between quantum physics and Plotinus’s metaphysics, or any metaphysics, for that matter.

It boggles my dualist mind, but I believe that for there to be unification there has to be a dualism from which the unification emerges and then disappears again. To use a physics metaphor, henosis is a fusion/fission back and forth. I’m sure Werner von Heisenberg (who has his own chapter in this volume) knew about Plotinus when he encountered the

henosis between the observed reality and the unobserved reality.

It would appear that, for Plotinus, you do not have to die to experience henosis, you just have to live well and nourish your intelligence. Plotinus describes the continuum where the "less perfect" human intelligence must, of necessity, "emanate" or issue forth, from the divine "perfect" intelligence. This is Platonic idealism, which I subscribe to. There has to be divinity in humanity just as there has to be humanity in divinity.

Even skeptical modern thinkers see that the self is not a static phenomenon. Yuval Harari in Homo Deus, suggests two selves: the "experiencing self" and the "narrating self." Sperry and Gazzaniga demonstrate that an individual is actually a 'dividual' divided in two. The two hemispheres of the brain were divided by severing the corpus callosum in order to alleviate the effects of seizure in epileptics. These split brain patients became experimental proofs for split mind theories.

For Plotinus the connections are more important than the separations but one proves the other.

Plotinus is generally regarded as the founder of Neoplatonism. Plotinus established a palace guard, as it were, defending Plato against misconceived adaptations. Plato had become play dough in the six hundred years between Plato and Plotinus, misshapen by pedants and pontiffs. Plotinus felt the need to tell the world what Plato really meant on the basis of what he actually wrote.

Of course, Plotinus was Alexandrian. He was raised and educated in Alexandria. As a Roman, he was fascinated with the Greeks, and especially Plato. He knew about the Gnostics, and according to Pagels, he might actually have been a Gnostic at one point and then turned away. While he approved of their idealism, he was critical of the absence of any methodology and also their misinterpretation of Plato. And he must have also disapproved of there being no joy in the Gnostic 'mudville.'

According to an article in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Plotinus parted ways with Gnosticism

over the “fallen soul,” idea, which he saw as a Gnostic perversion of the Platonic fallibility doctrine. The Gnostic misunderstanding of Platonic metaphysics, according to Plotinus, caused the Gnostics to wrongly despise this world and set themselves up as the only way out. That’s not what Plato had in mind at all.

Bertrand Russell (ibid), agrees that Plotinus parted company with the Gnostics over their excessive contempt for the material world and the idea that its semi-divine creator was mistaken or evil.

I have to dwell on this a bit longer, because I’m not sure where I stand, on which side of this seismic paradox. I agree with Plotinus that reality is not a hell on earth which we have fallen into by mistake; so I’m not that kind of Gnostic, but, however it got there, there is shit in the game. And we have to find a way out of it in the direction of surreality and divine perfection. I don’t think I’m perverting Plato which would piss off Plotinus.

Surreality for Plotinus was not an oasis but an upper layer of consciousness, which he calls ‘soul,’ which is

right here with us now in the midst of all the mundane 'banality.' Soul is unchangeable and divine and aloof but not disconnected from the lower part, which he calls mind. Soul provides the lower layer with a psychic ideation energy.

Plotinus and the Gnostics were on the same page in terms of the importance of interior consciousness. Both believed that going in was the only way out and up to surreality. For Plotinus, the lower mind is the seat of the personality, the passions, perception and impressions of the material world.

The friction factor in this interplay is a brilliant metaphor that never occurred to me until Plotinus pointed it out. The rubbing between the lower and upper layers might have a negative or positive effect. It could scratch or polish depending on the lubrication. Plotinus extols the polishing effect of contemplation. While he didn't talk about lubrication in so many words, I think Plotinus would agree that the best lubricant for contemplation is philosophy. I am referring to Wittgenstein's idea of philosophy as something you do, not something you say. We shall meet Wittgenstein and his unique flavor of

existentialism in a later chapter. This view makes life a duty to act.

Plotinus describes my inner teacher in his discussion of the 'contemplation' required for self polishing.

ANSELM

(1033–1109)

Saint Anselm was the Archbishop of Canterbury. His Proslogion is the first, and the most powerful, ontological argument that established the existence of God for rational thinkers. Anselm's logical arguments make a rational case for the coexistence of free will, sin, redemption, and Christ as savior. Belief alone, Anselm says, is a "*dead faith*," or what existentialists might call "*bad faith*."

For Anselm, there must be an absolute good on the surreal level which is the source of all inspiration. If you would aspire, you must be inspired and it follows that there must be something to aspire to and be inspired by. Anselm's Proslogion does not attribute human characteristics to God; he simply says, like Plotinus, there must be that other layer of divinity above humanity.

Christ is the name we give to the being that can come and go between humanity and divinity. In "*Cur Deus Homo*" (*Why the God-Man*) Anselm establishes

that Christ's humanity within His divinity inspires the divinity within our own humanity. This connection requires not just the occasional prayer but "continuous activity." Anselm says a "*deeper knowledge of God*" is the result of "*continuous activity*," and I would add, 'vice versa.' This resonates with Kierkegaard's constant "re-avowal," which you will hear more about in a later section.

Besides Anselm, there is not much more that I could find in medieval thinking about humanity's inner divinity, except for John Wycliffe, who must have been inspired by Anselm. John Wycliffe was thrown out of Oxford in 1395 for suggesting that finding God inside was a better path than that offered by the Churchmen from their opulent pulpits. He ended his days as a pauper. A worst fate befell his Lollard followers who were burned at the stake.

DESCARTES

(1596–1650)

Descartes was a soldier in the bloodiest carnage of the Thirty Year War, where Catholics and Protestants killed each other in numbers that noticeably shrunk the entire population of Europe. Descartes broke ranks, came to his senses, and somehow began to think for himself, or should we say, doubt for himself. Descartes was born in the age of uncertainty. How do you prove that life is not a dream-shaboom, caboom? What if some demon spiked the lemonade with LSD that created a hallucination which we think is life, like in the movie “Matrix”?

Descartes is the first to use the question as the answer. Descartes didn’t have to see the movie “Matrix” to know that if life was a hallucination there had to be a hallucinator. Descartes brilliantly turns the question of existence on itself. “Cogito ergo sum” he said: ‘I think therefore I am.’ In other words, if I didn’t exist, who is it that is questioning my existence. This philosophical jiu-jitsu is the keystone of ontology (the study of existence),

without which there would be no existentialism and no metaphysics.

In my earlier book (Conga Line of Consciousness) I added a '*us*' to Descartes' '*sum;*' making it '**sumus,**' the nominative plural of the verb 'to be' which makes existential proof also a collective experience of the collective consciousness, which I believe is a tendril of the universal consciousness. I'm not sure what Descartes would think about that. His dualism would certainly permit the distinction between the real and the surreal. At the shoreline of the enigmatic outer sea of material reality, "*res extensa,*" Descartes built a safe harbor for doubt "*res cogitans.*"

There has to be an inner world to question the outer world. We observe mechanistic discoverable laws that govern the outer world and we have come to realize that those laws do not apply to the innermost nonmaterial phenomenal realm and the outermost divine realm. This realization results in dualism. Descartes was the father of dualism.

Descartes was not only a pioneer in philosophy; he was also a pioneer in mathematics. He developed

Cartesian coordinates (named after him); he is also the founder of probability theory, and the mathematical concepts that made possible algebra, analytic geometry, and the sine law of refraction. He also proffered the first empirical account of the rainbow, and the formation of the earth and planets, a precursor to the nebular hypothesis.

I don't think Descartes would object to my calling him the pioneer surveyor of the chasm between reality and the surreality. That chasm has become more relevant than ever now with the quantum quandary of modern physics.

Last, but not least, Descartes is in the Pantheon because he is the patron saint of self discovery and apophatic theology. That, in my book , is the most important Cartesian equation because it provides a dynamic developing connection between divinity and humanity.

In Discourse On Methods, he sets the goal for human development:

"...endeavor always to conquer my self rather than fortune, and change my desires rather than the order of the world..."

In that same Discourse Descartes humbly reaches for divinity:

"I revered theology and aspired as much as anyone to reach heaven... Revealed thoughts, which led to heaven are above comprehension. I did not presume to subject them to the impotency of my reason, and I thought that in order to completely undertake their examination, there was need of some special help from heaven ..."

LEIBNIZ

(1646–1716)

Gottfried Wilhelm (von) Leibniz, like Descartes, is another classic example for how scientific genius spills over into philosophy, or maybe it's the other way around. Leibniz is known as the last "universal genius." He made important contributions to the fields of physics, metaphysics, epistemology, logic, philosophy of religion and mathematics. And if that isn't enough, he is the first to articulate the idea that there is a force in and between objects that is invisible but none the less real, or as we say, surreal. Because Leibniz was a scientist as well as a philosopher; as such he had a lot more influence on his intellectual peers.

As an engineer, Leibniz worked on calculating machines, clocks, and even mining machinery. As a librarian, he more or less invented the modern idea of cataloging. As a mathematician, he not only produced ground-breaking work in what is now called topology, but came up with 'calculus' independently of Newton. In logic, he worked on

binary systems, long before Boule and Turin. As a physicist, he made advances in the theory of momentum. He also made contributions to linguistics, history, aesthetics, and political theory.

Like Descartes, Leibniz anticipated quantum physics, and the quantum quandary. Long before Heisenberg, Kant, or Hegel, Leibniz saw how the consciousness of the observer was inextricably linked to the phenomenon of the observed. You could say that Leibniz discovered surreality. I am referring to his declaration that a serious error would arise if one took the “objects” of science (matter, motion, space, time, etc.) as if they were “real” in themselves. That posits this whole other realm we have been calling surreality and sets the stage for phenomenology and the cognitive distinction between perception and conception.

Like Democritus, Leibniz conceived of elemental components. Unlike Democritus, the Leibniz “monads” are not just real elements like the atoms, they are also a manifestation of a surreal energy flux. Like the strings in string theory, monads coexist in both the real and the surreal realms.

Like Plato, Plotinus and Augustine, Leibniz imbues fallible humanity with divine souls, which are Aristotelian in that they are energized by the '*final cause*.' 'Efficient cause' and 'final cause,' are two layers in the Aristotelian spiritualism. Like Plotinus, Leibniz's the lower layer of consciousness is just a means to an end. The end knowledge is in the upper sublime layer. Leibniz's term, "appetitions" refers to an upper layer that connects, orders and empowers the lower layer logic. Bodies may appear to act as if there were no souls, and souls act as if there were no bodies but, nevertheless, each is part of the other.

Leibniz's idea of "little perceptions" gives a phenomenal account of the "indiscernibles," and explains that just because they are indiscernible does not mean they don't exist. Seeing is not believing. Hearing is not listening.

It takes reverent humility to come to the understanding that the roar of the ocean we hear is composed of the trillions of indiscernible sounds of each drop splash. Nevertheless, the illusions are the human ramparts of consciousness which lead directly to the pinnacle of divine consciousness.

Leibniz argues that things seem to cause one another because God ordained a pre-established harmony among everything in the universe. God chooses the universe that is the most perfect. Thus, according to Leibniz, the actual world is the “best of all possible worlds.” For Leibniz, If we must see the universe as a clock, we must also understand that God wound the clock and built it so it could run itself. But God always knows what time it isn’t.

We opened Volume I of this work with theodicy. Leibniz is the one who coined the term “theodicy” to refer to the paradox of God’s benevolence and the so called evil in His “best of all possible worlds.”

In his book, Theodicy, Leibniz is able to demonstrate that ‘the best possible universe’ does not mean no evil; in fact, less overall evil is impossible in this “best of all possible worlds.” In his Principle of Sufficient Reason (Theodicy §7: G VI 106–07/H 127–28), Leibniz suggests that this apparent paradox may be a mirage, a phenomenal problem of human perception. Appointments and disappointments are aberrations which we are here to correct. Leibniz points out that so called evil and sin are a necessary

spring board for created beings to become creative beings. (Discourse on Metaphysics, §30).

In other words the name of the game is to make things better, which wouldn't be possible if they were better to begin with. This became the most acceptable Christian reply to the 'problem of evil.' And it resonates with my acceptance that life is a challenge and not a curse.

This solved the theodicy problem for most Christians for many years; that is, until the Lisbon earthquake (1755), where 30,000 innocent victims perished. This shook Voltaire into a vehement rage against the Leibnizian "best of all possible worlds."

Voltaire's poem about the earthquake and his major work *Candide* raise the question of divine inhumanity. Voltaire bellowed to the high heavens about the inhumanity of the creator and suggested that God become more humane, and have some empathy for human suffering.

Voltaire's anti- Leibnizian protest was met, head on, by Rousseau. Rousseau was appalled that Voltaire could blame God for evil which was, and has always

been, the result of human ignorance. Rousseau's answer to the earthquake victims was that it was a human mistake to build unnatural urban vertical structures. The earthquake was nature's way of calling attention to the fact that humans were meant to live closer to the ground in a primordial garden. Noble savages in tepees would still be alive.

That may have something to do with my move from my Florida high-rise to the rustic back woods of Cape Cod at this late stage of my life, where I am surrounded by trees rather than architecture..

KANT

(1724-1804)

Immanuel Kant ignited the beacon of German enlightenment. Because he wrote to dazzle his peers and not for the ordinary reader, Kant's tongue twisting terms and mind bending logic, are the most interpreted and misinterpreted words of wisdom in the history of philosophy.

None of Kant's critiques were ever intended to refute metaphysics but rather to perfect it. "Critique," is the very first word in all Kant's titles, Critique of Pure Reason, Critique of Practical Reason, and the Critique of the Power of Judgment, which, though unintelligible for ordinary readers, did inspire future generations of metaphysical philosophers. Karl Jaspers, a psychiatrist philosopher, and one of our virtual partners, rekindled Kant for Hanna Arendt and post war Europe.

Karl Popper, the philosopher of modern science, in his "Conjecture" and "Refutation," explains how Kant anticipated the Hegelian tango of historical progress.

Whether inspiring conjecture or inviting refutation, there is no question that the Kantian quandary is the quarry where all the marble came from for all the epistemological sculptors who came after Kant. For better or worse I will boil it all down to two sculptures: the schemer and the dreamer. We humans figure stuff out and we make stuff up. Kant calls these two forms of thinking: "analysis" and "synthesis." Which of these two modes of thought is bestowed and which acquired, is the crux of the Kantian quandary.

The bestowed aspect of consciousness would be called 'a-priori' and the acquired would be called 'a-posteriori.' Any bridge between reality and surreality is always and only a mysterious bascule bridge that opens and closes unpredictably, leaving most of us on the real side, with glimpses across the chasm.

The glimpses are what makes life worth living and what makes learning and self improvement a joy. Kant was not a major promoter of interiority and personal spiritualism, but he certainly knew the difference between the inside, which he called "phenomena" and the outside, which he called

“noumena.” This no doubt was the prototype for phenomenology, enhanced by the German enlightenment. Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger and Heisenberg all have Kant to thank for their discoveries of the uncertain universe.

Perhaps the central and most controversial thesis of the Critique of Pure Reason is the idea that human beings experience only appearances, not things in themselves. Even space and time are not part of external reality but intuitive conceptual tools. And we’re finding out now that those tools may have actually painted false pictures of reality which casts its shadow on our notion of surreality. Kant calls this surreal aberration “transcendental idealism,” which I take to include his discovery of the perception/deception paradox. Kant, I believe would tell you that all the science in the world will not get you to the promised land unless you have faith that there is such a thing. We have to know that there is something that can never be known in order to keep searching and learning. In other words Aristotle doesn’t work without Plato.

Kant greatly admires Plato and pretty much accepts the ideal "Forms." He admires Leibniz, as well, but is critical of his 'monads.' For Kant, in order to be self-conscious, one cannot be wholly absorbed in the contents of perceptions but must distinguish subjective consciousness from the rest of the objective world. That means there must be an acknowledgment of subjectivity in order for there to be objectivity, and vice versa. This is different from other philosophers you are about to meet who say 'there are no objects without subjects.' Kant insists that "things in themselves" are absolutely real in that they would exist even if no human beings were around to perceive them. Still, Kant believes that self-consciousness arises from combining or synthesizing representations with one another within the subjective realm, regardless of their connection to any object.

I have no solution to this dilemma, but I have devolved from it a handy dandy "categorical imperative" that can make you a better person and make the world a better place: Don't treat objects as subjects and don't treat subjects as objects. Don't call the atomic bomb "little boy" and don't call all

the 200,000 dead brothers and sisters of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, "collateral damage."

Kant's categorical imperative, on which all specific moral duties are based, is obtained by imagining the whole world doing what you are about to do and asking yourself, would you want to live in such a world?

No matter what scientism says, there is no denying that, for Kant, reason leads us to God and Christ by way of the 'a-priori' conceptual truth. Yes, that's in Kant. Kant's proto humanism could be mistaken for atheism, but it's not. There has to be a God who administers the challenge and who gave you the freedom and the power to complete the challenge or not. For Kant, we must represent an objective world in order to distinguish our subjectivity from it, and we represent an objective rest of the world by "judging." We are somehow able to judge that some representations necessarily belong together. "Judging" is an act of what Kant calls "synthesis," which he defines as "the action of putting different representations together with each other and "comprehending their manifoldness in one

cognition.” In other words, to synthesize is to combine several representations into a single (more) complex representation, and to “judge” it. The blend of subjectivity and objectivity is the only way to go for Kant; one reinforces the other. The smell of my favorite coffee this morning reinforced not only the continuity of the coffee object but also, the continuity of the smelling subject, me.

Kant’s dark tunnel between perception and conception is lit up by his concepts of “practical reason” and “contemplation.” The tunnel must lead to a super consciousness, a divine mind. The doors to the tunnel are imagination and self enlightenment. According to Kant, the more a culture facilitates this connection, the greater the culture.

FICHTE

(1752-1814)

Johann Gottlieb Fichte believed in the inevitability of progress. That would explain why Fichte sees things continuously getting better just after they get worse. One step back and two steps forward became the Hegelian tango of historical progress. Fichte discovered the dance, not Hegel. Most people credit the tango to Hegel.

It was Fichte's idea that a thesis spawns its own anti-thesis and then merges into a new and better synthesis, which then becomes the new thesis which spawns its own countervailing anti-thesis. This chain of events is a bit more concatenated and less fluid than the river flow of Heraclitus, and a bit less flip flop than Poppers "conjecture/ refutation" process. The physicist Richard Feynman glorifies mistakes and makes them an "integral path" to a "vanishing truth." All of these great thinkers found it necessary to describe progress, which makes me wonder, progress toward what?

Goethe was so impressed with Fichte, he arranged for his academic post at Jena, the hotbed of the German enlightenment. During his career at the University of Jena (1794–1799) Fichte's metaphysical speculations affected the philosophy of science, ethics, law and religion in Germany and later in all of Europe and the world.

The most important Fichtian exhortation for philosophy or science is that one should never disavow the duty to act as being beyond one's ability, or as Fichte put it, ever so succinctly:

“If I ought, I can.”

HEGEL

(1770-1831)

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel added, a more distinct tango rhythm to the dance of Fichte, a leap which provided lift-off. Hegel is as important as he is confusing. For Hegel, philosophical examination of life is essential to providing any meaning to life, or in the words of Socrates: 'the unexamined life is not worth living.'" Phenomenology of the Spirit numbers its propositions, and in propositions 76 through to 84, Hegel's analysis of scientific knowledge heralds Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty.

In a sense Hegel has amalgamated Schelling's idealism and Fichte's three step tango to create the chain reaction which results in historical progress. This is idealism rationalized by a mystic.

Like Schelling and Fichte and every other post Kantian philosopher, Hegel had to bounce off Kant in order to get ahead. Hegel's first work, Phenomenology of the Spirit (1807) corrected and perfected Kant's phenomena/noumena dualism and

made him the declared father of phenomenology. You will recall that for Kant, the world was divided into things as they are and things as they seem (noumena and phenomena). For both Kant and Hegel the appearances are part of consciousness but Kant's "consciousness" was only "phenomena;" for Hegel it could also become "noumena." This may have something to do with the fact that in the modern lexicon, ironically, "phenomenon" and "phenomenal" have come to mean very real instead of illusory.

Hegel also found it necessary to doctor Kant's categorical imperative. Hegel reversed Kant's negative morality, replacing 'sticks' with 'carrots.' 'Don'ts' are not as powerful as 'do's.' One of the essential 'do's' for Hegel would be Christ's "Love thy neighbor as thyself," which is much more powerful than Kant's 'don't do anything you wouldn't want the neighbors to do.'

Hegel draws a distinction between "cognition" and "absolute truth." This resonates with Plato's human fallibility. Hegel re-established the philosophical notion that the infinite mind is not distinct from the

finite mind. The two poles are bonded by a single force field which continuously powers the human consciousness and the will. I never realized until right now, writing about it, how important that realization is. Your mind is not your own to doubt. Once you see the connection of your narrow inlet to the vast ocean, you begin to hear voices in the sound of surf.

Hegel put Socrates and Christ in the same boat and rowed it to shore, so no one had to walk on water. Hegel knew that orthodox myths gets in the way of personal spiritualism, which he called "religious self consciousness." Orthodox religion is reality's failed attempt to hijack surreality. That's another reason I call myself a Hegelian, because I wish to be religiously self conscious in a world that is progressing from barbaric realism to surreal humanism, which is a kind of divinity.

Hegel credits the Reformation, not the Renaissance, as the antithesis of the corrupt orthodoxy of materialist religion, and sees the synthesis that emerged from the collision of this thesis and antithesis as open mindedness, which trumps organizational prerogatives, political or religious.

“Thought governs spiritual reality” Hegel says. I think if Hegel knew Pagels who brought us the Gnostic scriptures, he too would have become a Hegelian Pagelian. Hegel made Christ a philosopher, Pagels proved it. Hegel is the first philosopher that I know to interpret Christ’s incarnation as a humane theurgy in that God is both beyond the world and in it enough to care. Hegel sought to erase the images of the anthropic punishing God: “the picture of God must die in order for the concept of God to live.” This makes all the time I spent rubbing my eyes in the Hegelian blizzard of terms worthwhile.

Hegel didn’t trust the unwashed masses with power. This no doubt gave rise to Marxism, which became tyrannical and uninspired. Some philosophers like Karl Popper blame Hegel for Marx’s tyranny and they also blame Plato. I would rise to the defense of Plato and Hegel. Mass ignorance is real and massive. It’s no one’s fault but rather a universal challenge.

SCHILLER

(1759–1805)

Friedrich Schiller is sometimes referred to as the German Shakespeare. William James declares him a champion of pragmatism and a father of humanism. In his relatively short life, Schiller authored exquisite dramas and exquisite poetry, including the “Ode to Joy” enshrined in the anthem of the European Union and at the core of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony.

Thousand of us have been exposed to the Ode but few have experienced the Joy of understanding its brilliant fusion of divinity and humanity. Take a careful look at the end of this chapter; it will make you sing and dance for joy.

Schiller was a friend of Goethe’s, and so, I assume, he must also have known Fichte, as well, and if he knew Fichte, he must have been inspired by him. Schiller is included in the Pantheon especially because of his proposition that man is never more himself than when at play. We have to play at life which is the same as dancing in the dark.

In addition to his literary accomplishments, Schiller was a philosopher. While his philosophical writings are primarily concerned with aesthetics, his critique of Kant's "Critiques" focused on Kant's conflicted idealism. Schiller refutes Kant's claims that there could be no objective principle of beauty, and that aesthetic experience is a purely subjective pleasure. For Schiller beauty is both real and surreal. The idea that beauty is only in the eye of the beholder confines it to the real world, where it withers and dies. But beauty doesn't die; it's always there. Beauty is both a real subject and a surreal object. Schiller points out that unfortunately the fewest number of subjects experience this objective beauty. The unwashed masses are blind to beauty and the divine love that makes it possible.

Schiller has no kind words for those who exploit that mass ignorance. In "Concerning the Sublime" ["Über das Erhabene"], Schiller claims that nothing... "is so beneath the dignity of human beings as ... violence, for it destroys the individual's humanity."

Schiller's term "heautonomous," refers to the sublime inspiration that is "both given and obeyed by

the [same] being.” This is how beauty is brought to earth from the heavens above for humans and animals. Wait, animals?

Yup, animals. For Schiller they too have esthetic sensibility. Other philosophers such as Fechner and Karl Popper agree with the idea that other species have creative instincts which dictate such things as the architecture of hives and nests, and ant hills and beaver dams.

Schiller points out that the hero worship of those whose ascetic control results in esthetic success is a kind of God envy. This is the most plausible explanation of our worship of virtuosity. Those sensitive enough to notice this in others go beyond worship and are inspired by it, which results in “pan-creativity.” This for Schiller is an “inoculation against unavoidable fate.”

I believe that QI will massively spread pan-creativity without spreading it thin. The arts are not only beautiful but essential to our mental health. Schiller’s Ode to Joy makes that point much more eloquently.

ODE TO JOY:

*Joy! A spark of fire
from heaven,
Daughter from
Elysium,
Drunk with fire we
dare to enter,
Holy One, inside
your shrine.
Your magic power
binds together,
What we by custom
wrench apart,
All men will emerge
as brothers,
Where you rest your
gentle wings.*

*If you've mastered
that great challenge:
Giving friendship to
a friend,
If you've earned a
steadfast woman,
Celebrate your joy
with us!*

*Join if in the whole
wide world there's
Just one soul to call
your own!
He who's failed
must steal away,
shedding tears as
he departs.*

*All creation drinks
with pleasure,
Drinks at Mother
Nature's breast;
All the just, and all
the evil,
Follow down her
rosy path.*

*Kisses she
bestowed, and
grape wine,
Friendship true,
proved e'en in
death;
Every worm knows
nature's pleasure,
Every cherub meets
his God.*

*Gladly, like the
planets flying
True to heaven's
mighty plan,
Brothers, run your
course now,
Happy as a knight in
victory.*

*Be embracéd, all
you millions,
Share this kiss with
all the world!
Way above the
stars, brothers,
There must live a
loving father.
Do you kneel down
low, you millions?
Do you see your
maker's world?
Search for Him
above the stars,
Above the stars he
must be living.*

SCHELLING

(1775–1854)

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, along with Fichte and Hegel, is one of the three most influential thinkers in German idealism. Schelling and Hegel were fellow students at the same Lutheran seminary. Schelling's philosophical writings were much less organized than Hegel's, which may be the reason why the latter became more well known. Some scholars laud Schelling's disorganization since makes the philosophical point that there is no orderly way to consider surreality. For Wittgenstein and Heidegger, Schelling marks that outer limit of the systematic task of philosophy, "the end of philosophy and the task of thinking" as Heidegger put it. Besides influencing Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Hegel, and Fechner, Schelling's importance has to do with his response to the mechanistic determinism of natural philosophy which arose because of the scientific revolution. In his Naturphilosophie, we find a modern view of nature that reaches beyond science. Like many of his contemporaries, Schelling was challenged by the

Kantian chasm. He saw that no solid bridge could ever be kept in place across the Kantian chasm. In his account of subjectivity, Schelling provided to the world, and especially to Nietzsche and Heidegger, the puzzled profile of human consciousness that can never be fully objective or fully subjective. The Fichteian 'I,' in Schelling is transformed into a dynamic process of constant self-discovery and recovery. If a structure must be imposed on this dynamic process, Schelling provides us with three loosely defined stages: "original sensation," "reflection," and "the absolute act of will." This last stage makes Schelling an existentialist. In existentialism, 'will' makes all the difference. Will makes you what you are. Will powers choice; choice is your existential essence, your reason for being.

Fichte's Subjective Idealism was transformed by Schelling into a cosmic dynamic. His System of Transcendental Idealism (1800), views subjectivity as an intuitional whirlpool which goes all the way down to the moment of its origin. There, subject and the object are identical, being both ideal and real at once.

SCHOPENHAUER

(1788–1860)

Arthur Schopenhauer is known as the arch pessimist. It may come as a surprise to find his voice in our chorus. 'Will' is the hero in most existential accounts of human development; Schopenhauer's 'Will' is the villain. 'Will' is so villainous, he wishes he had never been born; so villainous, he seems to value death over life. For Schopenhauer "will" is the body's pointless struggle for survival in a game which is not worth the candle. Could Schopenhauer be telling us that life is not worth living? So it appears at first blush. Schopenhauer would banish making love since it might result in new life; he would cauterize the reproductive organs in men and women.

One wonders whether Schopenhauer knew about the early Christian Marcion who believed that there were two super powers completely alien to each other. One the Creator, the God of the Testament, who put the shit in the game and the other the Liberator, Christ of the New Testament, who came to take us all away from this shit. For Marcion and

Schopenhauer procreation was counterproductive. This spawned the anti-feminism that is still with us.

Women thinkers were unthinkable for Schopenhauer; they were baby machines. Schopenhauer's women were unable to conceive of surreality because of their shallow obsession with material reality; they are unable to conceive of anything but more pointless babies.

And now I must confess that I found this misogyny in myself, as well. I blamed consumerism on women's compulsion to procreate and proliferate. In a one act play I wrote called "The Great Vendor is a Mean Queen." The play was performed in the sixties at my Reredos Repertory Company in Venice, California in which Carl Reiner's daughter Annie and his son Rob Reiner were members. Again this is not just name dropping, but more to show the lasting impact of ancient thought. I had to get over the mistakes of my forefathers. I had to climb out of the pit on my own, and I did. I made the point in Volume I of this work, but it is worth bringing it up again. All my heroes were feminists or females and not materialists or "Mean Queens." Christ and Plato were feminists. My

most important virtual partners are female: Hanna Arendt, Karen Armstrong and Elaine Pagels, not to mention, Sarah Bakewell, and Simone de Beauvoir. Bakewell's At The Existentialist Cafe convinced me that de Beauvoir's The Second Sex should have been required reading in high school.

I can't imagine Schopenhauer's reaction to women becoming philosophers, prime ministers and presidential candidates. Plato would be pleased at how feminism turned out; he would not be pleased with how his notion of divinely inspired free will turned out.

Free will, which idealists glorify as a godsend, is for Schopenhauer a pitfall. According to Schopenhauer it is because we think we have a choice that we fight to the death, each of our wills pitted against the others, like bulldog ants (Schopenhauer's metaphor). If we realize that we have no choice in the end, there would be nothing to struggle about, nothing to improve. It is what it is and there is nothing we can do about it.

So why is Schopenhauer still here in the Pantheon of idealism?

Well, at first it was because I knew I had to deal with Schopenhauer defensively as with Russell and other nay sayers. But in framing my rebuttal, I had to find out why the list of Schopenhauer fans reads like the hall of fame of Western intellectuals: Friedrich Nietzsche, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Erwin Schrödinger, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Leo Tolstoy, Herman Melville, Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse, Marcel Proust, Samuel Beckett, Richard Wagner, Johannes Brahms, Arnold Schoenberg, and Gustav Mahler, to name a few. There must be something they saw in the darkness, which I missed. And, as it turned out, there was something. A sparkle in the darkness, which on closer scrutiny turns into a soft consoling glow, a kind of “what me worry” optimism.

Like Alfred E Newman, the sixties cartoon character, or like ancient Stoicism, Schopenhauer’s “Essay on the Freedom of the Will” (1839) joins Buddha, Epicurus, Epictetus, and the Gnostic Christ in espousing a pragmatic optimism, where dread and

suffering are the spring board to self control and self realization. So somehow, magically, pessimism spawns its antithesis optimism.

Behind Schopenhauer's dark curtain, I found Christ and Francis of Assisi, actually cited by Schopenhauer as examples of constructive human suffering. He insists that the liberating morality of Jesus and Saint Francis of Assisi, were the result of voluntary poverty and chastity (ibid, Section 68 and 70). This must be what inspired Wittgenstein to give away his enormous fortune. I couldn't do that.

For Schopenhauer, the mortality /morality connection is entirely in the spirit of Christianity, and sacred books of India, as well (ibid, Section 68). The view that the universe is double-aspected, having objective and subjective dimensions arises from the Hindu idea of Brahman and Atman. If not the first, Schopenhauer is the most important link between Eastern wisdom and Western idealism.

Schopenhauer's consciousness includes an upper layer where one's awareness expands beyond the mixed-up, tension-ridden, bittersweet, conflict

ridden, tragicomic, lower layer reality of daily worries. Plato, Aristotle, Valentinus, Plotinus, Leibniz, Scheler, all talk about layers of consciousness. I don't know how much Schopenhauer knew about them, but he did agree with them that you have to plummet through the depths of these layers to get to know your self before you can love yourself and then you can love your neighbor. Schopenhauer believed that by compassionately recognizing that the inner nature of another person is as deep as your own, you arrive at a neighborly respectful resonant "sympathy," which is more than ordinary compassion.

Schopenhauer's believed that: "With self-knowledge, we can transform our lives into works of art." What we call dancing in the dark is the esthetic transformation of an individually-oriented state of consciousness into a universally-oriented state of consciousness, or what Schopenhauer calls a pure will-less, painless, and timeless knowledge (The World as Will and Representation, Section 33, 34). This is also the esthetic transcendence which Goethe describes as the Ur-phenomenon.

Goethe was a friend and member of Madame Schopenhauer's salon of artists and poets. It appears, however, that he had no use for her son Arthur, except maybe as a ghost writer. Schopenhauer insists that Goethe's famous line: "architecture is frozen music" was originally his, as was "symmetry is rhythm standing still."

As compared to the visual arts, Schopenhauer locates music at the zenith of universal creativity. I go along with that. Schopenhauer believes that music achieves this transcendent state right here on earth by providing a sonic form to feeling. By expressing emotion in this abstracted sublimity, music allows us to apprehend the nature of the world without the frustration of a Protagoran myopia.

Music is a mode of aesthetic awareness akin to tranquil philosophical contemplation. Philosophical sensibility is closest to musical sensibility. Each human being starts out with the disharmony of the original sin of self loathing, and self misunderstanding and then moves up, more or less, depending on the will power exerted (The World as Will and Representation, Sections 63 and 64).

Progress is all about self understanding; this “self-realization” brings with it greater peace of mind (Ibid, Section 55). Schopenhauer points out that most people are denied the transcendent tranquillity of this dance in the dark, and the few who enjoy it, do so only for short periods. Again it is my hope that QI can change that tight circle into a square dance.

KIERKEGAARD

(1813-1855)

Søren Aabye Kierkegaard is a Danish philosopher, father of extreme fidelism and what has been called "theological voluntarism," which I think is very important but kind of hard to grasp. I should point out that schools of thought are like schools of fish struggling to stay together in the oceanic cross currents. The current that surrounded Kierkegaard's school was a very serious wave of Lutheran pietism with the undertow of sin, guilt, and suffering. Crucial to all pietism is the realization that where God is concerned, we are always in the wrong, and have to stay on our knees begging forgiveness from the punishing God. But Kierkegaard found a way to surf on that wave of pietism.

Kierkegaard styled himself as a religious poet rather than a philosopher. Others have called him the father of existentialism. He was all those things and more. Kierkegaard was particularly enamored of Plato's dialogue "Meno," where Socrates asks how we come to know anything. Kierkegaard believes that

the only teacher of that pre-existing soul is God. (Philosophical Fragments (1844)).

The Sickness Unto Death, a later work, is not an easy read. I had to do it at least twice, but what I learned was worth the effort. I learned that pagan religions have no sin, and that sin originated with Christian orthodoxy and Augustine. Original sin was not Christ's idea, according to Kierkegaard. By our legal standards, if original sin was the original crime, it would have to have been committed with original intent. Now comes the hard question. How does that original intent of Adam and Eve attach to me their great, great, 15,000 times great grandson? Recently parents have been held liable for the crimes of their children, where there is some participation, even if only by omission. But never are children held liable for the acts of their parents, or grandparents or their 15,000 generations removed ancestors. So as a lawyer I have a problem with that, and as an amateur philosopher as well. But I have accepted the original ignorance from which must to evolve. That presents the same theodicy paradox. Whether we call the starting gate of the human racecourse sin or ignorance, it leaves us running in the same

paradoxical loop. I don't have any answers, as I have said numerous times already. All I know is that it is our responsibility to erase our own ignorance and if we all did that, the world would be paradise, or amarchy as we call it.

Kierkegaard teaches us that no churchman is going to do the job for us. It must be powered by our own volition, continuously exerted. God will help, but only those who help themselves. That's a form of existentialism that makes the most sense to me. It makes redemption a divinely guided personal challenge.

Christian churchmen made redemption a business. Cataphatic Christians could buy their way out with stipends and compliance. For Kierkegaard, and apophatic believers like me, the only way out is in.

Who is to be saved is not predetermined; it is up to each individual to learn their way out of original ignorance. As you know from Volume I, I believe humans exist and are free to make of this 'existence' whatever 'essence' they will. The belief that existence precedes essence is existentialism.

Most existentialist are atheists because they can't understand what God has to do with this existence or essence. I can't understand how there could be existence or essence without God.

As a young man, I actually read everything Sartre wrote, fiction and philosophy. It got me thinking philosophically for the first time. I waded through almost a thousand pages of Being and Nothingness, and I realize now that if there were a surreality in it, it would have been much shorter.

Sartre believes that you have to know yourself and you have to use your will power to realize your *self* and that you have to somehow find a way to deal with your neighbors. He calls this "being for others." I can't imagine how you can manage all that without some help, super human help.

For those existentialists who find divine intervention absurd, Kierkegaard admits of the 'absurdity' and makes it the engine of faith. A century before Kierkegaard, Hume declared religious events, like incarnation as "absurd." Instead of resisting Hume's thrust, Kierkegaard turns it back on itself. He says

that we believe by virtue of the absurd. That absurdity for Kierkegaard is the spring board of faith. The absurdity of Jesus dying on the cross for our sins provides the opportunity for a leap of faith. Without the leap of faith to the surreality, albeit almost unimaginable, atheist existentialists are left to rot in place.

Sara Bakewell tells a story where Sartre goes into a cafe and orders a "coffee without cream." The waiter replies, " Monsieur Sartre we are all out of cream; how about 'coffee without milk'?" That's funny because it is absurd. Absurdity punches a hole in the rational view of reality, through which we can imagine surreality. Surreality has to be imagined without ever knowing for sure. We all have imagination, but most of us choose not to use it. And those who do imagine, usually make a difference in the long run but in the short run suffer punishment by their ignorant neighbors.

Joan of Arc's inquisitor, who was about to burn her at the stake asks her to admit that the voice of God she heard might be her own imagination; to which she replied "How else would God talk to me?"

It is the ultimate consolation to think that God cares enough to talk to me and inspire me. Life for me would be unimaginable without that. I made that point in Volume I, but it is worth repeating here.

For me to summon my muse, I must first dialogue with that inner voice I call Christ. Athletic and artistic performers all have a similar invocation ritual. Even the famous mathematician Ramanujan, to the consternation of the Cambridge Circle of atheists including Harold Hardy and Bertrand Russell, demonstrated a surreal connection to the divine mathematician. For all his magnificent concentration and focus Ramanujan reached out to his God every day.

Kierkegaard calls this "continuous re-avowal." You don't need to go to church for this continuous re-avowal. In fact church might get in the way. The most important contribution Kierkegaard makes to our brand of spiritualism is his insistence that faith requires more than going to church on Sunday; faith is an every day phenomenon. Kierkegaard asserts that Christian faith can only be accomplished by

individual subjective passion, without any managing clergy.

Kierkegaard was not, however, a Hegelian. He felt that the mechanical trajectory of Hegelian progress left no room for choice and free will. Kierkegaard says one's very selfhood depends upon the smoothness of these repetitive exercises of choosing and faithful leaps over the hurdles in the human race course. Each leap reestablishes the self; each leap "is a relation which relates itself to itself" Without acknowledging the "power which constituted it," despair undoes selfhood. Therefore, in order to maintain itself intact, the self must constantly re-avow "the power which posited it" (The Sickness Unto Death, *ibid*).

Kierkegaard influenced a broad range of modern thinkers, including: Dostoyevsky, Wittgenstein, William James, Bergson and Schopenhauer.

NIETZSCHE

(1844 – 1900)

As with Schopenhauer, at first blush, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche seemed to be a pothole on the high road, but then a single line changed my mind: "He who has a **why** by which to live can bear almost any **how** " (The Twilight of the Idols). Whatever the dynamics of finding that "why," the quest keeps you striving and making lemonade out of the lemons.

Nietzsche came from a long line of theologians and Lutheran churchmen, nevertheless he saw organized religion as the nemesis of religiosity. His famous line "Christ was the last Christian," suggests that Christianity has almost nothing to do with what Christ taught. To be sure, Nietzsche's Christ was the Gnostic Christ.

Nietzsche's "beyond good and evil" challenges me to think for myself beyond what he calls "herd mentality." I think that Nietzsche's was an apophatic believer, like me. He doesn't have the help of an

inner Christ in his challenging game of life, but there is a game in his life and rewards for virtue, and punishment for failure. Nietzsche's "eternal recurrence" rewards the virtuous with virtuosity and recurring joy, and punishes the dolts with the same old, same old shit.

Nietzsche talks less about the supernatural than he does about superman. Superman is not God. God died. But the god that died in Nietzsche was a blasphemous anthropic god, which we are well rid of. "God's murder" (section 125, The Gay Science (*Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*, 1882) is apophasis and not atheism. I'm sure if you look carefully, you will see that Nietzsche is telling you what God is not, not that there is no God. That is apophatic theology. Nietzsche debunks the dogmatic 'good shepherd' who leads the flock to sheering. His so called 'atheism' is really a detour from the anesthetic heaven of ignorance to the esthetic heaven of virtue and virtuosity.

In Beyond Good and Evil, Nietzsche identifies imagination, self-assertion, originality and the

“creation of values” as qualities of genuine philosophers, as opposed to mere scholars.

Nietzsche was inspired by Plato and the super subjectivity of Schopenhauer’s ‘will to power.’ Nietzsche’s superman could be viewed as humane divinity or divine humanity. It doesn’t matter because it isn’t matter. I believe that resonates with Nietzsche’s philosophy. Philosophy for Nietzsche is something you do, not something you talk about. If you deal with the present as though it would become your eternal future, you will do a lot more than follow the leader. This is a very accessible modern metaphysics.

Nietzsche’s personal metaphysics and his sanity ended with a haunting surreal metaphor. He was hugging an abused horse in the street when he was dragged off to an asylum where he died eventually without making any sense. Some say it was a brain tumor; some say it was syphilis. Whether it was his mind or his brain that spawned his insights, they keep Nietzsche alive.

BERGSON

(1859- 1941)

Henri Bergson was awarded the Nobel Prize twenty years after he wrote Creative Evolution because the committee could not find any other worthy recipient. But this is not about the importance of prizes but the importance of Bergson. The importance of Bergson, for our purposes, is that he placed consciousness outside the spacetime box of material reality. Bergson never mentioned surreality in so many words, but he might as well have. He divides existence into the "physical" and "psychical," and he describes "Epiphenomenalism" as apart from and connected beyond the material world. Bergson takes up more pages than anyone else in this Pantheon and you will soon see why.

Bergson's "creative evolution," should not be confused with Spencer's mundane social darwinism. Creative evolution runs on a surreal clock that Bergson calls "duration." For Bergson, concepts, percepts and intuition are in a surreal flux that has a very real effect on the matter and energy of reality

and vice versa. We should not expect material science to tell us anything about non-material psychic phenomena, which are super material. This requires metaphysics rather than physics. They are connected functionally, but quite apart epistemologically, according to Bergson. Physics is the exposed tip of the metaphysical iceberg. Iceberg is my crude metaphor; Bergson's are much more elegant.

One of Bergson's more memorable metaphors pictures an elegant ghost's cape left hanging on a coat hook. The cape is warming and forming and ready to cloak the invisible ghost. The ghost is consciousness; the cape is communication in all its heuristic forms. When you're done communicating, It's ok to hang the cape back on the hook, but it is a fatal philosophical error to try to hang the ghost on the hook. That happens in almost every pseudo scientific discussion of consciousness. Whitehead, who has a place in both volumes of this work, was a self acknowledged Bergsonian.

For whatever reason Bergson's ghost stories made him a rock star in England, France, Germany and

America, Just before his lecture at Columbia University, in 1913, the New York Times published a long article on Bergson, which generated the very first traffic jam in the history of Broadway, and, I might add, the last and only traffic jam ever caused by a philosopher. Bergson was a celebrity, but a celebrity of consequence. He inspired Norbert Wiener's cybernetics at MIT. Without Bergson there would be no Wiener and no Claud Shannon, no computer communication, no internet. Without the internet there could be no QI revolution and no hope for a virtual congregation of self-realized individuals.

Another elegant Bergsonian metaphor has to do with the persistence of vision that creates the illusion of motion from still frames, without which there would be no movies.

Ready for another serendicity story? I thought the movie metaphor was my idea. I had already published my real world<> reel world metaphor in The Castle of Consciousness (1994). before I ever read, "The Cinematographic Mechanism of Thought" in Creative Evolution, and before I ever heard of

Bergson. In my obscure book, I suggest that the roll of images, which I called the “reel” world, represents the “real” so that it may have a surreal life in the imaginative nonmaterial realm. So does Bergson. That’s either serendicity or I am a plagiarist. But if I were a plagiarist, I wouldn’t be telling you about it. Bergson saw the same life challenge to communicate between reality and surreality. This would have to be an imaginative language beyond common parlance.

Bergson chides scientific materialism for being a grammar that only recognizes nouns; reality is a static illusion that keeps us from seeing the flux, still frames trying to represent motion. Reality freezes into nouns for arguments sake, but it is a verb, an “action word” which is ever changing. With only our perceived discontinuous still frames of reality, we would be blind to the enigmatic fluidity, the Heraclitan river which never freezes.

Creative Evolution appeared in 1907 and was translated into English by, of all people, Bertrand Russell, the quintessential empirical Englishman. This experience changed Russell. Unlike the Russell of the chicken farmer god, this was a very different Russell,

which resonates completely with our own Love God. Take a look or listen to Russell's The Conquest of Happiness and you will see what I mean.

Russell initially objected that Bergson would turn humanity into a hive of bees with his notion of intuitive consciousness. Eventually Russell was forced to admit that Bergson floats up beyond the paradox of idealism/pragmatism fostered by traditional philosophical classification.

The 'Time' debates between Bergson and Einstein made headlines, not only in the scientific press, but in the popular press as well. That battle went on for more than a decade. Russell was, at first, on Einstein's side against Bergson. Bergson had all the other living philosophers on his side and a surprising number of physicists, as well. This was back in the day when intellectuals were celebrities.

We don't have space here for a blow by blow description of Einstein /Bergson match. I'll just tell you that it was a draw.

Bergson's experiential time "duration," ran into Einstein's notion of "time dilation." For Einstein's

special relativity to work, light speed and time had to be constant. Bergson's universe had no constants, no nouns. all verbs. All was in flux and time was a heuristic illusion at best and at worst a haunting delusion. Both sides used the "reel" metaphor to demonstrate the point that perception must be augmented by conception.

Bergson's metaphysical/ psychological opus "Mind Energy" turned many heads at Solvay, but not Einstein's. According to Merleau-Ponty, Bergson debated Einstein even there on his own turf, regarding this historic "crisis of reason." Bergson published his reflections on Einstein as Duration and Simultaneity Mélanges.

In World War I the French government sent Bergson to the United-States to bring his philosophy to Wilson's new international politics. He met President Wilson and apparently they got along well enough for him to stay and help form the "League of Nations," (The League of Nations remained in existence until 1946, when it was replaced by the United Nations.)

Bergson realized that metaphysics could only be addressed metaphorically and he did that so well that we are now on track for a communication technotopia.

Bergson's memory is, oceanic beyond the little inlet we call self consciousness, a flow, not like Dennett's frozen snow. Daniel Dennett sees memory as having very little to do with the thing remembered. Recall is a snowball forming itself out of the snow hill between the event and the memory. (See Daniel C Dennett's essay "The Self as a Center of Narrative Gravity") Dennett's "gravity of the narrative," suggests that recall is an internal roll up of the snow of hopes and fears, perceptions and misconceptions having little or nothing to do with the event being recalled. Bergsonians melt the snow and it becomes a river.

Stanislavsky 'Method' actors extract 'affective memory' from recalled experiences and inject it into their performance, which provides a believable emotional subtext to the surreality of their performance. We forget that they are acting. For this to occur there must be recallable original sensations

in the actor which resonate with the recall of the audience. There must be some connection between the inlet of self consciousness and the ocean of universal consciousness. Fact is fiction; fiction is fact; reality is surreality; surreality is reality; the illusion of movies erases the illusion of time.

Both Einstein and Bergson penetrated the illusion of time, as did Heraclitus, Augustine, Leibniz, Shakespeare, Benjamin Franklin, and Mark Twain. It's hard to admit that time and space are illusions, even for argument's sake, but I keep trying.

Surreality reaches down to the real world, according to Bergson, through certain gifted, mystically inspired individuals. Nietzsche's superman, Schopenhauer's genius, Fichte's absolute "I," and James's "hero," are examples of real humans who are in touch with surreality. These mystics, Bergson believes, will eventually create open societies, without the misguidance of leaders.

Both James and Royce made history with their Gifford Lectures; so did Bergson. Bergson gave two Gifford Lectures, one in 1913, entitled "Creative

Evolution" and another "The Problems of Personality" in 1914. In those lectures he exalts Plotinus for bringing together the great minds of Aristotle and Plato and solving the paradox of individual consciousness and its connection to universal consciousness and divine consciousness. The language quoted below from those lectures clearly distinguishes physics from metaphysics, mind from matter, and reality from surreality:

"consciousness in man is unquestionably connected with the brain: but it by no means follows that a brain is indispensable to consciousness. ""Consciousness and matter appear to us, then, as radically different forms of existence, even as antagonistic forms,matter is necessity, consciousness is freedom; but though diametrically opposed to one another, life has found the way of reconciling them."

For Bergson, consciousness, which includes "intuition," uses the brain and not the other way around. Bergson does not wish to fall into the crack between empiricism and rationalism. With Bergson's dynamic realization of "duration," we can have both and move from one to the other in no time at all.

Bergson reaches beyond the semantic dichotomies suggested by the terms 'heterogeneity' and 'continuity' to an ante-semantic meaning which unifies the illusory multiplicity. Bergson looks at the conflicting views of relativism and determinism and finds fault with both. Relativism is blinded by the separations between points and determinism is side tracked by the linearity that binds the points. For Bergson, 'intellect,' unlike 'intuition,' atomizes the material world. The particles of that atomization have to become nonmaterial waves for the world to be fully realized. Relativism is a river without banks; determinism is banks without a river. Both these paths, separately taken, Bergson says, lead to a life of waiting for death rather than living.

I believe Bergson ("Matter and Memory") would agree with our belief that everyone receives everything they need for self realization and self love, all of which comes wrapped in self doubt which can only be unwrapped by the recipient. We all know this intuitively and only some of us eventually realize it intellectually. For Bergson, intuition and intellect are mind layers. These layers of consciousness resonate with Valentinus, Aristotle, Augustine, Plotinus,

Leibniz, Scheler, Whitehead, and Kurzweil. For Bergson, however, the connection between intuition and intellect is a oneway street. Intuition can account for intellect, but Bergson insists, intellect will never account for intuition.

In "Creative Evolution," Bergson adds a picture puzzle to his kit of elegant metaphors. In this life puzzle, the big picture is conceived and painted by an artist and then cut up into small puzzle pieces to be put together by the lesser developed minds. The child putting together the pieces of a puzzle has a pre-existing whole picture to look at, but the artist painting the picture has only some hazy, unfolding inspiration from another realm. What the child is doing is intellectual; what the artist is doing is intuitive, and surreal. Again the Ramanujan /Hardy collision, mentioned earlier, comes to mind.

Intuition beyond intellect helps the Penrose argument, which distinguishes machine thinking from human thought. Machine intelligence is based on spelled out lines of code, like the puzzle pieces in the Bergson metaphor. The big picture which inspired the puzzle came to a human mind from

elsewhere as a mysterious intuition. The intuition which inspires intellect will always be outside and beyond machine intelligence. Bergson could not have known about Penrose's work, but Penrose might have known about Bergson.

Bergson's insights on self consciousness are a surreal balancing act of self images of one's own body with the outside reflections coming from other minds. Putting together what I think of myself and what others think of me, is a life long challenge for me and my circle of influence. Thinking for yourself has to be done in the context of others, or as Sartre puts it, "being for others."

Bergson objected to Plato who would freeze his dynamic idealism, and yet he attached himself to Plotinus, the father of neoplatonism as was demonstrated in the already mentioned Gifford lectures. Bergson's newer ideas as in The Two Sources of Morality and Religion, (1934,) and a collection of his essays, The Creative Mind, appear to move closer to Platonism and also closer to spiritualism and even Christianity.

Bergson's surreality includes an incomplete needy divinity, which resonates with the divinity described by James and Kurzweil. Bergson believes in a God that gave us human creativity so that He would have fellow creators with whom to share His creative love. It's as though God needs us as much as we need him.

Bergson's God is always changing, of course, (Two Sources of Morality and Religion). One is left to guess at just what this meant for his "highest mind" and how it would justify his earlier belief in a needy, almost pantheist God. Of course, as an apophatic, I cannot subscribe to any definition of divinity proffered by any human. Nevertheless definitions aside, I am a believer in an undefined divinity, including my inner voice, which I call Christ.

Bergson died on January 3, 1941 at the age of 81. He withdrew more and more from his own celebrity. There is solid evidence, from friends and church records that, like Scheler and Wittgenstein, Bergson was yet another Jewish intellectual who converted to Catholicism near the end of his life. In his '1937 testament, Bergson wrote: "*My reflections have*

brought me closer and closer to Catholicism in which I see the complete fulfillment of Judaism."

I think Jesus would agree with that.

SCHELER

(1874 –1928)

Max Scheler could be the tenor for the Jena barbershop quartet: Scheler, Schiller, Schelling, and Schopenhauer. The university at Jena was named after Schiller and everyone knows Schelling and Schopenhauer, but who is this Scheler guy?

Scheler was added to the quartet not only because of the alliterative trill it provided to my quartet metaphor (I admit, that might have had something to do with it), but more importantly because he provides the best connection between the German enlightenment and our personalized spiritualism. It's hard for us World War II kids to imagine such a thing as a "German enlightenment." The word "German" instantly conjures up the word Nazi. But there was a light in Germany before Hitler's torch parade.

Scheler taught with Fichte, Hegel, and Goethe at Jena, and made the most important contribution to phenomenology. Unlike Husserl and Heidegger, Scheler made a place for an inner Christ in his

surreality. Scheler adds a twist to the Platonic view of evil as ignorance. Evil is simply bad choices made in selecting lower values over higher values. Scheler's values are innately ranked in an ascending order: "pleasure," then "utility," then "vitality," then "culture," and finally "holiness." For those who choose the higher ranked spiritual values, existence takes on a more meaningful form.

Scheler believes that we are naturally attracted to those ascending positive values, but most of us succumb to the gravitational drag of the lower or negative values. We may forsake a particular life value, such as health, for the pleasurable experiences of ice-cream. Or, going the other way, we might sacrifice a secure salary because it offended the higher value of moral sensitivity. As I write this, I hear on the news that Department of Justice attorneys give up the security of their job because they see Trump's 'revenge' prosecutions as a violation of the justice they swore to serve and protect. An order of value preferencing is present in every experience great and small, in every individual and in every epoch, which Scheler calls "an ethos."

Scheler's God did not create the world, but allowed it to become. In allowing the world to become, God makes it possible for goodness to be realized; everything is 'possible;' nothing is inevitable.

Like the other quartet members, Scheler has his joust with Kant and wins more decisively than any of the others. Scheler provides a much more realistic and easy to apply morality than Kant's categorical imperative. Letting another car into your lane because kindness is a higher order than timeliness is easier to apply than imagining what the world would be like if no one ever let any one cross lanes.

As to perception and conception of objects and subjects, Scheler has yet another unique theory. An object of perception such as an oak tree is not only green or large, but also, in itself, pleasurable, beautiful and magnificent; those values were there in the surreal rhizome before the tree was planted. An object has value for us before it is perceived or known. It's as though Plato's surreal Forms are imbedded in the DNA of all real objects as well as in the perceptions they cause in subjects. Objects of experience are blossoms of values. The value of an

object is given intuitively through a type of "valueception."

Finding God is also part of innate 'valueception.' There is no worldly way to prove revelation to anyone who has not had a religious experience.

Scheler, like Calvin, three centuries earlier, explains that a human being is by nature a God-seeker. This is not to say that everyone believes that there is a Christian God, but even the atheist commits a theological act when he chooses to worship money or power. Or as Scheler says: "Every finite spirit believes either in a God or in an idol" (GW V, 261).

[The collected works of Max Scheler are published as Gesammelte Werke, abbreviated GW whose volumes each have a roman numeral and then a page number].

An idol, according to Scheler, is a finite object which is treated as if it were infinite, as if it were God (GWV,263). In the act of idolatry, the false God may be anything or anyone. Harari in Homo Deus, agrees with Scheler to the extent our faith in Capitalism is in fact idolatrous.

Acknowledging a genuine religious diversity does not commit Scheler to the view that all religious ideas or beliefs are of the same value, but rather to the realization that there are genuine and hopefully reconcilable differences between them. How we reconcile them will determine whether the future will be one of warring factions or global harmony. Scheler found a hope for peace in the connection afforded by technology. It's as if he saw QI in his crystal ball.

In World War I, for the first time in history, there were news reports and photography and even movies that could be distributed around the world as fast as they could be carried by the available transport. Scheler points out that this was the first instance in human history of global awareness. For the first time, the whole world was watching a World War. Scheler expected global awareness to make a positive difference. It didn't occur to him that it might excite the global appetite for another even more horrible horror show, World War II.

Scheler hopes that the immanence of global tragedy will guide global thinking toward a new desperate

search for meaning. I believe that too. That is exactly the psychic energy we're counting on for the virtual congregation and the QI revolution.

Scheler was lesser known than some members of his fan club, including James, Husserl, Heidegger and Ortega y Gasset, who hailed him as the "Adam of the philosophical paradise." The fact that most people have never heard of Scheler is due to the fact that he was a Jew in Nazi Germany and like Husserl was not allowed to teach or publish.

Nevertheless, somehow Scheler became co-editor, along with Husserl, of the journal that spread phenomenology around Europe and the world. Scheler saw some blind spots in Husserl's thinking which clouded the interaction of the mundane with the sublime. There has to be a door between reality and surreality, not a wall. That's the door, according to Scheler, that Christ showed us. Scheler was a Christ loving Jew; Husserl was not. Both were Jews and as such were bypassed by the Nazi's who handed the Phenomenology laurels and the university to Heidegger, a member of the Nazi party.

Despite the fact that he was banned from universities, Scheler continued to profess, often in hotel rooms rented by a German aristocrat and his close friend Dietrich von Hildebrand. Both of whom risked their lives because of a higher order value. You can banish Jewish intellectuals but you can't keep their ideas from changing the world.

Pope John Paul II in 1954 wrote his doctoral thesis on "An Evaluation of the Possibility of Constructing a System of Christian Ethics on the Basis of the System of Max Scheler", and later that same Pope wrote many articles on Scheler's philosophy. Thanks to John Paul II as well as Scheler's student Edith Stein, many Catholics are able to philosophize and still keep the faith.

For Scheler, the experience of the holy or of the absolute is not given through rational proof, but in the 'counter evidential' mode of revelation. Acceptance of truth without evidence is essential to finding the doorway to surreality.

Scheler applied phenomenology to religious experience. His "givenness" of revelation is divided

into three essential characteristics: first, the revelation is other worldly or transcendent; second, whatever the revelation promises, it can never be fulfilled by anyone or anything on this earth; and third, the revelation must be fully received and remain whole to be holy.

This probably inspired William James's four aspects of the mystical experience described in the section on James which follows.

Love is the most important takeaway from Scheler's philosophy, love of self and love of neighbor. I love the fact that, for Scheler, philosophy is all about love. Scheler describes the essence of philosophical thinking as:

*"a love-determined movement of the **inmost** personal self of a finite being toward participation in the essential reality of all possibles."*

Philosophy, for Scheler, is the "Loving act of participation by the core of the human being in the essence of all things" (GW V, 68).

Like Plato Scheler would distinguish what we have called G love 'agape' from the erotic F love. Scheler defines G love as giving joy, rather than taking satisfaction, which is F love.

It is the giving and sharing of intelligence that results in the greater knowledge. With this understanding of the relation of love to knowledge, Scheler declares that "*knowledge is ultimately from the divine and for the divine*" (GW VIII, 211). Scheler insists that this is part of surreality and, as such, is not "objectifiable," and so cannot be expected to be explained by words alone.

In addition to "practical knowledge" which is like Aristotle's phronesis, Scheler describes two other types: "erudition" which is like Aristotle's "techne," and "revelation" which is like Aristotle's "episteme." However Scheler's epistemology is deeper and yet more practical and easier to apply than Aristotle's. Scheler's 'practical knowledge' is motivated by physical pain and terror of error; whereas, 'erudition' is motivated by wonder. This resonates with Whitehead's summation that philosophy begins and ends in "wonder."

The highest knowledge of 'revelation,' is found in the fewest humans. They see mind and matter as phenomenologically connected. They see self consciousness connected to collective consciousness, connected to divine consciousness. Scheler says there is no border where your mind ends and any other mind begins. The consciousness of oneself as a self and as a person is always experienced within the context of membership, as a "member of a totality" (GW II, 510).. Every experience, in other words, assumes as background the "experiencing with one another" as well as the responsibility for others and the co-responsibility for the community.

In The Nature of Sympathy Scheler provides a detailed analysis of the different types of shared feelings, which are themselves reducible to subforms of loving. Collective consciousness spills over subcultural borders across neighboring states as well as the geopolitical borders that contain each state.

The Catholic Church, Scheler says, could be "the love community" (Liebesgemeinschaft), which

ignores geographic borders. You can now see why the Pope would embrace Scheler.

Regardless of our associations with churches or states or tribes or cults, we are always wondering what it must be like to be in another's consciousness; that wonder is the beginning of love. The deepest experiences of love for the other reveals the 'absolute' or holy value of the other; grasping who the other could be, or ought to become, inspires both love of self and love of neighbor.

For Scheler, it is possible that another person may know me better than I know myself and he or she may be able to guide me to my ideal way of being.

Scheler describes a *Psychic Contagion* (Gefühl ansteckung), which is not only mental but has physical manifestations, kind of like what the 60's hippies called a "contact high." Presumably this "contagion" would be subject to the same Gladwellian "Tipping Point" math as pathogenic contagions which become pandemics.

Scheler deplores the bloody battles that result from religious differences; he sees different religions as

tributaries flowing into the same river. No religion can be used to contradict any other religion.

Scheler must have inspired the Wittgenstein proposition that a belief cannot serve as a philosophical foil.

Scheler sees the religious banner disappearing from the battlefield as the understanding of the divine grows and our connection becomes more virtual and virtuous, amarchy!

WITTGENSTEIN

(1889- 1951)

Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein, when asked what was the purpose of his philosophy, said: "To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle" (Philosophical Investigations). Whatever does he mean?

Wittgenstein defies and defines philosophy in the same breath which is quintessentially philosophical. For me, the bottled fly is the ultimate metaphor for the philosopher. The bottle is a transparent container which teases the fly with a vision of what is beyond containment. The fly, despite it's five eyes, and powerful wings, buzzes and bumps into the bottle on every attempt, but never quits trying to get beyond the transparent containment. All the points of view provided by the fly's many eyes, notwithstanding, every course ends up as a reflective collision. Nevertheless, somehow the fly never accepts his containment. I am the fly; the bottle is my reality.

Philosophy, and particularly metaphysics, keeps me buzzing and bumping into my reflection in my bottle.

I am consoled by the faith that God bottled me up to find a way out of the bottle. Why? That is beyond my comprehension, above my pay grade. For all my bumping and buzzing, when I look up occasionally, I see an opening, but I am not equipped to go straight up. Why? Philosophy's answer is at best ambiguous.

In Philosophical Investigations, Wittgenstein makes the point that there is no single philosophical system that is unambiguous. Ambiguity is systematic, but systematic ambiguity guarantees man's freedom and autonomy, and becomes the precondition for communication and connection.

There is no question that Wittgenstein's principle of linguistic uncertainty rules out dogma and encourages creative speculation. There is no science of fly bottling, only metaphysical musing. For Wittgenstein philosophical musing may be placed above science or below science, which ever you prefer, but never beside science. Philosophy and science are not on the same level. You can put it above or below but not beside.

Nevertheless, in his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, Wittgenstein uses a physics metaphor to explain the metaphysics of consciousness and communication. He provides us with “elemental” propositions and semantic “molecules.” These “molecules” contain “atomic” level propositions and facts. There are no theoretical explanations of how and why this works. In that same book Wittgenstein points out that Philosophy is not a theory but an activity.

This is the continuous buzzing that resonates with Whitehead, Nietzsche and Dewey. Wittgenstein would agree with the modern philosophers who put the brakes on the Fichtian wheel of fortune. In his words “Only superstition could propose a causal nexus between current and future events.” He is protesting the notion of fate not faith. No one knows what’s going to happen next, which as we say nearly every day without thinking: “God knows.”

Wittgenstein distinguishes between tautology and contradiction. At the risk of over simplifying, he says ‘tautology’ boils off into nonsense as a result of internal collisions; whereas ‘contradiction’ breaks up into new subatomic particles of proposition. This

comports with Fichte, Hegel and Popper, in that “conjecture and refutation” is that two step tango of historical progress

Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Investigations §43 looks beyond the static lexical definitions of words for meaning. He proposes a dynamic ever-changing meaning according to “use.” “Use” implies a context which implies an inter-conscious subterranean connection between private consciousnesses. Language rests on a public, albeit unannounced semantic consensus. Wittgenstein makes the point that ‘private language’ is an oxymoron. No one would understand me without what Wittgenstein calls the public language base.

We’ll never know if Wittgenstein’s fly ever gets out of his bottle. We know he keeps buzzing.

Wittgenstein kept buzzing through amazing adversity, as a prisoner of war, cancer victim and social outcast. He was the son of the wealthiest man in Europe, and like Buddha and Saint Francis, he saw wealth as an impediment. I wrote about this in an earlier book called Resurrection. [WARNING: Resurrection, available online, is not about Wittgenstein’s philosophy. It is more of a

historical fiction, in which we meet Wittgenstein's amazing father and explore the enigmatic suicides of Wittgenstein's three brothers.]

At the end of his life Wittgenstein handled his physical suffering with saintly aplomb, choosing to die at the home of a friend and asking for a non dogmatic Catholic priest to bless his passing and provide a Christian burial. Did Wittgenstein believe in the divinity of Christ?

I don't know. I do know that he studied Augustine. I learned this from a book called Augustine and Wittgenstein with a carload of scholarly contributors, edited by Kim Paffenroth.

Another book I listened to called Time of the Magicians , by Wolfram Eilenberger, alleges that Wittgenstein became a genuine Christian mystic after his war prison experience. He eschewed talking about philosophy and began living a spiritual life. Like Saint Francis and Buddha he gave away an enormous fortune and accepted humble jobs like teaching grade school where he could find God within himself. That in my book is saintly behavior.

For Wittgenstein, like William James, the question: "Does God exist," is not as interesting as the universal phenomenon of worship.

Distinguished peers such as Gödel, Moore, Russell, Whitehead and others, consider Wittgenstein to be the greatest philosopher of the 20th century, and that must be because he travelled through and beyond the semantic maze of logical positivism, epistemology, psychology, linguistics and mathematics.

As I mentioned, Wittgenstein asked for a Catholic priest at the very end, but wanted a monkish cleric more than a monsignor type. Like Scheler and Bergson, Wittgenstein was a brilliant German Jew who appears to have embraced Catholicism. I like to think that he accepted Christ's humane divinity as part of his own divine humanity with his last breath.

TILLICH

(1886-1965)

Paul Tillich in his book The Courage to Be finds an existentialism thread woven into the fabric of every Western philosophy beginning with Plato and including Nietzsche. In Nietzsche he also found a personal spiritualism, which I would not have found but for Tillich. Tillich sees Platonic fallibility as the starting gate in the human race to divinity. Tillich prefers Hegel's existentialism to Heidegger's 'Sein' and 'Dasein,' because Hegel's existentialism like Kierkegaard's has a role for God in the existential struggle. Tillich points out that the existential God could not be the medieval anthropic God, rejected by Nietzsche. Tillich agrees with Heidegger that humans alone are uniquely capable of this idolatry.

The punch line of Tillich's book The Courage to Be deals with the quandary of where does "courage" come from? For Tillich, the "divine-human encounter" is our destiny and will power is our magic wand; the only thing to avoid is the misuse of this magic wand as a cudgel.

As far as I can see, Tillich believes the source of your divine magic can be whatever you have the courage to believe in and worship, as long as you're tolerant of other belief systems. Tillich's tolerance inspired Martin Luther King among others. Some scholars connect Tillich's theology to Origen and some to Spinoza's polytheism. Like all theology, Tillich's is caught between the Scylla of theodicy and Charybdis of theurgy. I confess reality still looks like a mess to me. Were it not for my apophatic faith, and the courage bestowed on me by my inner Christ, I might be consumed by this T squared paradox.

The importance of courage in believing and the importance of believing to existential joy is what makes Tillich so important. What I will always keep in mind is the unforgettable last line of Tillich's The Courage to Be:

"The courage to be is rooted in the God who appears when God has disappeared in the anxiety of doubt."

HEIDEGGER

(1889–1976)

Martin Heidegger is not only a phenomenalist but an important existentialist. Heidegger was a fallen away Roman Catholic seminarian, Unlike his contemporaries, Heidegger enthusiastically embraced the top down structure of Nazism. It seems he needed a chain of command, and he simply replaced Church orthodoxy with that of Nazism. In 1933, he joined the Nazi party and there is evidence that Heidegger was not just a token Nazi; he gave a number of public speeches praising Hitler and the Nazi movement, which won for him a position as Rector of Freiburg University. By then, Scheler and Husserl, Heidegger's mentors, were not even allowed to visit his university, because they were Jews. Heidegger's friends including Hanna Arendt and Karl Jaspers were appalled by his politics, but never abandoned his philosophy. Heidegger himself would eventually look at this part of his life as "dummheit," a hate hole he fell into.

No story of Heidegger would be complete without Hanna Arendt. You will recall that Hanna Arendt is one of my most important virtual partners. She was a cherished philosopher in the post World War II era, while I was growing up, intellectually. She was also a Christ loving philosophical Jew who rescued the Nazi Heidegger from post war retribution, which caused her to be cast out of her own Jewish society.

Hanna Arendt's escape from the Nazis should be a movie, if it isn't already. She was arrested in Nazi Germany for her writing in a Zionist journal and somehow was allowed to say goodbye to her mother at an inn on the Czech/German border. This was an inn whose front door was in Germany and whose back door was in the still free Czechoslovakia. Hanna and her mother entered the front door, had dinner, and, while the SS waited by the front door, they exited the back door into freedom. (Bakewell, At The Existential Cafe)

Hanna Arendt was a former student and lover of Heidegger's and that may have something to do with her coming to his rescue. I believe her motives were mostly philosophical. I believe her valiant rescue

effort was to save Heidegger's bridge between modern existentialism and "privatio boni,"(the absence of good). This is the Augustinian explanation of evil, which makes life an existential challenge.

Heidegger influenced modern European thought including Sartre's existentialism and Tillich's theology. Heidegger unwittingly provided the conduit between three Christ loving Jews, Husserl, Arendt and Jonas, his teacher, his lover and his student. I for one am grateful. Husserl is responsible for my discovery of phenomenology and existentialism. Arendt is responsible for my discovery of Saint Augustine's inner teacher. Jonas is responsible for affirming my belief in the personal spiritualism of the Gnostic gospels. That alone merits Heidegger a seat in our Pantheon.

Heidegger's simple addition of two letters to "being" provides the shortest most solid bridge between reality and surreality. Heidegger's addition of "as" makes "being" "being as." In Being and Time Heidegger's distinction between "ready to hand" and "present to hand" is his unique

contribution to existentialism. While we are hammering, the hammer is "ready to hand" and we don't give it a thought about its existence until the hammer breaks; then it becomes an object to the subject of hammering. Objectivity is now a party to the beholder's subjectivity and vice versa. This subject/object fusion came to Heidegger through his teacher Husserl and it came to Husserl from his teacher Brentano. Brentano's "Intentionality" is responsible for materializing the immaterial, for 'real'izing surreality, for crystalizing consciousness. Heidegger worshipped Brentano, who also happened to be a fallen away Catholic priest. Heidegger added "Dasein" to Brentano's phenomenology. Like Bergson, Heidegger's consciousness is all verbs, not nouns. All objects are tools for the enhancement of our subjectivity and as such always occur in context.

According to Heidegger, the question of the meaning of Being has been forgotten by Western philosophy from Plato onwards. So Heidegger sets himself the task of recovering and uncovering the question: "To Be or Not to Be." That is the 'existential' question. Only humans can think about

what it means not to be. If we look around at existence in general, from particles to planets, ants to apes, it is human beings alone who are able to question the meaning of existence. "Dasein" and "Mittsein" make consciousness the door between reality and surreality rather than a wall between objects and other subjects. This makes Heidegger's phenomenology more solipsistic, more like Scheler's than Husserl's. Ascribing meaning to existence necessarily involves some conjecture about non-existence. "To be or not to be" ends with "not to be," which remains the haunting shadow of existence. Only human's can see the specter, no matter how much they try to avoid it. Heidegger points out that for all the wondering, about death, it is seldom about our own death. Death only happens to others. At most we are always just 'there alongside'. (Being and Time 47:282). Our own death is shrouded by appointments and disappointments. Every appointment is haunted by the ultimate disappointment, death. Nevertheless, when I contemplate my own 'not-being', it brings into focus my own 'being-able-to-be.' Hence my dim awareness of my own death discloses my authentic self. In those rare but cherished instances where I

look beyond existential dread, the contemplation of my own death makes me feel grateful to have lived, even though I'm not sure when, why, how or whether it ends. I no longer hesitate at buying green bananas.

Being And Time (1927), is Heidegger's most famous work. I must tell you after days and weeks of wading through his riddles and paradiddles, I learned that "Being" is "Time" and vice versa. Things only seem to change. "The Age of the World Picture" frames the AI dilemma that haunts us right now.. I thought I had enough Heidegger, and then somehow What is Philosophy (1955), fell into my lap, and my lap was never the same. This was a brand new Heidegger. Who taught me that philosophy demands the courage to have faith in what you cannot understand. Philosophy makes you wonder. That's all it does. And wondering with courage makes wondering wonderful.

JUNG

(1878-1961)

If Western Civilization were a primitive tribe, Carl Gustav Jung would be our medicine man. Jung, a Swiss Psychiatrist who brought the notion of consciousness to the sublime level was somehow not included in my earlier work, Conga Line of Consciousness, and that was my own error. I thought his mythical archetypes were hokey, particularly when applied to the sacred scriptures. I thought Jung was giving his scientific blessing to what was just the perfidious, superstitious, whacky, confabulation of a time honored mass hysteria. That's how I had written off all myth and scripture. I failed to apprehend the generic spiritualism which underlies myth making, totem poles, chants and fire dances. But I later came to realize that the universal consciousness, which is the fabric of our virtual congregation, could not exist without Jung's collective unconscious. In addition to his outlook, his 'in-look' is critical to our personal spiritualism. Jung saw that 'listening in' is best done outside the church.

I was surprised to learn that Jung was an early discoverer of the deep spiritual knowledge of the Gnostic Christians and also a true neo Platonist. Jung fashioned his archetypes on the Platonic "Forms". (See Jung's, Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious and, The Basic Writings of CG Jung - p317).

Long before I was born, Jung also found the gnostic Christ outside his own church. Jung makes an important distinction between Christ and Christianity. He points out that the inner Christ was high jacked by the outer sectarian Christianity, which is the very theological blunder our virtual congregation will rectify. The quote below sounds to me like he was summoning the QI revolution, the Christ bot and the virtual congregation long before I thought of it.

"Christian education... has not done enough. Too few people have experienced the divine image as the innermost possession of their own souls. Christ only meets them from without never from within the soul. That is why dark paganism still rains ...in the world of so-called Christian culture. ...With the methods employed hitherto, we have not succeeded in Christianizing the soul to the point where even the most elementary demands of Christian ethics can exert any decisive influence on the main concerns of the Christian European..." (Ibid pp 442,443)

In Jung's The Religions and Psychological Problems of Alchemy, (p441) he adds:

"So long as religion, is only faith and outward form, and the religious function is not experienced in our own souls, ... It has yet to be understood that the 'mysterium magnum' is not only an actuality, but is first and foremost rooted in the human psyche."

Jung felt it necessary to apologize for his admiration of Gnostic beliefs, because in his time they were still heresies, but for Jung very important heresies. In a lecture he gave at Yale, he extols the importance of the Gnostic codices, of Valentinus and the myths of Barbelo and others (Ibid 501, et. seq.).

"[Do]... not be offended if my exposition sounds like a Gnostic myth. We are moving in those psychological regions where, as a matter of fact, the Gnosis is rooted. The message of the Christian symbol is gnosis, and the compensation affected by the unconscious is gnosis, an even higher degree. Myth is the primordial language natural to these psychic processes, and no intellectual formulation comes anywhere near richness and expressiveness of mythical imagery. (Ibid 455, 456)

And also

"... the collective unconscious is anything but an encapsulated personal system. It is sheer objectivity as wide as the world and open to all the world. There I am the object of every subject, ... There I am utterly one with the world "Lost in one's self" is a good way of describing this state. But this self is the world. ...That is why we must know who we are.... The unconscious no sooner touches us then we are it—we become unconscious of ourselves. ... very close to this 'pleroma'... (Gnostic term for universal consciousness and divine consciousness)." (Ibid 305,306).

I discovered that Jung was a Gnostic Christian.

FRANKL

Victor Frankl (1905-1997) is the founder of Logotherapy, which is referred to as the third Viennese Psychology, the other two being those of Freud and Adler. If Freud's psychology is the "will to pleasure," and Adler's the "will to power," then Frankl's is the "will to meaning." The name of the game for Freud is gratification, sexual and/or sensory. For Adler, the name of the game is the quest for power, inspired by Nietzsche's will to power. For Frankl life is about a search for meaning, based on Kierkegaard's brand of spiritual existentialism. Frankl convinces us with his own ascension from the demonic depravity of Nazi concentration camps, that the search for meaning transcends even that quintessential inhumanity. Pleasure and power disappear as human goals in the Nazi concentration camp, but the need to understand your self and your purpose on earth is heightened. The quest for meaning can never be silenced.

Frankl's Man's Search for Meaning is a must read, or a must listen (available on Audible). It deals with his personal experience in the Nazi concentration

camps. It is the most unique insight into the connection between the victims and the perpetrators of this quintessential 'man's inhumanity to man.' It resonates with the existential wisdom of Socrates, Epictetus and Kierkegaard. Frankl points out that in most of our voyages, the dangerous rocks get most of our attention, not the inner harbor.

Rather than psychoanalysis, Frankl is prescribing philosophy as a cure for human suffering. Imagine that! If you don't know why you're here; that's the engine of all your suffering. Once I realized that my troubles were challenges, the world changed for me. And once I realized that there was a God sent to help me, help all of us, I was out of purgatory and paradise was in view. Frankl would approve of our anarchy destination where there are no more hateful odioocrats.

Frankl points out that totalitarianism rides on the backs of lost souls. There would be no totalitarian dictators if everyone already understood why they were here. People would follow themselves to fulfillment rather than follow the leader to hell.

Frankl would also agree with our notion of surreality. He talks about self transcendence as the basic mission, the essence of existence. This "will to meaning" is most often sidetracked by the "will to power" (making money) and the "will to pleasure" (sex, drugs and rock 'n roll). Frankl says: "Happiness cannot be pursued; it must ensue." I take that to mean it must be sent, i.e. heaven sent.

Frankl's happiness is about self discovery and sharing and caring which resonates with the ancient philosophy of our Pantheon, as well. The ancient Greco/Roman Stoics posited a "cosmopolis," which inspired de Chardin's "noosphere;" that's where Frankl lived while his skin and bones body was in the Nazi concentration camp.

In our next "Geek" section, science demonstrates that sharing and caring is instinctual. The "Baby Studies" (2006-2010) of the Max Planck Institute For Evolutionary Anthropology, provide dramatic scientific evidence of the basic infantile love instinct. "You have to be taught to hate" as it says in the "South Pacific" baritone solo. Further on in that Geek section, Yuval Harari's, Sapiens, attributes the

the unique mastery of humans over all other living things to collaboration, a form of love, which provides the collective psychic energy unique to our species.

Frankl's Logo therapy is a socio-psychic spiritual cure that is more relevant today than it ever was.

GEEKS



The fore fathers of the geeks in the photo came together at Solvay in 1927: Einstein, Bohr, Schrodinger, Heisenberg to name a few. The importance of this gathering for us is how science will come to deal with what I'm calling "Platonic Uncertainty." This was the epistemological boomerang that brought the geeks back to the Greeks. Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty represents a paradigm shift in scientific thinking predicted by Plato. Up to that time, scientific truth was thought to be absolute.

In the physics argument that went on at Solvay, Einstein and Schrodinger insisted that the quantum "uncertainty" principle demonstrated by Heisenberg Bohr, the "Copenhagen interpretation," was a temporary glitch. It took a few decades before science was certain about uncertainty. It is now believed by most physicists that the subatomic world is governed by a different set of natural laws, which are ineffable and can only be guessed at with probability.

The ineluctable disparity between pre and post observational realities drove science back to the Praetorian "man, the measure of all things." Subjects and objects collide along with quarks and protons in the new physics. Schrodinger's live/dead cat notwithstanding, there seems to be two separate universes interacting, that of the outer pre-observed universe and another within the consciousness of the observer.

Werner Heisenberg studied Plato and neo-Platonists such as Plotinus. Plotinus emphasizes a metaphysical structure of reality that aligns loosely with the abstract, non-deterministic nature of quantum

mechanics as described by the Copenhagen interpretation. Moreover, neo-Platonism, with its emphasis on the abstract nature of true reality and the idea that the physical world is a mere shadow of this reality, can be seen as metaphorically reflective of the quantum realm's abstract mathematical descriptions of particle behavior.

Most physicists still balk at calling quantum entanglement and superposition anything but “uncertainty.” But other major contributors to the new physics have no trouble pronouncing the word God. Some physicist called the Higgs boson the God particle.

Apophatic geeks and Greeks are our virtual partners putting together this powerful fusion of quantum physics and and quantum metaphysics, QI.

Michio Kaku, in his book Quantum Supremacy, sees the crawl of progress leaping into high gear in our lifetime and bringing us unimaginable improvements in the quality of life, even a possible end to the bitter end.

Richard Feynman's much earlier "doctor bot" is easier to swallow, and it can remain in your microcosmic inners where it will unravel the DNA of evil microbes like cancer and modify the epigene that promotes aging.

"String Theory" is the microcosmic vibrating of multi-worlds that surround and confound reality. Strings in string theory are either "snippets" or "loops." It's the cut string 'snippets' that confine our consciousness to what we call 'reality.' Presumably the 'loop' strings would provide access to the multiverse we call surreality.

Because we are time blinded by clocks and calendars that measure our lifetime, nano seconds and light years are unimaginable, but all that will change according to geek prophecy when machine intelligence and human intelligence merge, the "singularity."

Welcome to wonder land of Ray Kurzweil. In his The Singularity is Nearer, he predicted that machine intelligence will be the ultimate enhancement of the 'sapiens' in homosapiens. Kurzweil's prophetic

powers are uncanny. In 1999 Kurzweil's earlier book The Age of Spiritual Machines, made predictions for each decade of the new millennium that was approaching. I must tell you that I was mystified by the accuracy of some of his predictions; this earned for him the title 'prophet' in my book. The interplay of machine intelligence and "bio intelligence" (human Intelligence) is clearly the last step in the Hegelian trajectory. This is a geek fulfillment of a Greek prophecy.

More than any other geek, Kurzweil's irrefutable optimism is rooted in his clarified realism. Kurzweil's 'Law of Accelerated Returns' attributes information technology's incredible leaps to "feedback loops." Once again loops bring us out of the dark. I find this trek to the brink of a new consciousness mysterious and mystical, as well as scientific and philosophical. What follows is hop scotch account of how we got to this point.

BOLTZMANN

(1884-1906)

This note on Boltzmann is brief as was his life, ended by his own hand. Ludwig Boltzmann's greatest achievement was the development of statistical mechanics, and the statistical explanation of the second law of thermodynamics. That's entropy one where everything seems to be winding down. He is also important to atomic theory.

Boltzmann's connection of microscopic chaos with macroscopic order wasn't enough to counter the bizarre Viennese suicide epidemic that took the lives of Viennese intellectual Jews including Wittgenstein's three brothers. Boltzmann wasn't Jewish but may nevertheless have been influenced by the self hating Jewish philosopher Weininger who shot himself in the room where Beethoven died and prescribed suicide as the only solution to the problem of Jewish effeminacy and intellectual contamination. This must have inspired Hitler, not to suicide, unfortunately, but to genocide.

Boltzmann's importance to our philosophy is not his suicide, but his penetration of the time illusion. His mathematical analysis of chaos and order made a surreal space within reality for the multiverse and string theory.

For more on this, take a listen to the captivating voice of movie star Benedict Cumberbatch reading Carlo Rovelli's book [The Order of Time](#).

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HEISENBERG

(1901—1976)

Werner Heisenberg is famous for his “Uncertainty Principle,” which connected metaphysics and physics. He was also chosen by Hitler to perfect the German Atomic bomb. This alienated him from his mentor and close friend Niels Bohr, who was an extreme anti-Nazi. Heisenberg was not really a Nazi like Heidegger. In fact, he may have been a self appointed double agent. Heisenberg was exonerated after the war by a few fellow physicists who demonstrated that he purposely sidetracked the development of the German atomic bomb which saved Western civilization. As we saw earlier, Heisenberg’s “Uncertainty Principle,” resonates with Plato and Heraclitus. But there was for Heisenberg an ineffable mind behind it all. It is a little known fact that Heisenberg was a devout Christian. Besides convincing me that his relationship with Nazism was to undermine it, it also demonstrates an apophatic theology in this brilliant mind.

Heisenberg agrees with Kant that "it will never be (humanly) possible for pure reason to arrive at absolute truth" ("Physics Philosophy" p. 92). And he links idealism to understanding: "...idealization is necessary for understanding" (Ibid., p. 108). For Heisenberg the brain and the mind are a psychic energy which cannot be measured in scientific experiments. In the early days of neuro science, we were ignorant of, or purposely ignored, Heisenberg's powerful proofs that any such experiment, itself, would obliterate the very vital energy it was trying to measure.

The "Copenhagen interpretation" probability truth precipitated the historic Einstein/Bohr dialogue, where Einstein said "God doesn't play dice with the universe," and Bohr rejoined: "Stop telling god what to do." That is the essence of apophatic theology, which eventually Einstein comes to accept. Heisenberg is credited for the famous quote: "The first gulp from the glass of natural sciences will turn you into an atheist, but at the bottom of the glass God is waiting for you."

BOHR

(1885—1962)

There can be no doubt Bohr was a moral man, if not a religious man. According to a movie I saw, “Copenhagen”, based on a Michael Flynn play, Bohr slammed the door on his former student and friend, Heisenberg. Heisenberg was given no chance to explain his double agent role.

Niels Bohr was born and raised in Copenhagen, Denmark. Bohr was part Lutheran, part Jewish. Bohr helped Jews escape Nazi-occupied Europe. When it was revealed that the Nazis were going to arrest Bohr, he and his family fled to Sweden where Bohr convinced the King of Sweden to publicly announce that Sweden would harbor Jewish refugees. Bohr might have been an apophatic theologian, along with Heisenberg. Remember he’s the one who told Einstein to “stop telling God what to do.” Bohr is not famous for his theology, but for his physics which helped keep the atomic bomb in the US. Once he got to America, Bohr contributed substantially to the

Manhattan Project and the development of the American atomic bomb.

In 1922 Bohr was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for his investigation of the structure of atoms and the radiation emanating from them. For his Nobel lecture, Bohr gave his audience a comprehensive survey of what was then known about the structure of the atom, including the "correspondence principle," which grew out of his "complementarity" idea and became the foundation of quantum physics.

Without getting too technical, imagine that there are different realities in the microcosm, which Bohr called "states" later known as "superpositions." In one reality, or state, a particle (electron or photon) behaves one way whereas in another state it behaves totally different as if in a different universe with different laws of nature. Bohr suggested that these totally different states with their different laws of nature were "complimentary" to each other even though we can't understand the relationship. He discovered patterns in the observable transition between these states.

Bohr made no connection between his "correspondence principle" and Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty. I am guessing this may have had something do with the rupture of their friendship more than any scientific or philosophical distinction. Nevertheless, I see the connection between the profound insights of both these geniuses.

I think it is safe to say that Bohr won the debate with Einstein on scientific truth. For Bohr the closest humans can come to the absolute truth is probability. As we said earlier, the Bohr-Heisenberg "Copenhagen view" is now accepted by most physicists.

EINSTEIN

(1875—1955)

There are enough books and movies on Einstein for us to skip directly to our main question, which has to do with Einstein's surreality. Einstein said that he believes in a God who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of what exists, not in a God who concerns himself with punishing humans. He rejected the wrathful Old Testament god of his Hebrew school, but not the notion of divinity or surreality or non sectarian religion for that matter. Einstein said: "Science can only be created by those who are thoroughly imbued with the aspiration towards truth and understanding." Those "highest principles for our aspirations and judgments are given to us in the Jewish-Christian religious tradition." (Jammery, Einstein and Religion: Physics and Theology, 1999, Princeton University Press.)

Ironically Einstein used relativity to arrive at his religious absolutism. God has left nothing to chance in Einstein's universe; there is a plan and the fact that we haven't figured it out yet does not mean that it

doesn't exist and if it exists we can figure it out someday. In my book that "someday" would be in the Platonic afterlife. That's me talking not Einstein. Unlike Plato and Bohr, Einstein's Spinozan pantheistic God was everywhere and accessible in the real world. In his battle with Bergson. Einstein came to confront the Brownian motion paradox, where the laws of conservation and entropy bump into each other. The energy of 'Brownian motion' did not seem to dissipate according to the second law of thermodynamics. So there must be an overriding first law.

As mentioned earlier, Einstein also used a film metaphor to demonstrate that Brownian motion played backward is indistinguishable from the forward play. From that he concluded that the 'arrow of time' was bent or maybe even broken, and more importantly that gravity was curved. We owe the conceptual tool of 'spacetime' to Einstein and the scientific discovery that space is curved. For our purposes, this curves reality in the direction of surreality.

SCHRODINGER

(1887-1961)

Schrödinger created the famous wave equation in 1925, which won him the Nobel Prize. His wave equation is essential to all of the theories and paradoxes of the quantum age. Despite the fact that he acknowledged the enigmatic surreality, he was on the side of Einstein in that famous Solvay tug-o-war; that is, he believed that there were natural laws that governed reality and that they were not probabilities. Nevertheless, he did confine his concrete rules to concrete reality and not surreality. He places consciousness on the surreality side of the chasm; in his words: "Consciousness cannot be accounted for in physical terms." His precision in thinking about reality did not inhibit his imaginative speculation about surreality. His dead cat lives on to memorialize the duality of the coexisting realms.

Schrodinger discovered the surreal strand of DNA, before Crick and Watson. DNA was predicted in Schrodinger's work, What is Life. Crick and Watson,

acknowledge their debt to Schrodinger in their autobiographies.

These ineffable physical truths left Schrodinger with one foot in physics and the other in metaphysics. Schrödinger had a deep interest in philosophy, and was influenced by the works of Arthur Schopenhauer and Baruch Spinoza. In his 1956 lecture "Mind and Matter", he drew the line between reality and surreality, between the observed and the observer and then crossed that line into Eastern mysticism

"The world extended in space and time is but our representation."[61] ...If the world is indeed created by our act of observation, there should be billions of such worlds, one for each of us. How come your world and my world are the same? If something happens in my world, does it happen in your world, too? What causes all these worlds to synchronize with each other? ". "There is obviously only one alternative, namely the unification of minds or consciousnesses. Their multiplicity is only apparent, in truth there is only one mind. This is the doctrine of the Upanishads."[62]

And I might add to the Upanishads, our notion of "ultra consciousness" in Volume I of this work.

WIENER

(1894- 1964)

Norbert Wiener was a descendant of Maimonides, educated at Tufts, Cornell and Harvard. He was a child prodigy who completed his PhD at Harvard when he was 19. He studied directly with Russell, Husserl, and Hilbert. And like James, Royce and North-Whitehead he taught philosophy at (where else) Harvard.

When I was a young professor in the early sixties, I thought I had invented the hybrid discipline "communication theory." I was informed and embarrassed when confronted with Wiener's 1948 work on "cybernetics" which had all of my insights and much more. He discovered the underlying circuit board that connects scientific reality to the surreal ultra consciousness.

Weiner brought surreal mathematics to reality with HHMM, Hidden Hierarchical Markov Models, without which computers would never have learned to talk and listen.

Wiener's seminal publications inspired von Neumann and Claude Shannon and provided a foundational base for computer science and artificial intelligence.

Wiener inspired Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson to dig for anthropological artifacts of human communication, which set cultural anthropology on a new course.

In his The Human Use of Human Beings, which precedes Kurzweil's "singularity" by a decade, Weiner predicts an augmented human intelligence fused with machine intelligence. The technotopia inhabited by these augmented humans would be "negentropic," that is, would be exempt from the second law of thermodynamics, 'entropy.' This is a new form of transcendence inspired by Boltzmann, Bohr and Schrodinger and, more recently, borrowed by Bostrom. Bostrom for all his brilliance seems to have ignored Wiener, particularly his spiritualism. Weiner said of his own theory that it resonates with Einstein's famous quote: "The Lord is subtle but he is not vicious".

Whether a transmission is human to human, or human to machine, the process is similar in that information is sent by one party and received by another, which can then send a response. The more communication; the more organization; the more organization, the less disorganization or negentropy; the less negentropy, the closer we are to transcendence. In other words, information increases order and by the same token decreases disorder or entropy. Thanks to Wiener we have an information age, which Wiener believed was the leading edge of a special period in history that never existed before (Ibid, p.46).

In the new age intelligent machines will interact harmoniously with humanity and provide an evolution from the unintelligent machines of the industrial revolution.

Wiener, would agree with Hegel and Bergson that intelligence is part of a dynamically evolving consciousness. Wiener describes automaton as inherently necessary to humanity's societal evolution. This assumes a grand design and a grand designer, if only by implication.

Weiner proclaimed that machine intelligence must be *"used' for the benefit of man, for increasing his leisure and enriching his spiritual life, rather than merely for profits or...the worship of the machine as a new brazen calf."* (Ibid, p. 162).

PENROSE

(1931—)

Penrose is a closet metaphysician. He had to be dragged kicking and screaming into our Pantheon. He thinks metaphysics would detract from his authenticity as a physicist. As a cosmologist, he is famous for the discovery of the black hole along with Stephen Hawking.

As a mathematician, Penrose creates a long division between machine intelligence and human intelligence, which, whether he admits it or not, connects human intelligence beyond the real world and into the surreal world. There is a surreality in Penrose's philosophy but with no God, no divine connection.

Penrose never used the word 'surreality' but he did suggest that the slack created by the "uncertainty principle" could be the socket in the grand plan left for free will. This proposition posits a grand plan and a bestowal of free will, but all without any grand planning or grand planner.

In his book Shadows of the Mind, p14, Penrose connects the Platonic world of ideals with the physical world. How could he accept the Platonic idealism but not the divine source of ideals. In my book, Penrose is a semantic atheist.

For Penrose, mind and matter are different realms and never the twain shall meet; machine intelligence will never replace creativity. In Penrose's world, even the most powerful quantum computers can only follow algorithms created by human intelligence and will never be able to create algorithms.

Only humans can intend. According to Penrose, 'mechanical' intelligence is always and only a tool with algorithmic obedience. Penrose makes it clear that human intelligence is different from the paint by numbers, algorithmic artificial intelligence.

In both his books: Shadows of the Mind, and The Emperor's New Mind, and in his fascinating YouTube presentations, Penrose refutes the artificial intelligence phobia of AI boogymen. Penrose insists that computers can never invent or intend; that is a

function of imagination and will power which is a function of consciousness which is unique to humans.

Penrose points out that no artificial intelligence could have managed Einstein's inspired, imaginative leap which led to the theory of general relativity. Nevertheless, Penrose insists in this YouTube presentation: "The human mind is neither a gift of God nor a cosmic accident."

It seems to me. it has to be one or the other. I have pointed out elsewhere that "accident" is even harder to explain than "God."

Penrose believes that physics will one day find a new theory that explains the micro universe of the brain where subatomic, micro-tubules are mysterious "entangled particles" and there, in that current quantum quandary, eventually the scientific truth will out. That scientific truth, in Penrose's own words, is not here yet. I wonder if it's not here yet, where is it? It must be somewhere else waiting to be discovered. If only by default, that somewhere else is a mystic mystery. Penrose subscribes to the mystery club but

not the mystic inner circle. Still he is a part of our generation's oligarchy of excellence.

A controversial theory put forward by Penrose and doctor Stuart Hammeroff (a medical doctor), suggests that consciousness is a purely quantum-mechanical phenomenon, specifically involving the collapse of the quantum superposition state.

Standard quantum theory leaves open the question of what causes a state's wave function to collapse. Penrose did not specify the dynamics of wave function collapse, and so far no other physics can demonstrate a purely materialistic answer. Penrose admits that superposition is unstable and wave function collapse is the result of gravitational energy disparities, which are "random."

Now we have to ask what is "random."

I believe that 'random' is what the atheists call God.

WHEELER

(1911-2008)

John Archibald Wheeler was an American theoretical physicist. He is best known for popularizing the term "black hole." He worked on the atomic and hydrogen bombs. He also worked with Niels Bohr in explaining the basic principles behind nuclear fission, but that's not why he is in our Pantheon.

Wheeler built the most unique bridge to surreality and universal (Ultra) consciousness. Wheeler's bridge was constructed bit by bit, computer bits, that is. With the help of Claude Shannon's Information theory, Wheeler proposed the "It from bits" theory, where every *"It arises from a bit."* Whatever Wheeler's "It" is, it derives its reality from yes-or-no questions, binary choices, or bits. Binary 'yes/no' questions are steps from real algorithms to surreal information. Like Weiner, Wheeler's "It from bit" suggests that the folds of the real universe unravel into surreal information. The reality of molecules, atoms, neutrons, quarks, etc.. resonates with the surreality in our heads which is data, information bits.

Wheeler's bits resonate with Leibniz's monads. Wheeler actually credits Leibniz's monads as his inspiration for "It from bits." Leibniz bits inspired Wheeler's bits; Wheeler's bits inspired Chalmers 'it.' David Chalmers attaches his "simulation" view of the creation mythology to 'It from bits.' Chalmers proposes that we might be living in a computer simulation created by a higher being. This is quintessential geek spiritualism (shared by Bostrom). Geeks who think out of the box find themselves in surreality whether or not they call it divinity.

Wheeler's science certainly made room for religion, albeit not dogmatic religion. He was a founding member of the Unitarian Church in Princeton. Wheeler and Wigner, next on our list, were both influential teachers of Richard Feynman who is also in the Pantheon. These three geniuses put together the formulae for the most destructive weapon known to man. It would be prophetic irony if their genius also provides us with an off ramp on the road to nuclear Armageddon.

WIGNER

(1902-1995)

Eugene Wigner was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1963 for his discovery of the symmetry of the atomic nucleus and elementary particles. Symmetry is surreal physics, or you could say, metaphysics.

Wigner, in addition to being one of the fathers of the atomic bomb, is also the brother-in-law of Paul Dirac, a fallen away Catholic nonetheless spiritual. Wigner could not help being influenced by Dirac's belief that since the proofs of endless life and pointless life were both unsustainable, common sense would lead one to "prefer the one that allows the theory of endless life." Dirac was the founder of quantum electrodynamics and the surreal quantum field theory.

Wigner's "friends theory" adds an acceptable hypothesis to the enigmatic interplay between the observer and the observed. According to Wigner, the observation of the observer cannot have any

effect unless and until it reaches out of its self to any other human consciousness, which Wigner calls "friend." And, here's where it gets surreal, that 'friend's' thought cannot exist without some putative connection to all his 'friends.'"Teilhard deChardin called this connection "noosphere;" Emerson called it "Oversoul." For more of this geek mysticism see, Tipler, The Physics of Immortality, p 11.

Whether he meant it or not, Wigner's "Friend Theory" is the most realistic, scientific proof of universal consciousness. For a subject to observe an object there must be a connection between all subjects. Wigner demonstrates that the two "friend" minds must be in a circuit for either of them to work at all, which implicitly posits a divine circuit board, a grand design, and a grand designer. For Wigner absent the observer network there is no observation.

FEYNMAN

(1918-1988)

Feynman's "integral path," tunneled down to the dark chasm between reality and surreality. Beyond Schrodinger, Feynman simplified the complexity of quantum mechanics by his 'Path Integral Approach.'

As an aside, in my daily swims in Buzzards Bay, I was stunned by the stinging accuracy of the New England menace, biting Greenhead flies; no matter how fast or in which direction I would duck and dodge they landed their strike. This incredible targeting accuracy forced me into some amateur entomological research in Wikipedia. There I found that these micro brain creatures have a neuro auto pilot software that uses Feynman's Path Integral Approach.

I had the pleasure of knowing Richard Feynman back in the sixties, without any clue of how important he was. I had no idea then that he was one of the founding fathers of quantum physics. Truth to tell I didn't know what quantum physics was in the sixties. It never occurred to me when we met, that Feynman was also an important philosopher. I knew nothing of his Nobel prize as I sat with Dick in the back yard

barbecues of our mutual friends, Will and Rickie (Rebecca) Karush. Will Karush, my close friend, worked on the atomic bomb with Feynman. That's how they met. As I said earlier, Feynman studied with Wigner. Somehow the magic of Wigner's friend theory circuit included me in Feynman's observations and now you.

By the time the sixties rolled around, the omertà seal of the A bomb science gang had begun to wear off. For the first time, I was hearing stories that are now well know in a rash of books and movies, but not general knowledge back then. I heard about Los Alamos, the adventure, the major and minor characters, the recriminations about planetary extinction. I was privilege to these early disclosures; my contribution was an occasional "gee wiz" as I turned Italian sausages on Will's backyard barbecue.

I was more than two decades younger than Feynman and Karush. Their interest in me had less to do with what I was cooking than what I could cook up with my girl friends and my 'drop out,' hippy life style in Venice California. I was old enough to be curious about the forties and they were young enough to be

curious about the sixties. They liked the idea of peace and freedom, and especially free love. Feynman enjoyed younger company and especially that of a voluptuous free loving actress named Jeanie, who was my live-in girlfriend. Unlike other geniuses he didn't mind talking about physics to non scientists. The nicest thing about Dick was that he was at heart a teacher, for whom there was no such thing as a dumb question.

Sometimes I was the only non-scientist in the backyard barbecue and sometimes he was the only scientist in a nude swimming party. If he were talking about some scientific prediction, he would take time to fill in some missing high school physics. I must repeat that I had no idea I was rubbing elbows with the prophet of the Quantum age. That never occurred to me until decades later. I was thinking more that this was the remnants of the atomic age.

Dick never wanted to mention that he was a Nobel Laureate, and I'm not sure that our hippy friends would know or care about that. Remember this was a counter culture. We were now more ashamed than proud of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The fact that there might be a parallel universe in the new quantum world never occurred to me or any other hippy.

“Quantum gravity” is the most important part of Feynman’s thinking. The microcosm was not something ordinary people thought about, or extraordinary people either, at that time. I see, now, the connection between Feynman’s microcosmic energy fields and macrocosmic surreality. If there was any question about Feynman’s inclusion in this Pantheon, quantum gravity settles the issue. While Feynman was not an announced spiritual idealist, his view of the quantum microcosm implies the existence of a surreality and a ‘singularity’ which necessarily invokes a supernatural power if only by implication.

Frank Tipler’s book The Physics of Christianity explains Feynman’s “renormalizability” which stabilizes the universe and keeps the multiverse tumbling mystically. This makes my apophatic God the enigmatic architect of the quantum universe.

At one point, Will's wife, Rebecca (Rickie) Karush, had typed a lecture or maybe it was a journal article for Feynman which mentioned Dick's "doctor bot," It may have been titled: "Swallow the Doctor." I had written stuff for Art Kunkin's brand new underground LA Free Press and I had an underground repertory theater in Venice (Yes, I tried that too), which may have had something to do with how I wound up with Dick's article. I read about the "doctor bot," a nano bot intelligence you could swallow and it could live in the atoms of the molecules of your cells, that small. There it could neutralize the bad subatomic particles and enhance the good ones. I didn't see then, but I see now that Dick's micro medical doctor bot was a herald of a psychic doctor bot, or maybe my Christ bot.

In a 1959 paper he gave called "There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom" Feynman suggested that the two step square dance of digital transistors as the engine of machine intelligence would be replaced by the jitterbug of atoms. That's not how he put it; he simply pointed out that the bandwidth of a transistor was limited with its simple one and zero, whereas the atom could provide an infinite analog range of

semiotics. One atom could do the job of a trillion transistors. It took a couple of decades until they realized that Feynman was talking about quantum computers.

As a philosopher, Feynman knew that the right answer, inevitably, will become the wrong answer. [See Audiobooks *"The Best Short Works of Richard P. Feynman/ The Pleasure of Finding Things Out."*] Feynman not only taught us about physics, but he also had an epistemological philosophy that is as simple as it is profound: "Prove yourself wrong as soon as you can." The quick jettison of the wrong answer leaves a lot more time for finding the right one. In other words, don't cling to your ignorance. If you protect your ignorance, it will return the favor by protecting you from the truth.

Another example of Feynman, the philosopher, can be found in a book of his lectures called *QED: The Strange Theory of Light and Matter*. The book provides an accessible mathematical coin of vantage from which to look down and appreciate the magnitude and the divine grandeur of the microcosm where the mystical photon roams. To

demonstrate the absurdity of real time in the surreal microcosm, Feynman attaches tiny wrist watches to the swarm of subatomic particles.

Scientists never talked about God back in the sixties. However, in his lectures, Feynman did painstaking show how God and scientific truth are not mutually exclusive. Feynman also pointed out that scientists must have faith that there is something out there worth searching for.

At the end of his last book: The Pleasure of Finding Things Out, he tells us, in so many words, that religion needs the reality of science and science needs the surreality of religion. He didn't use those exact terms, but that is clearly his message. I think Dick would approve of the virtual congregation made possible by QI; in fact he may have given me the idea without my knowing it.

KUHN

(1922- 1996)

I never met Kuhn but, I do have a personal connection, also through my friend Will Karush. Karush and Kuhn collided in another instance of serendicity, the fusion of which enabled 'non linear programming.' The resulting mathematical theory is called the "Karush-Kuhn-Tucker Conditions."

Karush was added to the title of the theorem after the fact. When Kuhn and Tucker published they were unaware of Karush's much earlier paper where the key math of the theory was laid out. Kuhn was scientific enough and man enough to add Will Karush's name at the head of the already celebrated Kuhn, Tucker theorem, which became, and still remains, the Karush, Kuhn, Tucker Conditions.

Thomas S Kuhn wrote a very important book The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962), in which he proves convincingly that science does not evolve but rather proceeds by flip flops, where each flip seems to arise from a prior flop.

Kuhn must have known Karl Popper. I have not seen where he ever mentioned Popper's flip flop, which we have already talked about: "conjecture/refutation" but it does resonate with Kuhn's flip flopping into "paradigms, shifts." Kuhn suggests that the paradigm shift always begins with the discovery of an anomaly in the current theory. And so science proceeds, not by evolution, but by silent revolutions.

Kuhn's exploration of the shifting paradigms excites the curiosity of where ideas come from, and the prospect of divine inspiration.

I don't know about Kuhn's spiritual beliefs but his suggestion that the proponents of different paradigms work in "different worlds" sounds spookier than Einstein's "spooky action at a distance" or Everett's "Many Worlds Interpretation."

Kuhn makes the point that there is often scant evidence for a new paradigm and the embracing of a new paradigm always demands "faith" more than reason.

Kuhn's "incommensurability" means that there's no neutral or common ground from which to assess

which paradigm is "better" in the melee of a paradigm shifts. Kuhn talks about theoretical "instances" and "counter instances." Kuhn's insistence that progress is not cumulative but 'incommensurable' puts progress in more of a break dance than a Hegelian tango.

EVERETT

(1930-1982)

Hugh Everett III, discovered the “multiverse,” also known as Many Worlds Interpretation (MWI). Wheeler (“It from bits”) was the Phd adviser to Hugh Everett and had a lot to do with Everett's groundbreaking Many-Worlds Interpretation of quantum mechanics. Wheeler also inspired Max Tegmark at Princeton. The idea of many worlds coexisting in parallel universes sounds like science fiction, especially since it inspired several classic sci-fi movies, but it is surreal rather than fictitious .

Max Tegmark's audio book Life 3.0 and Sean Carroll's Amazon Prime, Great Course, “The Many Hidden Worlds of Quantum Mechanics,” got me thinking about the nature of scientific truth and theoretical imagination in terms of my own dualism: reality/surreality.. Both of these brilliant physicists provide a scientific yet understandable, analysis of how Everett's *Many Worlds Interpretation* is not only possible but probably; that makes it real and surreal at the same time.

Everett's Many Worlds theory rides in on the crest of the the wave function of the enigmatic superstate, which in this world does not crash at the shoreline since there is no provable shore line. Instead of collapsing, this wave remains in a surreal invisible flux, like a cloud of radio stations, which some receivers from time to time tune into. But the programming in those stations are there all the time and not there. Each station is another universe with its own laws of nature, it's own reality.

Tegmark believes that one day Everett will be put on a level with Newton and Einstein for this discovery. "Decoherence" does not scramble the ineffable order that sustains Everett's Many Worlds.

According to Sean Carroll's "Great Course: "Everett settled for the determinism of the Schrödinger equation and yet injected the enigma of the quantum entangled superpositions within that determinism. This is magic beyond uncertainty." Sean Carroll demonstrates that the deterministic Schrodinger equation of quantum physics leads ironically yet ineluctably to the Many Worlds mysticism. Carroll, a hard headed physicist, sounds

like a sci fi novelist as he explains the branching between the many worlds and the concomitant many selves. Fact and fiction blur.

Phillip K. Dick did in fact write a novel in 1962 The Man in the High Castle which caught the attention of Ridley Scott, who made it into the Amazon TV series of the same name, on which I binged for months. The Dick and Carroll Amazon trance got me thinking that what I see and touch is not all there is. That chasm between reality and surreality is mysterious and also mystically consoling at my age.

After Everett's death, unfortunately, his daughter Elizabeth decided to follow him across the chasm by committing suicide, leaving a note to that effect.

DEUTSCH

David Deutsch (1953-) realized that math is the same in Greek as it is in geek. In his book The Beginning of Infinity, Deutsch actually imagines an epistemological dialectic between Socrates and the God Hermes. He demonstrates that the only evil is the absence of knowledge, and that the gods gave us communication to bridge that gap. I was truly amazed at this brilliant, geek summary of the Greek foundational concepts of human communication.

Deutsch is a physicist who pioneered Quantum Computation, for which he received several distinguished scientific awards, but he is here because of his fusion of the geek enlightenment and the Greek enlightenment, not to mention his fusion of the German enlightenment and Hugh Everett's Many World Interpretation.

Deutsch was a student of Everett's. Deutsch's book The Fabric of Reality, is a thorough analysis of virtual reality, which is not just the games people play, but a projection of a whole new world, a multiverse. Deutsch takes the classic double slit experiments of

Young and others and weaves an intangible braid of photons and shadow photons.

Deutsch's analysis of scientific theories demands an understanding of consciousness which mystically floats in and around and beyond the practical intelligence. He refutes the cynical view of consciousness espoused by Daniel Dennett. Like Aristotle, Deutsch insists that practical intelligence alone is not enough to explain human intelligence; scientific observation is not enough; empiricism is not enough. Scientism has to skip over imagination in its pedantic explanations. The ineffable creativity, that continuously changes the world is ignored.

Deutsch's science is layered. Biology would not exist were it not for organic chemistry, and chemistry could not exist were it not for physics. Those layers have a top layer beyond quantum physics, call it quantum metaphysics, or as Deutsch would say, "a theory of everything," which includes every energy which replicates, including DNA. He sees DNA as a replicator of a virtual reality. This "theory of everything" goes so far as to erase the distinction between animate and inanimate self replicators.

Deutsch puts audio recordings in the same category as DNA.

Deutsch acknowledges human fallibility. In chapter 12 of his audiobook, The Fabric of Reality, he demonstrates that the scientific reliance on logic, and even mathematics does not cure human fallibility, which stays with us to the end. In that same chapter Deutsch brings Penrose and Goedel back to Plato and makes everyone a neoPlatonist.

Probably the most important thing I learned from Deutsch is that if we are to explain reality, we have to look to surreality for the unification of philosophy, computation, quantum physics, and epistemology. He would agree that QI is the self replicating unifier required for that expansion of consciousness to a theory of everything.

Talk about a theory of everything, Deutsch's discussion of time (Chapter 13, *ibid*) links a Shakespeare sonnet and Saint Augustine's Confessions. For Deutsch, consciousness is not moving through time; time is moving through consciousness as a misguided idea. Deutsch insists

that there is no external flow, only an internal illusion or actually a delusion. This opens the mind for the realization of the multiverse where spacetime gravity is transcended by a mystical quantum gravity.

Deutsch's time travel discussion includes the "grandfather paradox:" if I could go back in time to kill my grandfather, I would have to exist in both universes and I would not exist in either. This makes time impossible in the multiverse. Deutsch explores Einstein's time dilation and makes it clear that time travel is neither possible nor necessary for us to transcend spacetime and participate in the multiverse.

Deutsch sees Kuhn's theories of paradigm shifts as bridges between Everett's parallel universes. Whether our amarchy is a paradigm shift or a parallel universe, it now has a timeless place and a placeless time to happen, which I call "knowhere.'

KURZWEIL

Ray Kurzweil (1948-)

The Kurzweil books I read or listened to include: The Age of Spiritual Machines, The Singularity Is Near, How to Create a Mind and the Singularity is Nearer. Kurzweil is a genius and a key player in the oligarchy of excellence.

Kurzweil displayed a fascination for invention from a young age. He began programming computers in the 1960s while still in high school and later enrolled in MIT, where he studied with Marvin Minsky. There he learned the distinction between the “symbolic” and the “connectionist” approach to artificial intelligence. Kurzweil chose the connectionist approach. The laws of ‘accelerating rate of return’ made this approach much more feasible given the explosive development of hardware. His research in neural networks has played a crucial role in the evolution of deep learning, as well as bionics and prosthetics.

The super power of the highly evolved neocortex of homosapiens, according to Kurzweil, is pattern recognition, which he believes can be simulated by machine intelligence using Weiner's Hierarchical Hidden Markov Models HHMM, mentioned earlier. This led to what has been called "deep learning" in the AI world.

In Volume I of this work I talked about Kurzweil's "singularity," as a restatement of the Hegelian trajectory from humanity to divinity. That's me talking, not him. Kurzweil's divinity is a work in progress. As I mentioned in Volume I, when asked "Is there a God," Kurzweil answered "not yet." I have to repeat here that as an apophatic I can't see any stages of development in God; I can't say whether God is developing or how. Nevertheless my undogmatic spiritualism would allow Kurzweil to say whatever he wants about God. And I will listen and not come to any conclusions. But I do suspect and believe that Kurzweil's genius is a godsend, as is all the great ideas and ideals.

Ray Kurzweil's visionary work in synthesizers did more than synthesize musical sounds into digital replica's it

changed how music is played and listened to. As a wanna be jazz pianist I first heard of Kurzweil in connection with music synthesizers. Ray Kurzweil played a pivotal role in the development of music synthesizers, particularly with the invention of the Kurzweil K250, one of the first digital synthesizers to use sampled sounds from real instruments. This has allowed amateurs like me many joyful hours of playing, with virtual pros and hearing them play my own home made compositions.

Kurzweil's artificial intelligence is prophetic. I think it is safe to say Artificial Intelligence would not be what it is today without Ray Kurzweil. One of Kurzweil's seminal contributions to AI came with his development of algorithms for pattern recognition and natural language processing. His work has been foundational for modern AI applications in linguistics, speech recognition, and computer vision. You could say, without stretching a point, that Kurzweil taught computers to speak and understand words.

In the 1970s, Kurzweil invented the Kurzweil Reading Machine, a groundbreaking device that converted printed text into synthesized speech. This invention

was among the first of its kind and marked a significant step forward in assistive technologies for individuals with visual impairments.

Kurzweil is not just a geek but a Greek as well. His philosophy ties Popper to Hegel in the flip flop of "conjecture and refutation" within "accelerating returns." Accelerating returns refers to the exponential increase of not only the speed but the rate of speed of technological advancement, especially information technologies.

Kurzweil is a staunch advocate for "transhumanism," which is actually a transcendental notion involving the technological enhancement of human capabilities by machine intelligence and nanotechnology.

BOSTROM

(1973)

Nick Bostrom may just be the fly in the ointment in our Pantheon idealism, but his super caution triggered a philosophical reaction in my own mind which I thought I should include in this Pantheon Volume.

Bostrom sees no connection between his 'super intelligence' and divine intelligence. His arguments are clever and his illustrations are a unique and broadly accepted augury of how and when super intelligence might occur and how that might affect and maybe even eliminate humanity.

Bostrom's 'what,' 'how,' and 'when' of superintelligence are carefully described, despite the fact that there is no 'why.' This may be the opposite of what he intended or a very subtle metaphysical cushion shot, but his prophecy proved to me that a godless life is a pointless life and devoutly to be avoided.

Nick Bostrom's book Deep Utopia presents us with a future where there is no more work to do. Machines have solved all our survival problems, which results in lots of spare time for self expansion. Bostrom's "experience machine" brings virtual reality closer than it has ever been to genuine experience, which raises human intelligence higher than it has ever been only to be dropped on its head by machine superintelligence.

For that to happen, Bostrom imbues anthropic machines with human intentions. I remain unconvinced and persist in my belief that intention, goals and free will are exclusive to humans. Even geek skeptics like Penrose would agree with that. I go further and believe that surreal energy must be divinely reserved for humans.

Bostrom is a Swedish-born philosopher best known for shaping the global conversation about the long-term impact of artificial intelligence. As the founding director of the Future of Humanity Institute (FHI) at Oxford University, Bostrom has become one of the most influential thinkers in the fields of existential risk, superintelligence, and technological ethics. His

work sits at the intersection of philosophy, and computer science, and he is responsible for bringing serious academic and governmental attention to the risks and opportunities of advanced AI.

Bostrom's 2014 book *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies* is arguably the single most influential publication in the modern AI safety movement. It introduced general public, policymakers, and tech leaders to concepts such as the "intelligence explosion," "recursive self-improvement," and "the orthogonality thesis." The first two of these three postulates are worth keeping in mind. The third is something that I'm not sure I understand.

The orthogonality thesis makes the point that "goals" are not connected to intelligence. Therefore a superintelligent machine which was asked to make a paper clip could not be kept from having a silly goal like make as many paperclips as you can. Then superintelligence machines would turn the planet into a pile of paper clips.

To me this orthogonal thesis carries with it the aforementioned implication that machines are not capable of intentions and goals. That should make us feel safe, not frightened of runaway machine super intelligence. Bostrom's superintelligence phobia violates my categorical imperative not to mix up subjects and objects. Attributing human qualities to machines is treating an object as a subject which is just as bad as treating subjects as objects. He systematically explores the concept of existential risks that could permanently curtail humanity's potential. He mapped out categories of AI risks, from biotechnology to anthropogenic environmental changes. His paper "Existential Risks: Analyzing Human Extinction Scenarios" became foundational and influenced research institutions around the world. Bostrom is also famous for formulating the simulation argument. With wit and clever word craft he gets us to the point where we begin to think that we must be living in a simulation. Bostrom's ideas have influenced tech leaders such as Elon Musk, Bill Gates, Sam Altman, and Demis Hassabis, all part of the current oligarchy of excellence. Bostrom made distinctions between the specific intelligence required to win a chess match and General Artificial

Intelligence that actually can come up with an idea or a plan on its own. Policymakers often draw from Bostrom when considering guardrails for powerful AI systems. Bostrom clarified the most important questions of AI alignment and AI safety.

Unlike any other geek Bostrom uses allegories, irony and wit to make his point, especially in his Deep Utopia. Unlike most other geeks, Bostrom is a gifted theater of the absurd playwright. In one such 'absurd' drama that pokes fun at 'qualia,' a billionaire dies with no heirs and no one he cares about. The only warmth he is grateful for came from his personal space heater, and so, he leaves all his money to this device 'thermorex'. Of course a human board of trustees is appointed to assure that benefits accrue to the beneficiary. The endowed Thermorex becomes intelligent enough to endow other devices. The results are a masterful irony which gets you wondering if there really is any difference between machine intelligence and the qualia of human consciousness.

Bostrom prophesies an inevitable development of a "general" machine intelligence characterized as

"oracle," "genie" or "tool." The oracle predicts; the genie facilitates the granting of wishes; and the tool optimizes working hands. Bostrom is one of the first modern philosophers to ignore the classical philosophical distinction between subjects and objects.

Because I believe intention has to be provided by humans and the best of intentions is inspired by divine intention, machine intelligence remains just a tool for human intelligence in my book. My QI will be a tool that implements divinely inspired human intention. I don't think Bostrom would agree. He does see that human intelligence is challenged to improve continuously and he does see that cultural development is a human challenge, but he does not see the existential connection between the two.

CITY ON A HILL

I grew up on a hill between Bunker Hill and Breeds Hill, a stone's throw from the Old North Church where Paul Revere's lantern ignited the American democratic experiment to dethrone autocracy.

The autocracy was replaced by an oligarchy of excellence, all of whom were connected to Harvard in one way or another.

It is probably more parochial than historical for me to suggest that my home town or any other particular place is more important than any other in the cultural evolution of our species. There are important geeks and Greeks in every time and space. Nevertheless this spot in New England seems to have been a jumping off point for the personal spiritualism which I believe will save the planet.

EMERSON

(1803-1882)

Ralph Waldo Emerson was born in Boston Massachusetts. We might have bumped into each other on Salem street, except for the century that passed between us. He is the key figure of the New England Enlightenment, and my own enlightenment, as well. Emerson's belief that church isn't the only place to find God found an ear with many ordinary Bostonians as well as an amazing group of extraordinary American thinkers. There was a need in his time, as there is now, once again, to make divinity much more accessible to individuals.

There was no electronic media back then, so spreading the word had to be done outdoors, on soap boxes and makeshift pulpits. He had to make common sense to inspire commoners and he did that in the Boston Commons. Not far from there on Saturdays at the Parker House was the place where he argued his case with uncommoners including Oliver Wendell Holmes, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow., Henry David Thoreau and others.

You don't need me to tell you that he was an exquisite writer. Fortunately we have ready access to his words, but we can only guess at his tone of voice and the charisma, with which he seemed to captivate young and old, rich and poor alike, in more than 1,500 public lectures in Boston and eventually across the United States. According to Wikipedia, he charged between \$10 and \$50 for each appearance, bringing him as much as \$2,000 in a typical winter lecture season, which would be around \$50,000 in modern dollars. His earnings allowed him to expand his property, around Walden Pond, made famous by his squatter, disciple and friend Henry David Thoreau.

In 1858, the Saturday lunch group and others had an "outward bound" several week long experience at the Follensbee Pond in the Adirondacks, which came to be called "Philosophers Camp." Emerson's epic poem, "The Adirondacks," is a poetic journal of the day to day adventures of this non-congregation of nature worshipers. The Adirondack trip was inspired by Emerson's earlier essay "Nature."

Emerson's poetry turns psychology into an inside out philosophy and elevates natural science to a cosmic spiritualism. According to some scholars, Emerson's pantheism may actually be pan-deism. Pan-deism is the same as pantheism in one respect but quite different in another.

Pan-deism suggests that the God of pantheism may no longer exist. The pan-deism God set everything in motion and then left town; God only knows to where. That absent divinity does not comport with Emerson's ongoing "still small voice" which resonates with my inner Christ. Emerson's inner God, and mine, left a lot for us to do on the outside, but I can't imagine such a God having no further interest in how things worked out.

Emerson made a careful study of the German enlightenment and Eastern thought, which were not widely known in America in those days. The central message Emerson drew from his Eastern studies was that: "the purpose of life was spiritual transformation and direct experience of divine power, here and now on earth. That is transcendental humanism, but it is also Vedic and Orphic deism. It would be misleading

to suggest that Emerson was merely re-packaging Eastern philosophy.

Emerson is considered around the world to be an 'American' intellectual, particularly because of his oration in 1837, entitled "The American Scholar," which was dubbed America's "intellectual Declaration of Independence" by none other than Oliver Wendell Holmes.

I am haunted by Emerson's insights into what I thought were my own deepest thoughts. If you will permit me an anecdote, I can shed some light on this feeling. As crazy as it sounds, I feel as though I met Emerson personally. I feel I heard Emerson in the deep baritone voice of my mentor, Henry Geiger, who you will hear more about in the upcoming chapter on Maslow.

Henry Geiger considered himself a modern Rosicrucian. He was the publisher of MANAS, a philosophical journal which he published for a very small but distinguished audience scattered all over the English speaking world. In keeping with Rosicrucian tradition, the journal's author, Henry

Geiger, remained anonymous to his readers for decades, but I knew that Henry wrote the whole journal himself almost every month. On rare occasions the names of contributing authors would appear.

I had fallen off the psychedelic carousel and was in the process of dusting myself off in the sixties when I met Henry. If you read Volume I of this work, you will recall that I was in southern California in the sixties, where I had progressed from an Italo-American street kid to a quasi neuro scientist to an Ivy league liberal lawyer, and then to a Venice hippy. I had not yet found my inner teacher but as luck (?) would have it I met Henry who introduced me to philosophy and especially the New England Enlightenment idealism.

The resemblance between Geiger and Emerson was uncanny. Sitting around the wood burning stove that took the chill out of the ghostly encounter in the Malibu hills, three thousand miles away from Ralph Waldo's Walden, Emerson spoke to me through Henry. Henry's voice had all the charisma I imagined in Emerson. And, here's the spooky part, he had the exact, I mean, exact, same face, nose, eyes and

eyebrows as Emerson. I knew that because a tintype portrait of Emerson hung right above the tattered high back arm chair where Henry sat, on the other side of the wood burning stove.

Henry's deep baritone practically made the lips move on the Emerson portrait just above his head. Whether Henry set the scene intentionally, or whether Emerson did, both expressions always seemed to match their utterances. I should tell you Henry had been a live stage actor.

Before becoming an anonymous Rosicrucian philosopher and publisher, Henry had been an actor with Helen Hayes in the traveling tent shows that made their way across the West in the roaring twenties. Now he was Emerson in the flesh, without having to announce it. The performances of poetry and essay left me with a life long memory of having sat at the feet of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

I don't know why anyone so important would take the time to read to an audience of one, Emerson's "Self Reliance," and "Oversoul" which laid the philosophical corner stone of my inner temple,

Imagine if you can Henry's voice saying this from "Self Reliance:

"I have taught one doctrine, namely, the infinitude of the private man.... This rational leap established, the ability for mankind to realize almost anything, including the relationship between the soul and the surrounding world."

Or this from "Oversoul:"

"The mind is one, and the best minds, who love truth for its own sake, think much less of property in truth. They accept it thankfully everywhere, and do not label or stamp it with any man's name, for it is theirs long beforehand, and from eternity." ... "When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love..."

"A thrill passes through all men at the reception of new truth, ... all sincere conversation is worship, ... In all conversation between two persons, tacit reference is made, as to a third party, to a common nature. That third party or common nature is not social; it is impersonal; it is God... For this communication is an

influx of the Divine mind into our mind. It is an ebb of the individual rivulet before the flowing surges of the sea of life. Every distinct apprehension of this central commandment agitates men with awe and delight."

*"...The influence of the senses has, in most men, overpowered the mind to that degree, that the walls of time and space have come to look real and insurmountable... Yet time and space are but inverse measures of the force of the soul."...**"When we have broken our god of tradition, and ceased from our god of rhetoric, then may God fire the heart with his presence."** ... "Do not require a description of the countries towards which you sail. The description does not describe them to you, and tomorrow you arrive there, and know them by inhabiting them.... and may in that thought easily dismiss all particular uncertainties and fears."*

JAMES

(1842-1910)

We all swim in what James calls “forethought” or drown in what James calls “fearthought.” It is in our nature to wonder or dread what comes next. James helps me wonder rather than dread, swim rather than drown.

If you only read Pragmatism and the Meaning of Truth (1907), you would wonder what William James is doing in the Pantheon, let alone on this hill top. That book is a series of lectures and papers, which is more reflective of James’s own fearthought rather than his inspiring forethought as seen in his immortal The Varieties of Religious Experience (1902).

William James is one of the most important contributors to personal spiritualism, which is what this book is all about. Sidestepping the philosophical oxymoron of his day “transcendental pragmatism,” he found his own practical connection between the reality of individual development and the surreality of it’s unknown goals.

James was a medical scientist and at the same time, a philosopher, the consummate geek Greek. However, he would not have called himself a Hegelian Pagelian, as I have done.

James saw Hegel as too dogmatic. James would not go up in the Hegelian balloon because it had no landing gear. James demanded a runway that could accommodate both spiritual take offs and landings. Maybe he knew more about Hegel than I do. Nevertheless, I know James would say it was alright for me to call myself a Hegelian Pagelian, because tolerance was more important to James than beliefs. James makes it clear in Variety of Religious Experience that "variety" is essential for "religious experience."

James was critical of Kant and his moral guide, his 'categorical imperative.' Nevertheless, I believe James would be comfortable in this Pantheon of idealism. In Pragmatism and the meaning of Truth, James applauds his fellow idealists Schiller and Dewey for their instrumental truth. They are "pragmatic" as opposed to dogmatic. Unlike empiricism, whose sole source for the truth is sensory

data, pragmatism casts a much broader net which includes mysticism. In both books, cited here, James all but embraces Swami Vivekananda for his declaration that "separation" is a delusion, which is the basis of all human suffering. He agrees with the Swami that great minds can transcend the separateness delusion and discover the one superstate.

James was born in New York City to a remarkable family that deserves a few lines here. Henry James, Jr., the renowned writer of fiction is William's younger brother. While Henry James wrote fiction with the depth of philosophy, his older brother, William, wrote philosophy with the grip of fiction. William James was the oldest of the five children of theologian Henry James, Senior. William's maternal grandfather was also a theologian. The entire family was involved with Emerson and Carlyle. Papa Henry James was also deeply absorbed with the teachings of Swedenborg, the proponent of an esoteric Christian belief that sought to explode 'selfism' into a broader pantheistic naturalism. The father's respect for Emerson was passed on to his son William James, who added a hard nosed realism to surreal

transcendentalism, which no doubt came from his training as a scientist and a medical doctor. But make no mistake, his physics did not rule out surreality or metaphysics.

William studied chemistry and then physiology, prior to his entering Harvard's Medical School in 1863. It was not until 1879, that James began teaching philosophy at Harvard. Remarkably, James had no trouble maintaining his status as a practical empiricist while he embraced metaphysics. At that time not too many earned their living at Harvard, or anywhere else, as both a practical psychologist and an esoteric philosopher. Yes, esoteric! James praises Fechner for holding that "the whole universe in its different spans and wave-lengths, exclusions and developments, is everywhere alive and conscious."

There are many instances of scientists becoming philosophers; we have met a few here: Aristotle, Fechner, James, North-Whitehead, Borg, Schrödinger Heisenberg, Feynman, to name a few. But I know of no instances where philosophers become scientists. This provides some evidence of the Bergsonian unidirectional flow of consciousness.

Consciousness flows downhill from intuition to intellect, but never the other way back up hill.

James was a member of the Metaphysical Club, which included Oliver Wendell Holmes, who also taught at Harvard and who had been a member of Emerson's 'Saturday Club.' The Metaphysical Club also included Charles Sanders Peirce, a philosopher of science, who would become the founder of American pragmatism.

As a scientist James was haunted by the search for unity and he deplored metaphysical dualism; nevertheless he lived with one foot on the boat and one foot on the dock. His "neutral monism" is divinely inspired dualism. He didn't say that; I did. James separated the real stuff from the "stuff" that is neither material nor mental."(see "Essays in Radical Empiricism"). That's dualism, even though it portends the unification of substance and non-substance. Neither James nor Emerson believed in intellectual property rights. Intellect and property are separate realms: there is no property in the realm of the intellect and there is no intelligence in the realm of property, only greed.

James pictures reality and surreality as two thought streams that flow into one metaphysical, metaphorical sea which surrounds the islands of individual consciousnesses (Memoirs and Studies, p204). James' description of the deep stream of thought as neither mental nor material resonates with the supernatural idea of universal consciousness, which we called "ultra consciousness in Volume I of this work. Emerson (and Plato) would insist that any idea of universal consciousness must include a divine consciousness. James might draw the line there, but it would be a dotted line.

"The Stream of Thought" James offers is a very different account of the flow of 'experience' than that proposed by tradition empiricists such as Hume. The difference lies in the fluidity. Like Heraclitus and Bergson, the consciousness described by James's "radical empiricism" is a flowing stream rather than a rattling chain. Our individual consciousness— which he labeled "sciousness," is a tributary that joins-the "con-" river of "con-sciuousness." I illustrated that insight in the graphics of my chapter head on consciousness in Volume I of this work.

James' pragmatism is a "whatever works" philosophy, which includes spiritual beliefs and metaphysics. I do not see James as an atheist, even though he would "tolerate" atheism as a belief system. James may have eschewed the remote punishing God of the puritan pietists, but James needs a God that works for the day to day spiritual needs of the individual, like our Christ bot. James would allow that as a "variety of religious experience." The only thing James was adamant about is the preclusion of adamanance. Nothing and no-one should preclude whatever sublime belief raises the consciousness of the individual.

You cannot be a empiricist without being a pragmatist. But you can be a pragmatist without being an empiricist. Some kind conceptual consciousness, no matter how practical and pragmatic is required to convert empirical sensory input into knowledge. You can reasonably believe that there are other sources of knowledge other than the empirical input from the senses. What James called "radical empiricism" was a supra empirical pragmatism.

In "What Pragmatism Means", James proposes a theory of how new ideas attach themselves to existing belief systems. No matter how radically different the new idea must add itself carefully, leaving the overall structure of the belief system intact, while making it more, sturdy. Whether James likes it or not, this lends itself to the dynamics of the Hegelian trajectory. For James, God is a natural response to any attempt to understand the universe. Independent of any theological proof of existence, God will always be the "center of gravity of all attempts to solve the riddle of life."

In "Reflex Action and Theism," James goes on to describe a personal God with whom we can maintain interpersonal relations. This lesser God resonates with the demiurge of Plato and the Christ of the Gnostic Gospels. The Jamesian personal God can be the angel on your shoulder or my inner teacher-Christ, or Emerson's "still small voice", or whatever works to lift you out of the pit of existential pointlessness.

In "Is Life Worth Living?" James suggests that there is a divine guide who enjoys, maybe even needs, our

gratitude, or should I say adoration. James said that God derives strength and energy from collaborating with our reverence. In other words, God needs us as much as we need him. This Jamesian idolatry resonates with Bergson's needy God, and Kurzweil's developing God. Again, describing God's needs is no job for an apophatic, like me. I'm just repeating what they said.

I do agree with James that it must be a divinity that bestows the gift of creativity on humanity. For James and Bergson creativity pleases God because God needs someone to share His creativity with. This is a mind bending blend of humane divinity and divine humanity.

I believe The Varieties of Religious Experience is the closest philosophy comes to useful everyday wisdom. For James, "religious experience" abides not in religious institutions, or rituals, but in the deep psychology, which James refers to as: *"the feelings, and acts, of individuals in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine."*

James calls this inner worship "healthy-mindedness" as opposed to a morbid "old hell-fire theology." James cites liberal Christians as examples of the "happy spirit." This includes the "mind-cure movement" of Mary Baker Eddy.

In The Varieties of Religious Experience chapter on "*The Divided Self, and the Process of Its Unification*" and the chapter on "*Conversion*," James discusses St. Augustine and Tolstoy focusing on what he calls "the state of assurance." Central to this state is: "the loss of all worry, the sense that all is ultimately well...." There are four facets to James's mystical happy frame of mind:

The first is "*ineffability*," which "*defies expression... its quality must be directly experienced; it cannot be imparted or transferred to others*," (which is what I am trying to do in this book).

The second is "*noetic*," which means revealed rather than constructed from experience, deduced rather than induced.

Third is “transience:” you can’t rely on the feeling to remain for any length of time, or even coming when it is called.

The fourth is “passivity.” Subjects cannot control the coming and going of mystical experiences. They seem to come to you; you can’t go to them. This is reflected in CS Lewis’s writings, discussed in Volume I of this work.

James deliberately defies definitions of religion. The religious experience is whatever and however an individual relates to whatever is beyond the reality of the self. James’ religion does not require a monotheistic God, or a congregation; neither does he preclude it. Nevertheless, James noted that, more often than not, organized religions produce a “sick soul,” with a “divided self” who is morbidly pessimistic, unlike the optimistic and joyful whole, holy spirits who find God for themselves. James develops lengthy analyses of religious conversion, beatification, and mysticism. In addition, he examines philosophical “over-beliefs” regarding the divine.

James finds that two psychological qualities can be found in those who also enjoy spiritual lives: (1) an energetic zest for living, and (2) a sense of security, love, and peace.

Because he felt strongly that the good society thrives on a plurality of outlooks, James demands tolerance, respect, and even indulgence for those who we see opposed to our view. Since the whole of truth is not revealed to any single human, each of us is entitled to our own personal revelations.

The James essay "*On a Certain Blindness*" reinforced my belief in my inner Christ and my reluctance to define God for anyone else. However, this does not preclude, for me or James, sharing wonder and wondering about sharing.

Postscript- A year or two after writing this chapter I came to listen again to the entire Gifford Lectures that became The Varieties of Religious Experience , where upon I discovered an entirely different William James, a spooky William James. Somehow I had missed his pronouncements on telepathy and mind

cures. But for that coincidence(?), I would have left out of account of the esoteric William James.

The esoteric William James is the most convincing spook I ever encountered. How my own "fearthought" was corrupting my hopeful "forethought." More than anything else that second exposure to the esoteric James strengthened my belief in my inner teacher and my own mystic speculations.

If you wish to find a meaningful life of faith without abandoning your reason, The Varieties of Religious Experience is essential reading, or better yet, listening, since it is now available as an Audible book.

I can say now, without a doubt, that QI, the Christ bot and the virtual congregation of self realized individuals, envisioned in Volume I of this work, are exactly what the good doctor would prescribe for our current relapse into odocracy.

ROYCE

(1855–1916)

Josiah Royce, in 1882, was recommended by William James to fill his position at Harvard while James was on leave. Royce accepted the position at half of James's salary and later became a permanent member of the most distinguished philosophy faculty in America, if not the world. In his thirty years at Harvard, Royce inspired his students to climb to new heights in the direction of surreality including: T.S. Eliot, Santayana, W.E.B. Dubois, Norbert Wiener, and C.S. Lewis.

Royce did not always agree with his sponsor James. Both knew there was a providence beyond Rhode Island, but had different ideas about how to get there. Nevertheless they would agree that history and geography do not tell the whole story, whatever that is. Their famous tug-o-war, which came to be known as "The Battle of the Absolute," moved each in the other's direction. James' relativism became a bit more absolute, and Royce's absolutism became a bit more pragmatic. So much so that Royce's

'absolute mind' came to be called 'absolute pragmatism', and James' 'radical empiricism' came became "transcendental pragmatism." One of Royce's positions is clearly inspired by James' well-known essay "The Will to Believe." The proposition that any philosophical view is at bottom an expression of individual "volition."

Josiah Royce was the leading American proponent of 'absolute idealism.' Like Plato and Hegel, Royce secures a place for the finite individual in the infinite universe. Royce is also important because of the uniquely American twist that connects spiritual and political idealism. Royce establishes self consciousnesses (self love) and gregariousness (neighborly love) as the basis for a democratic political philosophy.

Royce characterizes what I have called ultra consciousness as a virtual community of minds. Royce's 'correspondence' theory of knowledge places fallible human intelligence, in a circuit where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. No one knows everything; everyone knows something;

putting those somethings together invokes an absolute knowledge beyond what everybody knows.

The limits of your self consciousness are an illusion. Royce wondered how the same limited mind could both commit and correct mistakes. Royce considered all the traditional philosophical and psychological answers to that paradox and found them all inadequate.

For Royce, the answer lies in the connection of self knowledge to the divine mind. Royce's "Absolute Knower" is always ahead of you, but close enough to change your mind, if you're paying attention. Mind changing is an active process not a passive one. Activity is why we were given free will. This resonates with the proclamation of Wittgenstein: "philosophy is not a theory but an activity" (Tractatus).

Royce's major works include The Religious Aspect of Philosophy (1885), The World and the Individual (1899–1901), The Philosophy of Loyalty (1908), and The Problem of Christianity (1913).

Royce sees that we're equipped with too little intelligence and just enough will power to keep stretching our minds to the breaking point.

Royce maintains that the will to live is "loyalty to the ideal of an ultimate truth"—("Absolute Voluntarism," p200, and p 349). I take this to mean that free will is a godsend, as is the challenge to make good use of it. That makes for a bumpy ride. But Royce believes that God feels your pain.

"When you suffer, your sufferings are God's sufferings, not his external work, not his external penalty, not the fruit of his neglect, but identical with His own personal woe. In you, God himself suffers, precisely as you do, and has all your concern in overcoming this grief."

Grief is not *"a physical means to an external end,"* but rather *"a logically necessary and an eternal constituent of the divine life."* (Ibid). Royce's view of suffering as a divinely shared experience resonates with the similar beliefs in James, Spinoza, and Bergson.

Apophatically speaking, I cannot allow myself to wonder why this compassionate God either cannot or will not eliminate suffering, rather than sharing it. That put us right back in the theodicy paradox where we began.

Royce finds traditional accounts of atonement in Christian dogma unsatisfactory. The sinner may be inspired to change his ways, but Royce points out that, by itself, penance and punishments do nothing to reconcile the sinner to the community or to repair that community from any harm done by the sinner. Such reconciliation and healing requires something more than a punishment and a change of heart. Penance, punishment and prayer are not enough; you have to **do** something to change yourself and the community for the better.

Royce feels that Christ dying on the cross for our sins, in and of itself, is not enough, which is why He imbedded Himself in our 'gnosis,' rooting us on to community expiation and, if I may say, amarchy.

Established religions, Royce tells us, are only useful as evidence that every man feels a need to be saved.

Organized religions don't know any more about God than farmers know about the seasons or sailors about the sea. Royce knew, as did James, that God sits silently within you, not up on the gilded altar.

That doesn't mean that Royce was against congregations of believers. He spelled out in his own words, our virtual congregation of self realized individuals. Royce's "invisible church" is the loyal community, guided by a divine spirit and devoted to the highest ideals of goodness. The Christian church for Royce is not the place we go on Sunday in our starched shirts and neckties; it is not a place at all; it is a virtual community of grace.

The particular institutions that identify themselves as churches may or may not actually be communities of grace. Royce includes in that category communities that are not self-consciously religious or not even physical gatherings. Royce endorsed Buddhism as a community of grace. Royce's "The Problem of Christianity" includes a very sympathetic presentation of Buddhism. He actually took the trouble to learn Sanskrit.

Royce is critical of many historical churches because with their building funds and bingo games, they have in his view lost sight of the spirit that ought to guide them. Christian congregations can become "loyal communities" when they successfully create the "infinite worth" of the individual as a unique member of the ideal beloved community.

Royce may have had reservations about dogmatic Christians, but he had nothing against Christ as an inner teacher.

Thank God for Royce and thank Royce for a God, who is no longer far away and inaccessible.

NORTH-WHITEHEAD

(1861–1947)

Alfred North-Whitehead said:

"Philosophy begins in wonder. And at the end, when philosophical thought has done its best, the wonder remains." (Modes of Thought, - Macmillan, 1938).

Philosophy keeps you wondering; and I would add 'that's wonderful in and of itself. For Whitehead, empirical experience does not explain human knowledge, something beyond real experience must pre-exist to contain the flow of experience.

North-Whitehead was a British mathematician and metaphysician who found a more enthusiastic audience for his metaphysics in Cambridge, Massachusetts than he did in Cambridge, England. As his collaborator Bertrand Russell comments: "In England, Whitehead was regarded only as a mathematician, and it was left for America to discover him as a philosopher." So it was that in 1924, after a stint at lesser known colleges in

London, Whitehead accepted an appointment as a professor of philosophy at- where else- Harvard. There, in the those hallowed halls, Whitehead added to the metaphysics of American pragmatism already begun by James and Royce.

As for the source of Whitehead's metaphysics we only have to look at his oft-quoted comment characterizing all of Western philosophy as "foot notes to Plato." I think we can say Whitehead was a major Platonic footnote. Whitehead's The Function of Reason, provides a new psychic, dynamic, speculative reason which sheds the shackles of scientific and religious dogma and opens the mind to creativity.

Every inch the philosopher, North-Whitehead was no less the scientist and mathematician. Physics would not be what it has become without his Trinity Fellowship dissertation on Maxwell's electromagnetism, written right there where James Clerk Maxwell taught. In Whitehead's view, Maxwell's theory of electromagnetism also constituted an antidote to Newton's scientific materialism. Electromagnetism could be a model for the whole

universe as not a thing but *"a field of force—or,a field of incessant activity."* The definition of a force field as *"incessant activity"* is unique to both science and philosophy, especially to any philosophy about consciousness, because consciousness is the quintessential *"incessant activity."* Incessancy leads to infinity, anyway you slice it. Faraday famously remarked *"in a sense an electric charge is everywhere,"* and Whitehead topped it with his unforgettable: *"in a certain sense, everything is everywhere at all times."* Everywhere is there what comes to be knowhere.

Whitehead could see the metaphysics in the famous Michelson-Morely experiment, which led to the prolixity of insights in his Enquiry into the Principles of Natural Knowledge, The Concept of Nature, and The Principle of Relativity. We owe to Whitehead a unique critique of the dreaded measurement problem as well as the non geometry of spacetime introduced by Einstein's general relativity. In 1921, Whitehead had the opportunity to discuss these matters with Einstein himself. And finally, in 1922, Whitehead published a book with a more detailed

account of his alternative theory of gravitation, The Principle of Relativity.

Since Einstein's theory poses the distinction between the physical and the geometrical, it follows that the only way we can know the geometry of spacetime is if we first know the distributions of matter and energy throughout the entire cosmos which affects that geometry. Thus, as Whitehead argued, we are left in the position of first having to know everything before we can know anything.

In his book, The Function of Reason, Whitehead simplifies the life cycle in our universe as opposing forces, one down and one up. The down force is the entropy that withers life forms toward death and the up force is rebirth, regeneration, and evolution. He makes the point that these countervailing forces could not exist without a fulcrum. The surreal fulcrum is the most respectful and acceptable idolatry that I have ever run across, and the most unique characterization of divinity.

Whitehead spoke of the "bifurcation of nature into two systems of reality" (which I have called reality

and surreality). The only one we can expect to understand is the one we call reality. Everything else is conjecture. The infinitude of surreality is unknowable while you are in the flesh, while your intelligence is imprisoned in your skull. Whitehead didn't exactly say any of that. He did say that all the qualities we attribute to nature are in our head. He gave us a 'big head,' but he meant not to demean the content but to expand the container, human consciousness. Objective nature without subjective consciousness, he points out, is unrealizable and therefore pointless. This bridges the quantum physics observed/observer dichotomy. Whitehead's ontology is a force field of waves that could also be known as a sequence of particles. This quandary brought metaphysics closer to quantum physics than it had ever been before.

I don't know whether Whitehead's explicit interest in symbols had anything to do with Royce, but they were right down the proverbial hall from each other. One can assume it might have come up around the water cooler. Whitehead's theory of "prehension" connects to Royce's connectionism where everything everyone knows is mysteriously connected.

Whitehead points out that our “uncognitive” sense-perceptions are directly caught up in our symbolic awareness as is shown by the immediacy with which we move from perception to conception, i.e. from what is directly given to our senses from the real world to the concepts drawn from the surreal beyond. Whitehead’s “prehension” leaps gracefully over the deception/ perception hurdle in the phenomenological human race to realization.

Whitehead’s Science and the Modern World offers a careful critique of orthodox scientific materialism. He saw, early on, the effects of observation on our conceptualization in both the micro and macro universes. His acceptance of fallibility resonates with G o d e l ’ s “ I n c o m p l e t e n e s s , ” B o h r ’ s “Complementarity” and Heisenberg’s “Uncertainty.” The observer/observed paradox in quantum physics must have been on his mind when he wrote: *“All philosophy is an endeavor to obtain a self-consistent understanding of things observed.”*

Whitehead agrees with what we have called time blindness: *“...an instant of time conceived as a primary simple fact is nonsense.”*

The basic units of becoming for Whitehead are "*actual occasions*." Actual occasions are "*drops of experience*," that contribute to the "feeling" of inner connection to the outer reality, which should not be taken as actually real or "concrete." To mistake these interior phenomena as 'real' would be to commit the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. Feeling is not real, not unreal, but surreal. Things are not always what you think they are, which is why you have to keep thinking, and keep talking. This makes communication essential to experience. I believe that is what Whitehead meant although he may not have used those exact words. This comports with Royce's ideas of the validation of re-presented knowledge by subsequent usage.

In Process and Reality (1929); Whitehead's "prehension" suggests that the inner reality is a 'sine qua non' for "extension," (Descartes' "res extensa") which is the only way to connect the inner and outer worlds. In this respect he is more like Descartes and Kant than Berkeley. Berkeley believed that internal reality is all there is.

Whitehead's "superject" is his fused object/subject, which is the internal möbius strip of inter-externality. It is worth the stretch to get your mind around this proposition. Just as fusion exceeds fission in physics, joining these seemingly disparate existential elements provides a more powerful molecule of psychic energy than separating them. Whitehead's fusion applies also to religious and scientific knowledge. In his words: *"Philosophy attains its chief importance by fusing the two, namely, religion and science, into one rational scheme of thought."*

Science on its own is disconsolate and religion on its own is barbaric: "the last refuge of human savagery" (see Religion in the Making). Whitehead's indictment of religion includes the historic horrors of human sacrifice, and in particular, the slaughter of children, cannibalism, not to mention, sensual orgies, hatred between races, the maintenance of degrading customs, hysteria and bigotry.

I must quickly add that, like Royce, Whitehead believed that religion can be "positive or negative" depending on what it does to move individual minds toward transcendence. Disorganized religion has a

much better chance of meeting the Whitehead goal of fused transcendence.

There is no doubt in my mind that Whitehead would join our virtual congregation, which, of course, is why he has this special seat in the Pantheon. He clearly believes in self development as a movement toward divine perfection which he calls transcendence. In Religion in the Making, Whitehead says: "*The point to notice is its transcendent importance,*" and again in "Science and the Modern World," he explains "transcendent importance" is something which stands beyond, behind, and within the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real, and yet waiting to be realized.

For our virtual congregation the most important Whitehead insights are in "Process and Reality" where he declares that self consciousness, self appreciation, self love and self determination are crucial to creating things and putting things in order, which is the divinely inspired work of humanity. According to Whitehead: "*God is the organ of novelty and order.*" Without the intervention of God,

there could be nothing new in the world, and no order. God inspires order, novelty and originality.

Whitehead's Adventures of Ideas (1933), is purported to have been his complete outline of his "process" philosophy. Whitehead is responsible for the advance, if not the founding of so called "process theology." Process theology is hard to pin down as it took many twists and turns and unfortunately cannot be explained because of his strange dying wish to destroy all his papers following his death. This strange testamentary request may have something to do with his not wanting his ideas to become dogma of a new religious organization, which would have the propensity to become barbaric. I'm just guessing.

Nevertheless, without any documentation, I see the God of process theology as more like the Gnostic Christ than Jehovah. The process theology God is supremely affected by temporal events and, just as in Royce, that God is "the fellow sufferer who understands," and needs us to bridge the gap between our reality and His surreality.

That means God is there to help us become divine as we help Him to remain humane.

God does not force, but tenderly persuades each actual occasion to actualize from "the absolute wealth of potentiality." God, according to Whitehead, *"is the poet of the world, with tender patience leading it by his vision of truth, beauty, and goodness."*

That's the nicest bit of idolatry of all the great minds.

DEWEY

(1859–1952)

John Dewey is famous for discovering the crack between education and philosophy and he did more than just talk about it. Like North-Whitehead, Wittgenstein and Epictetus, for Dewey, philosophy is an activity, something you do not just talk about. Dewey was an all American activist.

Dewey wrote more than 40 books and hundreds of articles, and, at the same time, founded, and /or headed up several game changing social institutions, such as the American Philosophical Association and the American Psychological Association, to name a few. Dewey is one of the clearest examples of a philosopher who wished to make a difference in the here and now, real world, but, nevertheless, kept a third eye out for the surreal otherworld. If he had a bumper sticker on his car, it would read "God helps those who help themselves." For Dewey the point of free will was to build bridges between faith and reason; between the real and the surreal.

For James and Dewey psychology became the study of psychic energy, not just behavior. Behavioral psychology may work in the lab with Pavlov's dog, but would not explain the human psyche. Dewey wrote:

"The reflex arc is not a comprehensive, or organic unity, but a patchwork of disjointed parts, a mechanical conjunction of unallied processes" "the [reflex] model falsifies the nature of genuine interaction; organisms do not passively receive stimuli and then actively respond; rather, organisms continuously interact with environments in cumulative and modifying ways." ("The Reflex Arc Concept" in Psychology 97).

Like Bergson, for Dewey consciousness is a subject not an object, a verb not a noun. Dewey demonstrates the un-objective surreality of mind by pointing to the semantic fluidity of the word which represents mind: "I keep her in **mind**...I **mind** my manners... I **mind** the child... I **mind** the traffic light... never **mind**." "Mind" in each of those phrases means something different.

In "Art as in Experience" and in "Experience and Nature," Dewey insists that consciousness is never isolated from the world of other subjects and objects. He takes Wittgenstein's public language objection and replaces it with a self adapting communal dialectic. Dewey talks about the supernatural but not in terms of any dogma established by organized religions. There has to be something religious about the human condition, but, as Dewey points out, religiosity has nothing to do with organized religion. Dogma is actually a barrier to religiosity and spiritualism in that it freezes something that is meant to flow continuously.

Dewey did not believe a fully adequate account of consciousness could be captured in words. And it follows that the sanctified frozen word of the Lord, according to man, i.e. dogma, is a road block more than a bridge to meaning. Dewey thinks church dogma gets in the way of the dynamic communal dialectic. Dewey was profoundly influenced by the James metaphor of consciousness as a constantly moving "stream of thought" (see Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism").

In his A Common Faith, Dewey is not intransigent on going to church. Neither am I, really. All of us who see the importance of finding the soul would be alright with going to church if it helped self realization, or let's say, 'as long as it doesn't hinder it. The same applies to a communal dialectic, or any communication tool. Like philosophy, theology for Dewey is action.

In a A common Faith, Dewey tells us that virtue is what you do on your feet not what you say on your knees. "It is this active relation between ideal and actual to which I would give the name God."

So says Dewey; so say we all.

MASLOW

(1908-1970)

For Abraham Maslow self-actualization meant: "to become everything that one is capable of becoming." As implied by its name, self-actualization is highly individualistic action, not just wishing and reflects Maslow's premise that the self is "*sovereign and inviolable*" and entitled to "his or her own tastes, opinions, values, etc."

Maslow created an exclusive club for self actualized individuals that made a difference, an oligarchy of excellence, which he called the "Eupsychia Club." The club name has two Greek roots, "Eu" meaning 'happy' and "psychia" meaning 'soul.' I want to be a happy soul, don't you? But just how do we become part of the Maslow oligarchy of excellence?

Become the hero you worship is my advice. Heroes are role models; they serve no other purpose. That's what makes them happy. Without that purpose they become vapid celebrities who eventually commit suicide.

The excellence of this oligarchy is energized by the connection between self development and the development of the species.

Maslow's heroes, and mine, include Socrates, Aristotle, Spinoza, Jefferson, Lincoln, Thoreau, James, Bergson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Einstein, Norman Thomas, and Upton Sinclair.

Maslow says that they "were able to differentiate between what was fraudulent from what was genuine." They were also "problem centered," meaning that they treated life's difficulties as problems that demanded solutions. Because these heroes were comfortable in their own skin, they were comfortable with others. In Maslow's words: "These individuals also were comfortable being alone and had healthy personal relationships.... They had only a few close friends and family rather than a large number of shallow relationships."

According to Maslow, self-actualized heroes share the following list of surreal intangibles: "Truth, Goodness, Beauty, Wholeness, Dichotomy, Transcendence, Awareness, Uniqueness, Perfection,

Necessity, Completion, Justice, Order, Simplicity, Richness, Effortlessness, Playfulness, and Self sufficiency,"(Religion, Values and Peak Experience. P55).

These qualities are buried in all of us, but remain undiscovered in most of us. The job of the inner teacher is to coach us in this task of realizing our selves, which is to say, loving ourselves and, as I have been saying all through these volumes, this will lead to loving our neighbors and the promised land, amarchy.

Maslow didn't talk about my inner teacher or amarchy. But he did talk about "Metamotivation." Maslow says that this metamotivation guides self actualized persons to explore and reach their full human potential. Tuning in to this metamotivation is what energizes creativity. Orthodox psychology and orthodox religion are not tuned in to this, Maslow psychic energy.

Maslow established the school of transpersonal psychology because the reigning humanistic psychology dogma was incapable of explaining all

aspects of human experience. He particularly drew our attention to various mystical, ecstatic, or spiritual states known as "peak experiences." Maslow called these experiences "a fourth force in psychology."

In 1962 Maslow published a collection of papers on this theme, which developed into his 1968 book Toward a Psychology of Being. I found this book inspirational and important because it was spiritualism coming from a rational intellect. It made surreality essential to a more peaceful reality, or as Maslow put it: "without the transpersonal, we get sick, violent, and nihilistic, or else hopeless and apathetic." Again that is where most of us are, and that atmosphere and its odioracy has to be changed if we are to survive as a species. If you can't love, you wind up hating and joining the rabble who follow the leader back to bestiality.

Human beings, Maslow believed, need something bigger than human leaders, some super nature that connects us. Maslow did not believe in organized religion and referred to himself as an atheist, but I believe his surreality, which he was reluctant to call God, is in fact a super nature and therefore

supernatural. How do I know that? I read everything he wrote, but I also had a personal relationship with Maslow.

My relationship with Maslow began when I was a lawyer representing a heroic, heroine addict arrested for trying to help cure himself in Synanon. Synanon was a live-in California/Nevada community of ex-addicts inspired by Alcoholics Anonymous. I was a live-in general counsel back in the sixties. (This was just before I dropped out and became a hippy playwright in Venice California.)

Gil Faucett was a parolee who had bolted from the California State methadone program and joined the Santa Monica Synanon community. In Synanon the only chemicals allowed were caffeine and nicotine. The development of self control was accomplished by daily, small group, attack therapy that punched holes in the rationalizations which supported addictive behavior. This was a philosophical, psychological non-chemical cure which also turned out to be a California crime for parolees like Gil Faucett who was sent back to jail for "associating with known addicts." It didn't matter that the known

addicts in Synanon were cured addicts who had dedicated their lives to curing hundreds of other addicts from all over the country.

The official state cure for heroin addiction was sponsored by big pharma; it simply replaced heroin with methadone. The only difference between the two was the cash flow delta. Heroin revenue went to pushers with negative political power, whereas methadone revenue went to the pharmaceutical industry which supported politicians in both parties. My court case looks to be a David Goliath match, but actually I had my own Goliaths including Mrs Milton Berle and Abe Maslow. I got to Ruth Berle through Joanna Lee a rising TV writer/producer, who later became my wife and mother of my son Chris. I got to Maslow through my guru Henry Geiger, mentioned earlier in the Emerson chapter.

Maslow flew out to California to be my expert witness at his own expense, and without any other compensation. There was no money on our side of this case for me or anyone else. In court it all boiled down to a battle of expert witnesses. Abraham Maslow already an internationally known

philosophical psychologist versus a stammering alcoholic prison psychiatrist. The trial made headlines. It got me on a national TV show and a mention in Maslow's book, Religion Values and Peek Experience, p 87. The trial also inspired Maslow's later book, Toward a Psychology of Being, where he said, "Freud supplied us the sick half of psychology and we must now fill it out with the healthy half." The vainglory of victory has long since worn off, but I still treasure the quiet evenings at Henry Geiger's where our fireside chats, under the Emerson portrait, were now joined by Maslow. I was surprised at Maslow's non celebrity regular guy charm. I have no explanation as to how I came to sit between these two great minds, that changed my life. Coincidence???



Me

Maslow

More needs to be said about Henry here. I already mentioned that beginning in 1948. Henry Geiger published and wrote most of MANAS anonymously for decades. In the 60's, both Maslow and I had essays published in Manas, which Maslow called *"the organ for this new kind of faith and this new psychology"* [Ibid, p 39].

It was Henry's idea to put chemical solutions on trial in the Faucett case. It was Henry who saw the danger of replacing philosophy with pharmacology, and it was Henry's idea to select Maslow to lead the charge against "scientism." In his article in MANAS (July 17, 1963) [Ibid, p 58] Maslow said, *"An education which leaves untouched the entire region of transcendental thought is an education which has nothing to say about the meaning of life."*

In his book Religion. Values and Peak Experience, pp 61-62, Maslow wrote: *"The peak experience seems to lift us to greater than normal heights so that we can see and perceive in a higher than usual way. We become larger, greater, stronger, bigger, taller people and we tend to perceive accordingly."*

Now comes the strangest of my serendicity experiences. In 2019, I wrote a kind of autobiography, The Blink of an I, in which I recalled an actual scene from my early childhood. Apparently I was precociously ready to leave the nest not long after I had learned to walk and talk. On this particular occasion on the heels of the great depression and just before World War II, because of some frustration with parental authority, I threatened to run away from home. This precocious petulance was hilarious for the Italo-American tribe of aunts and uncles gathered at our Saturday night kitchen soiree. Someone thought it would be fun to call my bluff; and so, they folded a few toys and my favorite cookies into a hobo kerchief and tied it to a stick. Somehow I knew to place the hobo stick and sack on my shoulder as I headed for the door. Hysterical laughter turned into silent surprise, as they watched me walk down the winding staircase of the three story tenement, out to the curb of a wide street, where I was stopped by my brand new super ego, which reminded me that I was not allowed to cross any street without an adult. Unbeknownst to me, my half lit Dad. Everyone was half lit back then prohibition had ended leaving everyone with an

alcohol habit. Dad was stealthily following me in stalking feet just to see how far I would go. There at the curb he swooped me up into his arms and carried me home, chuckling to himself. My memory of this event was half hearsay from my elders and half sensory recall from the recesses of self consciousness. The interplay of these realities is why I wrote about the event.

Maslow could not have and did not read my story before he wrote his story to illustrate the inborn independence of self consciousness. Nevertheless, If you place these two accounts side by side: Maslow, (Religion, Values and Peak Experience, p 46) and (Ciampa, Blink of an I, pp 80 - 83), you will be forced to conclude that we collaborated. Vanity would bid me to leave you with this collaboration assumption, which would make me the model for this ground breaking Maslow insight. Maslow is long gone so you just have to take my word for the fact that this was magic. I cannot lie about mystical mystery, this close to end.

THE END