

THIS FEAR OF GOD

by

Richard J. Sutcliffe

In a strictly human world of concrete landscape, concrete fear, tense bodies and closed minds, anger, violence and grey predictability, I could understand that optimism failed as a popular stance. The emergence of a new era in human evolution was apparently vague - scattered across the breadth of my fragmented imagination, its singular influence was not at all clear. Just like everyone else, I had constructed a brittle framework of definition, both ideological and seemingly solid, across the face of the earth. It had become a limited reality and a self-made prison.

As I surveyed the senseless scenery of my mind, I was surprised to experience a strange sense of joy. I began to notice an increased sense of personal power and vitality - a new faithful feeling was growing from within. I gained strength and confidence by participating in social education, service and change. I sold hope to my friends and worked on the environment in whatever way seemed most appropriate. I was helping to save the planet by manifesting a vision of unity. The more I changed things the more I grew, but with objectives shaped by a social history of sleepy confusion, it was the process that seemed more

relevant in retrospect than the method or product of change. It was tempting to conclude that the ultimate transformative factor lay not in the form, but in the nature of experience.

The concept of 'Holism' had emerged as a central and common element. It was pertinent to both the form and to the nature of my experience, and offered a far-reaching and all-encompassing understanding of my universe, my life and my reality. The term was derived from the Greek 'holos' (whole) and referred to an understanding of reality in terms of integrated wholes whose properties could not be reduced to those of smaller units, systems or wholes contained therein. In other words, my social-conscience was in holistic terms an unwanted product of material sense perception and blatantly denied the fundamental idea that here and now all things are part of a perfect whole and therefore exist in harmony. It denied human experience as an aspect of a greater system of independent control, that human reality is at once greater than and less than other totalities. My actions had been directed toward establishing holism within many separate areas of knowledge and

associated physical forms such as political structure, community organisation, health, religion and personal perspective, and in effect had reduced holism to that which I create - the form of my experience. However, the more important truth (or element of faith) was that greater system of unknown properties out of which I am created - the nature of my experience loosely described as possible infinity. Predictably, my subjective experience was flooding me with awe and humility.

In the eternal moment - as as in that perfect space, drifting with the breeze and flowing with the tide as a cosmic being on the surface of a heavenly water planet - visions and discoveries of a dawning new age seem interlaced with the actuality and become inseparable from the total experience . . . direct experience. These forms, no longer isolated and distinguishable in themselves, in effect become the same concept (my thoughts) and cease to exist. It seems that, viewed from this place, definition plays no part in the ways of the universe. Ideas and techniques are aids toward transformation but have nothing to do with the event itself. Useful as structures have been to my self-conscious being struggling for cosmic-consciousness, now I know that nothing had to be changed or controlled, nor did I have to do anything at all when viewed from the cosmos. It was here all along, this same cosmic planet in all its wonder and natural balance. It needed only to be seen and

appreciated, its intrinsic unity experienced. As T.S. Eliot once commented, "it is as if we must travel a long way, through many difficulties, to find a place we have never left". If every 'thing' is of one whole, then everything is much more than itself and it is this greater unifying presence that can make such simple sense of all mental and physical diversity: a rainbow is a rainbow and not just an arrangement of different colours. New age crusading was still tempting but it was beginning to seem a little misguided implying a confusion between reality symbols and the actuality, the method and the event. Now I understood that 'change' arises from the **known** (more of the same) and that 'transformation' arises from the **unknown**.

It was the very illusion of differentiation and definition, both within and without, that was the prime mover of all that disturbed me. Living as an isolated inner self responding to separate outer circumstances, all my motivated action was as Chuan Tsu had said 'like trying to stop an echo by shouting at it'. This was not to reject definition, but was merely to keep it in place: my task was not to bend the world to this new form, but to learn to see the world in this new way, to experience myself and my universe as inseparable manifestations of one dynamic principle, a greater reality.

Now I accept the transformative element is too close to touch but its effect is too strong to mistake.

Ultimately, the process unfolds by itself because of itself. I play the part of collaborator. As attention turns ever more toward the subtle, the distinction between doing something and doing nothing soon begins to fade. The question 'what shall I do?' becomes more appropriately 'what am I doing?'. It becomes clear that all 'doing' is effectively interference and belongs to my illusory separate self - action that is ultimately wise and useful ceases to be 'doing' as such, 'doer' and 'done' merging as the 'joy of living', the cosmic dance. Emphasis shifts from **what** I do, concerning myself less with objects and form, and more with the experiential process of a changing reality. The process becomes the only constant or known factor and is the source of the cosmic dancer - the developing centre of my being, my guide and monitor and the stepping stone between isolation and cosmic

contact. I take it as my responsibility to provide sufficient personal and social space, a sufficiently fluid lifestyle, to experience myself and my universe as on single intricate interplay - unity at a level of experience beyond the more familiar but less inclusive systems of contact, mindful awareness and physical sensation - all this within the boundaries set by my imagination and always a limitation to be transcended.

There was and will be a place of separated isolated opposites - a prison in my mind; but more important, there **IS** the world of immense beauty and infinite mystery in which all things are ONE - the cosmos is dancing the cosmic being; the only truth, it is a liberating experience.

CELEBRATE 1985
