

Daily Meditation 11/7/2021

Art & Spirituality, Coomaraswamy & Eckhart: Deep Ecumenism continued

Good morning.

Returning to our meditations on Coomaraswamy, Hinduism, Meister Eckhart, deep ecumenism, and our very survival as a species in this time of climate change.

Coomaraswamy says that Eckhart's nearest and natural descendant is Blake. He thinks among all the the writers and artists in the West, that Blake is the nearest to Eckhart.

He says, for example, "Jesus and his disciples were all artists." This is something that Blake says: that "praise is the practice of art;" that "Israel delivered from Egypt is art delivered from nature and imitation."

That "the eternal book of man is the imagination;" that "humans have no body distinct from our soul."

"And if the doors of perception were cleansed, all things would appear to humans as they are--infinite."

"In eternity, all is vision."

All those are themes that William Blake makes explicit in his writings. And Coomaraswamy, an Easterner, recognizes all these themes in Meister Eckhart. And he is correct, they are there.

And he ends his beautiful and powerful essay on Meister Eckhart this way: He talks about the aesthetic experience and creativity that Eckart is constantly not only bringing up, but laying in front of us.

He says: "Recollection, contemplation, illumination, accommodating point of vision, rapture, and rest."

All these are themes in Eckhart, and themes in himself as a reader of the Upanishads of India.

He goes on: "Insofar as it is accessible to man as a rumor or foretaste, passing like a flash of lightning, it is a vision of the world picture as God sees it, loving all creatures alike, not as of use, that as the image of the Divine Self, in Himself.

Each in His divine nature and unity, as a conscious eye situated in a mirror might see all things in all other dimensions, apart from time and space, as a single object of its vision. Not turning from one thing to another, or seeing without light in a timeless image-bearing light, where over all assessable things hangs a 'motionless haze of unity.'"

That last phrase is from Eckhart, that he's quoting.

Coomaraswamy goes on:

"That is a seeing of things in their perfection, ever verdant, unaged and unaging."

Quote: "To have all that has being and lustfully to be desired and brings delight, to have it all at once and whole and the undivided soul, and that in God reveal this perfection in His flower, where it first burgeons forth in the ground of its existence, that is happiness. The peculiar wonder, neither an intellect nor will as happiness and not as intellection. Not dialectically but as if one has the knowledge and the power to gather up all time in one eternal now, as God enjoys the God Self."

So in that passage--very powerful--put together by Coomaraswamy, he brings in quotes, sentences from Eckhart, but he molds the whole--that all of it is speaking and really celebrating what Eckhart is celebrating.

But he's also celebrating what the Upanishads celebrate.

This is deep ecumenism. He's going deep. He's going to that common underground river that all spiritual traditions and mystical traditions have in common.

And he finds it very strongly in Eckhart. He finds this marvelous mirror. Not only on a mirror of Upanishad wisdom, but a mirror of Divinity itself.

We, too, can journey to such places.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.