

## The Heart of Brother Wayne Teasdale's Vision of the Interspiritual Age

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Many of us are familiar with the new age joke-riddle: “What did the Zen Buddhist say to the hot dog vender?” Answer: “Make me one with everything.”

We laugh because of the witty convergence of meanings. The Zen Buddhist wants to become “One” with all that is as well as have his “one” delicious hot dog. In other words, he wants to eat his own cake and at the same time, share it with the totality. And, as a pacifist, he really doesn't want to fight about it.

In a world of global stress with its race for resources, even for survival, we too long for a peaceful, compassionate, practical answer, an answer not just for me or us but for all.

As Al Gore reminds us around the issue of global warming it's no longer a question of noble dreams but of brute survival. We are in a place where a “win/win” is utterly imperative, where “what's good for me” and “what's good for all” *must* come together.

How do we honor our individual and national needs and, at the same time, respect the needs of all others, including those most different from us? In his core text, *The Mystic Heart*<sup>1</sup>, the late Brother Wayne Teasdale, offers a seminal and visionary answer. Our goal in this paper is to give you a glimpse of Brother Wayne's heart as we experienced it.

Above all, Wayne Teasdale was a mystic, a seeker of the One. He was also, like Gore, a pragmatist. He often quoted Martin Luther King, Jr., “The choice is between

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<sup>1</sup> *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions*. 1999. New World Library (Novato, CA), xix + 293pp. (hereafter, “MH”).

non-violence and non-existence” (MH, p.7).

For Wayne, we awaken and survive through the Mystic Heart. For him, the Heart is a “metaphor for the mystical organ of integration with the divine, or for ultimate realization” (MH, p.268). The Heart then connects us with the “ground of Being” and through that ground, with “all that is,” both immanent and transcendent, material and spiritual, practical and visionary.

For him this synthesis is not so much a mental construct as a “felt” or “whole body-mind” response. A “mystic” is anyone whose life purpose is to enter the Heart, the space of Oneness, and live and act from this place of integration, serving the needs of self and other, individual and collective, the many and the One.

Wayne saw this non-dual movement converging in many areas at this time on the planet,

- the emergence of ecological awareness and sensitivity to the natural organic world;
- a growing sense of the rights of other species;
- a recognition of the interdependence of all domains of life and reality (and we would include here the arts, sciences, social sciences, education, politics, etc.);
- the ideal of abandoning a militant nationalism and recognizing our essential interdependence;
- an evolving sense of community among the religions through relationships between individual members as well as a growing receptivity to the inner treasures of the world’s religions;
- an openness to the cosmos, with the realization that the relationship between humans and the earth is part of the larger community of the universe (in this regard, Wayne did

not discount the possibility of connection with and support from angelic beings, ascendant masters and even extra-terrestrials!).

He saw all these converging movements leading to a major historical paradigm shift, “We are at the dawn of a new consciousness, a radically fresh approach to our life as the human family in a fragile world” (MH, p.4).

Wayne named this fresh, never before seen era, “the Age of Interspirituality.” This new epoch could have been named for any of the previously mentioned changes, but for him “interspiritual” was the most encompassing and fundamental term.

As a “monk in the world,” he was quite sensitive to the dominance of materialism, consumerism and sensate pleasure in current value systems. He wanted to highlight Spirit, not materialism, Essence, not appearances. Using the physicist, David Bohm’s terms, he wanted to touch the “implicate” and not merely the “explicate” order, to affect true, lasting transformation at the root level.

He felt that through dialogue among religions, through sharing the treasures of the various mystical and religious traditions, the essential and spiritual ground of all values could be touched. He loved to quote Rabbi Gelberman from New York City, who said, “In exploring other traditions and in embracing them, remember, it isn’t a question of *instead of*- Buddhism instead of Christianity, or Christianity instead of Islam- but rather of *in addition to*, that is in addition to Buddhism, Christianity, in addition to Christianity, Islam. We don’t reject our tradition, but build on it (MH, p. 49).

Having more faith in individuals than in institutions, however, Wayne felt this dialogue could best occur through personal and individual sharing, particularly through the exchange of practices between followers of different faith traditions. The more Jews

and Muslims, Protestants and Catholics, Hindus and Buddhists could all pray, meditate and sing together in mutual worship and celebration, the more friendships would grow, alliances could solidify, and the Mystic Heart would expand. Although Wayne felt that interspiritual dialogue between different faith traditions and institutions was important, indeed, necessary, he had greater faith in the impact of one-on-one heart connection between individual seekers who through mutual sharing and respect would co-create an ever-growing collective understanding and valuing beyond separate mythologies to embrace the one path wisdom tradition. For Wayne, individuals rather than institutions, the heart rather than the head, engaged personal encounter rather than intellectual debates and discussions was the surest and most direct path.

This for him was the primary interspiritual dialogue, in the moment here and now, as if there were no history of this path or that.

Consistently, Wayne made a distinction between the “church” as religious, historical “institution,” and “Spirit,” the alive, authentic heart connections among individual seekers. He often equated the latter with “mysticism” and the “non-dual” path and the former with “religiosity” and the “dual.”

As a mystic, Wayne had to find the essential building block of all Reality, the all-pervasive source of the One in the many. Like many mystics before him, of multiple traditions, he came to identify this source as Consciousness.

Choosing Consciousness as the basic “stuff” of all Life foregrounds the “subjective” rather than the “objective, the “knower” rather than the “known.” This radical emphasis on mind over body, subject over object challenges the view of traditional science, although it totally resonates with the findings of quantum physics.

This is how Wayne explains it in his chapter unit, “Everything Depends on Consciousness,” “All that we experience – or know, think, imagine, remember, feel, and dream – we experience because we are first *aware*. For us, everything requires and depends on consciousness to be. The perception of an external world, the existence of others, even the fact of our own bodies, are presented to us through the agency of our consciousness” (MH, p.65).

Further on, he writes, “That which makes perception possible is the basis of reality. Reality, cosmos, life, and being all rest on mind. Consciousness makes perception and everything else happen. Every system of thought that exists – every theory, science, art, literature, culture, religion, spirituality, family life, our personal experience, all experience – requires consciousness. It is the most fundamental insight in human life, and nothing is beyond its truth” (MH, p.66).

For him it is this underlying dimension of Consciousness, grounded in subjective perception and awareness that will provide the non-dual basis for interspiritual dialogue among all the domains of life.

He demonstrates how the new science, quantum mechanics, with its “unified field” theory and “role of the perceiver,” confirms this radical perspective; “Subjectivity is intimately part of the theoretical and experimental phrases of quantum research. The researcher is part of the quantum phenomena observed or predicted by probability. The observer affects the results of what is observed, and intentionality appears to be at work in particles, waves, and atomic structures. They are perhaps as conscious as we are, and make decisions as we do, but in and through their mode and degree of thought. It is more and more evident that consciousness is at work even on every level of phenomenon”

(MH, p.74).

As with particles, waves, and atomic structures, so with spiritual seekers, paths, and religious traditions--it all begins and ends with Consciousness.

In Chapter 3 of his *Mystic Heart*, "The Mirror of the Heart: Consciousness as the Root Identity," Wayne specifically focuses on Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity as representatives of all faith traditions, identifying Consciousness as the common ground not only of these three religions of the Book, but by implication, all spiritual paths, indeed, all domains of life. How does he do so?

Beginning with Hinduism, he focuses on the four *mahavakyas*, the four great statements or utterances of the Vedas, perhaps the earliest of all extant recorded scriptures. The first mahavakya declares, "Brahman is Consciousness." The Absolute, the all-pervasive and encompassing Self or Totality, is Awareness, the great Light of Consciousness.

The second mahavakya says, "Atman is Brahman." The essence of the individual self, the Atman, the individual Witness, is identical with the aware Essence of Brahman--one and One merge. Wayne further points out that for Hindus the *guha* or cave of the Heart is where this meeting takes place.

The third mahavakya occurs as a conversation between the sage, Uddalaka, and his son, Svetaketu, the archetypal Guru-disciple relationship. In teaching his son about the subtle essence of Atman, Uddalaka says: "The finest essence here, *this*, constitutes the self (Atman) of the whole world (Brahman), and that same essence are you, Svetaketu."

The Guru tells his ready disciple, "Thou art That," and the boy awakens to his true nature. Thus we, the individual self, despite our apparent limitations and

imperfections, are One with the Totality, One with Atman and Brahman. The purpose of the Sadguru is to foster this recognition.

The fourth mahavakya pushes this pure identification even further by having each seeker subjectively claim It, “I am Brahman.”

As Wayne so elegantly puts it: “This daring assertion falls in the context of the Brahman reflecting on itself, but the implication is that each one of us can arrive at this same self-knowledge around our ultimate identity in God and as God- as Brahman” (MH, p.54).

In all likelihood, this is Wayne’s own experience and Self-assertion. He lived continuously in the awareness that he was One with the supreme Knower, with all-pervasive Light.

How does he see this same Great Light as the root of Buddhism? Like many others, he returns to the inner experience of Siddhartha Gautama Sakyamuni, the Buddha, who shared with many his experience of “nirvana,” of awakening. The essence of Gautama’s Enlightenment was his recognizing his core and ground to be this Light, “the revelation of our ultimate nature as this vast awareness” (MH, p.58). Becoming fully “awake,” fully “sentient” in the Buddhist sense is to recognize our essence in and as Consciousness. And what do the Buddhists do with matter, substance, apparently solid and individual forms? Wayne underscores Buddhist “shunyata,” the “impermanence” of all passing phenomena, as proof of their insubstantiality, of their “emptiness.”

Just as thoughts and feelings are ephemeral, passing, and hence, unreal, so too are apparently solid objects--the fleeting “names” and “forms” of things, since they too transmute, dissolve, and eventually disappear.

Buddhist “shunya” or emptiness, however, is not total nothingness nor complete absence; beneath this emptiness of individual and impermanent forms lies a deeper inter-connectedness of Being, of “co-dependent arising” as the Buddhists call it.

The transient world of passing forms and this deeper inter-connectedness of Being together form what the Buddhists call “immanent emptiness.” What is it which experiences and recognizes this “immanent emptiness?”

It is again Consciousness, the Light of Awareness, which the Buddhists call “transcendent emptiness,” “cognizing emptiness,” the “emptiness” which is “fullness,” which does not pass away.

As Wayne expresses it, “Ultimate, or transcendent emptiness is equivalent to *parinirvana*, or the goal of existence as boundless consciousness beyond desire and personal identity” (MH, p.57).

In this way, Wayne identifies the mutual ground of both Buddhism and Hinduism as pure and universal Consciousness.

How does he do the same for Christianity?

He begins with Plato and Aristotle whom he says share the same core dualism of mind/soul as separate from body. For Plato, this dualism is antagonistic; the soul is a “prisoner” of the body. For Aristotle, the relationship is more co-operative. The soul is both the “animating” and the “intelligent” substance or force. First it provides movement and mobility to “primary” matter; it “enlivens” it. It also provides a cognizing or intelligent aspect, once again, awareness or Consciousness.

For Aristotle, this is the higher function of the soul, “active reason.” It is “active” reason or “mind” which separates from the body and has an independent and perpetual

existence: “When mind (soul as active reason) is set free from its present conditions, it appears as just what it is and nothing more; this alone is immortal and eternal...” (MH, p.63).

Once again, this time within the context of western philosophy, mind or consciousness has been recognized as the essential or enduring aspect of Reality.

Wayne, however, identifies Thomas Aquinas, the synthesizer of Neo-Platonic and Aristotelian insights and Christianity, as the first to bring mind or Consciousness into western theology.

For Aquinas, the highest function of the soul or mind is to know God. We do this through our “intellectual substance,” “And this will be most clearly fulfilled in that vision, when the intellect, by gazing on the First Truth, will know all that it naturally desires to know....” (MH, p.63).

In this way, Wayne identifies “intellect,” “mind,” as the enduring essence in both western philosophy and, in Christianity, as the faculty that allows man to know and be in relationship with the eternal Godhead. Thus Consciousness becomes the common ground uniting the three religions of the Book.

With Consciousness identified as the mystical or non-dual glue, there still exist certain historical, doctrinal and institutional differences among the three.

How might these sources of potential disagreement and conflict be resolved through interspiritual receptivity and dialogue?

Wayne wrote in *The Mystic Heart* that through thoughtful and sensitive discussion along with shared practices the strengths of each tradition could first be recognized and then synthesized into a greater whole.

Again, it is Hinduism in addition to Buddhism in addition to Christianity. At the most general or meta level, what can each of these three paths learn from and offer to one another, both historically and in the now?

Wayne begins by pointing out the dependency of Buddhism on its Hindu roots in India for both context and practices. Buddhism, however, with its absence of a Godhood and of an individual, permanent self could and did offer a critique of institutional Hinduism's hierarchical and separatist caste system. If there was no difference between God and man, simply realized or non-realized Buddha nature, and all individual selves were temporary and thus unreal, how could one person or class of people be deemed superior to another and, therefore, closer to God, who did not even exist? And, of course, it was the Brahman priests, the highest caste--who appropriated the name of the deity for themselves--that supported and maintained this system.

Thus, for Wayne, Buddhism had political and social roots as well as metaphysical ones. In this way, Buddhism could add to and expand Hinduism's traditional perspective and values.

What could Christianity add to historical Hinduism and Buddhism?

Wayne believed that Christianity contributed its gospel of love, of social equality and compassionate service. He directly states that it was Christianity that introduced love into *hinayana* Buddhism's more ascetic and other worldly thrust. Though Buddhism challenged Hinduism's class system, at the same time, with its *samsara* and *nirvana* emphasis, it also focused on escaping the world.

Wayne quotes the anonymous writer of the *Meditations on the Tarot: a Journey into Christian Hermeticism*, "When the Gospel was preached by the light of day in the

countries around the Mediterranean, the nocturnal rays of the Gospel effected a profound transformation of Buddhism. There, the ideal of individual liberation by entering the state of nirvana gave way to the ideal of renouncing nirvana for the work of mercy towards suffering humanity. The ideal of Mahayana, the great chariot, then had its resplendent ascent to the heaven of Asia's moral values" (MH, p.6-7).

He saw that the bodhisattva ideal of a selfless return to the earth plane until all sentient beings are freed was stimulated by the Christian message of love and compassionate service. This was Christianity's gift to Buddhism, and, by implication, to Hinduism as well.

This is but one example of Wayne's vision of how receptive and authentic dialogue among the different faith traditions could not only avoid partisan conflict and struggle but also contribute to a more expanded and fulfilling vision of interspiritual Oneness and solidarity.

Although we see Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity in their more mystical and non-dual expressions (for example, the *shaivite* traditions in Hinduism, the *mahayana* approach to Buddhism, and the way of the *mystic* in Christianity), as having a common ground, a core Oneness in Consciousness, we would here like to look more historically at the doctrinal and institutional differences Wayne noted.

We hope to identify more abstract or "meta" sources of differentiation and, perhaps, of ultimate synthesis. We see these more meta-categories as Hinduism's "transcendent" emphasis, Buddhism's essentially "immanent" focus, and Christianity's journey from "immanence" to "transcendence" through the "purification of the Heart."

The teleologies or final ends of these approaches are relevant here.

Hinduism seeks merger with Brahman, the transcendent Light of Consciousness, beyond the play of individual and worldly forms. Above all, the Hindu seeker wishes to get off the “wheel of becoming” and merge with the infinite Absolute. This transcendent emphasis also appears in Hinduism’s four *asramas* or stages of life: student, householder, forest dweller and renunciant. The final and highest stage is asceticism, when one has completed all worldly responsibilities and turns exclusively to Spirit for meaning and release. Only then is supreme and eternal “*samadhi*” or Liberation possible.

In contrast, *Mahayana* Buddhism, based as it is on Siddhartha Gautama’s experience of “awakening” in this world without God or deities, emphasizes “immanence.” Gautama’s teachings end with recognizing one’s own Buddha nature or mind in this world by turning inwards, not in the pursuit of otherworldly *nirvana*. Again, in *Hinayana* Buddhism, closer to its roots in classical Hinduism, the focus is more transcendent, to leave “*samsara*” behind through extreme asceticism. With *Mahayana*’s *bodhisattva*’s ideal of compassionate return, the emphasis is again on immanence, on life on this plane.

In Christianity’s embrace of both immanence and transcendence through the purification of the Heart, we find the two combined.

Wayne was fascinated by historian Arnold Toynbee’s suggestion that the, “meeting of Christianity and Buddhism would be the most significant event of our period of history” (MH, p.46).

Why was this meeting so significant to both of them?

Once again, Wayne saw Consciousness as key. He writes, “Christian mysticism only ends where Buddhist mysticism begins, and ends- its goal” (MH, p.48).

Wayne had earlier established Consciousness as the goal and essence of both traditions. Why does he here say that though Christianity ends in Consciousness, as in Aquinas' "active reason" beholding the Divine Light," it begins in a different place?

We believe Wayne was making a distinction here between "institutional" or "dualistic" Christianity and its "mystical" or "non-dual" branches.

Buddhism begins with one's inherent "Buddha nature or mind" and ends with a more expanded version of it; we are *all* Buddhas, all One with Being-Awareness.

Although Christianity also started out with a unitive creation myth with its pristine Paradise and harmony between God and man, institutional Christianity came to embrace the ontology of the Fall. Here it became dualistic, God versus man, man versus woman and the other creatures of the earth, ultimately, Good versus Evil.

Such dualism always implies a win/lose situation; man must surrender to God or God must surrender to man. Eventually one or the other must be negated. Thus Christianity in its ontology of the Fall begins in oppositional dualism, and then, through the intervention of Christ, the God-man, ends in Re-union, in Paradise regained.

Buddhism never postulates an ontological dualism even at the beginning; our essence has always been our Buddha nature and we merely come to recognize it along with its universal presence.

Institutional Christianity, however, even with its final embrace of the beatific vision, can never completely leave its dualistic roots. Even at the end, Man can at best behold the Godhead, never become fully One with It. Even the most evolved of the Christian mystics would hesitate before the boldness of Hinduism's fourth mahavaka: "I am Brahman; I am, indeed, God." They can look upon the Great Light of Godhead but

never absolutely and eternally enter It.

This same dualism appears in the “Church’s” perpetual struggle between Good and Evil, ultimately in the eternal separation of Heaven and Hell. It is, perhaps, Buddhism’s essential non-dualism, without God and empty of individual forms, which is its potential gift to an “interspiritual” Christianity.

What, reciprocally might Christianity offer Buddhism?

We believe Wayne points to it when he discusses Aquinas’ synthesis of neo-Platonic philosophy and Christian theology. He acknowledges the role of mind or consciousness in the final approach to God, “And this will be most clearly fulfilled in that vision, when the intellect, by gazing on the First Truth, will know all that it naturally desires to know....” (MH, p.63).

For Aquinas, however, the Heart as well as the mind enters this experience, “Contemplation of God in total enjoyment in love, the maturity of a selfless intimacy with the divine in which the person transcends selfishness. It is love. The intellect and heart are united in knowing the absolute directly” (MH, p.63).

Wayne underscores this combination by mentioning it again in his description of the mystic and philosopher, Spinoza, “The philosopher Spinoza was suggesting this experience when he spoke of the intellectual love of God. The highest kind of knowing unites love and knowledge: It is more than love, because vivified by the intellect, and more than reason, because expanded by love” (MH, p.63).

How has the “mind” of God become the “intellectual *love*” of God? How has Consciousness come to have a Heart? Perhaps, this is Christianity’s contribution to both hierarchical Buddhism and world-renouncing Hinduism?

How does love come to be the central message of the Gospels?

We believe it is the very dualism of the Fall that engenders it. For God to be reconciled to fallen man, unconditional love and forgiveness are required. This is already apparent in the parable of the prodigal son, who comes to realize there is no real separation from the Father, who has always been present and available. Still the son must first believe, ask for and accept this boundless, conditionless Love. It is the temporary separation that brings into full consciousness the need and centrality of Love. We also see this in Christ's cry of abandonment on the cross, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?"

Since in Hinduism, Brahman is already the Essence of all individual selves and, in Buddhism, "Buddha nature" is man's intrinsic state, no such core separation and consequent need for love are emphasized.

Sinful, fallen man's distance from perfect, unchanging God, however, demands such pure and self-transcending love. Christianity's dyadic symbolism of the parent/child bond also supports this. The parent/child tie is the most fundamental of all love bonds, and where that seems absent, great longing and urgency is generated.

Metaphorically, to re-connect with Hinduism's universal Self or re-awaken to Buddhism's universal Light is less personal and pressing than Christianity's intimate familial re-union. And again, since in Christianity the separation is a matter of relationship and heart longing, not simply of right understanding, Love becomes the bridge and the way.

Christianity's personification of a dualistic God-man relationship along with the myth of the fall then may account for its special gift to Buddhism and to Hinduism, the

articulation of the need for and centrality of Love as the catalyst to redemption and re-union. For Toynbee, this may be what Christianity has to offer Buddhism.

Once we have identified transcendence, immanence and Love's journey between, as the core elements of interspiritual wholeness, might there not be a deeper way to combine and even synthesize the three?

Wayne points the way in his discussion of the Christian-Hindu cross-over, Abhishikatananda, who recognized the resonances between Christianity's Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and Hinduism's Great Self, "Saccidananda," Being, Awareness and Bliss absolute. He writes: "The experience of Saccidananda carries the soul beyond all merely intellectual knowledge to her very center (the guha, cave of the Heart), to the source of her being. Only there is she able to hear the Word which reveals within the undivided unity and advaita of Saccidananda, the mystery of the three divine persons. In Sat, the Father, the absolute Beginning and Source of Being; in Cit, the Son, the divine Word, the Father's Self-knowledge; in Ananda, the Spirit of Love, fullness and Bliss without end" (MH, p.34).

The three common elements are, 1) Being as ground and source, 2) Awareness through differentiation and self-consciousness 3) Bliss through the fullness of Love.

These same three appear again in Mahayana Buddhism as 1) Being, collective and individual in "immanent" emptiness 2) Awareness as "transcendent" emptiness 3) Bliss as the bodhisatva compassionate ideal of universal awakening and merger. Further, in all three instances, it is through the experience of Love, the Heart, that Being and Awareness become connected and as One.

In Christianity, Being and Awareness are united through the longing of the Son

for the Father, the Father for the Son- God for man, man for God. The Holy Spirit expresses and finally actualizes this longing. Spirit is the “daemon,” the “go-between” first desiring and finally uniting transcendence and immanence, immortal and mortal, man and God.

Similarly, in non-dual Hinduism, Brahman, the Universal and Absolute Self and Atman, the individual self, seek to recognize and celebrate their Oneness. Again, Love or desire serve as the catalyst and vehicle, *mumukshutva*, the longing for Liberation, in the *jnani* or Hindu contemplative paths and *bhakti* or devotion in the paths of the Heart.

Finally, in Mahayana Buddhism, the longing of “transcendent emptiness” to release and liberate all individual forms of “immanent emptiness” is realized through the compassionate service of the *bodhisatva* ideal.

The triune synthesis then of Christianity’s Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Hinduism’s Satchitananda, and Mahayana Buddhism’s transcendent and immanent emptiness through compassionate service happens in the integration of Being and Awareness within the Heart. In all three, individual Awareness longs for all-pervasive Being, and when realized through Love in the space of the Heart, universal, eternal and supreme Bliss arises.

Why is this experience so rare and unsustainable?

All three traditions agree, when the focus is on individual desire and gratification alone, there can be no real re-union nor perpetual fulfillment. In Christianity, selfish desire and action lead to sin and irrevocable separation. In Hinduism, the *ahamkara* or individual ego seeking self-gratification can never know the great Self and must, therefore, constantly return to taste yet more *maya* or illusion. In Buddhism, self-grasping

attachment to the material plane ignoring co-dependent arising, transcendent emptiness and collective awakening leads inevitably to separation, impermanence and suffering.

On the other hand, when individuality in all three traditions moves beyond itself and embraces the well Being of the whole, when the many and the One again reunite, then Christian beatitude, Hindu *ananda* and Buddhist Awakening become the norm and we have “world without end.” Once again we have returned to our new age joke, “make me one with everything,” and the critical dilemma of our times, how can we enjoy our individual hotdog and also share it with all others.

Again, for Wayne we do this by entering the Mystic Heart and knowing and experiencing our fundamental Oneness in Consciousness as the ground for co-creative action and manifestation.

How might we make this synthesis more understandable and tangible, more operational?

We return to the body/mind problem in yet another form.

How can matter and consciousness, substance and thought, the physical and spiritual needs of both the individual and the collective be joined and synthesized? How do we move beyond living and thinking in polarities and instead embrace an ontology of Oneness? How do we find a unified ground of meaning and purpose that lets us eat our cake and still have enough to share with others? How can we truly understand how matter and mind, body and Spirit, individual and collective co-exist as One and, further, how do we find tools and practices to assimilate and implement this benevolent and at the same time survival generated perspective?

Kashmir Shaivism, a highly sophisticated non-dual Hindu philosophy originating

in 12<sup>th</sup> century India , provides possible insights and methodologies. When we combine these with hypotheses of contemporary quantum mechanics, a viable explanation begins to emerge.

*Pratyabhijnahridayam*, one of Shaivism's core scriptures, says, "*Citi* herself, descending from the plane of pure Consciousness, becomes *citta*, the mind, by contracting in accordance with the object perceived" (Siva, 53).

Here we have an explanation of how pure, all-pervasive Consciousness, Wayne's core essence, becomes the mind, limited, individual awareness, by contracting through the perception of and participation in discrete objects. Pure Consciousness, all-pervasive Light, becomes individualized minds, Aristotle's active reason, by coming into relationship with differentiated matter.

In other words, when universal or Big Mind focuses on concrete objects rather than on the Great Light of Consciousness, it contracts and becomes small mind, our own limited awareness in a world of concrete names and forms.

In Buddhist terms, transcendent emptiness or awareness, when it begins to focus on the impermanent realm of separate objects, becomes itself differentiated and individuated, losing its transcendent dimension, its formless freedom.

Quantum mechanics with its metaphors of Light and space, energy and matter, waves and particles suggests a parallel process. The key is again Consciousness or Light condensing into greater densities, manifesting in different expressions or forms, yet remaining ever One. We have a spectrum model, a single essence differentiating into varieties of itself, like the different colors of a color wheel, rather than a system of duality and opposition.

Both quantum physics and Kashmir Shaivism connect this with vibrational frequencies. When Light moves so fast as to appear motionless and still, it approximates unchanging substance, unmoving potentiality. It becomes all-pervasive ground and potential source, God the sustaining Father, Sat or all-pervasive Being, transcendent emptiness in the three faith traditions.

In quantum mechanics, this unmoving ground may be the limitless space into and from which the rapidly moving photons enter and disappear.

In the three religions, when Light begins to move a bit more slowly, it differentiates itself from non-dual Essence and now distinct and apart in Oneness can know itself for the first time. Hindu Sat has condensed into Chit, pure Awareness, Christian Father separated into Son as pure Spirit/Word, and Buddhist transcendent emptiness coalesced into formless Inter-being now capable of knowing Itself.

In quantum theory, this may be the point at which photons start to emerge and vanish within the space field. When Light further slows and condenses, it coalesces into universal energy, Shakti, Chi or the Tao in the eastern religions, living Spirit in western Christianity and quantum energy in western science.

As it continues to condense and differentiate, it becomes first separate and individual thoughts, feelings and sensations and finally concrete objects, separate bodies, the immanent world of passing names and forms. This all parallels quantum mechanics condensing of moving particles into matter. We have a new paradigm of seeing mind and body, awareness and being, energy and matter, even waves and particles, as no longer different and mutually opposed but rather as one continuous spectrum of Light vibrating at different frequencies and densities.

By combining the insights of Kashmir Shaivism and quantum mechanics, we can see how Wayne's intuition of Consciousness as unified, ineffable ground simultaneously manifesting as matter, energy, individual thoughts/feelings, electrons, even sub-atomic particles becomes viable. We have a way of explaining how the One can also be the many.

We still have the concern of how to make all of this operational and practical.

After the success of *The Mystic Heart* a central focus for Wayne was answering the many questions he received about how this cogent vision could be actualized as part of the world transformation he also envisioned.

Addressing this in discussions after *The Mystic Heart*, Wayne stressed a view anchored in his mature appreciation of the simultaneity of immanent and transcendent, relative and absolute. Recognizing the breadth of social crises and challenges worldwide, he called for a potent new initiative by all the traditions aimed at maturing the individual *and* the collective simultaneously.

This call was a vigorous extension of the challenge that *The Mystic Heart* aimed at the world's religions and, specifically, their contemplative core. "We need to understand, to really grasp at an elemental level", he wrote, "that the definitive revolution is the spiritual awakening of humankind" (MH, p. 12).

If, as Wayne had stressed throughout *The Mystic Heart*, the pivotal transformative asset of the world's religions was the commonality of their mystical experience of Oneness ("unitive awareness", MH, p. 80f) and its inherent manifestation as transformative unconditional service to the world (MH, Chapter 7, "The Spirituality of Action"), a new synergy of these dimensions must be the urgent imperative for all the

world's traditions.

Attention to the contemplative core could no longer be merely anecdotal or acknowledged by the traditions as being limited to the possible experience of just a few. "This journey is what spirituality is really about" Wayne had written (MH, p. 18). "We are not meant to remain here.... We cannot depend on our culture either to guide and support us in our quest. We must do the hard work of clarification ourselves" (MH, p. 120).

This renewed attention to the Heart was the first of what Wayne called his "two-pronged" challenge. Regarding the contemplative core, his central term, "the mystic Heart" pointed the Way. To enter, live and act fully from the space of the One Great Heart is to reconcile the apparent opposites of Awareness and Being, knowing and feeling, self and other and to embrace and live the common ground of universal peace, love and joy. As individuals, we can experience this quite directly and immediately-- "becoming" merging into Being, immanence meeting transcendence, man becoming God as "felt Awareness," "conscious Presence," "differentiated Totality"-- the individual Heart expanded and merged into the Heart of Kosmos. This was one indispensable asset the world's religions could bring to the process of world transformation.

But, as second prong, Wayne recognized another emphasis required by the centuries of inertia caused by sectarian separation and discord.

Such attention to individual spiritual "work" must be enacted with simultaneous and equal emphasis on the traditions creating and proffering a new revolutionary narrative with paramount emphasis on shared core values and, most challenging, a common realization from the experience of the Heart that, in a world of shrinking space

and resources, the exclusive claims natural to the evolution of the religions must now be recognized as a possible pathology, one of several possible sources of mass conflict which could lead to our planetary extinction.

“This revolution will be the task of the Interspiritual Age”, he wrote, “The necessary shifts in consciousness require a new approach to spirituality that transcends past religious cultures of fragmentation and isolation” (MH, p. 12).

Of this balanced attention, Wayne had written in *The Mystic Heart*, “If transformation is only a matter of consciousness, then there is always the risk that the change many never touch the deeply hidden intentions of the heart. If the will is not involved in the radical change the spiritual process initiates, then the resultant “enlightenment” is only partial. Clearly, if the mystical process is to be complete, it must include a profound transformation in the will. Achieving the ultimate awareness of the way things are is simply not enough” (MH, p. 89).

Bro. Wayne knew that tremendous courage would be needed for the religions of the world to become part of the revolution to initiate an Interspiritual Age. As he wrote to his own constituency, the Roman Catholic Church, “It will take enormous vision and courage to walk this path in history. It brings to mind Christ’s words: “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains only a single grain, but if it dies it yields a rich harvest” (MH, p. 248).

Wayne was challenging the world’s religions to take this revolutionary path; a path he felt would make their confounding diversity an asset, not a liability, to the world’s future. This was the center of Wayne’s attention after the success of *The Mystic Heart* and as he began preparation for his contribution to the 2004 Parliament of the

World's Religions (a process which involved both of the present authors).

In preparing for the Parliament with his fledgling “interspiritual association” (which after his transition became InterSpiritual Dialogue in Action, [www.isdna.org](http://www.isdna.org)), Wayne brought to his last planning session (New York City, October 2003) report of his “Omega Vision” or “Omega Formula”.

He said he had received this simple formula in a recent spiritual experience and he “wondered” outloud, in his usual humility, “if it might serve for interspirituality the same purpose  $E=mc^2$  had served for science”.

We share it here for the first time:

$$\Omega > \sum^n E$$

It means “Always, Omega is greater than the sum of all experiences” ( $\Omega$ / Omega;  $>$ / greater than;  $\sum$ / sum of; E to the nth/ all experience).

For Wayne, this was the “view” of the mature soul, whether referring to an “Omega point” in individual spiritual knowledge or the cumulative knowledge of any or all traditions. It was also a fulcrum for mature humility, an acknowledgement of fundamental “unknowing” from which it would not be possible to posit an exclusive claim.

Wayne was not only serious about the two-pronged requirement for maturing world spirituality to help usher in a transformative Interspiritual Age, he was concerned that if the world religions could not assume this universal redeeming role, it might well pass to another historical vector, one he saw already growing from individual personal transformations to grassroots circles of transformation and broader associations, networks

and coalitions.

These, he wrote “could then join together in collaborative efforts to reverse the negatives habits that produced the ecological crisis, countless wars, and the many forms of injustice, oppression, and inequity” (MH, p. 249).

“The Interspiritual Age” he said, “will require institutions and structures to carry, express and support it” (MH, p. 248). From sharing spiritual practices of the Heart, to true interspiritual dialogue from the core essentials of religious experience, Wayne believed the “treasures of the world religions” could forge a common ground and actual impetus toward realization of his dream of a “new civilization” grounded in the “mystic Heart” (MH, pp. 4-5).

In conclusion we assert that the world-embracing, cosmocentric, vision of Bro. Wayne, elucidated in *The Mystic Heart* and thereafter in discussion with his many friends and colleagues, deserves substantial further elucidation and study.

Such enterprise has been overlooked somewhat since his 2004 transition, both because of the suddenness of his passing and also because much of the depth and detail of his vision is scattered across the many pages of his books, written in inspiring style, but not necessarily rigorously enumerated in structure.

It is not enough to simply remember Bro. Wayne as an inspiring figure. His succinct comprehension of the world’s spiritual traditions in the context of unitive awareness, coupled with his balanced call for the socially transforming energy that inherently emanates from this realization, is a distinct contribution to current holistic and integral approaches to world transformation.

Fully aware of what was required of these approaches, Wayne said “This new

paradigm must be able to accommodate all human experience, knowledge and capacities” (MH, p. 65) “built both on intellectual integration and direct experience” (MH, p. 35) and “make available to everyone all the forms the spiritual journey assumes” (MH, p 26).

We will comment more on this in the future.

Shortly before Wayne’s transition, Gorakh Hayashi asked him whether he had any final teachings he wanted to share with the world.

Wayne paused, reflected, and then wrote: “The Divine is infinite sensitivity.”

Once again, Wayne grounded even absolute Consciousness in the tender knowing of the Heart.

For Wayne, the key to all of this is uniting body and mind, matter and Spirit, feeling and intellect through entering and living the way of the mystic Heart. In the penultimate words of his seminal text, Wayne alludes again to this core teaching, “Spirituality, finally, is awareness and sensitivity, and sensitivity is itself awareness-in-action. It is this quality that we most require in our time and in the ages to come, but it is a quality refined only in the mystic heart, in the steady cultivation of compassion and love that risks all for the sake of others. It is these resources that we desperately need as we build the civilization with a heart, a universal society capable of embracing all that is, putting it to service in the transformation of the world. May the mystics lead the way to this rebirth of the human community that will harmonize itself with the cosmos and finally make peace with all beings” (MH, p.249-250).

And lest we are daunted by this title of “mystic,” Wayne has earlier reassured us, “Every one is a mystic. We may or may not know it; we may not even like it. But whether we know it or not, whether we accept it or not, mystical experience is always

there, inviting us on a journey of ultimate discovery” (MH, p. 3).

May each of us become what we all already are.