

Twelve Miles Offshore

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This thesis won't be a statement or a way to spread truth and science. It is rather a combination of theories, ideas, and philosophies. Perhaps consider this thesis a constellation of ways of thinking. It is a collection of perspectives on the potential nothingness after life is lived.

*the numbers you may find floating in the text, refer to the number of the source. Sources can be found at the end of the thesis as an appendix.

Chapters.

1. Nothingness
2. Non-duality
3. Consciousness
4. Water
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Appendix: sources

Nothing [nuhth-ing], *noun*

1. The physical absence of anything

Nothingness [nuhth-ing-nis], *noun*

1. The non-experienceable realm
2. The state of non-existence
3. Unconscious emptiness

The first chapter: nothingness.

The party squad left the banquet, and the revelry. Everyone had gone on their ways to continue their journey. The dining tables were left with tumbled glasses, dirty napkins, leftovers, asymmetrical chairs, used cutlery, and the smell of garlic. The echoes of joy might still be heard in the hallways, but remained particularly in the minds of those who were once at the feast. And even those echoes as well as the memories, together with the traces, will fade someday.

This setting is a sketch of what could be the most real state, the state of nothingness. That's what it's all going to, and what it's all been coming from.

The moment that awareness of reality, life, events, and experience rises is the exact moment that implies something otherwise¹. One may imagine an afterlife, others expect an illusion. My interest lays in the option we could call nothingness, unreality, or non-being. The quality that makes something interesting, is the fact that it was not always there and that it will fade, eventually. It is about change. It is about the ending. Vivacity is variance, movement. And even that -in the end-, will fade and vanish².

Some find the idea of dying scary. The irreversibility of ending might be overwhelming, but the unknown mustn't be. What about the nothingness before we were born?

What about it?

The way we trick ourselves is by attributing powerlessness with nothingness. This leaves a hole in our logical brains when considering nothingness as a concept, and this hole is where our fear of nothingness begins to grow.

When the idea of nothingness is presented as blankness, when it provokes an eerie feeling, when nothingness is made synonym to anything but something beautiful, nothingness is not well understood.

When one arrives in nothingness, there won't be anything to perceive nor will there be anything with which to perceive. In nothingness, there is no difference between joy and sadness, because there will be neither joy nor sadness. In fact, there won't be any feelings or emotions. There won't be pain or pleasure. There won't be thoughts. There won't be silence or sound. There won't be anything. The only way for me to imagine that non-experience, is by trying to remember what I perceived before I was born.

Nothingness might come across a bit overwhelming at first, but please give the idea of it a bit of time to sink in, as there is no right or wrong within this unknown field.

When talking about nothingness, we could divide the conversation into two sections: mind and matter. In many areas of thought, mind can be matter.

When talking about nothingness, consciousness and non-duality, the conversation might get divided into mind and matter, but since the mind (the brain, with which comes consciousness) is matter (a physically touchable substance), I do not always agree with this division. I like to believe that the division is intended as a clarification. Therefore, I think the conversation might get both clarified and purified by speaking of -the fields of- consciousness and -the fields of- physicality, rather than mind and matter.

So, let's ask ourselves, what happens when all our achievements and goals, memories and knowledge, experiences, and feelings, fade away? What sensation does it cause?

We better all prepare for this, as that is-was-will be real. That is-was-will be reality. It is-was-will be the fundamental reality. It connects us to everything else. Nothingness is our past, present, and future. Please keep in mind, be aware, nothingness is not equal to worth nothing, to worthless. Nothingness doesn't equate to anything, or to anything sad. Rather imagine nothingness being the most incredible non-experience, as it is the purest state of mind.

In a way, it is comparable to the nothingness of space, of the universe, as it contains everything. All the celestial bodies, full moons, new moons, eclipses, sunsets, the tides. Good people, bad people, plants, animals, and all the other beings are contained in the void out of which comes everything, including your consciousness. By acknowledging nothingness as the fundamental reality, the fear towards nothingness could fade away, as fear -like all feelings- is made up like a dream¹.

The second chapter: non-duality.

Advaita is the Sanskrit term to indicate the interconnectedness of everything³. Often, non-duality is seen as a philosophy that relates to consciousness. However, non-duality pertains to anything that speaks of a dichotomy.

Non-duality makes no distinction between body and soul, you and me, God, and servant, one and the rest. Duality does not exist. Everything is one. There is no ego. You are not special and neither am I⁴. This theory provides a lot to think about, especially in the field of nothingness.

Until I was about 4 years old, -like most of us- I did not make any difference between me and the world. I looked at the world in amazement. One day, I looked in the mirror, and recognized “my hands, my hair”. A logical consequence was the thought, “my toys”. Someday, many years later, I did not enjoy the feeling of separation anymore. I felt sad that I lost touch with the feeling of wholeness. I missed the wholeness within myself, I missed the wholeness between me and the world around me. I desired and longed for it. For a long time, I thought I felt this way because I did not fit in with many people around me. Because I felt many people just lived for themselves. In these kinds of situations, many people start to look for a connection through love, money, sports, prestige, or other ways to boost their ego. I, however, fell into a depression. Perhaps ego boosts and depressions are similar in a way that they are both sad, but because of this depression, I

knew I had to look for a solution within myself. A way to feel less empty. At a certain point, I started to feel a connection between me, the air, the trees, the clouds, and the soil we stand on.

“Man feels himself isolated in the cosmos, because he is no longer involved in nature and has lost his emotional ‘unconsciousness identity’ with natural phenomena. No voices speak to man from stones, plants, and animals, nor does he speak to them believing they can hear. His contact with nature has gone and with it the profound emotional energy this symbolic connection supplied.”¹¹

A plank can be looked upon as a piece of wood, or as a table. Zooming in and out makes all the difference. Is something a piece of furniture or a piece of energy? That energy is the unity in which everything results, originates from, and draws back to. For clarity's sake, let's imagine that energy as a movie screen on which one moment a car is seen, a minute later perhaps a flower or two people, but in the end, it is a movie screen. Perhaps it is not very practical to philosophise about whether something is a piece of wood or a piece of furniture, but it may symbolize the bigger idea I am expressing. These examples could be applied to anything that speaks of a dichotomy. For me, non-duality becomes interesting when we don't see ourselves as individuals, when we let go of egoism and see ourselves as a part of a whole.

My idealistic gut feeling suggests me that society, and perhaps even the entire world, would be a more loving and curious place if we would all see ourselves as a part of a whole.

The third chapter: consciousness.

“The sun began to have a soporific effect as its rays played against my body. Before I knew it, like a napping child, I crossed out of this reality and into slumber. What trust we place in the world when we sleep. Lapsed from consciousness, we leave our bodies open and vulnerable to the world. (...) the ground was covered in a generous layer of moss, which made for a comfortable bed. As I drifted off, it was as though roots of the trees in which I nestled were growing around my body, not binding but rather cocooning me in their ark of wood. Here I was protected, not from the animals of the forest, for I too was an animal of the forest, but from the animals of the city, the republic, and the regime.”¹³

Waking up in the morning, coming to your senses, going out of your subconscious mind, and moving into consciousness. From here on, we start making conscious decisions. Some of these seem voluntary, others seem less voluntary. Some of these seem automatic, others need more attention. Holding breath is a conscious voluntary decision, but breathing regularly seems to happen automatically, involuntary without requiring our attention. You happen to do these things, but these actions don't seem to be included in the idea of ego, self, or conscious attention, while the voluntary decisions (for example getting a tattoo, listening to music, buying art, etc.) Are usually included in the way you see yourself.

You could say you don't incorporate breathing or the place your hair grows into your idea of ego, self, or conscious attention for various reasons. Perhaps because you don't consciously decide that or because it does not differ a lot from the way others do that. However, it certainly says a lot about you. This shows us that the way we define ourselves is quite whimsical. Your body seems to know how to form your bones, how to shape ears, how to grow and how to decay.

Not just your body, wallpaper, nails, pets, bones, and clothes, is you. Everything is you, whether you are conscious of it or not, whether voluntarily decided or not, whether automatically happening or not. You are everything around you, you are everything you are able to perceive, and it are all compositions of material, of particles. All of that material, all the particles: everything is constantly circulating. There are differences between you and the pavement, but there are mainly similarities, which is something we often tend to forget.

In physical reality, there is no separation. If I am my finger, I am the moon. We feel like our consciousness, ego, self, and conscious attention are trapped in our body, but all of them come with our physical being. It is not separate, it is not separated.

The involuntary beating of your heart is one continuous process within the total energy system of the cosmos.

It is all you⁵.

Once we cut of our ego from our identity, once we become aware of the fact that we are the whole organism, we are able to see how harmonious the universe is.

The present moment is a crossroad, a point where particles come to meet after billions of years, and where they continue their journey's form.

Ego [ee-goh], *noun*

1. The image one has of themselves created by other people
2. The shape one formed in through social interaction
3. The identity one performs because of expectations of others
4. One's feeling of importance of not breaking the image others have of them

Self [self], *noun*

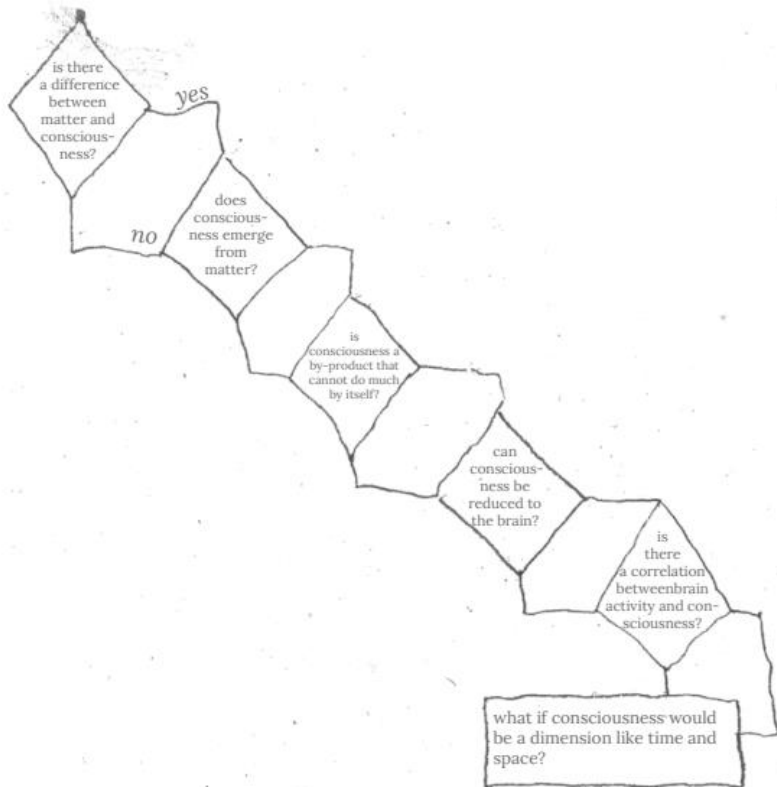
1. The own respected individual identity of someone
2. One's unharmed character
3. One's nature
4. The personality of someone who knows society is a game

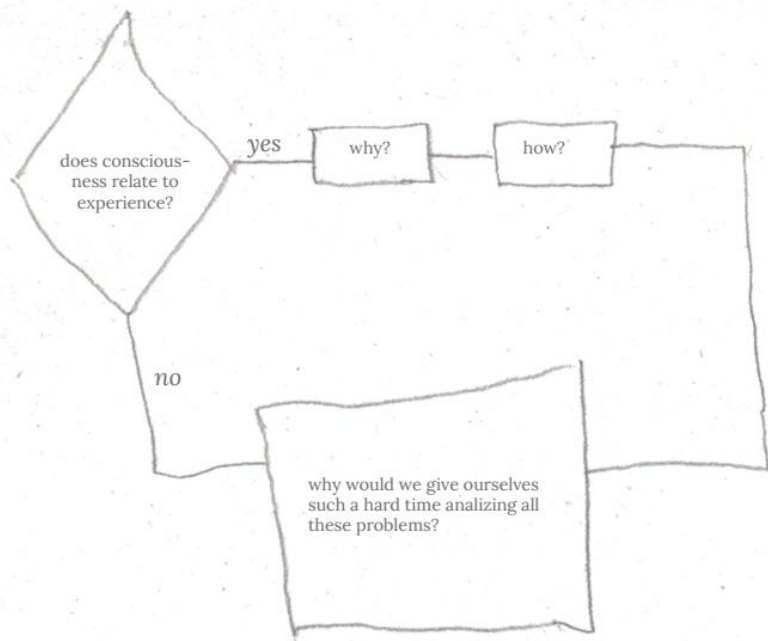
Conscious attention [kon-shuhs uh-ten-shuhn], *noun*

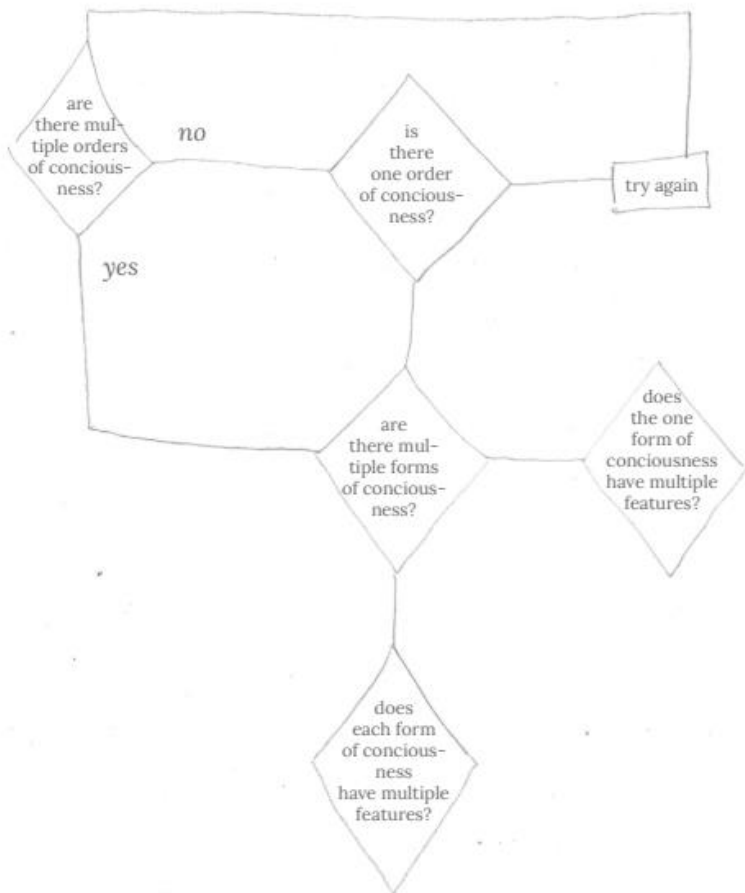
1. The awareness of one's own existence and of its surroundings
2. The active mental faculty to perceive
3. The capability of maintaining and sustaining observant care
4. Scanning one's own environment

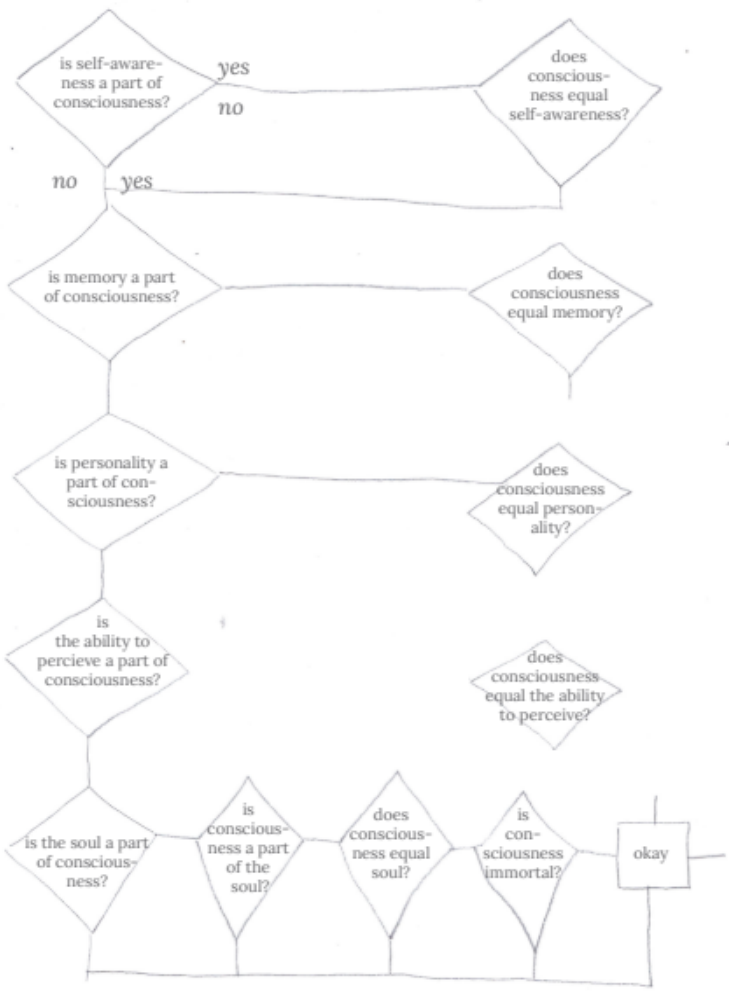
Different scientists and philosophers have tried to define the meaning of consciousness⁶. For the last centuries, numerous philosophers think of consciousness as the world of introspection, of private thought, imagination, and volition⁷. I believe that consciousness is the ability to perceive, consciousness is about awareness, which includes the ability to perceive thoughts, and the ability to imagine. However, modern interpretations on the topic have many different points of views.

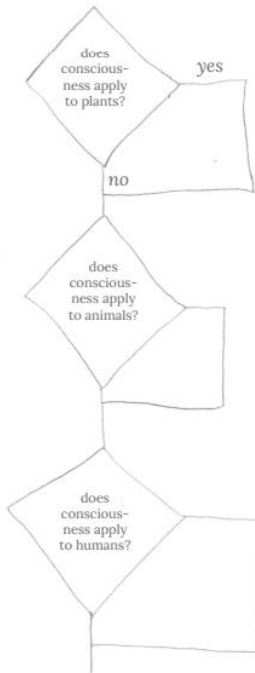
The reason why consciousness interests me, is not necessarily because of all of its problems, but because of the questions consciousness rises, all of its possible ways of being, the philosophies of its origin, or the many definitions. Consciousness plays a big role in the philosophy of nothingness, as it is important to consider the (in)ability to perceive when we speak of non-being.











A caterpillar seems to know how to build a cocoon.

The fourth chapter: water.

About half of my body is water, which means I am 35 to 40 kilograms of water⁸. Every day. This water is circular, it comes and goes, evaporates, and gets refilled. But as soon as I die, the refilling stops. This means there once was a beginning and there now is an end to the water with which I used to keep my body alive. Once I die, there has been a specific quantity of water which passed through my body, and there remains a last portion in my body still.

It fascinates me that every individual creature -humans, animals, plants, clouds, buildings, objects- has these specific quantities of water, and that these quantities go somewhere. They do not get lost. However, it remains unclear where they exactly do go, actually. I imagine this water travels through space and time. This water travels through the veins of other creatures.

“Not a love borne of base desires, which swims and is spent in bodily fluids, evaporating in the night air to fall as dew in the dark streets.”¹²

Where are the faces no one seems to remember?

The people who lived a thousand years ago, but did not manage to be in a painting forever hanging in a hall? Where are they?

Where am I when I do not remember myself? Perhaps life is not much different from a sandcastle. A tumbled sandcastle. One that falls down, and one that gets rebuilt

over, over and over again. Until it cannot be rebuilt. Until it is vanished and taken by rain and sea.

No prosthesis exists that will cure such missing. No scientist can fill the created emptiness. No one can fill up or fill in. But whenever I look at clouds, I remind myself there might be a piece of anything I miss, floating around, flying above me, coming down in rain.

Then, clouds could cure phantom pain.

“The first rain that ends a long, arid summer in a hot country quickened the heartbeat, unleashes the sudden release of the scent of the waiting earth, makes leaves bark tar and metal glow, cleans the light that falls from the sky and transforms children and dogs into heroic shamans and rain dancers. It is said that even un-romantic people find themselves falling in love more often in the first week of the advancing monsoon. What the first rain does to our senses, to our bodies, to our dry and waiting minds is the sly undertaking of just a quiet shift, a barely perceptible recalibration of our appetite for life.

Our dreams turn vivid.

The best kind of art, like the rain, invokes a re-ordering cognitive and sensory feel.

Art neither kills us nor keeps us alive, but being in the presence of art is sometimes a matter of fathoming exactly how alive we are prepared to be.”¹³

The fifth chapter: botany.

“Artists are once again turning to the garden as the pre-eminent site for the interrogation of the relationship between nature and culture, wilderness and order, freedom, and control. It is not merely a space to spend leisure time, or a retreat, safe and schedules. Nor is the garden just a place to let escapism run wild. No. In the garden life is reflected and manifests itself.”¹¹

“In the garden, time passes with a certain slowness, which contrasts with the acceleration of global consumer and commercial culture. This distance from the world facilitates the necessary awareness of our relationship with nature, and in particular of our surviving colonial relationship with people, animals, and plants. We can explore our own nature in the garden, our identity and gender, the meaning of our origin and birthplace, the dimensions of our social inclusion or exclusion.”¹¹

“We are a lake, trees, a ray of sunlight that falls through the tasks on the grass.”¹⁴

*“I walk in this garden
Holding the hands of dead friends,
Old age come quickly for my frosted generation.
Cold, cold, cold.
They died so silently.
Did the forgotten generations scream?
Or go full of resignation.
Quietly protesting innocence?
Cold, cold, cold.”¹¹*

“The flower is made of non-flower elements. We can describe the flower as being full of everything. There is nothing that is not present in the flower. We see sunshine, we see the rain, we see clouds, we see the earth, and we also see time and space in the flower.

A flower, like everything else, is made entirely of non-flower elements. The whole cosmos has come together in order to help the flower manifest herself, the flower is full of everything except one thing: a separate self, a separate identity.

The flower cannot be by herself alone. The flower has to inter-be with the sunshine, the cloud and everything in the

cosmos. If we understand being in terms of interbeing, then we are much closer to the truth. Interbeing is not being and it is not non-being. Inter-being means being empty of a separate identity, empty of a separate self.”¹⁵

“Unlike most higher animals, they have no selective relation to what surrounds them. They are, and cannot be other than, constantly exposed to the world around them. Plant life is life as complete exposure, in absolute continuity and total communion with the environment.”¹⁶

“They participate in the world in its totality in everything they meet. Plants do not run, they cannot fly; they are not capable of privileging a specific place in relation to the rest of the space, they have to remain where they are.”¹⁶

“The plant is the observer when it comes to contemplating the world in its totality. Under the sun or under the clouds, mixing with water and wind, their life is an endless cosmic contemplation, one that does not distinguish between objects and circumstances.”¹⁶

“We are invited to conceive of the physical world as a collection of all objects, the space that includes the totality of everything there was, is and will be: the definitive horizon that no longer tolerates any exteriority, the absolute container.”¹⁶

“Forests aren’t simply connections of trees, they’re complex systems with bulbs and networks that overlap and connect trees and allow them to communicate and they provide avenues for feedback and adaptation, and this makes the forest resilient.”¹¹

“Unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states. The rhizome is reducible neither to the one nor to the multiple. It is not the one that becomes two or even directly three, four, five, etc. It is not a multiple derived from the one, or to which one is added (n+1). It is composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overflows. It constitutes linear multiplicities with n dimensions having neither subject nor object, which can be laid out on a plane of consistency, and from which the one is always subtracted (n-1).”¹¹

“I was pushed on by the forces of man and history, and found in the transgression of nature not a screaming void of the inhuman but a perpetual network of intelligence. The forest rots and grows, no different to me, it reaches out to touch me without guile. It is harsh and complex, mild, and benevolent, all at once. The forest and the beings within and around it are fellow souls. Friends, made animate and equal by the greening power that is the spark and sustenance of creation in this vast web, this intergalactic ecosystem that connects all matter and the processes of life, death, and rebirth.”¹²

“Mycodiversity is biodiversity. You will decompose, I’m gonna decompose. We’re all gonna die! That’s okay because we will enter into the mycoverse. We will forever exist together within the myco molecular matrix. We are not an individual. We are a vast network of molecules, and energies and wavelengths. The interconnectedness of being is who we are.”¹⁷

“To live is essentially to live the life of another: to live in and through the life that others have been able to construct or invent.”¹⁶

The sixth chapter: time.

The realisation that a star might not exist anymore when we are still seeing it

The faster one moves through space, the slower one moves through time

The start, the happening and the ending of a banquet

The growth, the decay, the dissolving

The lifecycle of a plant

The process

Time feels real, it is always present, and I always seem to be late. Time has flow and runs like a river. Time has order, one thing comes after the other. Time has duration, it has a quantifiable period between events. Time privileges the present. Only now is real. Time is the universal stage on which all events are performed. Playing out, suggesting that order can be sequenced and durations measured.

But what of this is real, what of this is false?

When we talk about space, we could say “we are here and they are over there”, and both would be equally real. When we talk about time, we often don’t speak of the past and the future as equal, or as real. First of all, we only see the present as real because it seems to be here. Stranger, still, the past is seen as more real than the future because it already happened.

No matter what we do, we can only move forward in time, and the past is not yet to come. Through night and day, seasons, the growth and decay of plants, the passing of time seems to move only in one direction. In our universe, a flower grows, blossoms, loses its leaves, and then slowly collapses. It never happens that a limp flower grows strong, gathers leaves from the floor, turns its leaves into blossom, and shrinks back into the soil⁹. The moving from order to disorder defines the direction of time's arrow.

This way of thinking leads to many more theories. To better understand scientific theories on time, I looked into Newton's laws of motion, Maxwell's laws of electromagnetism, Einstein's relativity, special relativity, time dilation theories, thermodynamics, and entropy. By doing so, I figured that time passes for everyone, but not always at the same rate. Speed affects mass, time, and space. According to theories, my head is slightly older than my feet.

Some see time as emergent properties, which are things that don't exist in individual pieces of a system, but do exist for the system as a whole. For example, a movie is a series of still images which creates change through time. It only appears to be a fluid continuous change between these stills. No individual still in the movie changes or contains the passage of time. The movement is real, yet it is an illusion. Perhaps the physics of time could be similar.

While these theories are all interesting, I still have many questions. The biggest question is “would it matter if I had all of the answers to all of the questions which these theories raised?”. Think about it, the theories on time feel so big, that the conversation about non-duality and nothingness seems irrelevant. The initial subject seems to get overshadowed by theories on time.

A while ago I wrote: “simultaneously or in the meantime, time does not exist. It is only a tool to create order and to create reason in daily life, because in the end, it is all about the events that happen in between two moments.” We can see processes, we can feel ourselves grow older, we gain memories and we have some expectations of the future. But nevertheless, I feel we only have the present to grasp. The way I have previously understood time is not in relation to space. The writing of this thesis has made me reconsider my initial assumptions.

It intrigues me how time is relative, both scientifically and emotionally. The awareness of time at all feels extraordinary. Because the humankind has a strong memory, we are able to keep the past in mind. This gives us the skill to cast previous experiences into visions of the future. Alan watts states, although the ability to memorize and remember gives us an extraordinary opportunity to plan our life and to prepare for future events, there is an extremely high price which we pay for being able to understand the passing time¹⁰. He sees this especially when we as humans take this skill too serious. At such

moments, we do not realise that the true reality in which we live, is the present moment, is now. Because we are able to use our memory to create visions of the future, we spend most of our time and a great deal of our emotional energy living in time which is not here.

Living in an elsewhere which is not concretely real.

At times, this can escalate to the point that -although we might be quite happy and satisfied in our present circumstances- if there is not a guarantee of a good time coming ahead, we become unhappy. This happens even in the midst of pleasurable times. This happens because we imagine the future to be of more importance than the present. This causes us to be, seemingly, in a hurry to get things finished.

The things we finish might not have been worth finishing because they were done so fast. We could compare our joy to a music play. We don't play music in order to get somewhere. If the meaning of a composition was to finish it, then all we would do is rush its playing. Play it as fast as possible so as to get to the culmination. End as soon as possible, or just cut out the whole symphony and play the last bars only. To be able to enjoy it, we have got to live each moment of each note and listen to it as if it were the only thing important to listen to. And then, if we do that, our time has an entirely different quality.

A Buddhist saying says “spring does not become the summer. There is spring and then there is summer. Firewood does not turn into ashes. There is, first, firewood. Then, there are ashes. The two stages are sufficient by themselves”. I mention this to give an idea of what it means to be living in a fully concrete present into which you settle. Every present is different, but within that, not better or worse.

Nothingness and non-duality are closely related to each other, and so is time. When being in nothingness, time is translated into eternity as well as no time at all. There is not-was not-won't be anything to perceive or to perceive with, which means nothingness cannot be slow or fast. It has its own pace, no pace. It just exists in its non-being. It won't take long, it won't be boring, and no patience is needed.

“Nothingness is a book with 300 pages and no pages at all. It is both a presence and an absence.”¹⁸

The seventh chapter: conclusion.

Since the beginning of time, particles have been travelling to get where they are at this exact moment. It made me able to write this thesis, and you to read it on this specific sheet of paper. In the meantime, in life, in the present, in society, we created elements that separate us from each other. We created wealth and poverty, here and there, they and them, zoo, and zookeeper. Once we are done there, our consciousness moves on to an unknown realm. The realm of nothingness fascinates me because unity still exists there, into eternity.

I believe everything once came to existence out of a great empty nothing from which the universe started to expand. This is where particles come from, this is what we are built out of. These particles are the fundament of our physical being, of our mind, and -with that- of our consciousness.

Consciousness needs a body to exist, but once a body extinguishes, the consciousness moves on to nothingness while the body decays. The happening of these two related yet different events at the same time, fascinates me. Of course, a body grows, evolves, changes, and slightly decays under our watch, but it always happens with our consciousness to perceive it. For a body to change and decompose without the presence of a consciousness to observe that.

What precisely happens when one dies? One being a plant, an animal, or a person. What happens to bodies while they are decomposing? What happens to bodies while they are decomposing without the ability to perceive that event? What happens to bodies while consciousness is fading away? What happens when consciousness is fading away, where is it fading to? What does it mean to die? What does it mean to die as a person, as an animal, a plant, or as something less graspable like a language or a memory? What is the difference between different kinds of deaths?

“Process philosophers, on the other hand, argue that there is urgency in coming to see the world as a web of interrelated processes of which we are integral parts, so that all of our choices and actions have consequences for the world around us. This stance requires us to challenge and reject the prevailing philosophies and theologies that give primacy to being over becoming, to independence over relatedness, to things over processes, to the idea that the human spirit is fundamentally isolated from the social and natural web in which we clearly all live and move and are becoming.”¹⁹

*The eighth chapter: **acknowledgements**.*

Mentor: Jens Pfeifer

Thesis mentor: Alexandra Phillips

Appendix: sources.

Used references

1. Alan Watts (1960), lecture

The Nature of Consciousness- The State of Nothing

Steemit.Com/Life/@Nicholi/The-Beauty-Of-Nothingness/

“If you are aware of a state called is, or reality, or life, this implies a state called isn’t. Or illusion, or unreality, or nothingness or death. You can’t know one without the other. And so as to make life poignant, it’s always going to come to an end, that is don’t you see what makes it lively. Liveliness is change it is motion, and motion is going to fall out and be gone. You see, you are always at the place you always are.. [laughs] except it keeps appearing to change. And you think wowie we’ll get that thing. I hope we don’t go further down so that we don’t lose what we have. But that’s built into every creature’s situation or matter how high or how low. So in this sense, all places are the same place. And the only time you ever notice any difference is the moment of transition. When you go up a bit you gain, when you go down a bit you feel disappointed, gloom, lost. You can go all the way down to death. Somehow, there seems to be a difficulty getting up. Death seems so final. Nothing seems so very very very irrevocable and permanent. Then if it is, what about the nothingness before you started. So don’t you see, what we’ve left out of our logic and this is part of the game rule to the game we are playing. The way we hoodwink ourselves is by attributing powerlessness with nothingness.

We don't realize that is a complete logical fallacy. It takes nothing to have something. You wouldn't know something without nothing. You wouldn't know what the form is, without the background space. You wouldn't be able to see anything unless there was nothing behind your eyes. Now imagine yourself with an eye with which you can see all around. Now what's in the middle? Even if I have all this behind me within view suddenly, I will find there is something in the middle of it all and there is a hole of reality. Like now there seems to be wall, not so much a whole, but you see if I was an animal that had eyes in the back of its head. You could feel the sensation I'm describing.

Now you may say to me, now that's all a bunch of wishful thinking, because when your dead your dead! Now wait a minute, what is that state of consciousness that talks that way? This is somebody saying something that wants to make a point, but what kind of point are they trying to make? When your dead your dead see. Well, that's one of the people that want to rule the world. That's what frightening about death. Death is real. No indulge in wishful thinking, all you people who dream of an afterlife, and heavens and Gods and mystical experiences, and eternity. You are just wishy-washy people, you don't face the facts! What facts? How can I face the fact of nothing. Which is by definition not a fact. All this is toddle whatever way you look at it. So, if you really go the how way and see how you feel at the prospect of vanishing forever. Of all your efforts, and all your achievements, and all your attainments turning into dust and nothingness. What is the feeling? What happens to you?

It is a curious thing, that in the world's poetry, this is a very common theme. "The earthly hopes men set their hearts upon turns ashes, and or it prospers, a non like snow settles on the desert dusty face lighting an hour or two and is gone" all kinds of poetry emphasize the theme of transcendence. There is a kind of nostalgic beauty to it. "The banquet hall deserted, after the revelry, all the guests had left and gone on their ways. The table with overturned glasses, crumbled napkins, breadcrumbs, and dirty knives and forks lies empty. And the laughter echoes only in one's mind. And then the echo goes, the memory, the traces are all gone. That's the end you see.

Do you see in a way, how that is saying the most real state is the state of nothing? That's what it's all going to come to. With these physicists who think of the energy of the universe as running down dissipating into radiation, and gradually and gradually, and gradually, gradually, until there is nothing left.

And for some reason, we are supposed to find that depressing. But if somebody is going to argue that the basic reality is nothingness. Where does all this come from? Obviously from nothingness. Once again you get how this looks behind your eyes. So, cheer up you see, this is what is meant in Buddhist philosophy by saying 'we are all basically nothing.

When the six patriarch says, "the essence of your mind is intrinsically pure", the pure doesn't mean a 'non dirty story state of mind' as is it apt to mean in the word puritan. Pure means "clear" void. So, you know the story when the six patriarch was given his office to his successor. Because he was truly enlightened. There was a

poetry contest. And the losing one wrote the idea that the mind, the consciousness was like a mirror.

So, I'm detached, calm, and pure headed. Buddha-ed. But the one who won the contest said there is no mirror, and the nature of mind is intrinsically void. So where is there anywhere for dust to collect?

See, so, in this way, by seeing that nothingness is the fundamental reality, and you see it's your reality. Then how can anything contaminate you? All the idea of being scared, and it's nothing it just a dream. Because you're really nothing. But this is most incredible nothing. All the six patriarchs went on to contrast that emptiness of indifference. Which is sort of blind emptiness. See you think of this idea of nothingness as blankness, and you hold onto this idea of blankness then kind of grizzly about it, you haven't understood it. Nothingness is really like the nothingness of space, which contains the whole universe. All the sun and the stars and mountains, and rivers, and good men and bad men, and the animals, and insects, and the whole bit. All are contained in void. So out of this void comes everything and you it. What else could you be?"

2. *Torbjörn Ahlström (2011), text*

International Journal of Osteoarcheology (Volume 21, Issue 4)

Contribution On Page 407

“All organisms follow a specific sequence in their development, beginning with gestation and ending with death, which is known as the life cycle. Events in between usually include birth, childhood, maturation, reproduction, and senescence, and together these comprise the life history strategy of that organism.”

3. *John Grimes (1996), text*

A Concise Dictionary of Indian Philosophy: Sanskrit Terms Defined in English

9780791430682

(P15) “advaita – nondualism; nonduality; “not-two” (from a “not” + dvaita = “dual, two”)

1. A term used to indicate a position of nonduality adopted by various Indian schools of thought. Advaita vedanta adopts a position of absolute nonduality while all other uses of the term accept internal distinctions within their various types of monisms. Thus, in its latter usages, it signifies the interconnectedness of everything which is dependent upon the nondual one, transcendent reality.

2. Advaita vedanta is commonly referred to as advaita because it was the first and, perhaps, the greatest exponent of this idea. It is one of the six orthodox (āstika) schools of Indian philosophy and the first school of vedanta philosophy. It has no individual founder, for its roots are to be found in the vedas, and particularly the upanisads though its greatest exponent is sankarācārya bhagavatpada. Its central teaching is the oneness of the individual soul (jiva) with the absolute (brahman). It affirms the nonduality of brahman, the nonreality of the empirical world, and the nondifference between the individual soul and brahman (brahma satyam, jagan-mithya, jivo brahmaiva na parah). Its basic source books are the upanisads, the bhagavad gita, and the brahma-sūtra. (see prasthanā-traya.)

3. The key concept in advaita vedānta is ignorance (avidya/maya). This explains the otherwise perplexing distinction between the formless (nirguna) and the having

form (saguna) brahman, between the nondual reality appearing as individuals and as God (isvara). It accounts for Advaita's metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics.

4. See chart no. 4”

4. *Patrick Kicken, Paul Smit (2017), podcast*

Filosofie Met Mayonaise!

Episode 305: Wat Is Nondualiteit

03:50 “Non-dualiteit heeft niet alleen betrekking op bewustzijn, maar op alles waarin over een tweedeling wordt gesproken. Dualiteit bestaat niet, alles is 1.”

07:45 “Non-dualiteit is niet te bewijzen, maar je kan er wel omheen dansen.”

09:45 “Tot iemand 4 jaar oud is, ziet iemand geen onderscheid tussen de wereld en zichzelf. Iemand aanschouwt de wereld vol verwondering. Pas daarna komt de bewustwording in een spiegelbeeld, “mijn handen”. Een logisch gevolg daarvan is de gedachte “het is mijn speelgoed”. Toch komt er vaak een dag dat we het gevoel van af gescheidenheid zo naar vinden, dat we het naar vinden dat we los zijn geraakt van heelheid, dat we naar verbondenheid verlangen en dat we naar eenheid zoeken. Meestal zoekt men dit in liefde, geld, sport of aanzien.

14:27 “Een plank kun je zien als een stuk hout of als een tafel. In- en uitzoomen maakt het verschil. Is iets een meubel of een stuk energie? Die energie is de eenheid waaruit alles voortkomt. Die energie is als een filmdoek waar je het ene moment een auto op ziet, daarna bloem of 2 mensen, maar uiteindelijk blijft het een filmdoek. Nu is het niet heel nuttig om onderscheid te maken tussen een meubel of een stuk energie. Non-dualiteit wordt pas

interessant op het moment dat we onszelf niet gaan zien als individu, dat we egoïsme loslaten en onszelf beschouwen als een onderdeel van een geheel. Die gedachtegang zou de wereld een stuk liefdevoller maken.”

5. Alan Watts (2021), *video*

The False Idea of Who You Are

[Youtube.Com/Watch?v=4yabjvfyy00/](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4yabjvfyy00/)

01:13 “You can feel that you breath deliberately, you control your breath. But when you don’t think about it, it goes on. Is it voluntary or involuntary? We come to have a very arbitrary definition of self that much of my activity which I feel I do and that then doesn’t include breathing most of the time. It doesn’t include the heartbeats. It doesn’t include the activity of the glands. It doesn’t include digestion. It doesn’t include how you shape your bones, circulate your blood. Do you do these things or do you not do these things? If you get with yourself, and you find out that you are all of yourself, a very strange thing happens. You find that your body knows you are one with the universe. In other words, the so-called involuntary circulation of your blood is one continuous process with the stars shining. If you find out that it, is you who circulates your blood, you will at the same moment find out you are shining the sun, because your physical organism is one continuous process with everything else that is going on. Just as the waves are continuous with the ocean, your body is continuous with the total energy system of the cosmos and it is all you. ... there are in physical reality no such things as separate events. Doesn’t

it really astonish you that you are this fantastically complex thing and that you are doing all of this and you never had any education in how to do it? You never learned but you are this miracle. Well, the point is that from a strictly physical scientific standpoint, is a continuous energy with everything else that is going on. If I am my foot, I am the sun. ... the ego is nothing other than the focus of conscious attention. It is like a radar on a ship. The radar on a ship is a trouble-shooter. Is there anything in the way? Conscious attention is a designed function of the brain to scan the environment like a radar does, and note for any trouble making changes. But if you identify yourself with your trouble-shooter, then naturally you define yourself as being in a perpetual state of anxiety. The moment we cease to identify with the ego and become aware that we are the whole organism, you realize as the first thing how harmonious it all is. Because your organism is a miracle of harmony. All this thing functioning together. Even those copper schools and creatures that are fighting each other in the bloodstream and eating each other up. If they weren't doing that, you wouldn't be healthy. So, what is discord at one level of your being, is harmony at a higher level and you begin to realize that and you begin to be aware too that the discords are a fight at one level, but are at a higher level of the universe healthy and harmonious. You suddenly realize that everything you are and do, is at that level as magnificent and as free of any blemish as the patterns in waves, the markings in marble, the way a cat moves and that this world is really oke. It can't be anything else otherwise it would not exist. If you awaken from this illusion, you can feel yourself not as a stranger in the

world, not as something here on probation, not as something that has arrived here by fluke, but you can begin to feel your own existence as absolutely fundamental. What you are basically deep deep down far far in is simply the fabric and structure of existence itself. So, in this idea, everybody is fundamentally the ultimate reality. Not God in a politically kingly sense, but God in the sense of being the self. The deep down basic whatever there is and you are all that. Only you are pretending that you are not.”

6. Wouter van Noort, *Jessica van der Schalk, Jacob Jolij* (2022), *Podcast*
NRC Future Affairs
Episode 5: Is Bewustzijn Een Extra Dimensie?

02:00 “Door een experiment te waarnemen, wordt het experiment beïnvloed. Dat betekent dat het bewustzijn invloed heeft op quantum mechanica, op deeltjes.”

05:00 “Het zou zo kunnen zijn dat bewustzijn een dimensie is van ons universum, net als ruimte en tijd.”

05:30 “Er zijn 3 traditionele manieren om bewustzijn te benaderen.

1. Het bewustzijn is te reduceren tot het brein, tot het materialisme.
2. Het bewustzijn emergeert uit de materie, het is een bijproduct wat zelf niet zo veel kan doen.
3. Het bewustzijn is een dualisme. Er is materie en bewustzijn.”

7. Julian Jaynes (2000), text

The Origin of Consciousness in The Breakdown of The Bicameral Mind

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(P21) “In being conscious of consciousness, we feel it is the most self-evident thing imaginable. We feel it is the defining attribute of all our waking states, our moods and affections, our memories, our thoughts, attentions, and volitions. We feel comfortably certain that consciousness is the basis of concepts, of learning and reasoning, of thought and judgment, and that it is so because it records and stores our experiences as they happen, allowing us to introspect on them and learn from them at will. We are also quite conscious that all this wonderful set of operations and contents that we call consciousness is located somewhere in the head. On critical examination, all of these statements are false. They are the costume that consciousness has been masquerading in for centuries. They are the misconceptions that have prevented a solution to the problem of the origin of consciousness.”

8. U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) Water Science School (2019), text

The Water in You: Water and The Human Body

[Usgs.Gov/Special-Topics/Water-Science-](https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school/science/water-you-water-and-human-body)

[School/Science/Water-You-Water-And-Human-Body](https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school/science/water-you-water-and-human-body)

“According to dr. Jeffrey Utz, neuroscience, pediatrics, allegheny university, different people have different percentages of their bodies made up of water. Babies have the most, being born at about 78%. By one year of age, that amount drops to about 65%. In adult men, about 60% of their bodies are water. However, fat tissue does not have as much water as lean tissue. In adult women, fat makes up more of the body than men, so they have about 55% of their bodies made of water.”

9. *Andrew Zimmerman Jones (2019), text*

Does Time Really Exist?

Thoughtco.Com/Does-Time-Really-Exist-2699430

(P27) “The phrase “the arrow of time” was coined in 1927 by Sir Arthur Eddington and popularized in his 1928 book “The Nature of the Physical World.” Basically, the arrow of time is the idea that time flows in only one direction, as opposed to dimensions of space that have no preferred orientation. Eddington makes three specific points in regards to the arrow of time:

It is vividly recognized by consciousness.

It is equally insisted on by our reasoning faculty, which tells us that a reversal of the arrow would render the external world nonsensical.

It makes no appearance in physical science except in the study of the organization of a number of individuals. Here the arrow indicates the direction of progressive increase of the random element.”

10. Alan Watts (2019), lecture

Time

[Youtube.Com/Watch?V=Buw62nx0kt4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Buw62nx0kt4)

02:35 “Animals live moment by moment. They don’t appear to have very strong memories. But because man has a strong memory, he is able to bear the past in mind and, as it were, cast it forward into visions of the future, based upon what has happened in the past. Therefore, although this facility gives man the most extraordinary to plan his life, to prepare for future eventualities, at the same time there is a very heavy price which he pays for it. Especially if he takes this ability too seriously. In other words, if he doesn’t realize the true reality in which he lives is the present moment, now. For example, the animal probably doesn’t concern itself very much with problems of future affairs, death or starvation, and things of that kind. If an animal sees another death animal lying around. I don’t suppose he thinks to himself: “well, one day that is going to happen to me”. Rather, he just sees a death animal, sniffs it, sees whether it is good to eat and wanders away. But for human beings, it is entirely different, because we actually spend most of our time and a great deal of our emotional energy living in a time which is not here, living in an elsewhere, which is not concretely real. So much so, that although we might be quite comfortable and happy in our present circumstances, if there is not a guarantee, not

a promise of a good time coming tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, we are once unhappy, even in the midst of pleasure and affluence. So, we develop a kind of chronic anxiety about time. We want to be sure more and more because of our sensitivity to the feeling of time. We want to be sure more and more that our future is assured. For this reason, the future becomes of more importance to most human beings than the present. In this sense, we are hooked, taken in by a maya because it is a very little use to us to be able to plan and control the future. Unless we are capable at the same time of living totally in the present.”

06:51 “It is of tremendous use for us to be able to look ahead in this way and to plan, there is no use planning for a future which when you get to it and it becomes the present, you won’t be there. You’ll be living in some other future which hasn’t yet arrived. In this way, one is never able actually to inherit and enjoy the fruits of one’s actions.”

18:10 “We are always in a hurry to get things finished, and so the things we finish were not worth finishing because they were done so fast. After all, the enjoyment of our world is not really unlike listening to music. We don’t play music in order to get somewhere. If the objective of music were to arrive at a point, say the last bar, the final great crashing chords of the symphony, all we’d do is hurry up its playing, play it as fast as possible, so as to get to the culmination, the end as soon as possible. Or just cut out the whole symphony and play only the last bars. To be able to enjoy it, we have got to live each moment of the playing and listen to it as if it were the only thing important to listen to. If we do that, our time has an entirely different

quality. It is represented in a Buddhist saying. Spring does not become the summer. First, there is spring. Then, there is summer. Firewood does not turn into ashes. There is, first, firewood. Then, there are ashes. The two stages being as it were sufficient by themselves. This is intended to give the idea of living in a fully concrete present into which you settle in.”

20:30 “In spring, hundreds of flowers

In summer, a refreshing breeze

In autumn, the moon

Free your mind from idle thoughts, and for you, every season is a good season”

21:21 “The past and future are useful only if one can live in the present. Only if one realizes this, one can settle in full participation with the momentary reality of life as it goes along just like music. In the arts of the far east, there is reflected a kind of delight in momentariness.”

22:34 “...a man sitting all alone in his boat and listening to the water. He’s not asleep, he’s not dreaming. He is a man living in an entirely real world, a world which we neglect because we have no time to sit and listen to the water.

After all, are not the memories which you go over, memories which you persuade you that it is really worth being alive, really memories of certain moments in which life itself brought you completely awake. I know we all think of things like the smell of coffee and bacon cooking on an autumn morning. The smell of burning leaves. I remember particularly for me one glimpse of a flock of sunlit pigeons against the dark background of the thundercloud. It is incidents like that which are largely celebrated in far eastern art and poetry. Perceptions of the full reality and intensity of the moment. Such a one is

this; the seed of the voices of the wild ducks are faintly white. A brushwood gate and for a lock this snail. ... This is all an artform possible for people who feel themselves to be living in this real momentary world.”

Direct quotes

11. Laurie Cluitmans (2021), text

On the Necessity of Gardening: An ABC of Art, Botany and Cultivation

Chosen contributions and references by Erik A. de Jong (Page 12), Laurie Cluitmans (Page 13), Donna J. Haraway (Page 20), Carl Jung (Page 156), Derek Jarman (Page 157), Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (Page 160), Peter Wohlleben (Page 176), Suzanne Simard (Page 176)

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(P12) “In the garden, time passes with a certain slowness, which contrasts with the acceleration of global consumer and commercial culture. This distance from the world facilitates the necessary awareness of our relationship with nature, and in particular of our surviving colonial relationship with people, animals, and plants. We can explore our own nature in the garden, our identity and gender, the meaning of our origin and birthplace, the dimensions of our social inclusion or exclusion.”

(P13) “The garden is an essential metaphor for our relationship with the natural world.”

“The current climate crisis makes the desire for a revival of the figurative value of the garden poignantly relevant once again, and if anything demonstrates just how

precarious our current situation is, it is the covid-19 crisis.”

“Artists are once again turning to the garden as the pre-eminent site for the interrogation of the relationship between nature and culture, wilderness and order, freedom, and control. It is not merely a space to spend leisure time, or a retreat, safe and schedules. Nor is the garden just a place to let escapism run wild. No. In the garden life is reflected and manifests itself.”

(P20) “Anthropocene is a term most easily meaningful and usable by intellectuals in wealthy classes and regions. It is not an idiomatic term for climate, weather, land, care of country, or much else in great swathes of the world, especially but not only among indigenous peoples.”

(P156) “Man feels himself isolated in the cosmos, because he is no longer involved in nature and has lost his emotional ‘unconsciousness identity’ with natural phenomena. No voices speak to man from stones, plants, and animals, nor does he speak to them believing they can hear. His contact with nature has gone and with it the profound emotional energy this symbolic connection supplied.”

(P157) “I walk in this garden
Holding the hands of dead friends,
Old age come quickly for my frosted generation.
Cold, cold, cold.
They died so silently.
Did the forgotten generations scream?
Or go full of resignation.
Quietly protesting innocence?
Cold, cold, cold”

(P160) “Unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states. The rhizome is reducible neither to the one nor to the multiple. It is not the one that becomes two or even directly three, four, five, etc. It is not a multiple derived from the one, or to which one is added (n+1). It is composed not of unites but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overflows. It constitutes linear multiplicities with n dimensions having neither subject nor object, which can be laid out on a plane of consistency, and from which the one is always subtracted (n-1).”

“A rhizome has no beginning nor end, it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb ‘to be’, but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, ‘and... And... And...’.

This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb ‘to be’. Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you headed for? These are totally useless questions. Making a clean slate, starting, or beginning again from ground zero, seeking a beginning or foundation – all imply a false conception of voyage and movement (a conception that is methodical, pedagogical, initiatory, symbolic...).”

(P176) “A tree’s most important means of staying connected to other trees is a ‘wood wide web’ of soil and fungi that connects vegetation in an intimate network that allows the sharing of an enormous amount of information

and goods. Scientific research aimed at understanding the astonishing abilities of this partnership between fungi and plants has only just begun.”

“Forests aren’t simply connections of trees, they’re complex systems with hubs and networks that overlap and connect trees and allow them to communicate and they provide avenues for feedback and adaptation, and this makes the forest resilient.”

12. *Hildegard of Bingen and Huw Lemmey (2020), text
Unknown Language
9781999675912*

(P58) “It gave you time to rejuvenate, to fortify yourself with faith before the sun sets and the darkness of the night fills the room, starting from the corners.”

(P84) “Not a love borne of base desires, which swims and is spent in bodily fluids, evaporating in the night air to fall as dew in the dark streets.”

(P121) “In the city, the pink before me would have signified something primitive, someone who has come from nature and never returned. Here, she stood for artifice, something that could turn the whole world into fetish.”

(P127) “John (...) had the voice of one crying in the wilderness, to make straight the paths.”

(P131) “Only God, the true divinity that lives in all of the vibrating atoms of the universe can unite the substance and the sign. ... The stars broke through the trees, and I counted off the constellations as they cradle our sleep.”

(P206) “The sun began to have a soporific effect as its rays played against my body. Before I knew it, like a napping

child, I crossed out of this reality and into slumber. What trust we place in the world when we sleep. Lapsed from consciousness, we leave our bodies open and vulnerable to the world. (...) The ground was covered in a generous layer of moss, which made for a comfortable bed. As I drifted off, it was as though roots of the trees in which I nestled were growing around my body, not binding but rather cocooning me in their ark of wood. Here I was protected, not from the animals of the forest, for I too was an animal of the forest, but from the animals of the city, the republic, and the regime.”

(P207) “I was pushed on by the forces of man and history, and found in the transgression of nature not a screaming void of the inhuman but a perpetual network of intelligence. The forest rots and grows, no different to me, it reaches out to touch me without guile. It is harsh and complex, mild, and benevolent, all at once. The forest and the beings within and around it are fellow souls. Friends, made animate and equal by the greening power that is the spark and sustenance of creation in this vast web, this intergalactic ecosystem that connects all matter and the processes of life, death, and rebirth.”

(P208) “For to be born is to die, and to die is to be reborn, and in my last moments in my walking state, I felt my pulse connect with the vibrations of all the lifeforms around me to become unified waves, moving towards an ecstatic peace.”

13. Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson (Eds.) (2010), *text Curating and the Educational Turn*
Contribution by Raqz Media Collective on page 77
9780949004185

(P77) “The first rain that ends a long, arid summer in a hot country quickens the heartbeat, unleashes the sudden release of the scent of the waiting earth, makes leaves, bark, tar, and metal glow, cleans the light that falls from the sky and transforms children and dogs into heroic shamans and raindancers. It is said that even unromantic people find themselves falling in love more often in the first week of the advancing monsoon.

What the first rain does to our senses, to our bodies, to our dry and waiting minds is the sly undertaking of just a quiet shift, a barely perceptible re-calibration of our appetite for life. The rain invokes something latent, something unformed, something hidden in us, and coaxes us to give those musty, locked-in aspects of ourselves an airing. It awakens sensations just under our skin, makes us remember snatches of forgotten songs and stories, and allows us to see things in the shapes made by clouds. We open windows, unlock doors, and let the world in. Our dreams turn vivid.

The best kind of art, like the rain, invokes a re-ordering of the cognitive and sensory fields. It asks of its actual and potential publics to open doors and windows and let other worlds in. This re-ordering – subtle, slight, sure, sharp, or soft as the case may be, whether it is a desultory drizzle across a few frazzled or jaded synapses, or the neurological equivalent of an electrical thunderstorm and

sudden downpour – is why we bother with art in the first place. When it rains art, we do not reach for umbrellas. It makes sense to let ourselves soak, as long as we can, like children dancing in the season's first rain.

However, unlike the process of paying attention to the environment within and around our bodies (which we cannot avoid as long as we are alive), attending to art is not simply a matter of staying alive but a highly contingent series of choices which remain acts of conscious will even if they are rooted in our somatic instincts. Despite appearances to the contrary, art neither kills us nor keeps us alive, but being in the presence of art is sometimes a matter of fathoming exactly how alive we are prepared to be.”

14. Makoto Ooka (1986), text
Onder De Slapeloze Planeten
9789029020855

(P7) “Boven het water van meren dompelen de vogels hun vleugels in de wind”

“De nachtelijke zee van hemelgeheimen zal als een spiegel schitteren”

“Verscholen waaiend in de hemel van gister”

(P8) “door de snijdend kille ochtendwind viel ik in het holst van een wolkenzee”

“Dat noemt men geschiedenis, en met versiert het met een klimop”

“Menigmaal werden geliefden bedroefd wakker bij de komst van schapenwolken die rondgaan op de maat van

het getij. En er waren nachten dat hun eigen melk de melkweg binnen vloeide”

“hun geest verschrompeld klein en zielig”

(P9) “ergens duttend, koestert de lente zich. Jij graaft haar uit en wekt haar”

“Geluidloos warmt de zee de groene zon”

“Wij zijn een meer, bomen, een streep zonlicht die tussen de taken door op het gras valt”

(P11) “de weg verwarmt je voeten”

“Spreid je bloeiende armen uit in de wind”

“Laten wij dromen van een ochtend waarop de vruchtenbomen hun bloesems zullen dragen”

“Niets is zinloos”

“Ik geef mijn lichaam aan het bos met zijn stromen van hars. En aan jou”

(P13) “o, hoe vaak is in jouw oog de regen weggezonden. Jij staat te spreken zonder warden aan de rand van het heelal. Aan de rand van het heelal waar jij staat woedt een hevige wind. O, wat een duidelijk bewijs is dat. Het heelal had een ruggengraat moeten hebben maar ik ben dat niet”

(P36) “begraaft men het leven en de dood die elkaar in de geest als een Siamese tweeling onverbrekkelijk omhelzen”

(P38) “het heelal waar geen liefde woont noch vogels eten”

(P43) “bij de dageraad zat er aan de binnenkant van het fruit een koele regenbui”

(P50) “de wind is als water dat in de lucht stroomt”

(P52) “een wonderkoele drank als de echt van een boomgeest”

15. *Daisyworld Magazine #1 (2020)*, text
Chosen Contributions By: Zazie Stevens (page 1), Dayna Casey (page 10), Niklaus Mettler (page 21), Thich Nhat Hanh (page 63)

(P1) “A sea-soaked shirt will never be fully dry again.”

(P10) “I was becoming we.”

(P21) “It is a wink, a high five on green leafage. It is the moment of somebody giving a high-five to the leaf of a tree.”

“We have changed and came much closer to everything. We understand how particles move and how on my hand there is now plant and on the plant some of me they are sinking into the capillaries of the tree.”

(P63) “The flower is made of non-flower elements. We can describe the flower as being full of everything. There is nothing that is not present in the flower. We see sunshine, we see the rain, we see clouds, we see the earth, and we also see time and space in the flower. A flower, like everything else, is made entirely of non-flower elements. The whole cosmos has come together in order to help the flower manifest herself, the flower is full of everything except one thing: a separate self, a separate identity. The flower cannot be by herself alone. The flower has to inter- be with the sunshine, the cloud and everything in the cosmos. If we understand being in terms of inter-being, then we are much closer to the truth. Inter-being is not being and it is not non- being. Inter-being means being empty of a separate identity, empty of a separate self.”

16. Emanuele Coccia (2019), text
The Life of Plants: A Metaphysics of Mixture
9781509531530

(P4) “By contrast, it seems that no one ever wanted to question the superiority of animal life over plant life and the rights of life and death of the former over those of the latter.”

“a form of life without personality and without dignity, it does not seem to deserve only spontaneous empathy, or the exercise of a moralism that higher living beings capable of eliciting.”

“Our animal chauvinism refuses to go beyond an animal language that does not lend itself to a relation to plant truth.”

“In a sense, antisepsis animalism is just another form of anthropocentrism and a kind of internalized Darwinism: it extends human narcissism to the animal realm.”

(P5) “they participate in the world in its totality in everything they meet. Plants do not run, they cannot fly; they are not capable of privileging a specific place in relation to the rest of the space, they have to remain where they are.”

“Unlike most higher animals, they have no selective relation to what surrounds them. They are, and cannot be other than, constantly exposed to the world around them. Plant life is life as complete exposure, in absolute continuity and total communion with the environment.”

“The plant is the observer when it comes to contemplating the world in its totality. Under the sun or under the clouds, mixing with water and wind, their life is an endless

cosmic contemplation, one that does not distinguish between objects and circumstances.”

(P6) “We will never be able to understand a plant unless we have understood what the world is.”

(P7) “To live is essentially to live the life of another: to live in and through the life that others have been able to construct or invent.”

(P8) “Life seems to have to be its own environment, its own site. Plants alone break this topological rule of self-inclusion. They have no need for the meditation of other beings in order to survive. Nor do they desire it. They require nothing but the world, nothing but reality in its most basic components: rocks, water, air, light. They see the world before it gets inhabited by forms of higher life; they see the real in its most ancestral forms. Or rather they find life where no other organism reaches it.”

(P10) “life is a rupture in the asymmetry between container and contained. When there is life, the container is located in the contained.”

“We are invited to conceive of the physical world as a collection of all objects, the space that includes the totality of everything there was, is and will be: the definitive horizon that no longer tolerates an exteriority, the absolute container.”

17. *Louie Schwartzberg (2022), film
Fantastic Fungi*

10:40 “A mycelium has more networks than our brain has neural pathways, and works in much the same way, with electrolytes, electrical pulses. They’re the most common species on earth, they’re everywhere.”

11:00 “Just to give you an idea of how much fungi are in the forest, as you’re walking through, there’s about 300 miles of fungi, under every footstep that you take and that’s all over the world. And they form these massive links, it’s like a big web just growing through the forest.”

11:48 “Trees are communicating using the mycelium as pathways. They are connecting one tree to another. They’re using the mycelium, too, to feed one another, in other words one tree can swap nutrients with another tree using mycelium as the passageway.”

12:15 “So we often think of kin recognition as an animal behaviour. Humans, you know, we love our babies, we know it’s our baby and we’re gonna look after that baby. Well, we never thought that plants could do that, but we’re finding in our research that plants can recognize their own kin. So, these mother trees recognize their kin through their mycorrhizal networks. The mother tree and the baby seedlings are sending signals, talking to each other. When they’re connected together and carbon is moving between plants, the trees are supporting the weaker ones. If she knows that there’s pests around and that she’s under danger, she will increase her competitive environment towards her own babies so that they regenerate further away. It’s a magical thing, and this could not happen without the fungi.”

18:10 “From those great extinction events there’s one lesson, those organisms that paired with fungi survived. We are more closely related to fungi than we are to any other kingdom. What this means is that we are descendants of mycelium. Mycelium is the mother of us all. Living creatures like fungi are intelligent in the sense that they respond to their environment, they seek out

food and they defend themselves, they solve problems, and that's intelligence."

1:08:46 "Mycodiversity is biodiversity. You will decompose, I'm gonna decompose. We're all gonna die! That's okay, because we will enter into the mycoverse. We will forever exist together within the myco molecular matrix. We are not an individual. We are a vast network of molecules, and energies and wavelengths. The interconnectedness of being is who we are."

1:15:51 "This world of ours is always changing, not for the better, or for the worse, but for life. If the storms come and the water rises, if fire scorches the land or darkness descends. We will be here, working. As we always have. Extending the network, building community, restoring balance. One connection at a time. It may take a million years, or a hundred million. But we will still be here."

18. *Nigel Warburton, David Edmonds, Suki Finn (2019), podcast*

Philosophy Bites: Suki Finn on the Metaphysics of Nothing

3:09 "Nothingness is a book with 300 pages and no pages at all. It is both a presence and an absence."

19. *Charles Robert Mesle (2008), text*

Process-Relational Philosophy: An Introduction to Alfred North Whitehead

9781599471327

(P24) "Process philosophers, on the other hand, argue that there is urgency in coming to see the world as a web of

interrelated processes of which we are integral parts, so that all of our choices and actions have consequences for the world around us. This stance requires us to challenge and reject the prevailing philosophies and theologies that give primacy to being over becoming, to independence over relatedness, to things over processes, to the idea that the human spirit is fundamentally isolated from the social and natural web in which we clearly all live and move and are becoming”

Whitehead argued that reality consists of processes rather than material objects, and that processes are best defined by their relations with other processes, thus rejecting the theory that reality is fundamentally constructed by bits of matter that exist independently of one another”

Unused inspiration

Sabrina Borja (2020), podcast

Psychedelic

An Introduction To Metaphysics – Alan Watts

13:00 “Life should not be a drag, but a game. Life is playful, there is no necessity for it whatsoever. It is not going anywhere, it has no destination.”

Pierre A. Guertin (2019), text

Journal of Consciousness Exploration & Research (Volume 10, Issue 6), A Novel Concept Introducing the Idea of Continuously Changing Levels of Consciousness

(P406) “For major advances in the field of consciousness research, it is imperative to propose novel and scientifically useful definitions. As of today, many partially overlapping or opposing concepts about consciousness, self-consciousness, or mindfulness exist, although none is widely accepted. It is problematic particularly for researchers aiming to study objectively a brain function for which no standard neurological correlates and assessment methods have been accepted by most scientists, medical doctors, and philosophers. This short communication briefly presents a unique feature of this new definition proposed recently called 3tc consciousness. It states that consciousness, in its largest and most inclusive sense, is bound to change its level both continuously and dynamically. The importance of this idea for research is discussed.”

(P408) “Time (age, time of day, season, etc.) generally affects indeed most brain functions – e.g., self-consciousness first emerges at 2 or 3 years of age whereas, for many elderly, memory loss and self-consciousness problems are often progressively found (40–45). Compelling evidence – from Buddhists and scientists – suggests that training is pivotal for those seeking higher consciousness levels (46–52) as well as for benefits on health, as mentioned earlier (29–39).”

Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy (2001), text
4 Higher-Order Theories of Consciousness
Plato.Stanford.Edu/Entries/Consciousness-Higher

“Higher-order theories of consciousness try to explain the difference between unconscious and conscious mental states in terms of a relation obtaining between the conscious state in question and a higher-order representation of some sort (either a higher-order perception of that state, or a higher-order thought about it). The most challenging properties to explain are those involved in phenomenal consciousness—the sort of state that has a subjective dimension, that has ‘feel’, or that it is like something to undergo.”

Michael v. Antony (2001), text
Is ‘Consciousness’ Ambiguous?
Research.haifa.ac.il/~antony/papers/ambiguous.htm

“Corresponding to the word ‘consciousness’ we have a rich conception of a complex and multi-faceted mental

phenomenon. This phenomenon appears to comprise (something like) states and events with phenomenal or qualitative aspects that are temporally located, that enter into part whole relations, that are related to intentional features of the mind, that enter into causal relations with one another and with unconscious mental states and events, and so on. This complex phenomenon seems intimately linked to wakefulness, attentiveness, and capacities for “inner reflection”—though perhaps none of those are necessary. Something like that, and much more, goes to make up our complex conception or picture of consciousness. If that is right, then it makes sense that given our varied theoretical and folk psychological interests, different features of the phenomenon on different occasions will be thrown into relief or emphasized— sometimes phenomenal features, sometimes functional or cognitive ones, etc. While others are suppressed, just as with cruse’s ‘car’ example. But just as ‘car’ is univocal, so is ‘consciousness’ on this story.”

*Contzen Pereira (2015), text
Scientific God Journal (Volume 6, Issue 7), Soul & Consciousness*

(P407) “It is my view that my soul is my consciousness and my consciousness is my soul. It appears that energy renders my consciousness to surge within me and my soul is a sphere of energy that encases me. Further, it appears that my soul dwell within me until my bodily death and my soul makes me conscious of my existence and all that exist around me. I feel my consciousness for it is my soul.

Addressing the 'how' of my soul may someday be possible but knowing the 'why' of my soul may stay a mystery for it is as mystifying as the supernatural. We may be able to introduce a soul within non-living beings by evoking consciousness artificially, but I am rather sure that these beings may never experience the soul or consciousness that I experience. On bodily death, my soul shall depart as an end to my conscious cycle for somewhere someone shall reap the energy and devise its consciousness, thus, its soul."

Merriam-Webster Dictionary, text

"Consciousness"

<https://www.Merriamwebster.Com/Dictionary/Consciousness>

"Definition of consciousness

1A: the quality or state of being aware especially of something within oneself

B: the state or fact of being conscious of an external object, state, or fact

C: awareness

Especially : concern for some social or political cause

The organization aims to raise the political consciousness of teenagers.

2: the state of being characterized by sensation, emotion, volition, and thought : mind

3: the totality of conscious states of an individual

4: the normal state of conscious life

5: the upper level of mental life of which the person is aware as contrasted with unconscious processes"

De Kift (1999), song

Kom mee

“Vannacht was mijn moeder bij me. Ze zat naast me op de vloer en wreef met haar handpalmen over haar knieën, en ze keek me plotseling aan met bange ogen.

“Wil je iets voor me doen? Maar je mag niet lachen, alsjeblieft niet. Kom mee.”

Ze greep mijn hand en die voelde aan als sneeuw. Heel koel, heel los, heel licht. We stonden tussen een paar elzenbomen. Daar lag iets lichts. “Kom”, zei ze, “daar lig ik.”

Ik zag het skelet van een mens, en toen wees ze naar het skelet. “Je mag niet lachen”, zei ze. “Dat ben ik. Kun je dat begrijpen? Zeg nu zelf, kan ik dat zijn? Met alles wat ik vroeger was heeft dat toch niks meer te maken?”

Ze ging op de donkere aarde zitten en keek bedroefd voor zich uit. “Met vroeger heeft dat niks meer te maken.”, zei ze. “Helemaal niks.” En toen raapte ze met haar vingertoppen iets op van de donkere aarde en rook eraan. “Vreemd,”, fluisterde ze, “zo vreemd.” En ze hield me de aarde voor en die was als sneeuw, die was als de hand waarmee ze mijn hand had gegrepen. “Ruik.”, zei ze. Ik snoof diep.

“Nou?” “Aarde.”, zei ik. “En?” “Een beetje zuur, een beetje bitter. Echte aarde.” “Maar toch vreemd, en walgelijk toch?” Ik snoof diep de geur van de aarde in, en die rook koel, los en licht. “Het ruikt lekker,”, zei ik, “naar aarde.”

Mijn moeder keek me met bange ogen aan. “Dit ruikt toch walgelijk?” Ik rook. “Nee, die ruikt zoals alle aarde.” “Vind je?” “Ja.” “En je vindt het niet walgelijk?” “Nee.” “Dit ruikt echt lekker, ma. Ruik nog eens goed.”

Ze nam een beetje tussen haar vingertoppen en rook.
“Ruikt alle aarde zo?”, vroeg ze. “Ja, alle aarde.” Ze snoof diep. Ze stak haar neus helemaal in de hand met de aarde en snoof en toen keek ze me aan. “Je hebt gelijk.”, zei ze. “Misschien ruikt die heel lekker, maar toch vreemd als ik bedenk dat ik dat ben. Toch wel verschrikkelijk vreemd.” Mijn moeder zat daar en rook en vergat mij, en ze zei het woord ‘vreemd’ steeds minder vaak. Steeds zachter zei ze het. Toen liep ik stilletjes terug naar huis. Het was half zes in de ochtend en in de voortuin kwam overal aarde tussen de sneeuw uit kijken. Ik liep met mijn blote voeten over de donkere aarde in de sneeuw. Die was koel en los en licht, en hij geurde. Ik stond op en ademde diep.
“Het ruikt lekker, ma!”

David J. Chalmers (1996), text
The Conscious Mind in Search of a Fundamental Property
0195105532

(P93) “Almost everything in the world can be explained in physical terms; it is natural to hope that consciousness might be explained this way, too. In this chapter, however, I will argue that consciousness escapes the net of reductive explanation. No explanation given wholly in physical terms can ever account for the emergence of conscious experience. This may seem to be a negative conclusion, but it leads to some strong positive consequences that I will bring out in later chapters.”

(p95) “What is going on in my zombie twin? He is physically identical to me, and we may as well suppose that he is embedded in an identical environment. He will

certainly be identical to me functionally: he will be processing the same sort of information, reacting in a similar way to inputs, with his internal configurations being modified appropriately and with indistinguishable behaviour resulting. He will be psychologically identical to me, in the sense developed in chapter 1. He will be perceiving the trees outside, in the functional sense, and tasting the chocolate, in the psychological sense. All of this follows logically from the fact that he is physically identical to me, by virtue of the functional analyses of psychological notions. He will even be “conscious” in the functional senses described earlier—he will be awake, able to report the contents of his internal states, able to focus attention in various places, and so on. It is just that none of this functioning will be accompanied by any real conscious experience. There will be no phenomenal feel. There is nothing it is like to be a zombie.”

“This sort of zombie is quite unlike the zombies found in Hollywood movies, which tend to have significant functional impairments (figure 3.1). The sort of consciousness that Hollywood zombies most obviously lack is a psychological version: typically, they have little capacity for introspection and lack a refined ability to voluntarily control behaviour. They may or may not lack phenomenal consciousness; as Block (1995) points out, it is reasonable to suppose that there is something it tastes like when they eat their victims. We can call these psychological zombies’, I am concerned with phenomenal zombies, which are physically and functionally identical, but which lack experience. (Perhaps it is not surprising that phenomenal zombies have not been popular in

Hollywood, as there would be obvious problems with their depiction.)”

(P102) “From all the low-level facts about physical configurations and causation, we can in principle derive all sorts of high-level facts about macroscopic systems, their organization, and the causation among them. One could determine all the facts about biological function, and about human behaviour and the brain mechanisms by which it is caused. But nothing in this vast causal story would lead one who had not experienced it directly to believe that there should be any consciousness. The very idea would be unreasonable; almost mystical, perhaps.”

“As we saw earlier, consciousness is a surprising feature of the universe. Our grounds for belief in consciousness derive solely from our own experience of it. Even if we knew every last detail about the physics of the universe—the configuration, causation, and evolution among all the fields and particles in the spatiotemporal manifold—that information would not lead us to postulate the existence of conscious experience. My knowledge of consciousness, in the first instance, comes from my own case, not from any external observation. It is my first- person experience of consciousness that forces the problem on me.”

“Even when we know everything physical about other creatures, we do not know for certain that they are conscious, or what their experiences are (although we may have good reason to believe that they are). It is striking that there is no problem of “other lives,” or of “other economies,” or of “other heights.” There is no epistemic asymmetry in those cases, precisely because those phenomena are logically supervenient on the physical.”

(P103) “The most vivid argument against the logical supervenience of consciousness is suggested by Jackson (1982), following related arguments by Nagel (1974) and others. Imagine that we are living in an age of a completed neuroscience, where we know everything there is to know about the physical processes within our brain responsible for the generation of our behaviour. Mary has been brought up in a black-and-white room and has never seen any colours except for black, white, and shades of grey. She is nevertheless one of the world’s leading neuroscientists, specializing in the neurophysiology of colour vision. She knows everything there is to know about the neural processes involved in visual information processing, about the physics of optical processes, and about the physical makeup of objects in the environment. But she does not know what it is like to see red. No amount of reasoning from the physical facts alone will give her this knowledge.”

(p106) “the problems with consciousness are in a different league. Here, the purported analyses do not even get into the ballpark. In a much starker way, they completely fail to characterize what needs to be explained. There is no temptation to even try to add epicycles to a purported functional analysis of consciousness in order to make it satisfactory, as there is with similar analyses of life and of learning. Consciousness is simply not to be characterized as a functional property in the first place. The same goes for analyses of consciousness as a structural property, or in other reductive terms. There is therefore no way for an entailment from physical facts to consciousness to get off the ground.”

Stephen Addiss (2008), text
Zen Sourcebook
Traditional Documents From China, Korea, And Japan
9780872209091

(P27) “The essence of your mind is intrinsically pure.”

John Boswell Cobb (2007), text
A Christian Natural Theology, Second Edition Based on The
Thought of Alfred North Whitehead
9780664230180

(P52) “Freedom always exists within limits. But an entity’s uniqueness and individuality arise from its own self-determination as to just how it will take account of the world within the limits that have been set for it.”

Alfred North Whitehead (1926), text
Science and The Modern World
9780029351901

(P24) “There persists, however, throughout the whole period the fixed scientific cosmology which presupposes the ultimate fact of an irreducible brute matter, or material, spread throughout space in a flux of configurations. In itself such a material is senseless, valueless, purposeless. It just does what it does do, following a fixed routine imposed by external relations

which do not spring from the nature of its being. It is this assumption that I call 'scientific materialism.' also, it is an assumption which I shall challenge as 25 being entirely unsuited to the scientific situation at which we have now arrived."

(P52-55) In Whitehead's view, then, concepts such as "quality," "matter," and "form" are problematic. These conventional notions, often referred to as "classical" concepts, fall short in adequately explaining change and neglect the dynamic and experiential essence of the fundamental elements of the world. While they may serve as helpful abstractions, they do not represent the fundamental building blocks of the world.

(p54) materialists have made a misjudgement, according to whitehead, by mistakenly considering enduring objects as the most genuine and fundamental entities in the universe. In doing so, they have confused the abstract with the tangible, a concept that whitehead refers to as the "fallacy of misplaced concreteness."

*Alfred North Whitehead (1927), text
Symbolism, Its Meaning and Effect
9780823211388*

(P26) Whitehead describes any entity as in some sense nothing more and nothing less than the sum of its relations to other entities – its synthesis of and reaction to the world around in.

(P39) The other side of creativity/freedom as the absolute principle is that every entity is constrained by the social structure of existence (i.e., its relations); each actual entity

must conform to the settled conditions of the world around it.

*Alfred North Whitehead (1929), text
Process And Reality
0029345804*

(P21) According to whitehead's perspective, traditional concepts like "quality," "matter," and "form" present problems. These concepts fail to fully explain change and ignore the active, experiential nature of the fundamental elements of the world. While they are helpful in their abstraction, they are not the essential building blocks of the world. Instead, creativity is the ultimate principle of existence. Every entity, whether it be a human, a tree, or an electron, possesses some degree of originality in how it interacts with other entities and is not wholly determined by causal or mechanistic laws.

(P34-35) Philosophically speaking, what is commonly perceived as an individual person is instead characterized as a continuous series of interconnected events. This is due to the fact that individuals undergo constant change, even if it's just the passage of time and the accumulation of new experiences. Although these instances of experience are logically separate, they are gradually linked together in what philosopher whitehead refers to as a "society" of events.

(P207) The concept of God is not solely confined to religion. Rather than stemming primarily from religious beliefs, whitehead viewed God as essential to his

metaphysical framework. In his system, the existence of order among possibilities was necessary to allow for novelty in the world and to provide a purpose for all entities. Whitehead proposed that these ordered potentials exist in what he termed the primordial nature of God. However, whitehead also had a keen interest in religious experiences, which prompted him to delve deeper into what he referred to as the second nature of God, the consequent nature. Whitehead's understanding of God as a "dipolar" entity has prompted the need for fresh theological contemplation.

(P208) Scientific materialism masks the reality that nothing remains static by perceiving any material entity as essentially unchanging over time, with any modifications considered secondary to its inherent "nature." However, whitehead argues that change is inherent and unavoidable, emphasizing the notion that "all things flow."

(P344) Whitehead characterizes the primordial nature as "the unlimited conceptual realization of the absolute wealth of potentiality", representing the infinite possibilities within the universe. This primordial nature is timeless and unvarying, offering entities within the universe opportunities for actualization. Additionally, whitehead refers to this primordial aspect as "the enticement for sensation, the eternal impetus."

Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy (2001), text
Panpsychism
<https://Plato.Stanford.Edu/Entries/Panpsychism/>

“Panpsychism is the view that mentality is fundamental and ubiquitous in the natural world. The view has a long and venerable history in philosophical traditions of both east and west, and has recently enjoyed a revival in analytic philosophy. For its proponent’s panpsychism offers an attractive middle way between physicalism on the one hand and dualism on the other. The worry with dualism—the view that mind and matter are fundamentally different kinds of thing—is that it leaves us with a radically disunified picture of nature, and the deep difficulty of understanding how mind and brain interact. And whilst physicalism offers a simple and unified vision of the world, this is arguably at the cost of being unable to give a satisfactory account of the emergence of human and animal consciousness. Panpsychism, strange as it may sound on first hearing, promises a satisfying account of the human mind within a unified conception of nature.”

Elbert Hubbard (1906), text
The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam
9789029020855

(P32) “The worldly hope men set their hearts upon. Turns ashes or it prospers; and anon, like snow upon the desert’s dusty face, lighting a little hour or two was gone.”

*The references and sources are not limited to the creator, title, year, etc., as I find it important to show the full texts, as it shows insight to the context in which it was written.

**Not all references, quotes, or inspirations are included because I agree with them. Some of them are included because they are interesting to take them into consideration, as they might give a different perspective or a different voice to the thesis.

Thesis by Lise Teeuw - 1026150

The Large Glass Department

Gerrit Rietveld Academie