



Picasso's Left Ear

Issue 17



Contents

1. Peter Kiernan
2. Eamon Yeung
3. Brian Woods
4. Neal Morrin

Editor- N.Morrin.

"Where is God? He cried; I'll tell you! We have killed him – you and I! We are all his murderers. But how did we do this? How were we able to drink up the sea? What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Where are we moving to?" - The Gay Science

God is dead. This, the messianic message of Nietzsche, has too often been misunderstood. Men have interpreted it as some late-blooming affirmation of atheism, as the cry of one who only *now* discovers that 'God' does not exist. For Europe at this stage was well familiar with that idea, Voltaire had slammed his metaphorical fist with *'écrasez l'infâme'*, and Shelley had published his essay on the necessity of God's non-existence, suffice it to say that the words of the German prophet were not ones to shake the foundations of society. In fact if anything they revealed just how inveterate Nietzsche's protestant roots were, he being foolish enough to believe in the first place. Alas this indeed has been the response of most to the passage above, but they have missed the point entirely. Nietzsche never discusses the *existence* of God, for he realises that this question is itself irrelevant. To Nietzsche God has always been a cultural projection, a myth representative of a certain set of values and morals, he does not bother with an examination of the myth itself but with an analysis of that which the myth represents. For example consider how foolish one would seem, if one were to compose a thesis on the supposed 'revelation' that the murder described in *The Brothers Karamazov* never actually took place. Then imagine how absurd it would be to insist that the book be removed or discredited because its characters, its plot were that of fiction. So it is with religion-the myth is transparent, it is the values with which are concerned. His conclusion therefore, is not that 'God' does not exist, that is a conclusion with no basis in reason (the question should be *how*), but rather that man has done away with God, has rejected the Christian message and view of life. The death of God runs far deeper than a foolish flourish of 'there is no God-itis', but rather speaks of man's decision to reject an entire moral philosophy, an entire way of life. What Nietzsche spoke of here, was the soon-coming of the transvaluation of all values. When the Christian ways of life would be broken and with their God swept away into the open gullet of ravenous time. All values he argued, will be reshaped. Our 'murder' has unloosened the constellations, the fabric of western society is undone, and waits to be rewoven. Nietzsche looked upon himself as beginning this process of re-evaluation; this process of smashing up the tenets of the old order and creating new values for a new epoch of man. The philosophers of the future would, he argued, raise into being a new morality, one which would service man's new way of life, that of the 'overman'; a terrible philosophy which would worship power and praise brute strength above all else. A philosophy which is the antithesis of Christianity, what Blake would have called the philosophy of Hell, "*those who restrain desire do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained*", a philosophy which delighted in destruction and creation, in an abundance of energy, for energy is "*eternal delight*". It is a philosophy which seems to me as some disturbing picture of a parallel universe where all values are reversed. One in which murder might be praised as the exercise of power, the natural assertion of a superior form of life. Nietzsche laughs at us, because he believes that we, by condemning God, have simultaneously condemned our entire way of life, worse than this, as is expressed by his man-with-the-lantern parable, we have not yet even realised it! He believed some new mythology must inevitably replace Christianity, and he attempted to provide it through Zarathustra.

I have seen firsthand the vengeance of Raphael and all the arch-angels, for modern Society is sapped. We had not the imagination Nietzsche thought we had, for we have raised no second tyrant, from his bones no promised 'overman' has come. Instead we grow sick. For when we stoned God, we stoned with him all sense of the sacred, all sense of mystery, and what have we heaved up in his place? - Consumerism, a luke-warm hedonism. These the signs of our decay, these the signs of our lack of imagination. We worship strength and power, reward self-interest, stand in awe of obscene wealth, and above all else, with each day grow more apathetic towards life. Our new Gods (when you come to realise God as a cultural projection of our hopes and aspirations it becomes painfully apparent that the whole existence debate is quite pointless, a new God is *always* raised, merely in different forms), which we have raised up above all others, what values do they reflect but greed and a shameful shallowness? We did not have the strength to bring forth a new structure capable of meaning, to replace the one we had torn down. So now, our value-systems slumping in ruins, we must await, await a re-evaluation. Not necessarily what Nietzsche envisioned, that is when "*the weight of all things is determined anew*" but when we begin to create some philosophy, some art, which is once again worthy of life. We artists, we philosophers have failed in our fundamental task, to re-interpret the essential questions of existence for a new society and a new age. Now we are needing prophets and poets of stature, now we are needing the creative impulse. The old structures of meaning are gone, replaced by frail and flaccid things - and our society is inculcated into belief in them by the swamping force of the media. In short we need a new mythology. Our modern values stand before us as devoid of depth and significance. We either cling to the remnants of religion, or are swept into the meaninglessness of a hedonistic, materialistic society. Ours is a desert of steel and dust.

One is forced thus to the overwhelming question, what shall we ever do? Are we capable of imbibing this civilisation, now so accustomed to the worship of wealth and power, with a sense of the sacred, with a keen appreciation of life? Are there among us now those who will build, create a mythology which affirms life, which brings back to it growth and meaning? We need them. For presently we fall prey to all sorts of pseudo-philosophies, from consumerism to hedonism, atheism to diluted eastern religions. Indeed one asks with Nietzsche, just where are we going?

By Peter Kiernan

Cambodian Justice?

The 2010 earthquake could not have come at a worse time for the destitute Haiti. The once lush and idyllic landscape was also the richest French colony in the New World owing in large parts to its striving coffee, sugar and indigo plantations. It is now routinely tagged as the “poorest country in the western hemisphere”, torn asunder again by a devastating and calamitous natural disaster. Ravished by nearly half a century of political instability and deforestation, land erosion, loss of biodiversity and urbanisation and demographic pressure are looming dangerously close to “the pearl of the Antilles.” In Haiti’s terms, it is another inconvenience for the Caribbean island desperately trying to capture progress and economic growth in a bottle. Cambodia shares a similar predicament to Haiti, albeit in a less severe way.

Like the majority of Asian and African countries, corruption pervades the South East country; flooding has become prevalent while it is also suffering topsoil erosion, illegal logging of land has deprived Cambodia millions of dollars of sorely needed revenue. On top of such a heavy weight, Cambodia carries a sombre and dark legacy of conflict from which it is beginning to put into place the mechanism for bringing those responsible for the ‘killing fields’ to justice. Allow me to explore briefly the origins of the Khmer Rouge, the focal point of this article. At first, the Khmer Rouge were the armed wing of the Communist Party of Kampuchea- the old name communists used for Cambodia. Docked mainly in remote jungles and mountain areas in the north east, the armed body gained little recognition. Nevertheless, a civil war ensued in Cambodia from 1970-1975; the Khmer Rouge gradually engulfed the Communist Party of Kampuchea altogether. Khmer Rouge forces finally took over the capital, Phnom Penh, and therefore the nation as a whole in 1975. Pol Pot, lynchpin of the Khmer Rouge, was very impressed from his sojourn with the local hill tribes, especially with their stranglehold on self-sufficiency- little use for money with their incorruptible nature, moulded by Buddhism. Under his orders, the Khmer Rouge dragged Cambodia back to the Middle Ages, where the country at its zenith was a large imperial empire, enslaving millions of people from urban areas to work on ineffective communal farm. The Khmer Rouge’s reign ended in 1979, marked by an invasion of Cambodia by Vietnam.

In a bid to build an agrarian utopia, the Khmer Rouge abolished religion, schools, currency and private property while herding civilians into rural collectives. Intellectuals were expunged, anyone seen wearing glasses or knowing a foreign language were condemned (even though it was known that Pol Pot spoke fluent French). The Cambodians are finally taking a step forward by bringing those to trial, but contentious issues lurking behind the process makes it difficult to earnestly applaud the War Crimes tribunal.

On 18th December 2009, Khieu Samphan, former head of state of Cambodia for the Khmer Rouge was charged with genocide, adding to his existing charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Along with Nuon Chea and Ieng Sary, both of whom are also officially in pre-trial detention for war crimes and crimes against humanity, the triumvirate are not expected to undergo the judiciary process before 2011. All the genocide charges relate to the men’s treatment of Cambodia’s Vietnamese and Muslim minorities. Nuon Chea, formerly known as Brother Number Two, was viewed as the chief ideological advocate of the Khmer Rouge movement. In terms of the political hierarchy established in Cambodia at the time, he was second in command only to Pol Pot- the leader of the fiercely nationalist organization. When the party was stripped from power by the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1979, Nuon fled from the public eye until he defected in 1998. Nuon maintains he was not involved with the atrocities that went on during the brutal Cambodia regime. Ieng Sary, nicknamed Brother Number Three, was the country’s foreign minister who served as the intermediate between the outside world and the rulers of insulated Cambodia. Ieng Sary’s transgressions, similar to his comrades, cannot be exaggerated. Ieng’s primary duty consisted of convincing Cambodian intellectuals and professionals, who had fled the country during the civil war, to return to their homeland and begin a process of renovation. The fate of the intellectuals was not a prosperous one; the majority of them were tortured and executed as part of his purge. Surprisingly, both Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan were granted royal pardons in 1996 from the Cambodian Premier Hun Sen following their defections from the Khmer Rouge. The UN had warned that the pardons did not necessarily mean exoneration from prosecution, but despite threats of a civil unrest in Cambodia, both men were arrested for genocide in 2007. The only major surviving member of the group who has not been charged yet is Comrade Duch, whose real name is Kaing Guek Eav. A former maths teacher, Duch supervised the Tuol Slang interrogation centre in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, where 15,000 executions had taken place, along with countless thousands of civilians tortured to death. Having been detained since 1999, he is said to house valuable information concerning the decisions made by the organisation’s organs. Very recently, he stunned the UN- backed war crimes tribunal by unabashedly requesting to be released on the final day of the trial, having co-operated completely with the Cambodian investigators.



If one were to suggest a UN backed- trial would act as a catalyst, speed up the whole judiciary procedure, and therefore bring the war criminals to justice, then that is an acceptable reason, but I have neglected to mention the tribunal commenced in 2007. So far, charges have been made but the actual trial does not begin until 2011. Let us not exclude Duch, who is currently in the preliminary process, yet he has endured approximately a decade of detention. It is bittersweet justice for the survivors, especially if Pol Pot did not live long enough to see his country wake up from the nightmare he alone created.

By Eamon Yeung

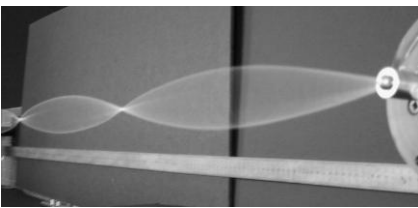
An easier way to understand reality?

“When forced to summarize the general theory of relativity in one sentence:
Time and space and gravitation have no separate existence from matter.”
(Albert Einstein)

We’ve all heard of Albert Einstein and his infamously incomprehensible theory of relativity. Ask any scientist and they will tell you that it is one of the most beautiful achievements of human logic. Phrases like the Space-Time Continuum, constancy of light and $E=MC^2$ are thrown about the place with few truly grasping what they mean. Supposedly it describes the universe in which we inhabit with incredible clarity... if you can somehow understand it. My question as follows: is there a simpler way to gain a basic understanding of this notoriously difficult concept, and in the process, absolutely everything around us?

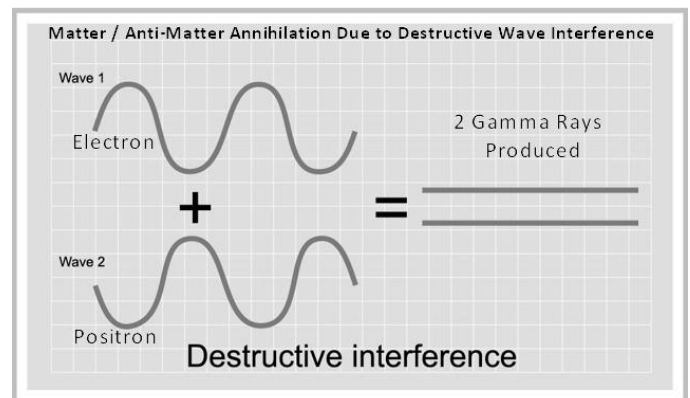
In previous articles we discussed the theory of wave-particle duality, i.e. that all particles at once exhibit both the properties of waves and the properties of matter. In this article we’ll take a more metaphysical look at the world around us in an effort to find a more simple way of describing reality.

Let us consider all matter; all forms of energy; everything around us as the One Substance. Einstein called this “The Space-Time Continuum”. Everything that makes up the universe that we experience on a day-to-day basis - all humans, animals, trees, plants, buildings, rocks on Earth; the planets in our Solar System including the Earth which orbit the Sun; the Sun which orbits our galaxy; and our galaxy that is just one out of the billions and billions that are out there within the observable universe – ALL of this occurs within one common Space. We are not separate from this substance. It is not ‘out there’. We are all made up of this One Substance.

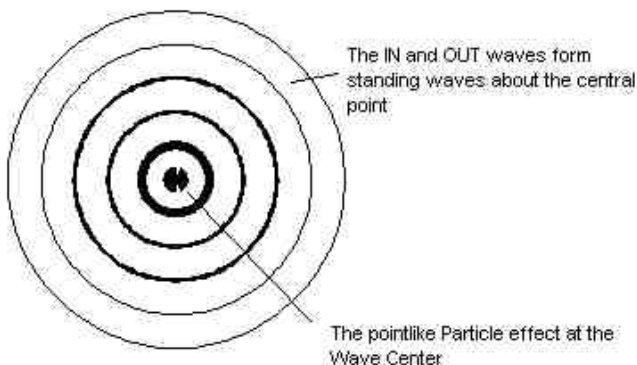


We know that there is wave-particle duality for light and matter. Since we have assumed that our universe is made of just this One Substance we cannot add anything to it. Therefore we are left only with a *universe made up of waves*. It follows then that space exists with the properties of a wave medium and that all particles of matter are made up by the wave motion of space. This particle effect of matter is caused by the wave centre of a spherical standing wave. Also known as a stationary wave, this is a wave that remains in a constant position (see picture above).

To illustrate the beauty of this theory consider the phenomenon of annihilation that occurs when a particle of matter and antimatter collide thus releasing energy. Imagine one of the simplest forms of matter, an electron. This is a particular individual standing wave. The positron is simply the opposite phase standing wave. When they come into contact destructive wave interference occurs and energy in the form of 2 gamma rays is produced. You cannot deny the beauty of this simplicity.



From this theory we can also deduce, as Einstein did, that the reason we have 3 dimensional space is simply due to the fact that matter interacts spherically.



It is also possible to establish that the fourth dimension of “time” is simply the movement of this wave. In fact, the most accurate time-keepers on the planet, atomic clocks, use the natural frequency of the cesium atom (9,192,631,770 Hz) to measure time.

In summary, the theory of the Wave Structure of Matter is founded on one thing, Space, which exists as a wave medium. All forms of energy and matter are simply various forms of wave. Matter is formed from the spherical standing wave motions of Space or this One Substance. Time is formed by the movement of waves. Thus, we have now managed to unite space, time, motion and matter in a most simple manner. Hopefully in the process we’ve found a slightly easier way to understand reality!

By Brian Woods

Palestine Region and the Historical Origins of its Conflict

First of all, just to clarify- Palestine is not, nor was it ever really an autonomous state, until recently. It was simply a region in the Middle East, bordering the south-west edge of the Mediterranean. The exact specifications of its enclosing borders have been vague and have often varied throughout the years, but generally the river Jordan is about as far inland as is considered Palestine. This is the area that the current recurring conflict between the newly formed Israel and the new Palestinian state, among other Arab countries, is to be found.

History recalls, with some scepticism as will be discussed, the presence of Jewish kingdoms in the region around 1000 BC, with the likes of King David, as is in the Old Testament. By 548 BC however, the Persians controlled the region, and from there it switched from power to power. Macedonia controlled it, then the Romans, then the Byzantines, then a number of different Islamic kingdoms, then the Crusaders, then the Mamluks. In 1516 it changed hands again to the Ottomans, who controlled it right up until 1917 with World War I, excluding a brief period of Egyptian rule from 1831-41. After World War I, it was in British hands due to their advancements on the Ottomans through the area, and the ensuing collapse of the Ottoman Empire. In 1920, it was put under British mandate until such a time as it was possible to set up an independent state.

Before moving on, it is necessary to look at the Jewish people and their links to the land. As time progressed, their presence in the area diminished due to persecution, as was suffered by many of the other inhabitants. The only period of them ruling the area is from Biblical times, and some historians doubt the accounts of the likes of King David. Regardless, the area was the homeland of the Jewish people at the time, and is the source of much of their culture. After the time of the Byzantines however, there are few if any real accounts of major Jewish activity in the region. There is an interesting period during the rule of the Crusaders where although few in numbers, the Jewish inhabitants fought alongside the Muslims against the European invaders, a thought which seems inconceivable in the current climate. In contrast, the Arabs, mainly of the Islamic faith, had been the rulers and majority occupants of the region basically since 630 AD.

What began to change this layout of a mainly Arab population was a Jewish movement called Zionism. Among the Jews, the exact definition is disputed, but to the rest of the world it's rather simple, as it only concerns us in one main area. Basically, it is the belief that the Jewish people have a right to have a national home in the area which they consider to be their home- Palestine (Israel to them). Among the Jews, the exact inclusions of the definition vary, but it seems mainly so that they do not cause offense through what is a controversial belief. Now, as I described it as a "movement", there is some movement we must take note of. In the very late 1800s, Zionism led to mass the immigration of Jewish people to Palestine, which continued for a long period. During the 1930s it was especially strong, due to the obvious issue of the rise of Germany and the Nazi party. In 1917 Britain had promised to try to acquire a Jewish national homeland in Palestine, and hence we are back to the British Mandate of the region.

Unlike the other Mandate areas after World War I, where assisted administration was the aim, the main objective of this one was not to help with administration, it was to set up a Jewish state. This did not go so smoothly. There was massive Arab resistance to Jewish immigration, and demands for an independent Arab state. In 1937, the Arabs went as far as rebelling. Unable to control the situation, the British passed the problem over to the newly formed United Nations in 1947. They proposed the partition of the region into an Arab and a Jewish state, which was accepted by the latter, but not the former. As a result of this decision, violence erupted in the region, according to the U.N "over half the indigenous Palestinian population fled or were expelled" in a conflict which resulted in Israeli victory. These refugees fled to the Gaza strip, West Bank, and countries like Egypt and Jordan. War with neighbouring Arab states also ensued, and

again the newly formed Israel emerged victorious, and took much more land than the UN plan had originally proposed. In 1949, the UN drew the issue to a short-lived end by drawing up armistice lines to try and define borders. A Palestinian state was not included in this. Egypt took control of the Gaza strip, and Jordan took control of the West Bank. Both the Israelis and Palestinians had declared their states at this stage, but a better organised Israel dominated and took control, leaving the Palestinians with a state which only they properly recognised. The tensions between the peoples rose to volatile levels, and have remained volatile.

The Palestinians were clearly in a very unhappy state to say the least after the events, and the rest of the neighbouring Arab world had also built up a hatred, which largely still exists, towards Israel. This was not aided by later Israeli actions, often of discrimination to remaining Palestinians, and their harsh reactions to terrorism. In 1967, they fought the Six Day War against Egypt, Jordan and Syria, defeating them all, and making massive territorial gains, into Egypt (refer to the news.bbc.co.uk for maps which illustrate the progression of the region). This war is said to have caused another 500,000 Palestinians to flee the Palestine region. Now, whilst Palestine is not a fully recognised state, it does have some 'state' status, such as an observer in the UN. Terrorist groups have constantly been operating and antagonising Israel, as seen recently. There have also been numerous wars between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Basically, that is the sum of events since the declaration of the Israeli state. Not all the details can be discussed here, much has been omitted from the last 60 years of history, but hopefully this provides a better perception of how the conflict arose in the first place.

By Neal Morrin



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