

NIGHT SKY THEOLOGY

A PERSONAL APPROACH TO THE INTEGRATION OF THE SCIENTIFIC WORLDVIEW AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

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THE CHICAGO LITERARY CLUB

JANUARY 20, 2020

(Artwork follows)

Between the conscious and the unconscious, the mind has put up a swing:

all earth creatures, even the supernovas, sway

Between these two trees,

and it never winds down.

Angels, animals, humans, insects by the million, also

the wheeling sun and moon;

ages go by, and it goes on.

Everything is swinging: heaven, earth, water, fire

and the secret one growing a body.

Kabir saw that for fifteen seconds, and it made him a servant for life.

-from The Kabir Book – Forty-four of the Ecstatic Poems of Kabir, Versions by Robert Bly

INTRODUCTION

I encountered the phrase “night sky theology” in a New Yorker article by Louis Menand about two years ago. He used the phrase to describe, somewhat skeptically I thought, the views of God as expressed in a 1954 letter by Albert Einstein that was being auctioned at the time. In the New Yorker article, Menand wrote that Einstein had “what might be called a night-sky theology, a sense of the awesomeness of the universe that even atheists and materialists feel when they gaze up at the Milky Way.” Menand went on to say that Einstein “seems to have held the standard belief for a scientist of his generation. He regarded organized religion as a superstition, but he believed by means of scientific inquiry, a person might gain an insight into the exquisite rationality of the world’s structure, and he called this experience ‘cosmic religion.’”ⁱⁱ

The term “night sky theology in the context of Einstein and his views of God, jumped off the page for me. Physics was my first religion and Einstein the prophet. I majored in physics as an undergraduate with the zeal of a convert. Mathematics was the secret language of this religion, easier for me to master than the rudimentary Hebrew I had studied when younger. I received an initiation in high school when a fellow student in my AP physics class told me that Einstein had been working on an equation that “explained everything”, presumably the so called “unified field theory”, still an elusive goal for physicists. Much later in life, when my facility with mathematics had faded away amidst medical studies, I began to do art and many of the works were mixed media collages with deep sky photographs as background. These photographs, taken through powerful telescopes, including more recently the orbiting Hubble telescope, were of galaxies, nebulae and stars millions and sometimes billions of light years away. Such photographs have only been possible in the last century. In one of the artist statements for a gallery show I wrote:

"I tend to use the star filled night sky as a background because it always puts everything else in a different perspective and I am often using art to expand my perspective. In a certain sense, it is for me an image of God, but God as viewed now in the 20th century."

The term, "night sky theology" then, was a kind of discovery by the language center of the left brain of what had been going on in the right brain for decades.

Thus, I enthusiastically submitted "Night Sky Theology" as the title of the Literary Club paper I was going to write having little idea what I would write about. I received an email back from the representative of the Literary Club accepting the title, but it was somehow changed to "Night Sky Therapy". I wasn't sure if this was a typo or it had been changed due to a prohibition on papers which might touch on religion. I emailed back asking if there was such a prohibition and I was informed that the title change was a mistake. The signer hinted that I might check his signature to realize that there was no reason "theology" would be a taboo subject. There I discovered that he himself was a theologian, in fact the editor of a theological journal! As you might imagine, my stomach dropped: I realized that I was using the word "theology" somewhat ironically and that, with this title, I ran the risk of making a fool of myself. However, this has pushed me to dig deeper into my own experience and it is from this deeper digging that I have tried to write what follows.

CHAPTER 1 – A LITTLE PERSONAL THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

“Everything is connected, and the web is holy.” – Marcus Aurelius

If I look objectively at my body, I see that it is made of cells, which are made of atoms. These atoms have been elsewhere before they were me. They were part of the food I ate, the water I drank, the air I breathed. Of course, what I call “food” was once (mostly) living creatures of the plant and animal kingdoms. The minerals came from the earth.

If I trace these atoms in time, I see that I am a construction of impersonal elements. Going back eons in time, I understand that the heavier atoms, carbon, oxygen and so on, were forged in the stars, stars mostly made of hydrogen and helium. Despite all appearances, I am mostly hydrogen (especially in the form of water).

If I look at my thoughts, I can see that many are formed with words, in a language I did not create. I can see that most of these thoughts have been had by others and much of what I think, has been thought by others and I have learned from others.

In this way, I see that the separate self, a creation of the mind, and my default state of consciousness, is just one way of understanding reality. In actuality, I am woven of materials and thoughts that are universals - not mine. They temporarily reside in patterns that are “me”. This “me” exists in a particular form in the present but it is ever changing.

In this way, I realize that I am always and forever, totally in union with the All, the One, Reality, the Whole, God, the Divine, Allah... whatever name seems best. Creation is constant and so is death.

Mystical death is the technical name given the process leading to this realization by many spiritual paths. It is the death of the illusion of separativity, the illusion of ownership and the many other illusions that constitute the default, “self” state of consciousness. Mystical death is part of a process of divine union through love that is at the center of my aspiration to realize the sacredness and holiness of Reality, this Reality being only the surface of the Great Mystery in which we all live, or so it seems to me.

Over the past 50 years, I have devoted a very large proportion of my time and energy to exploring and trying to realize these kinds of reflections. Much of this has been guided via study, daily meditation practices and small group work within a formal spiritual path known as Cafhⁱⁱⁱ. This especially includes efforts to apply all of this to daily life. This work has been guided by the maxim that daily life and spiritual life are one and that “there is no basis for thinking that our relationship with God can be better than our interpersonal relationships.”^{iv}

Cafh is a mystical – ascetic spiritual path founded in the 1940s by Santiago Bovisio^v in Argentina. Bovisio was born in Italy and initiated into an esoteric order there. He moved to Argentina in the 1920’s with the purpose of founding a continuation of that esoteric order, the remnants in Italy having perished under the rule of Mussolini. Such orders, which preserved and taught fundamental ancient knowledge and teachings of both eastern and western sages, have existed secretly for hundreds of years or more in Europe and elsewhere. For political reasons, they have tended to be secret. Bovisio added much of his own direct experience, as have many of the participants in Cafh over the succeeding years. In some ways, Cafh has been my “secret life” though it is no longer secret. However, it has seemed to me to be a part of my life that I would not have been able to have predicted.

I entered Cafh formerly in 1973, along with my wife, making my first vow, the Vow of Silence. It was not so much a vow of secrecy but a vow to enter into this path via the door of Silence, the inner quieting of the surface currents of thoughts and feelings that make up much, if not most of our awareness, in order to come in contact with other deeper currents.

Cafh has a narrative but the emphasis is on its method. Its teachings have been, for me at least, more like “working hypotheses” rather than beliefs. During this time, I have come to see this process as using the “experimental method”, with the tools given by the spiritual path applied to one’s own life. The name of this process is “spiritual unfolding”, implying a natural process of development. Along the way, life unfolds and sometimes you have insights, epiphanies or numinous experiences which help to encourage you to continue your sometimes seemingly unrewarding efforts. Indeed, perseverance and the renouncement of rewards are some of the virtues taught. I think of this as “applied theology”, where the applications are about how one lives. Speculative aspects about “other worlds” or levels of reality that I cannot perceive don’t interest me very much.

Concurrent with this activity, I have been a student and practitioner of science. Initially I was a physics major, then did graduate studies in biomedical engineering. I have spent the last 5 decades in the clinical practice of internal medicine. This practice is grounded in what is known as “evidence-based medicine”, which means relying on practice, based as much as possible on scientifically validated evidence. Of course, there is more to practicing medicine than this, but it is, more or less the basis of what I do.

The world view which has developed during my lifetime via the methods of science is, for the most part, my own world view: I am immersed in it the way we are immersed in air: mostly I am unaware of it, I take it for granted. This world view might be called “metaphysical materialism” and it is the pervasive view in contemporary Western thought. It reduces the mental to the physical – thought

comes from the brain and most ideas of God are seen as delusional. In this world view, the physical is the ultimate reality. I am not sure what else Reality consists of, but it seems to me that the physicalist world view assumes that what we know now is a complete picture. On the other hand, if science teaches us anything, it is that every discovery shows how incomplete our knowledge has heretofore been.

Integrating the spiritual and the modern scientific world view is like trying to square the circle.

CHAPTER 2 – THE NIGHT SKY - A NUMINOUS EXPERIENCE

It is the 1970's and I am living in Baltimore, in the Homewood area near the Johns Hopkins campus. I am a graduate student in biomedical engineering, a transitional period in my life. Along with an intense commitment to academic studies, there is also the Vietnam War and the draft, the civil rights struggle and the "counter culture" with which I identified. The seriousness of the war, the deaths of high school friends who had been drafted or volunteered, the injustices suffered by black America lend a gravity to life that transcends even academics.

One early summer evening, I ride alone on my motorcycle out of the city to a reservoir north of where I lived. I can't remember the exact details, but I probably had only a vague destination in mind. At this point my whole life had only a vague destination in mind. I was a few years beyond the loss of my high school and college girlfriend/fiancé, who had dumped me (for a real physicist, I may add) and I was living with a group of other hippie graduate students.

As I ride to the reservoir it gets darker and darker. There is little light pollution and the stars are exceptionally bright. I pull into an empty area next to the reservoir and lay on a picnic table studying the stars in silence. After some time, the night sky becomes my only reality: the planet Earth a viewing platform in space. The mind slows, thoughts quiet and the vastness of it all transports me into a timeless reverie: the realization that human beings would have looked at this same night sky a hundred years ago, a thousand years ago, a million years ago. They have all likely asked variations on the same question that I am asking: "What is out there?" Connections with history, astronomy, metaphysics and physics emerge from my undergraduate liberal arts education in a way that they rarely did in class. The physics lessons describing the Big Bang and the formation of galaxies connect with those places in the brain where it was all mathematics and they join that part of the brain which is direct sensation. My

perception moves from the usual, everyday state of mind into an impersonal, more scientifically accurate frame of reference. Reality with a small “r” becomes Reality with a capital “R”. I begin to realize that there is no “outer space”. Our home is in what we call “space” and we are living on a small rock in continuous movement in spacetime. Flipped out of the Earth centered frame of reference, I “feel” the rotation of the earth instead of seeing the stars move. We are moving 800 miles per hour rotating about the earth’s axis and 25,000 miles per hour revolving around the “sun”, our star. This “hidden” reality behind day and night and the seasons of the year which I had only realized intellectually before shakes me from my everyday consciousness into one both impersonal and sacred. The reality of the scientific discoveries that I had heretofore studied in class, become Real to me in a new way, an awakening of sorts. It had an emotional power both awe inspiring and scary for in the face of this unimaginable physical vastness, this impersonal cosmos, comes also a feeling of smallness, profound humility, and a kind of nothingness with a feeling of vulnerability.

Some years later I imagine that this was what Blaise Pascal, the 17th century mathematician and mystic experienced at a time when the idea the earth revolved around the sun was just catching on and he wrote, *“The eternal silence of these infinite spaces fills me with dread.”*^{vi}

As I recount this experience, now, I remember that it occurred a year or so after the moon landing. It was the time when the first beautiful photographs of the Earth from space were available. Planetary consciousness was in the air. The moon landing seemed to be an event of historical significance on par with the discovery of fire or the wheel. The realization of our place in the cosmic scheme of things and the hope that this knowledge could truly lead to a new consciousness and a “new age” was also a part of this time. Unfortunately, this was a time before “new age” became a marketing category and its spiritual value debased.

Sometime years later, Carl Sagan wrote a famous essay called “The Pale Blue Dot”, a reflection based on an actual image of the earth as photographed from Voyager I as it left earth as it looked back on the planet from a distance of 4 billion miles. He wrote:

“Look again at that dot. That’s here. That’s home. That’s us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every “superstar,” every “supreme leader,” every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there – on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.”^{vii}

A few years ago, I wrote the following while sitting on a bluff overlooking the Anasazi ruins in Canyon De Chelly, Arizona. It was another contact with “night sky theology”. The abandoned ruins of earlier inhabitants of the land are dwarfed in 250 million-year-old geologic rock formations in which they are embedded.

Meditation at Antelope Ruins, Canyon de Chelly

Sitting on the rock mantle, moon up ahead, vast canyon below, bottom layer 250 million years old:

We are little bursts of life in the well of space – time

formed by our pebble in the cosmos and our nuclear furnace – star/sun.

Human history is the history of small mammals with extraordinary potential.

Is there a Divine Hand in all of this?

It is hard to imagine a "yes",

But even harder to imagine a "no".

I don't know.

My kilogram or so of neural circuitry cannot take it in.

Combining the neural networks of the billions of humans who have lived and are still alive is still only a drop in the cosmic bucket. Dehydrate the brains, remove all the water and how much does the combined brain of the all – time human race weigh in total?

Remove the space between the atoms, only count the space of all the nuclei... you get the point.

We are here in this vast unknown universe,

Grasping at an understandable cosmology and yet

Doesn't the more sophisticated understanding just continually lead to more questions? Don't we seem ever smaller, ever more ignorant?

Ah, but that burst of energy called life: isn't it incredible in itself!

All its forms, its ingenuity.

A toast to survivorship: to all those life forms who have been our ancestors,
who combined their cellular forms to form... us.

Silence. Words are too paltry to even talk about it.

Silence is the process toward God – it is the process of apprehension.

This is what the noisy one knows.

CHAPTER 3 – THE MYSTICAL BODY OF HUMANITY

“There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

- William Shakespeare, “Hamlet”

It is 1975 and I am now married and in medical school. My wife is weeks away from giving birth to our first child. We are living on the Upper West Side of Manhattan in development called Park West Village, on the 16th floor. It is a modest complex but it has terrific views which include the Hudson River in the distance. The floors of the apartment are tiled with 9 x 9-inch tiles which have a nondescript pattern of randomly spaced colored blotches in various shades of brown— from light cream to dark brown. It is not an aspect of the apartment anyone would ever notice.

According to an article by Kenneth Tupper, entitled “Entheogens & Existential Intelligence: The Use of “Plant Teachers” as Cognitive Tools”, an “entheogen is a word coined by scholars proposing to replace the term ‘psychedelic’.” It is a more respectable term which refers to substance that are used as a spiritual or sacramental tool.

On that day in 1975, after the ingestion of LSD, I spent much of the afternoon alone walking up and down Broadway. It was a quintessential New York City experience: the great diversity of humanity living together in such a concentrated area. On acid it was also seeing everything and everyone with fresh eyes, as if for the first time. The city had always struck me as the microcosm of the world and on this day, it was through that lens that I experienced it. People of every nationality, color, shape, age and language, all working or walking on this urban “river”, Broadway. I felt as tiny participant in the great human current, one of billions, one with humanity. This feeling of oneness was neither sentimental nor romantic but real, perhaps more real than my own brief existence. There was the realization that I have

been born in the middle of some process that existed long before I did and will exist long after I am gone. And along with this vision came a feeling of love – and identification with everyone sharing this unique, never to be repeated moment in time, that is both impersonal and unconditional. It was the love of one who was also a kind of “visitor” to this world, a powerful yet fragile love, too, for it is often a lot easier to love humanity than individual humans!

Anyway, I am back in our living room and glance at the floor and I no longer those speckled tiles but human beings - all shades of color, ages, men, women, children alive and interconnected moving, and breathing. Each blotch on the tiles was a person with a different shade of skin. It was the “Human Soul Tree” for each was a living, unique person connected like a fruit to a tree, extending from wall to wall. Of course, this vision was the consequence of the visual tricks played by LSD combined with all of the feelings I had experienced on the walk and the special feeling of almost fatherhood projected on the tiles: a hallucination.

But it was also a transcendent vision that seemed to come from the depths not of my being but a gift from the “collective unconscious”: a primordial vision of the Mystical Body of Humanity. And it has stayed with me ever since.

The scientific discoveries of the past century have revealed that the human experience is new in the Universe. While the known physical universe is thought to be near 14 billion years old, homo sapiens have only been around the past 2 million years and humans that we might recognize as such about 200,000 years. Recorded history is perhaps 10,000 years.

Truthfully, these are numbers that are very hard to imagine.

An easier way to visualize these relative time spans is to imagine a long highway where one foot is equal to one year. Thus, the last century would be the closest 100 feet of road and the last 10,000 years would be the last 2 miles down the road. By that measure, members of *Homo sapiens* have been

around the past 40 miles of road. Dinosaurs, who lived 65 million years ago, would be 13,000 miles back and the geologic formations you can see at in the southwestern United States, as for example Canyon de Chelly in Arizona, had been formed 40,000 miles down the road. The planet earth, our home formed some 1.5 million miles down the road. Such reflections bring to mind a quotation of Paolo Soleri, the late visionary Italian architect who founded the futuristic community Arcosanti in Arizona.

As the end of a process, man is absurd. As the beginning of a process, man might be hopeless, desperate, but never absurd. We stand where the magnetic field is just beginning to orient each particle (monad). The total pattern is far off in the future but the magnet is operative and the particles will orient themselves. In reality the magnet (which stands as God) is itself self-constructing and the force field is not just undefined but also highly improbable, not absurd, just inconceivable.^{viii}

CHAPTER 4 – A NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE

Einstein's most well-known quote about his beliefs with respect to God were sent in a telegram to a prominent rabbi who pressed him to stop being so vague. The rabbi asked, do you or do you not believe in God? And make it brief. His famous response was "I believe in Spinoza's God, who reveals himself in the lawful harmony of all that exists, but not in a God who concerns himself with the fate and the doings of mankind."

As a physicist in training at the time I first read this, I took it for granted that I probably believed in "Spinoza's God" too, though, if the truth be told, the issue of God was not really of much interest to me at the time and neither was Spinoza.

Commented [R1]:

Commented [R2R1]:

In the past year or so, I became re- interested in Spinoza, initially of because Einstein's endorsement. The more I read, the more I felt a kinship. However, it was the following lines from the book, Betraying Spinoza by Rebecca Goldstein that really piqued my interest:

"We can survive death to the extent that we have already let go of our singular solitary selves... Immortality, for Spinoza, is impersonal. I survive my necessary death to the extent that I have ceased identifying with the mere thing that I am, and identify with the whole intricate web I have assimilated into knowing..."^x

This idea seemed to sum up thoughts that had been percolating in my subconscious for a long time. It led to a personal feeling of connectedness to Spinoza that is hard to get reading his book, The Ethics.

In 1995, I had a heart attack which included a cardiac arrest, fortunately, while in the emergency room at Evanston Hospital. During the time of the resuscitation, when I was totally unaware of anything happening around me, I went into a super aware, timeless state, filled with peace and love that is very hard to describe since it was beyond anything I had ever experienced before or since. In this dark, but illuminated state, I moved toward three lights, which seemed more like beings but looked like stars. I later felt they represented three important beings, my father and two friends who had died within the past few years and that they were greeting my arrival. This experience was as profound as anything else I have experienced in life and its influence is omnipresent for me even 25 years later.

While I have spoken a lot about this experience, and indeed it was the subject of my previous Literary Club paper called “Light in Dark Places”, I haven’t spoken about the context in which it occurred, a context that seems relevant to these theological ruminations.

In short, it occurred at a time when I was having a crisis of faith. I had been in Cafh over 20 years at that time, had assumed leadership roles and was giving direction to many individuals. But I wasn’t sure whether this was worthwhile or if I was really up to it. My closest friend and informal teacher had died at the age of 42 a few years before. His brother, who was my formal spiritual director at the time, had left Cafh, divorced his wife and had started a new life. We had moved to Chicago from New York to begin a group here and it was difficult. My father had died of a heart attack two years before. One day, I picked up a book at the Jungian bookstore in Evanston called In Midlife – A Jungian Perspective^x and I started to read it. It seemed to describe me. To generalize a bit, my own mid-life crisis which I had not recognized as such, had little to do with my marriage or my profession but centered on this spiritual path to which I was so devoted.

Hence, I began seeing a Jungian analyst, the author of this book. I diligently started recording my dreams and began to realize how much was going on within about which I was unaware. Details are

unnecessary here. However, the heart attack occurred during this time of therapy and I was able to learn from it in ways I doubt that I would have if I did not have the guidance of this therapist.

First, in the course of entering back to consciousness from the arrest, I felt totally helpless, realizing nothing was in that moment under my control. I was filled with sadness and fear and a feeling of failure. I also realized that I had neither created myself nor given myself life and it was not “mine” really. Whether my creation came from a process or a Deity seemed a matter of little importance, but the reality of being created, a creature, became a very real for me. At that moment, a mantra like prayer arose in my mind, “If it be Thy Will” and a feeling of letting go and surrender filled my being.

Second, the sense that everything can change in split second, became very real for me. It made me appreciate the present in ways I had not before experienced to this depth. It validated an idea called in Cafh terminology, “The Becoming” which says simply that everything is in flux. Nothing remains the same and there is no point trying to hold on to the past. From this existential sense of the reality of the flow of time, comes another central idea in Cafh called “renouncement”. While renouncement has a great number of meanings, in this case it has been the embrace of “letting things go” and living in the present as a participant in the Great Current of life. Many such abstract spiritual ideas became concrete living realities.

Third, becoming a patient closed for me the gap between doctor and patient that is a natural part of practicing medicine. I began to be able to understand the subjective experience of illness and vulnerability and death in a way that has made me a better doctor and more capable to relating the subjective worlds of my patients. It led me to practice part time as a hospice physician for ten years and accompany many others who were dying and their families. It helped me to be a better human being.

That smallness of self who is woven piece of the Whole meditation with which I started this paper is reflected in the preceding comment about Spinoza's view of death. It is possible, of course, that there is an afterlife and some continuity of the individual after death, but who can really say?

A few years after this near-death experience I read another New Yorker article^{xi}, this by the writer William S. Burroughs. It is called "Last Thoughts" and it consists of short reflections he wrote in the last few months before his death. Burroughs is described in the brief preface of the article as "the dark Prince of American letters – druggy, dangerous and poetically bleak. He was the granddaddy of the Beats and the author of Naked Lunch and twelve other novels."

Burroughs wrote:

"The search for a final answer – the Holy Grail, the Philosophers' stone. A receding mirage. In any case, who wants a final answer? I asked a Japanese physicist; "Do you really want to know the secret of the Universe?" He said "Yes". I thought a fraction of that secret would have you climbing the walls. Me, I only need to do what I need to do. "Just a Tech Sergeant, me."^{xii}

The following is a kind of poem which I wrote in this spirit of "what is it that I need to do". It is called "Inner Work".

INNER WORK

One

Of six - billion

I am.

Nameless,

Universal, Prototypic Human

Struggling with

Culture - conditioned, personality identified

Separateness,

To be born anew.

To see

Right - perspective,

Proper - scale:

My sacred nothingness

as one

of six sacred billion.

To interiorize this

As the Antidote

To the Poison of the Conditioned

self - believing,

self - centered,

success - oriented,

twentieth first century, control oriented,

Persona of

Who I thought I was.

The human soul

Is

One Soul:

All in me,

Me in all.

Tiny,

Infinitesimal, transient me

Obscure birth,

Obscure death:

Obscure life,

The seed of New - Prototypic Human

Has been sown.

The direction is clear:

The work must be done now.

To live as

One of six billion,

Not as a bee in a hive, but

Expanding,

The best in me,

Wanting nothing personally: if only that is to

Learn

Again, and again

What

That means.

CHAPTER 5: RECAP

*“We may be in the Universe as **dogs** and cats are in our libraries, seeing the books and hearing the conversation, but having no inkling of the meaning of it all.”^{xiii} William James*

I began this reflection, “Night Sky Theology” with a poem by Kabir, in which he described an experience of “fifteen seconds” that changed his life. In this paper, I presented three different experiences of my own, trying to use them to describe a kind of non – systematic, personal “theology” and I have tried to tie these experiences to ideas I have learned to use in the spiritual path of Cafh.

I have taken the liberty to describe these as “numinous experiences”. Numinous, comes from the Latin word *numen* which means divinity. It was first used by the German theologian Rudolf Otto in a book called The Idea of the Holy, published in 1917. He makes the case that such experiences underlie the foundations of all religions. He describes them succinctly with the Latin phrase *mysterium tremendum fascinans*. Numinous experiences are “wholly other” for they are of a different quality than anything experienced in ordinary consciousness. They provoke awe and terror due to the feeling of personal powerlessness in the face of the over whelming power encountered. But along with this is also a feeling of mercifulness and grace. It is the encounter with the Sacred. I have used the term “night sky” as both physical reality and symbol. As symbol, its meaning is quite open but it has for me these qualities.

I have a very good friend, Peter, who is both a clinical psychologist and a member of Cafh. He has many clients who are in religious professions and on spiritual paths, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist and

otherwise. He says that everyone in religious professions or on spiritual paths has entered these disciplines, initially at least, to solve some sort of psychological problem. (Of course, he is a psychologist!) He says that we create the God we need, or in the case of atheists, we slay the God which hurt us. As deflating as that perspective is, I am sure that it has much truth.

This has led me to think about what psychological problems I have been trying to “solve”. I think they are the problems of love, suffering, finiteness and death. They are probably the same reason I went into medicine.

In the end then, perhaps the title of this paper could very well have properly been called “Night Sky Therapy” rather than “Night Sky Theology”. I am happy with either.

ⁱ Robert Bly. *The Kabir Book – Forty-Four Ecstatic Poems of Kabir*. 1977. The Seventies Press. p. 11.

ⁱⁱ Louis Menand. “Reading into Albert Einstein’s God Letter”. *The New Yorker*. 12-25-18.

ⁱⁱⁱ See www.Cafh.org and www.seedsofunfolding.com

^{iv} “Everyday Reality”. *The Work of Cafh*. Privately published.

^v See www.SantiagoBovisio.com

^{vi} Blaise Pascal. *Pensées*. www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/18269.

^{vii} Carl Sagan. *The Pale Blue Dot*. Random House. 1994.

^{viii} Paolo Soleri. The Bridge between Matter and Spirit is Matter becoming Spirit. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. 1973.

^{ix} Rebecca Newberger Goldstein. Betraying Spinoza: The Renegade Jew Who Gave Us Modernity. Nextbooks/Schocken; 2006.

^x Murray Stein, In Midlife – A Jungian Perspective. Spring Publications. 1998.

^{xi} William S. Burroughs. "Last Thoughts". The New Yorker. 8-18-97.

^{xiii} William James. A Pluralistic Universe. <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/11984/pg11984-images.html>.1909.

ART WORK – ILLUSTRATIONS FOR “NIGHT SKY THEOLOGY”

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