

INTERACT

All you need is love?

**Hippies- did they
have it right all along?**

**Beauty, Faith and God
the differences in depictions of beauty**

**THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION
Haitian Children: Denied?**

Peace – a Lost Cause?

Today we often hear people talking about peace. Perhaps that is because it now seems rare to find. The modern world seems to be growing increasingly frantic, commonly leaving little time or place to find rest and relax.

Technological and economic advancements as well as the media revolution all contribute to making life, especially in the developed world, move at a faster pace - even if this means having a mobile phone in your pocket prevents you from a minute's respite. In the wider world, conflict continues to plight millions of lives and the earth itself appears to be rebelling against years of pollution, with prospects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

So why chose peace as the theme for a magazine? War and conflict have remained pervasive since the beginning of history to the present day, with increasing awareness about the immense tasks we face in addressing the modern eruptions upon our world – to the extent that even our cultural industries, most obviously cinema, have tuned into mindful fears about the end of the world. Perhaps a new era can emerge through conciliatory politics, balanced faith, and the appearance of responsive cultures. The election of Barack Obama and the recent US-Russia treaty to reduce nuclear arms seem the result of a desire to achieve a safe and peaceful future. By talking about peace, and keeping it in public discourse, we will hopefully remember that there is more to improving life than increasing wealth or increasing its speed (cf. Ghandi). It is with ideas like this that our team came to making Peace the theme the magazine.

All religions point to a messianic age of universal peace or take a metaphysical peace as their ultimate goal, be it God's kingdom on earth or a form of nirvana. Whether achieved in this world or not, peace as an ideal remains for us contemplate. It is impossible that those who suffer from inner conflict, who lack knowledge about what contentment and peace actually mean, will be trustworthy guides to offering a firm foundation for its establishment. Harmony in the wider world will begin with an inner peace and conviction within ourselves, from which a new era might spring forth.

Thank you for reading Interact!

Interfaith Action's aim is to build understanding and respect between people of all faiths. We work towards a cohesive society where all faiths are not only tolerated but where individuals are respected and diversity is valued and celebrated.

We achieve this through facilitating dialogue, joint action and civic participation, as well as raising awareness and understanding. In turn enabling people of all faith communities to engage with each other and the wider community through projects encouraging shared and responsible citizenship. Most of our projects are tailored for 14-25 year olds in London.

Interact Magazine is one of Interfaith Action's project, written by and for young people from all faith and cultural backgrounds.

Being a life-style magazine, Interact Magazine contains articles about everything to do with being young and from a faith background. It includes sections on politics, food, sports, music, faiths, culture, as well as London listings, features, interviews and information.

Interact magazine is a resource of information, it crosses cultural boundaries, and it gives a voice to young people from all faith backgrounds.

The aims of the magazine are to give young people:

- an opportunity to express their views
- real and valuable experience of journalism and design
- an opportunity to disseminate amongst all groups of young people what life is like in any given community
- a feeling of inclusion in the wider group of young people from faith groups, rather than only their own faith group
- something to read about other faith/cultural groups
- information about their peers from other faith/cultural groups
- experience of the responsibility of free speech

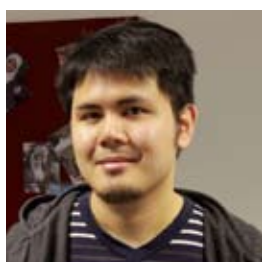
To get involved or for more information contact the Project Manager Laura Griffiths on laura@interact-uk.org.uk



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MEET THE EDITORIAL TEAM



Josh

I am the print editor for this issue of Interact. I study law at UCL and have a keen interest in interfaith, political and peace related issues.

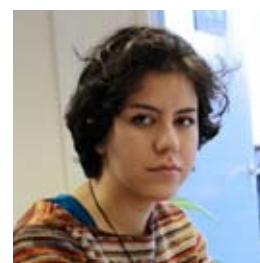


Gemma

Studying Magazine Publishing and Creative Writing at the University of the Arts London. Has been writing for Interact for the past year and believes that everyday is a day where peace is achievable. <http://loveicegems.blogspot.com>

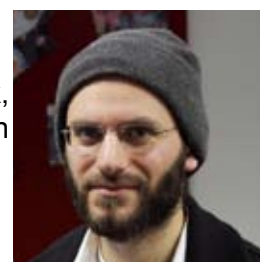
Masomeh

Salam to everyone. My name is Masi. I am from Iran and am the graphic designer of this issue. I hope that Interact will bring a little peace into everyone's heart!!"



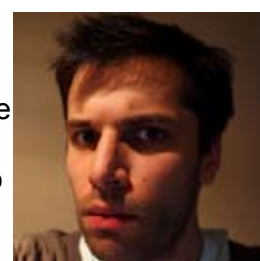
Kayan

Kayhan Ali is a graduated from Birkbeck, University of London with an Philosophy degree. He has experience in campaign work and is interested in theology and religion.



Deven

I'm a freelance photographer and creative editor for this edition of Interact looking to get into the media and design while helping worthwhile community causes that the magazine represents Interact.



Rebuilding hope in Haiti

By Rachel Heatherly

For the people of Haiti the last two decades have been characterised by a shrinking economy, high unemployment, an average life expectancy of only 53 years, the highest incidence of HIV in the western hemisphere and devastating poverty. Prior to the January 12 earthquake already 80% of the population were living in abject poverty and 47% were severely malnourished.

Consequently Haiti has been the subject of an almost continuous cycle of UN interventions. The success of these, however, have been seriously undermined by political and military instability. Consistently ranked by Transparency International as one of the most corrupt nations on earth, reports by the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre tell of a brutal and unjust police force and judiciary and of serious human rights violations. Sprawling urban slums, media repression and armed militia groups all stand in the way of peace. Haiti's experience has demonstrated that you cannot fight corruption with corruption,

and you cannot end violence with violence. Building Peace in Haiti, a publication by the International Peace Institute emphasises this point, stressing the limited effectiveness of external assistance without firm local foundations.

Education is therefore a key priority in bringing lasting peace to Haiti made more important now in the wake of the earthquake than ever before.

“You cannot fight corruption with corruption, and you cannot end violence with violence”

Prior to the quake only half of all Haitian children were able to attend school. Now this proportion is practically non-existent. Figures from the Haitian Ministry of Education indicate that approximately 5,000 schools were damaged or destroyed nationwide in the earthquake, with hundreds of teachers and thousands of pupils left dead. Of the 1,500 schools surveyed in the capital Port-au-Prince only 85 have escaped severe damage. Even those that were not destroyed are struggling to reopen due to the loss of critical staff. UNICEF estimate that as many as 2.5 million Haitian children are currently without access to schooling.

The New York Times has reported on one of the few



functioning schools in Port-au-Prince, St Marie's Catholic school (see below for link). The buildings of St Marie's were badly damaged, but thanks to makeshift tents donated by the Dominican Republic and the Israeli government it has been possible to begin providing lessons and a much-needed sense of continuity to 600 students, many of whom are local refugees from other quake-damaged schools in the area.

In response to this dire situation, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) has made the resuscitation of the education system its priority on the ground in Haiti. In the weeks following the quake three projects were launched with the aims: of providing emergency repairs to secondary and higher education establishments, of training teachers to give psycho-social support to traumatised students, and to develop technical and vocational training for young people to enable them to gain employment through the reconstruction of their country. To date Brazil has contributed US\$400,000 to finance the second of these projects, and significant pledges have also been received from Bulgaria, Israel and the Norwegian Refugee Council.





Despite the generosity of these donations and the laudable scope of the UNESCO projects this remains but a drop in the ocean. For primary schools such as the Centre Rosalie Javouhey which do not lie within the remit of these projects, there is often little hope for assistance. With up to fifty students to a class, Centre Rosalie, run by a Catholic order of nuns, is open to all denominations and helps children from the poorest backgrounds. The school is situated in a district of Port-au-Prince which was notably deprived even before the earthquake and provides not only education, but shelter, food and even medical

care to its 560 students. Many of these students were orphans prior to the loss of life in January and were dependent on their school for these basic necessities and the sense of peace and community it provided. Centre Rosalie was forced to close in January when the earthquake devastated the school building.

Facing an otherwise desperate situation the St. Joseph Sisters of Clunly have found renewed hope thanks to the efforts of students at University College London who, in response to the plight of these primary school children have launched a campus-wide initiative to completely rebuild the school together with the adult education centre which stood on the same site. Going by the name of the Intersocietal Haiti Forum (ISHF), the project aims to be a collaborative effort bringing together staff and students from all corners of the university community regardless of creed to work towards a common cause. As well as raising the funds necessary to reconstruct the school buildings (estimated to cost as much as £100,000) the ISHF are also working closely with an international team of architects and other NGOs on the ground in Haiti to ensure that the new buildings will be sustainable, eco-friendly and community-friendly, but most importantly resistant to the effects of future natural disasters.

“Without assistance, these children will have nowhere else to turn.”

For schools like Centre Rosalie the aftermath of the earthquake and the threat of the impending hurricane season means much more than a break in tuition. These schools are community centres that provide shelter, food and security to the nation's most disadvantaged children. Ambitious, community-driven projects are every bit as vital as major UN programmes in protecting the Haitian education system and fostering hope for future peace in Haiti through its children. ☺



By Gemma Nicola Jamieson



Jon Snow;

“What Does the Media Believe?”

Channel 4 news presenter Jon Snow eminently talks about his personal experiences in media, culture and faith at the National Liberal Club as part of the Annual Undergraduate ParliaMentors Lecture series held by the Three Faiths Forum, an Abrahamic inter-faith organisation.

Born in the small village of Ardingly, Sussex to an Anglican Bishop and Headmaster father, Snow attended a strict religious private school. He describes his upbringing as “clinical” elaborating further “every morning we had family prayers, for every meal there was a grace.” Despite his rather authoritarian and regimented upbringing, Snow says he goes to churches “not to worship God” but instead “to worship the human spirit”. Snow states that he has a “passion for humanity” and this is what motivates him spiritually.

“where is God in this?”

a common question many atheists and even theists, ask after such natural disasters occur

While Snow was broadcasting from Haiti he asked himself “where is God in this?”, a common question many atheists and even theists ask after such natural disasters occur. Snow believes in the power of humanity: it is the people that step up to help in the aftermath and not God.

Snow spoke of his career in journalism spanning 35 years to date and surprisingly admitted to being a late developer, calling himself a “dunderhead” in one instance. He said “I decided to become a journalist because you didn’t need any qualifications”. After spending time volunteering in Uganda and “falling in love with its people”, Snow wanted a career that would allow him to go back there. Reflecting on what makes a good news topic, Snow states that “society doesn’t want good news, there’s no appetite”. He cites the example of how there was a lot public interest over footballer John Terry committing



adultery as opposed to little interest being shown when he was named Father of the Year, showing a rather sad state of current affairs.

Snow’s take on the media and faith emphasises that there has been a shift in the way in which media broadcasts faith. It only thinks about faith “in conflict and terrorism” and this is one of the reasons why faith is becoming increasingly hard to grasp from an outsiders perspective. Snow believes that in Britain there is more opportunity “to de-ghettoize faith” whilst living in such a culturally diverse society.

While society has evolved in terms of diversity it seems as though the Media has forgotten that religion altogether exists unless it is explicitly confronted. Snow believes that the media “is ignorant” to the point that they filter the truth to suit their own agenda. Regarding the war on terrorism Snow said “we hear so much about Iran, we hear too little about Saudi Arabia, 17 of the 19 hijackers were Saudi Arabian but that doesn’t get much coverage,” suggesting that the media’s portrayal of 9/11 is incomplete.

Snow wondered how he has survived the reporting duties he has had in conflict-ridden territories. Interestingly he points out that one of the largest conflicts that has occurred in modern history -the ongoing Israeli/Palestinian conflict- could easily “be resolved” as it is simply a matter of politics and less a matter of faith. Despite this, when it comes to the topic of world peace Snow is more pessimistic, believing that “human nature simply would not allow it”.

Technological advances such as social networking sites and blogging mean the human race now no longer needs to rely on traditional media, with it becoming easier for us to air our views to a global audience. Alongside increasingly pacifist international and domestic government policies and the march of peace movements and organizations: the aspiration and possibility of achieving peace has never been so notable.

Overall Snow charismatically provided an informed lecture into a lucrative and important industry and his established career, and provided his audience with insights into how the media works, thinks and the largely unknown power it exercises in society. ☺

Beauty, the Human Being and God

By Josh Allanigue



As the old maxim goes: “beauty is in the eyes of the beholder”. Constantly we are reminded of how judgement as to a person’s physical beauty depends on the person who “sees and judges”. “Although there is arguably such a thing as “classical beauty” when it comes to physical appearances (as psychological studies have shown), the hugely varied cultural norms on which man or woman can be deemed “beautiful” will attest to diversity of human aesthetic experience.

Religion has a significant influence on how the concept of beauty is perceived and represented by shaping or even giving birth to particular and unique religious and cultural norms and practices.

In Christian culture, how beauty is represented and viewed appears to take a unique blend of obsession and downright avoidance. The contradictory representations of beauty cannot be more illustrated than the depictions of the Virgin Mary in art.

Whilst some depictions of Mary give her a rather plaintive and unattractive appearance, such as in Jorge



Breu the Younger’s “Madonna” (1510-47) and Italian Renaissance master Leonard Da Vinci’s “Madonna Lita” (1480) (scholars say to prevent any impure thoughts from arising in the mind of the viewer), other depictions provide her with a breathtaking form, as we can see in Bouguereau’s stunning Virgin of the Lilies (1899) and Madonna by Carlo Dolci (1616-1686).

Intriguingly the Roman Catholic Church seems to have taken the “avoidance” approach to physical beauty, especially to female beauty.

When in the 1st century the apostles of Jesus and Peter (the first pope) were for the most part, married men, the Age of Gnosticism opened up the Christian Church to the belief that “a person cannot be married and be perfect.” This was to be followed by the Council of Elvira (306 AD), Council of Nicea (325 AD) and Council of Laodicea (352 AD) which had the combined effect of confirming the discipline of the celibacy of Roman Catholic priests. In 385 AD Pope Siricius left his wife in order to become pope, declaring that priests



may no longer sleep with their wives. In 401 AD Saint Augustine ruled, despite his many sexual indiscretions that priests should not marry, excluding the priests from the sexual side of human experience with the seeming intention of denying the natural desire of a man to be attracted to a woman. Within the Roman Catholic Church this ruling has been widely implemented and has developed as a discipline to the present day.

In the early history of the Christian Church the institution of nuns and sisters originated and developed. This institution required a vow of chastity and purity with the effect of suppressing the female beauty, as expressed in the dress code for nuns, which require the female church servants to wear habits (garments used by a religious orders, mainly to mark detachment from greed and vanity).

There is a distinctive difference in early Christian beliefs about the appearance of Jesus Christ. Some Christian ➔



leaders, such as Fathers Justin (d.165) and Tertullian (d.220) conclude after reading Isaiah 53:2 that Christ's appearance was not traditionally attractive: "he had no form nor comeliness, we should look upon him, nor beauty that we should delight in him."

Christ's appearance was not traditionally attractive: "he had no form nor comeliness, we should look upon him, nor beauty that we should delight in him."

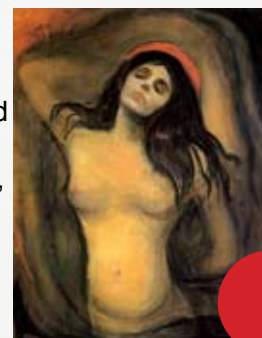
However, when the pagan Celcius ridiculed Christians for having an "ugly God" in about 180, Origen responded by citing 45:3 "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, mighty one, with thy beauty and fairness". Through Origen's depictions of Christ's beauty other Christian views on Christ's appearance changed as well. Jerome (d.420) and Augustine of Hippo (d.430) argued that Christ was ideally beautiful, the latter believing that he was "beautiful as a child, beautiful on earth, beautiful in heaven."

Christ's subsequent depictions in art follows from the conception that he was unequivocally graceful in physical appearance. The Christ the Saviour Pantocrator, encaustic on panel from Saint Catherine's Monastery, completed in the 6th

century, Mount Sinai is the oldest surviving panel of Christ available. In this image Christ is depicted as a handsome figure with long hair and beard, a product of a complex interaction between the image of the classical philosopher and the image of the Greek and Roman mythological figure of Zeus/Jupiter and perhaps, Eastern culture. The modern depiction of Jesus in the "Divine Mercy" by Adolf Hyna (1943) shows Jesus in one of his most resplendent of forms. Dressed in an all-white linen and robe with white and blue rays emanating from his chest, Jesus is depicted as having facial and bodily proportions clearly in accordance with the proportions of the idealized human figure of Leonard Da Vinci's Vitruvian man . His long brown hair and neat beard express his holiness, wisdom and benevolence.

While Christianity has an almost schizophrenic perspective on human physical beauty, Islam takes an approach which runs contrary to the cultural norms we see in the largely Christian West. While Western Christian culture has developed through complex interactions between religion and philosophy to have depictions which glorify and objectify the grace of both the male and female forms, Islam proscribes that both men and women show modesty in their appearance. Not only are Muslim men specifically asked

to "lower their gaze" when looking at women, but women are also asked to cover their beauty using the hijab (which covers their hair) as well as wearing loose fitting clothing which aim to cover their female form (Quran 24:30-31). This is seen as a particularly controversial topic in the liberal West, which sometimes sees the female Islamic dress code as a sign of "repression and oppression" - since it acts to suppress female beauty. Others, such as Sehmina Jaffer Chopra, argue that the hijab is actually an expression of liberation, by bringing about an "aura of respect" (takim, 22) for the women, having them recognized and admired not for their beauty or lack of beauty, but their mind and personality. In Islamic art, the human form (and any other living form) is generally not depicted visually (though exceptions do exist). The reason behind this is the fear amongst many Muslims that depicting the human body in art, through the "worship of these graven images", constitutes idolatry or something very close to it: a pagan practice which is strictly prohibited by a





number of the Prophet's hadiths. This is not to say that Islamic art is in any way dull or unexpressive of beauty. In a well-known hadith (recorded by Bukhari) the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is believed to have said: "Allah is beautiful and loves beauty." This is taken to summarize the whole Islamic attitude to art and beauty. Though depictions of the human form are strictly prohibited, Islamic art takes Arabic calligraphy, patterns, ceramics and architecture as its subject matter. Traditional Islamic art moves refreshingly away from Western portrayals of beauty, and focuses on ways to express the beauty of the "Islamic message". Where Islam prohibits the depictions of living beings, its close relative – Judaism – takes an identical approach. In Judaism there is also a prohibition on the creation of "graven images of worship" (Exodus 20:3-6 & Leviticus 26:1), traditionally construed as including images of humans, angels and most especially God. Since God (in particular His magnificence) is regarded as being incapable of being visually represented, visual art depicting God as having a physical form is strictly prohibited by Jewish Mosaic law. This prohibition has not been rigidly followed though, as God's beauty and mysteriousness behind His being seems too profound a topic for some Jewish artists not to depict

in their works. In the synagogue frescoes of "Dura Europos" (third century C.E.) for example there are representations of God's hand stretching forth from heaven (said to be inspired by Ezekiel 37:1). In the famous Sarajevo Haggadah there is an image of a man in repose which according to some interpretations illustrates God taking a rest after working on his creation for 6 days.

Also similar to Islam, women (especially married women) are encouraged by the Jewish faith to dress modestly (called tzniut in Hebrew), with the intent of protecting their dignity. Orthodox Jewish women are asked to cover their hair using a scarf, hat, snoot or wig (called a sheitel) and dress using clothing which are not tight-fitting, provocative, loud in colour or display texts. Distinguishing themselves from these women, however, are non-orthodox Jewish women who tend to adopt the dress code of the non-Jewish society in which they live. In conclusion, depictions of beauty and God in the three Abrahamic religions take a rather colourful and intriguing character. Western Christian culture seems to be torn between the denial and obsession with the beauty of the human form. Islam takes the most modest approach of the three faiths, preferring to literally hide the

illustriousness of the human body through clothing requirements as well as in its artwork, concentrating on the latter on conveying the "beauty of Islamic message". Judaism, the elder sister to both Christianity and Islam, also prefers to keep to the virtue of modesty, but as a quick perusal of contemporary Israelite culture and beauty magazines would suggest it is lacking in real-life application.

What unites these three religions, however, is that their scriptures put great emphasis on the "beauty of the soul" over that of that of the outward appearance. Nothing illustrates this more than the story of the Jewish King, Islamic Prophet and ancestor of Jesus – King David. When the prophet Samuel was told by God that one of Jesse's sons is to be anointed as the next Israelite King, he mistook each one of David's brothers as the next king, simply because each one "looked the part". God, surprising Samuel, Jesse and his 7 other sons, asked David "the youngest and the smallest" to be anointed as King, and providing us with the famous verse, extremely insightful of what constitutes true beauty in man and to God: For the Lord sees not as a man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart". (Samuel 1:16:7). This glorious message is one whose universal and objective beauty is one no person, whatever their religious background, can deny. ☺

Peaceful Acceptance

By Joseph Marshall



Deven Capikon

We all have a sense of self conflict. Some of us experience raging, turbulent inner battles, while others might simply be indecisive. We might be terrified of entering the void of death or not achieving the level of affluence we hope to during our lifetime. On the other hand the source of our anxiety could be more trivial things like heavy traffic on the way to work or misplacing the door keys. Typically we cope with these stresses by becoming angry or even, in the case of larger and more existential issues, immersing ourselves in work or turning to vices like drugs. And it goes without saying that these are not long term solutions. Increasingly people are looking elsewhere for ways of mastering their struggles. The idea of peace through acceptance is being greeted with a great amount of popularity. It is widely reflected in the philosophical traditions of the East, but it isn't always regarded in this part of the world. So can some modern problems in our own culture be solved using this concept?

One obstacle of modern living is the struggle to be in a place of material wealth and abundance. This has many of us running around in circles. It's a long and

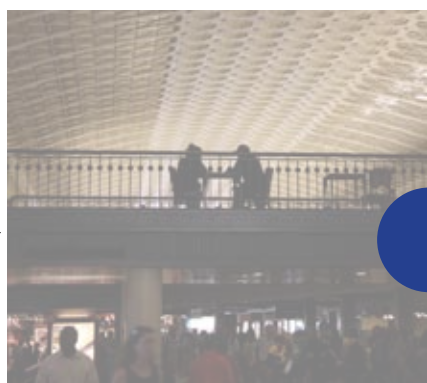
arduous pursuit with no end in sight. Another problem is that of old age. For many people this is a curse. They're frightened of dying and as they grow older it plays on their minds more and more. Both of these problems can be looked at from the Buddhist perspective of accepting death as a part of life. In Buddhism, the ultimate truth is that as we were once born, we will one day die. In regards to materialism, as we are destined to pass on anyway all the stuff we acquire is more or less meaningless in the grand scheme of things, belonging in fact to creation itself as opposed to any one person. From this new point of view we can strive to be in a place of spiritual wealth.

'Aspire not to have more, but to be more' - Archbishop Oscar Romero. Now let's look at aging. A Buddhist monk spends hours meditating on the subject of death as a way of being at peace with it. He welcomes death as a part of life, integral to everything else. We too can come to a similar understanding by taking time to address and reflect upon it or anything else that scares us for that matter. In this way, we accept death as part of our conscious mind.

Acceptance can also lend a hand in everyday situations. Often we'll be inconvenienced by the behaviour of others. Someone might, for example, unwittingly push in front of us in a queue. Instead of being quick to anger, accepting that we will have to wait a little longer is a far more serene attitude that avoids any unnecessary conflict with strangers. Equally someone might accidentally scratch your car. A typical reaction would be to become angry and possibly even abusive towards them. But only the wise few would take a step back and accept that what's done is done.

On a broader political scale acceptance could also be an important tool. Climate change is one of the huge global issues of the day. There have of course been many attempts to reach a cohesive solution to the imminent threat it poses, but with little avail. It's often remarked that the desires of the top polluting powers such as America and the European Union are more or less interchangeable on the subject of climate change. Everyone wishes to pollute less and avoid the danger of natural disasters at as little cost to their nation's productivity as possible. Leaders however will often spend time debating the pettiest of differences in their viewpoints. This seems to suggest that by simply accepting differences of opinion in the technicalities of any one debate we can tackle the broader issues at hand, working peacefully between nations.

So it seems like an embracing, accepting attitude is a time proven route to that elusive sense of inner peace. It is at least a good antidote to the demanding struggle of always trying to be the best and the most well-off. ☺



Deven Capikon

Give Peace A Chance!

Did hippies have the right idea all along?

By Romina Rovira

Sometimes our world seems to be drowning in problems: from war to climate change, ethics and rights to political and economic crisis. Society is continually redefining itself, opening itself to what is different, expanding our concept of 'normal' and 'acceptable'. Change is happening all around us, but just how much of it do we owe to the hippies? Did they have the right idea all along? Is it true that all we need is love?

Foundations of hippie thought can be traced as far back as Ancient Greece through the work of philosophers like Diogenes of Sinope and the Cynics, and has been influenced by many famous figures such as Jesus Christ, Hillel the Elder and the Buddha. European social movements in the early 20th century are said to have expressed features of the hippie subculture, however the modern and more well-known hippie movement began in the United States during the early 1960s.

San Francisco's Haight district became the epicenter of a countercultural movement that rose to challenge the government's policies and the established way of life within mainstream society. The foundations of the movement had been formed from years of economic, social and inter-generational conflict, all of which exploded when psychoactive drugs came into the mixture. LSD and marijuana were passed around like

water, freeing people's minds from inhibitions and erasing preexisting taboos. As a result the hippies encountered a whole new world of possibilities and helped form a new way of thinking.

Make love, not war! Live and let live! Give peace a chance! Slogans dismissed as "old hippies' sayings". And yet these are ideals that even today are sought after. For a short period of time the hippie movement dominated the mind of the youth, born and powered by artists, writers, poets, and a variety of groups from different cultures and backgrounds, all looking for an alternative way of life.

The hippies were determined to transform the world; to create a society without restrictions and find a way to coexist in peace and harmony with everyone and everything around them. From the clothes they wore to the music they listened to, their everyday actions were part of their statement.

To the media, the subculture was a phenomenon that needed to be dissected. For the 'normal people' or 'straights', being a hippie was synonymous of being a lazy drop out or freak. In contrast younger generations were attracted to this new revolutionary way of new possibilities.

The masses needed icons and idols to look up to and who better for the task than the musicians themselves? Some of the most powerful figures of music were first in the heart of the hippies than in the history books. Jimmy Hendrix, ➔





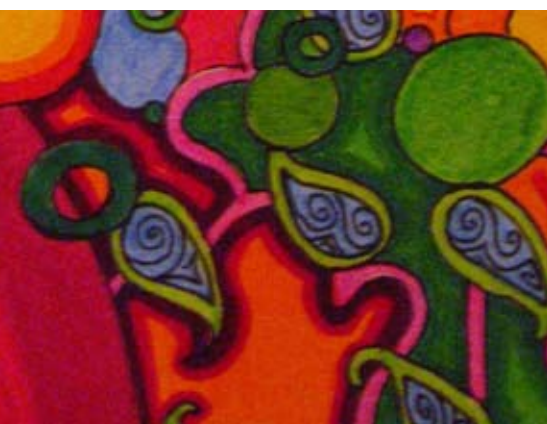
The Beatles, Bob Dylan, all part of the hippie legacy. And how could we forget their names when their music is so alive even after some of their deaths? When their message is so needed where is our John Lennon of today?

Sure we have Bono and a whole range of celebrities with their own humanitarian projects, but still something is lacking. The spirit of unity that the hippies accomplished is absent. The world keeps moving forwards but sadly we are still plagued by the same problems we've had for thousands of years.

hippies and law enforcement grew, not helped by how most of the media made a conscious effort to portray the situation as toxic. To make matters worse, in 1968 a quick succession of devastating events landed a painful blow to the moral of the movement. Casualties in the Vietnam War were higher than ever, and the conflict looked to be far from over. April 4, Martin Luther King Jr is assassinated, his death causing panic and havoc all over the country. June 5, presidential candidate and peace advocate Robert Kennedy

With few exceptions the hippies remained true to themselves, protesting peacefully with conviction and with an unmistakable slogan: Make Love not War!

The end of the hippies coincided with the loss of some of their most valuable idols. In 1970 The Beatles decided to part ways. In the same year Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin passed away due to overdose. Jim Morrison followed the year after. With the end of the Vietnam War the fire that kept the hippies going extinguished. It was the end of the counterculture movement that stirred the world.



We owe to the hippies for a change in the world. Their passion and perseverance proved to be an inspiration and stepping stone for other radical movements, the most significant of these being movements which fought for women, gay rights and racial equality. The hippies showed us that thinking differently is not wrong.

Though their vision of the world was perhaps too innocent and optimistic, it is a vision with great significance in intellectual and world history. Who could describe that perfect world better than John Lennon himself? "Imagine there are no countries, nothing to kill or die for and no religion too. Imagine all the people living life in peace. Imagine no possessions, no need for greed or hunger a brotherhood of man. Imagine all the people sharing the world. Just imagine how great that world could be." Maybe, just maybe, it would do us all good to bring a little more of the hippies into our lives. ☺

Maybe the hippies had it right to begin with. Maybe had they been more organized they could have taken their message further.

By the 1970s the hippies started to rapidly deteriorate. The Haight Ashbury district was crowded with young people, many of them unemployed, sick, and hungry. Drug dealers started to make a business out of the hippies' pro-drug attitudes. The police tried to gain control of the situation, creating a volatile environment as hostile relations between

is shot and pronounced dead the next morning.

The situation in America was boiling, the people were afraid and the hippies couldn't stand back and let things happen. Above all, however they were pacifists: people that condemned war and violence to resolve conflicts of any kind. Unlike other advocates for and against war that confronted each other on a nearly daily basis, the hippies had a different approach, clashing non-violently with the more radical groups that sought direct confrontation.

Do We Need Proof of God's Existence?

By Kayhan Ali

Deven Capikon

Religious people around the world take for granted that God exists, but that hasn't stopped some of the greatest minds in history from putting forth philosophical arguments to rationally support a belief in God. A number make up the classical "proofs" advanced by famous Christian thinkers.

One of these, the ontological argument, was stated by Anselm (1033-1109) who later became Archbishop of Canterbury. The argument can be found in his *Proslogion* (1077-78). It is an a priori argument, which means that it is based on reason rather than experience. Beginning from the concept of God as 'the most perfect being', it moves from His definition to proof. In formal deductive terms the argument states that; God is the greatest possible being; nothing greater than Him can be conceived; yet, if God exists in the mind alone then something greater would be that

which exists both in the mind and in reality too; so if God is the greatest being then He cannot exist only as an idea; He must exist both in the mind and in reality too.

A similar argument was espoused by Descartes (1596-1650). Descartes thought of the existence of God as necessarily tied to the concept of God, just as when one thinks of a triangle it must have 3 angles to the sum of 180 degrees. For Descartes, God is the most perfect being and therefore has all perfections. Since existence is part of perfection, God must exist.

The ontological argument has survived over the years and enjoyed a recent revival at the pen of Norman Malcolm (1960) and Charles Hawthorne (1962), but is still subject to severe criticisms. A major objection, first advanced by Kant (1724-1804), states that existence does not make something greater; it is not a real predicate as it does not tell us what a thing is actually like.

Another classical proof for the existence of God is the cosmological argument. It found its popular form in Aquinas (1225-1274), specifically his 'Five Ways'.



The first of these is that of the Unmoved Mover. The argument goes as follows: everything that is in motion is moved by something else; infinite regress is impossible; therefore there must be a first mover.

It is the causal relationship that Aquinas emphasises - everything is dependent on something else. Christian theology has

always taught that God sustains the universe, such that if God ceased to exist the universe too would stop existing. The problem with this argument is that it attempts to prove the existence of God by beginning with 'this world' and conclude with concepts of which we have no experience, for example 'uncaused' and 'unmoved'. ➔



Deven Capikon

Since we only have access to our representations of reality we cannot know of the laws and nature of things as they are in themselves, and so there is no means of inferring the existence of God from our experience of reality.

One argument is often cited by religious believers and appeals to many, at least on a spontaneous level. The teleological argument (argument from design) was advanced by Aquinas, being the fifth of his Five Ways. The argument comprises two steps: showing that the world exhibits 'apparent design'; and the inference from this apparent design, by analogy, is of an intelligent cause.

The watch analogy, famously advanced by William Paley (1734-1805) gives light to its strength. If you come across a watch, even if you had not seen such an item before, you would know that this instrument did not happen by chance but must rather be the result of an intelligent mind. In essence the watch demands a watchmaker.

Scientific revolution

Each of the classical arguments is subject to numerous objections which seem to leave us at a loss as to whether to trust their truth. Nowadays it seems that the most trenchant objection to faith, especially in the western world, stems from the belief that scientific explanation is sufficient to explain everything before us, leaving no need to assume God exists. But this alone does not seem enough to destroy the credibility of religious faith, for although there may be no need to believe in God in the terms of Western science it does not mean there is no need to believe in God at all.

One theory in particular seems to stand directly opposed to the beliefs of theists: the theory of evolution. First advanced by Darwin and now furthered by scientists such as Dawkins, the theory stands in conflict with the religious belief in Adam and Eve as the progenitors of the human race. It postulates that humans are the descendants of more primitive primates, and that all living beings have become what they are as the result of a process of development which sees the adaptation of animals to their

environment through a course of natural selection. But even if the theory is accepted it would be a mistake to assume that, standing alone, it is an argument against God. To put these two things together we first need to prove that belief in God precludes the ability to believe in natural selection. Is it beyond doubt that the human race was always in some way special, and not derived from more primitive beings?

Belief beyond reason

Whether you think science is the answer or not there is general consensus among current philosophers that, as deductive arguments, the theistic proofs fail. This is why we should better view them as probabilities expressing in a rational way elements of religious belief. It is often said that 'If God was proven there would be no room for faith'. Belief would be virtually inescapable and there would then be no test of faith. Faith then would lose all its value.

The emphasis upon faith is presented by the philosopher Kierkegaard (1813-1855). He argued that reason plays no part in faith because faith in God is a statement of certainty rather than probability and that reason can never produce such a certainty. For Kierkegaard complete faith involves a degree of commitment that makes the believer sure they could not change their belief or abandon it. Reasoned argument could never produce such a commitment. Kierkegaard advances the idea of 'a leap of faith' so that belief would remain even if the argument failed. He also claims that intense passion is an essential component of religious faith. Without risk, there can be no faith, and passion increases in proportion to the extent of risk.

In another view, emanating from Islamic tradition, it is simply held as part of the natural human disposition to believe in God, but that socialisation and upbringing can alter or develop one's beliefs as they grow up or make them cover up the faith within themselves. 'The mother of every person gives him birth according to his true nature (fitrah). It is subsequently his parents who



Golden Tones

make him a Jew or a Christian or a Zoroastrian' (Sahih Muslim). In this situation, to deny faith is like denying that one has a heart or a mind: something that is simply a given fact about the human being.

Spirits take wing

With the generally accepted failure of the traditional proof, it seems that if you wait to see by rational argument whether God exists or not you may wait your whole life, for you will see myriad theses and counter theses, logical possibilities and probabilities which for centuries thinkers have been grappling with. But it appears too difficult to say that no benefit can be derived from the study from these debates, though perhaps taking this route alone will not endanger absolute faith. For the religious believer the aim is to overcome all doubt; the very possibility of being wrong, and attain a firm conviction. Studying the ability of the human being and our potential capacity to gain awareness of the nature of things which supposedly exist beyond our realm of physical awareness is perhaps more fundamental than the proofs themselves, and the key to understanding their limitations.

The great Andalusian Philosopher Ibn Rushd spent his life investigating the ability to gain the ultimate truth of reality from reason and testify to its agreement with revelation. During his career he heard of a young mystic who had been gifted with spiritual knowledge and sought to meet him. This beardless youth was Ibn Arabi, soon to be called 'the Great Sheikh'. Upon their acquaintance the philosopher asked Ibn Arabi: 'What kind of solution have you found through divine unveiling and illumination? Is it identical with what you have found through speculative thought?' Ibn Arabi replied: "Yes - No. Between the yes and the no, spirits take wing from their matter and necks are separated from their bodies'. At this Ibn Rushd turned pale, realising what was meant: Reason alone cannot encompass the highest truth; but on the other hand, we cannot entirely exclude it. ☺

Once I walked beside an angel who,
shining with golden tones,
Flew next me, and like a hymn, did her
voice reach into me.

A joyous light within herself, shone through with
every gesture;
Whilst elated choir, there sang out, what ears
could not capture.

But her song escaped my grasp and her re-
splendent glow
In turns of fate soon disappeared, beyond my
sight, my world.

So blue and cold my eyes perceive, now life
replaces joy,
Perhaps in her light I was subdued, and so she
left my side.

But though swiftly she had departed, and ab-
sence lengthens time,
As prayer makes brighter moments, her song
remains inside.

Upon its sound I hear the earth with all the beauty
possessed;
And my soul rises above the sky, while my heart
learns new depths.

So, if inquired of me now, 'Where's your light,
your love?'
My voice, within longing ardour speaks, and qui-
etly replies

'Once I walked beside an angel, upon entering
my life and fate
I longed to go to heaven with her, but it's her song
that remains'

PEACE SYMBOLS

By Romina Rovira

Let's play a game of word association. The word of the day is peace. Go. What was the first thing on your mind? Was it the peace symbol? The white dove or an olive branch? Maybe you went a little further and thought of a Buddhist monk meditating in a faraway temple. An old adage says that a picture is worth a thousand words. It may be true, but the problem is that peace is hard to capture because peace is hard to find.

It's easy to picture war or violence. When it comes to peace we can write and talk about it endlessly, and if we are fortunate we can call our lives peaceful. But we have to ask ourselves; if we struggle to achieve peace, how can we represent it? Through the course of history symbols and images have been used to represent what we cannot see. Even today these symbols are in use, providing hope for a better future. However, the use we give them today has not always been the purpose originally intended.

The classic peace symbol is mostly associated with the hippies and other anti-war movements, but originally the symbol (designed by Gerald Holtom in 1958) was intended as a symbol for the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War. It was later adopted by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and eventually, in 1960, imported to the US by peace advocate Philip Altbach. But what does this symbol mean exactly? Holtom based his design on semaphore signs. Commonly used in the 1800's as a way of communication between ships, the system itself is very simple with each letter having a specific arm movement. Transmitting a message is only a matter of spelling the word in the right combination. Holtom used the signals of the letters N and D, standing

for Nuclear Disarmament, surrounded by a circle. Other interpretations can be found when looking for the roots of this symbol. Some have put forward the theory that in reality it's an inverted tree of life. Holtom may not have realized the second meaning that could be found in his creation but we cannot deny the importance that today surrounds the Peace Symbol. When we see it, we think of peace, of what we want to accomplish to make a better world.



The popular hand gesture in the form of a 'V sign', also known as the 'peace' or 'victory' sign is mostly attributed to Winston Churchill who during the World War II used it as a way to declare the future victory and promote hope of peaceful times to come. The same sign was used by American president Nixon after the end of the Vietnam War. This created a connection in peoples minds: the V sign was a signal of

the end of a war, and that the time to focus on peace had arrived. The hippies also helped to transform the sign into one of peace. They would often perform the gesture while saying 'peace', deepening the association. Ironically it is around two war periods that two of the peace symbols were created. We've all learnt about the horrors of World War II, about Hitler and the Nazi's goals. We can all easily remember the Nazi symbol, the cross with the arms bent. This is probably the most misunderstood symbol we can find, the swastika.

To the Western part of the world it tends to convey a message of pain and suffering, however the original meaning in religions such as Hinduism is one of peace and good luck, and it can still be found in temples, altars, and even events such as festivals or weddings as a sacred symbol of protection. To the Buddhist the symbol represents the 'righteous path', universal harmony, and the balance of opposites. To Jains ☸



(D)



(N)



The Messianic Age; Towards Perpetual Peace

By Josh Allanigue

the symbol is holy, forming a crucial part of their rituals. Archeological discoveries show the symbol appearing in other cultures, from the Indo-Aryans, to the Persians, Hittites, Slavs, Celts and even the Greeks.

It is hard to imagine how something we have associated with one of the cruelest times was in reality meant to transmit peace, and it is probably too late now to change our mentality as a whole but nevertheless, as individuals, we should at least learn to respect the meanings behind this and other symbols and learn their history. ☺

Peace

is hard to fully understand. History shows us that as war and violence are always around us we should look back and learn from our mistakes, but until we do we can look at these symbols and find hope. We can try harder to transmit the message these symbols carry for others.



Across the street from United Nations Headquarters in New York are these words written on a wall:

"They shall beat their swords into plowshares. And their spears into pruning hooks. Nations shall not lift up sword against nations. Neither shall they learn war anymore." Isaiah 2:4

World peace as a concept is older than written history. People of ancient days were hopeful that it would reach them as promised in scriptures and deliver them from persecution, suffering and the evils of life. Since this time instead of 'world peace' a ruthless cycle has persisted. WWII led to an almost universal acknowledgment of the need for a worldwide effort to preserve and enforce peace. The product of this acknowledgment was the United Nations.

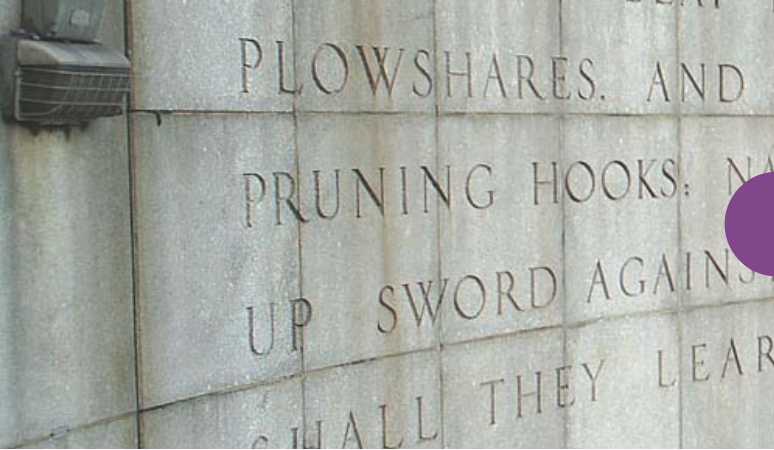
Although since the UN inception we are yet to see another world war, civil wars, inter-state conflicts and the birth of a new style of warfare in terrorism have come to the forefront. 9/11 marked a bloody turning point in history, prompting US-British led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in attempts to wage a War on Terror that violently continues to this day. Over 5,000 years after the words of Isaiah were written, peace at first sight feels like an unachievable goal.

However, around us are signs of hope for a better and peaceful future. Under the leadership of Obama a mainly "conciliatory" approach to US politics has emerged. Peace, it appears, is on the top of Obama's agenda. The nuclear arms reduction treaty signed by the US and Russia on April 8th has paved the road for Obama's goal of a "nuclear free world", plus his attempts to mend US relations with the Islamic world can be seen as a sign that the world is heading on track towards peace. It is profound how one man can spark such a sea change in world politics.

But the idea that "one man" could try to change the world and direct it towards peace is also the basis of important beliefs in the major faiths of the world.

The fact that major world powers are perceived to be moving towards the goal of a more just and peaceful world is argued by some religious scholars as providing the "signs" of the coming of an era of peace. Religious teachings differ slightly in their portrayals of this "golden age" but what unites them is the belief that the era is an unprecedented time of universal peace and justice and that a central saviour-figure will be the period's main leader.

Jewish theologians are in broad agreement that world history will only last for 6000 years. This belief is based on the idea that there were "6 days of creation" in the book of Genesis, and that each day in "God's sight" amounts to a thousand years to man (Psalm 90:4). According to the Jewish Calendar we are currently in the Hebrew Year 5770. There are only 230 years left before the "end of history" in Jewish theology! ☺



Some Jews believe that a saviour and redeemer figure called the Moshiach (or “anointed”) will herald and lead this “Messianic Age” where the world will recognize and worship “One God”. Descended from the most famous Israelite King David via his son King Solomon, Moshiach is destined to arrive before the end of the world’s 6000 year history. There also exists a belief in Jewish theology that there will be two generations succeeding the Messiah. By deduction it is possible to argue that the era in which we are living now – the 21st century – may be drawing closer to that ever elusive goal of world peace.

The Jews call their Messiah figure “David” (meaning beloved), the Buddhists call their redeemer “Maitreya” (word maitrī (Sanskrit) or mettā (Pāli) meaning “loving-kindness”). Maitreya is the prophecized “future Buddha” who will achieve enlightenment and revive the teachings of the Buddha. He will then bring peace to the world and lead mankind into a state of nirvana. What is interesting here is the similar meanings of the names given to these two saviour figures, David and Maitreya rooted in concept of “love”.

The Hindu redeemer is prophecized to restore “order and balance” to the world by adopting the role of righteous warrior. The Hindu saviour, Kalki, destined to appear in this current Age of Decline (Kali Yuga), is the 10th and final avatar of Vishnu (the supreme God in Hindu tradition) – the preserver of the universe. Kalki literally means “destroyer of confusion” or alternatively “eternity” or “time”. Traditionally represented in Hinduism as a sword wielding man riding a white horse or as centaur, Kalki’s role is to destroy evil and lead the human race to righteousness.

It is interesting to note that the first Buddha is actually the 9th avatar of Vishnu, showing a connection between Kalki and the Maitreya

Following this themes the Christian Messiah – Jesus – is said to be the leader who will preside over a world government that will eradicate evil and establish world-wide peace. Whilst Jesus Christ’s teachings are largely pacifist in nature (even teaching people to love their enemies), the verses in

the final New Testament Book of Revelations reveal a “warrior-saviour figure” who seeks to smite the unjust and the impure as an expression of God’s “righteous anger”. This is in accordance with the Hindu figure of Kalki who is regarded as having the same purpose. Not only that, but Revelations verse also mentions a white horse as something that’ll bring peace to the world without force.

Whilst the Islamic tradition generally regards Jesus as the Messiah (as identified by the Quran), Sunni and Shia versions of Islamic eschatology provides Jesus with a “side-kick” in his mission of eradicating error, tyranny and injustice. This figure is called the “Mahdi” (Arabic meaning: “Guided one”). Though not a belief that is universally agreed upon within Islam, the “Mahdi” remains a powerful idea within the faith and is actually the saviour-figure whose arrival the current Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is anticipating.

All the main faith traditions expect “one main person” to act as a saviour-figure and redeem the world from its troubles. One person, who embodies the fulfilment of the human potential for love, compassion, mercy and justice, could finally bring the world to peace. This is the testament not only to the power of the human soul but also an illustration of how every being in the world is of great value and significance. In the same way that we were condemned to a world of imperfection through the transgression of one man (Adam), the whole world will be brought back to “perfection” through the works of the Messiah figure in the Messianic age. The powerful religious message of the sacredness of human life is summarized both in the Torah and Quran in the famous verse “Whoever destroys one life, it is as if he has destroyed the entire world. Whoever saves one life saves the world entire.”

There is hope that a better world is possible. Through the leadership of people like Obama, the leadership of a “Messiah” like figure and through our own everyday efforts to better the world: we will draw ourselves closer to the Messianic age of world peace. It is up to us to fulfil our full potential so that we could all become the “Messiahs” of the world. This way we will finally fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah and return ourselves to the “Garden of Eden”, which is our true home. ☺



Deven Capikon



Tranquil Times

By Lyndsey Richards

In a changeable society the individual is contending with a multitude of subtle and evident stresses. Searching to obtain achievements and pleasures externally is thought to make us happy. The age of enlightenment is calling for humanity to remember to take a breather and focus upon themselves internally to create happiness. Making peace from within helps in leading a calm and mindful existence which can then be extended to others around us and allow for peaceful coexistence.

In times of hardship most, if not all, seek help from a variety of sources, attempting to find ways to cope. The power of positive thinking, self-manifestation and self-fulfilling prophesy is believed to have a powerful effect upon our mind set, however you need to have the desire to make the important decisions in life necessary to gain this state of being. To be at peace with oneself requires having the imagination and desire to do so!

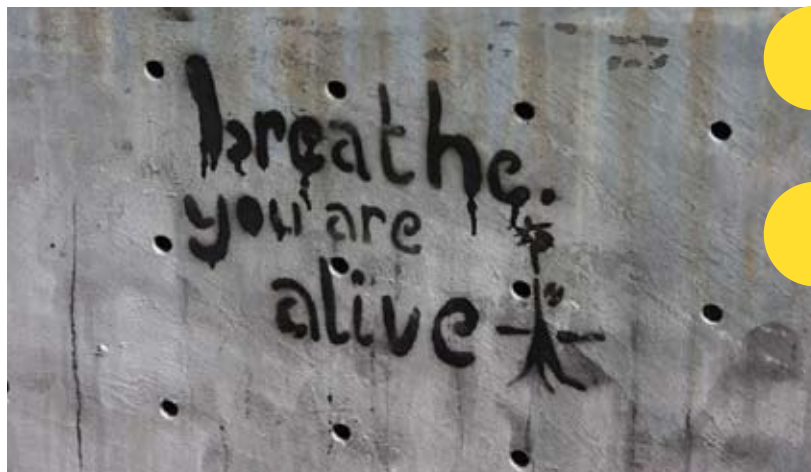
The book 'Creative Visualization' by Shakti Gawain comprises of the teachings and practices which could lead to a peaceful view of life. The book teaches us to retrain our minds with positive affirmation. This is said to be an effective process in reducing negative thoughts. It involves a mantra of positive statements by way of inner dialogue or thinking out loud. It is said that ten minutes each day of this method can facilitate in developing a new and conducive pattern of thinking. Coming out of our own consciousness to notice the surrounding world is another form of affirmation. "I give thanks to Mother Earth for nurturing and sustaining me every day." By guiding the individual to appreciate the bigger picture we learn to appreciate our own lives and others, leading to a more tranquil life.

A variety of religions have fundamental philosophies as to how someone can live a more positive and constructive life, such as being kind to others or not doing to another that which we would not wish upon ourselves. Being conscious of the actions made towards ourselves and others is a productive step in climbing the ladder towards peaceful times. Buddhism entails gaining a form of spiritual enlightenment involving meditation which aids in the search for the elusive inner peace. As with most things it takes time and dedication to achieve such a sought-after outlook upon the world. A lot of soul-searching is needed for this particular quest; to transform our thought sequences and the way in which we lead our lives for the better.

"These transformations are paradigm shifts or evolutions of the mind, spirit and soul." - Self Growth.com.

All around people strive for perfection which feels like an impossible task. Books and websites on the matter say that





Deven Capikou

perfection does not exist and that we all make mistakes. Some key points when aiming to reach inner-peace are: to live among others without complications and issues manifesting within our own psyche; to not project our own negativities upon someone else by irrational judgments created in the mind; loving your enemy and accepting, not ignoring, aversions. Holding on to detrimental ideas is not only harmful and contemptuous to others but will personally assist in the ruin of body and soul. Discovering a position of awareness about each others' sensitivities by recognizing our own can induce a more thoughtful approach when interacting with people.

Emma Tydeman-Ashton, a graduate of psychology in her twenties, has felt the calling in the past few years to find a more positive existence. Emma was asked some questions about how she came to this time in her life where she felt it was essential to seek out peace from within.

What methods, practices or teachings do you follow in pursuit of inner peace?

"I find self awareness through CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy), while methods such as Yoga and meditation, creative visualization and moving towards practicing social Buddhism aid in this journey. Finding connectedness and peaceful moments to reflect and practicing forgiveness towards self and others. What helps me is reading literature on certain teachings which I find to be useful to me as an individual when seeking this inner state of consciousness."

At what moment did you realize you needed to lead a calmer, happier and more tranquil existence?

"I have always been conscious of these resources due to my parents having an interest in such disciplines. So, naturally I adopted these techniques when young. It only dawned on me later in life when everyday living; including

work, home and relationships, became stressful and overbearing. It came to the point where I found utilizing previous knowledge and taking a certain approach to life would assist me with the journey to accept and be ready to improve who I am, thus enabling one to feel at peace and pass that on to others. Going to Yoga and meditation retreats assisted in creating awareness for the beneficial aspects of living a calm and tranquil reality, inside and out."

Without animosity would we lose appreciation for the good things in life, easily taking it all for granted? What kind of place would we be living in then? A harmonious haven full of love and acceptance doesn't sound too bad, except Ying and Yang, good and bad and a happy medium is innate to the universe, and for civilization it is a remaining objective in a subjective world. We must remember that a balance needs to be found and understood to generate peace from without and within. ☺

you have to desire or need to make the improvements and the important decisions in life to gain this state of being. To be at peace with oneself requires having the imagination and desire to do so!



By Hannah Petra

This is a weighty tome not only giving a history of the life of one of the most recognised faces of South Africa, the international Anglican Church and the antiapartheid movement, but also bringing to life 70-odd years of 20th century history.

Desmond Mpilo Tutu, Nobel laureate for peace, Archbishop of Cape Town and Primate of the Church of Southern Africa amongst other accolades, rose to international fame as a fiery yet pacifist antiapartheid voice, stirring and rousing for the cause of justice and human rights in South Africa and beyond. The scene is set for this remarkable life by sketching Tutu's humble background, family and childhood, with a heavy focus on the histories and geographies of the towns he lived and learnt in. This unfortunately provides a very factual and dry start to the story of Tutu, and the ongoing barrage of names is something of a hurdle too.

When learning about a figure of such historic importance we naturally hunt for causes of such greatness, and in Tutu's early life his mother is presented as one of these pivotal forces. Tutu is described more than once as being motivated and driven by the compassion he learned from his mother, who is called "the strongest formative influence on his life". That Tutu is a compassionate man is abundantly clear to anyone who knows anything of his life – this book gives a moving description of an ordained Tutu wading out into an irate crowd to save a

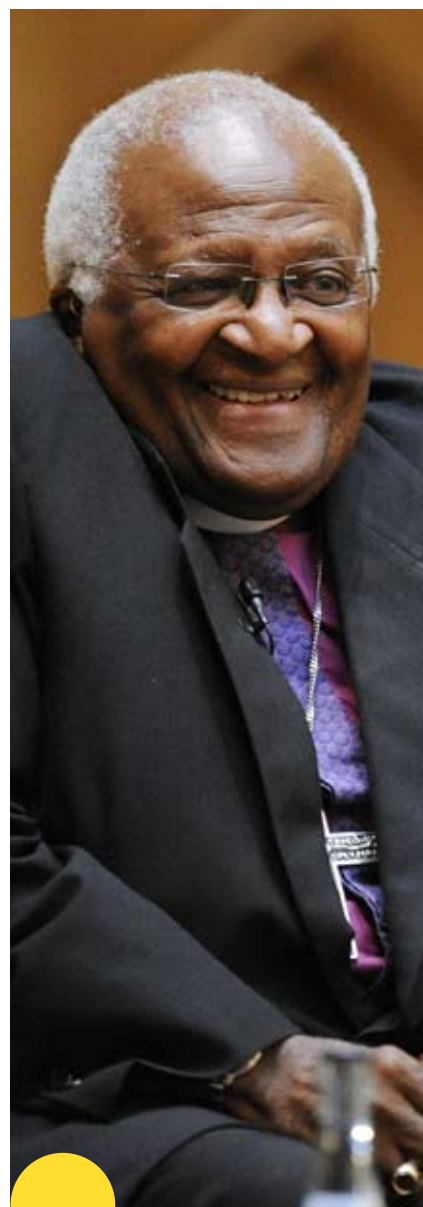
Review of Rabble-Rouser For Peace

The Authorised Biography of Desmond Tutu by John Allen.

black informer from the township masses wishing to beat him to death. However Tutu's mother, a supposedly fundamental influence in his life sadly remained a faint and fleeting whisper with barely a sentence written about her. The book is all the poorer for this. An additional noticeable absence later in the book is that of Nelson Mandela. Despite being another anti-apartheid giant, Mandela hardly features in this book: a deliberate omission or simply a description of the way things were?

Other key influences on Tutu's intriguing life and career remain frustratingly nebulous. Whilst Tutu's whole upbringing was bathed in religion the decision to become a priest is distinctly mundane: Tutu, inspired by his experiences of suffering tuberculosis, wanted to go to medical school but could not afford it, and theological college was somehow "the easiest option". Thus began the career of one of the most prominent Anglicans of all time! The church as a sage career choice as opposed to a sacred calling or vocation may be anticlimactic, though conversely this may also serve as a helpful reminder of the subtleties of divine will and providence.

The book does little to reveal concrete 'causes' of Tutu's opposition to the status quo. Instead his famed opposition to apartheid is presented as an un-sensational, surprisingly slow-growing awareness of the disparity and abusiveness of



apartheid. The 'causes' that are described are distinctly religious: Liberation theology, Black theology and African theology are posited as important contributors to Tutu's markedly Christian opposition to apartheid. This book is certainly no sort of confessional or systematic Tutu-theology, yet Tutu's identity as a genuine Christian streamed through the pages when it could so easily ➔



have been subsumed under the roles of campaigner, politician, humanitarian, orator, celebrity... It was refreshing and exciting to see faith, so often blamed for so many evils, translated into real-life powerful and protracted goodness. Indeed Tutu's faith seemed to form the very backbone of his campaign; or to reverse the terms, struggling for peace and justice were simply gospel imperatives according to Tutu.

Tutu's story places the focus of faith very strongly on its practical out workings, as opposed to more ivory-tower conundrums. Real life, however, always begs moral questions, and the issue which would have been impossible for Tutu to ignore was the colossus of violent struggle (in South Africa's case the issue of the ANC's use of arms). Tutu drew upon just war arguments and advocated a 'justifiable resistance' solution. Tutu demanded the asking of pertinent questions of any advocate encouraging the use of violence, such as "whether all peaceful means had been exhausted; whether violence had a realistic prospect of achieving its objectives; whether the ends sought had been clearly defined; and whether the suffering caused might not vitiate the ends sought." Tutu married such scrutiny with a blanket condemnation of all violence, plus a blanket acceptance of all people, no matter what they have done. Tutu became one of the chief proponents of economic boycott as a means of peaceful resistance, notably disinvestment and sanctions. Tutu's commitment to peace, justice and liberation was powerfully expressed in innumerable speeches and statements – he is responsible for the enduring metaphor of South

Africa as a 'rainbow nation' – but he also revealed himself a man of action who could get his hands dirty. From trying to keep peace at individual highly-fraught rallies and funerals, to diffusing tense confrontations between police and protesters, to demonstrating and lobbying at the highest levels, Tutu repeatedly put his neck on the line in his pursuit of peace and liberation. Tutu also imbued the struggle with a dignity, a confidence and a humanity which often prevented the loss of human life. For example his speech at Gugulethu dissuaded school pupils and teachers from marching, which would have inevitably caused a violent clash with police, but instead Tutu successfully roused the rabble towards peace: "We are involved in a moral struggle. We are involved in a struggle that will succeed. We have no doubt that we are going to be free, we can afford to be disciplined, we can afford to be dignified and we need to underline the fact of this struggle being a non-violent struggle."

The book goes on to sketch some of Tutu's involvement in other struggles for peace, primarily in Israel and Palestine, although unfortunately here he comes off far less glowing. The book shows a number of instances of Tutu wading into this most complex area of political, social and religious relations and repeatedly putting his foot in his mouth and inflaming nearly every party. Whilst these episodes may be interpreted as evidence of Tutu's arrogance and ignorance, they could also be interpreted as symptoms of the extreme complexity and tendency toward impasse of the Palestine-Israel conflict. Where Tutu really dazzles is in his work in post-apartheid South

Africa. Tutu, in chairing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) shows an utterly inspirational and uncompromising commitment to costly, genuine reconciliation, forgiveness and progress. Once again he makes his case on a strong basis of Biblical authority flanked by common sense and humanitarianism. The TRC operated by a triad of disclosure, amnesty, and restitution for the crimes committed by all parties since the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960 where 69 were killed and hundreds injured in a clash between township protesters and police, sparking national uproar and the declaration of a state of emergency. Tutu's even-handedness and lack of racial-discrimination when it came to guilt over human rights abuses was powerful to read. Indeed Tutu's marked non-racism was supremely inspiring and consistent throughout the whole book, from the way he collaborated with anti-apartheid allies of all skin colours and faiths to his concern for white South Africans as the ground shifted beneath their feet.

Despite being a well-written and thorough 400 pages detailing Tutu's life I am not sure I really feel like I know the man much better, and to me this is a loss. I have pieced together scattered personal details, like Tutu's habit of beginning so many things with prayer, or his prioritisation of retreat and solace, or his orange juice breakfasts. But with really just a handful of such details Desmond Tutu is not fully human to me yet. However, the force and accomplishments of his life and his electrifying oration cannot but impress and thus whet the reader's appetite to know the man better, and indeed, to know better the great story of South Africa of which Desmond Tutu is a significant part. ☺



Interact Calendar Spring/Summer 2010

JUNE

3rd CHRISTIAN- Corpus Christi
(Roman Catholic celebrating the 'real' presence of Christ in Eucharist.)

6th CHRISTIAN- Corpus Christi (Catholic Church, England and Wales.)

16th SIKH- Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev

29th CHRISTIAN- St Peter's Day
JEWISH- 17th Tammuz (An important Jewish fast day.)

JULY

5th SIKH- Birthday of Guru Hargobind (Nanakshahi Calendar, the Sixth of the Sikh Gurus.)

15th CHRISTIAN- St Swithun's Day (Myths say that the weather on Saint Swithun's feast day, determines the weather for the next 40 days.)

20th JEWISH – Tisha B'av (Remembers a number of tragic coincidental events in Jewish history.)
Zoroastrian- Jamshedi Noruz (Qadimi Calender, New Year)

23rd SIKH- Birthday of Guru Hargobind (Nanakshahi Calendar, Eight of the Sixth of the Sikh Gurus.)

25th Zoroastrian- Khordad Sal (Qadimi Calender, birthday of Zoroaster)

26th BUDDIST – Asala, Dharma Day (Celebrates the beginning of the Buddha's teachings after overcoming the 'wheel of truth' prior to his enlightenment.)

AUGUST

6th CHRISTIAN – Transfiguration (Orthodox Christian.)

11th /12 MUSLIM- Ramadan (Start of the month of fasting. *Subject to moon sighting*)

15th CHRISTIAN – Dormition of the Theotokos (Orthodox Christians remember the death, resurrection and glorification of Christ's mother.)
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Catholic festival celebrating the mother of Jesus being taken into heaven in body and soul.)

19th Zoroastrian- Jamshedi Noruz (Shenshai Calendar, New Year.)

24th HINDU- Raksha Bandhan (Hindu celebration of brother and love.)

[illegible]