

The Natural Inclusionalty of the Beatles

A spontaneous conversation

Amongst Ben Sidebottom, Alan Rayner and Roy Reynolds

(written in 2012)

BEN: You need silence, 'a holiday', as it is a calming induction, that calms your imagination to a more peaceful, learning state, which when settled can untangle this tangle of transfer / transposition (dreams); and then craves its next adventure. The ebb and flow of the ever learning mind and soul? Music should play to this, and does e.g. 'breakdowns' etc in dance music to raise the state of euphoria. Dance uses flowing, motive and silent pauses too.

The Beatles used this type of improvisation in music every now and then. I think 'A Day In the Life'. A song about the rush of life that makes you forget the important things by merging them, and diminishing them. The profound is transferred 'mundane status', as the mundane is the perceptual-context within which it is described and experienced.

ALAN: Reference to 'The Beatles' resonates with me. I 'grew up with them', being a 'teenager' from 1963 - 1970. The implicit/explicit natural inclusionalty of their music and lyrics never ceases to amaze me. Perhaps we should write a piece about this?! It strikes me that each of 'the four' represented a complementary aspect of NI (John - Fire/edginess; Paul - Water/sweetness; George - Air/spirituality; Ringo - Earth/fleshiness) that needed to be held openly together within the 'infinite fifth' (Space/Soul) to touch the heart, mind, muscle and nerve in the way that they did. Yet, none of them individually could quite 'see' the 'depth' that held them in common, leading to their ultimate break-up and the

Triumph of Vanity, which heralded the desolation and shallowness of subsequent decades.

BEN: I like the sound of a piece about the Beatles, and your description...

That movement in the 60s 'came from the sea', and while it may have succumbed to the Triumph of Vanity, the sentiment remains in all of us - it was from our souls. Perhaps rather than an ultimate Triumph, Vanity is exploiting the silence as the 'movement' dreams to itself quietly, in the sea of the minds of the receptive, and transforms to something more potent. Evolution of an ideology? We can only hope!

ROY: I too liked your Beatles description of the four elements plus space (including your insightful addition of their vanity without the inclusion of space).

ALAN: There was 'something' in the way they interplayed that really moved me. A strange attraction that drew me in, along with millions of others. In a unique and inexplicable kind of way, I suppose I simply loved them - they aroused feelings in me that no other popular musicians have done, before or since. Their continual co-creative evolution, through a willingness to experiment, to take risks, to challenge dogma, to acknowledge both the bitter and the sweet of life and never reproduce 'more of the same' for long both aroused my concern for their continuing welfare and inspired my own sense of adventurous enquiry. They weren't 'just another rock band'. They symbolized an evolutionary process that for me and others brought hope for humanity to break loose from preconceptions that have held it addicted to needless conflict for millennia. That process is what I have called 'natural inclusion' – the co-creative, fluid dynamic, transformation of all through all in receptive spatial context. 'Receptive spatial context' here corresponds with my own understanding of agape 'love' – that intangible, limitless pool that draws us all in to co-creative natural communion – if we simply 'let it be' present in our 'imaginings' of a world without the need to alienate 'self' from 'other' – where self-identity is, inescapably, a 'natural inclusion of neighbourhood'. A world where, indeed, 'all things must pass' – for permanence can only be found in frozen

geometry – and ‘all you need is love, love is all you need’ – the ‘zero’ or cavity at heart that reaches to infinity, without contradiction or disruption by any definitive boundary.

But ‘something’ got in the way – something that always gets in the way of truly loving human understanding – and that ‘something’ was ironically the ‘infinite dread’ and ‘fear of darkness’ – the ‘dead of the night in which the *blackbird* sings’ – that leads ‘someone’ ultimately to fear love and isolate their self behind a wall of exclusion. Within this wall a false sense of superiority and/or inferiority takes shape. A wall of ‘vanity’ that separates ‘winners’ from ‘losers’, arrogant from humiliated, bullies from victims – and inspires hatred of ‘the other’. George Harrison sang evocatively about this wall, but ultimately – and to my mind tragically – missed the ‘hole point’ of what passes through it – Roy’s ‘aperture of empathy’; Jesus’ ‘eye of the needle’; natural inclusion’s ‘I-opening’:

We were talking – about the space
Between us all
And the people – who hide themselves
Behind a wall of illusion
Never glimpse the truth – then it’s far
Too late – when they pass away
We were talking – about the love we all
Could share – when we find it
To try our best to hold it there – with our love
With our love – we could save the world
- if they only knew
.....
And the time will come when you see
We’re all one, and life flows on within
You and without you

Had the last phrase been ‘we’re all pooled together, and life flows on within you and without you and *throughout* you, things might have turned out differently, and there would have been no need for asinine laughter – just deep silence – at the open ending.

Image:- (added in November 2023) ‘Opening Endings’ (oil painting on canvas by Alan Rayner, 1999)

