



Ariadne's Thread

In *Taking Appearance Seriously* (p. 58.59) Henri Bortoft recounts a visit to an anthropological exhibit of masks, decorated shields and weapons in the Horniman museum. Henri became absorbed in the pattern of the layout of the exhibits:

'The decorated shields were arranged in a series so that the eye could move along from one to another whilst at the same time taking in the series as a whole. I was reminded of the way that Goethe laid out the leaves of a plant in a series, and I realised that here also with these human artefacts there are two ways of seeing. In one way we can see that they are all based upon the same plan. [...] But there is another way of seeing, which also begins with the finished products [in this case the shields], but moves in the opposite direction by placing ourselves within the coming-into-being of diversity. When we do this we see the unity concretely as a *productive* unity. The unity can no longer be abstract, but includes difference within it as a natural consequence of the productivity. Difference stands out now, instead of receding into the background, but the difference is now the *dynamic* unity of the productivity. In other words, the unity is generated in the very act which differences, instead of being abstracted by ignoring the differences.'

In the 1960's, Basil Hiley and Henri Bortoft worked together on the question of wholeness in quantum physics. From this initial challenge Henri went into philosophy and Goethean Science and Basil into mathematics and physics. In this issue Basil Hiley brings full circle the work of Henri. Basil outlines for us the path by which the dynamic process of distinction revolutionises all levels of physics. This is to illuminate the very origin of Holistic Science, the attempt to make the dynamic arising of wholeness the central premise of physics.

Another key contributor in this issue is Patrick, Henri's life-long friend since schooldays. Patrick trod quite a different path through travelling, painting and expressing life in its essence. There has been no contradiction between the two friends. Henri's philosophy was to broaden out from the kernel of living truth into a communicable understanding; Patrick's to work inward from the wealth of experiences to portray its living centre.

Jacki, Henri's wife, co-edited this issue with us. Jacki's article joins together school-friend, physics researcher, teacher, guide, philosopher and writer. Jacki describes this as "a short piece about what I see as the different phases of our life together, for on reflection it feels like several 'different lives.'"

The range of friends and colleagues exploring their work through the influence of Henri meet in the vision Henri inspired in many people. Only in the way Henri lived did all these episodes, periods of time, areas of academic exploration come together to uniquely deliver Henri Bortoft and his work as testimony to a dynamic wholeness.

The import of Henri's work is to give us a dynamic sense of where we are in the world. We are no longer 'standing in front of the products' being faced with a situation over which everything has already been said. We find ourselves alive in a pattern of living that is showing itself to us with our creative input, desired, called for, included.

This issue is a testimony to one who lives on in many.

Philip Franses