The
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Sydney Unitarian News

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150 YEARS OF HUMANITARIAN SERVICE

The International Committee of the Red Cross has a lengthy and unique history of protecting human life and alleviating suffering since its foundation in Geneva on 17 February 1863. Starting with a meeting of just five men, what is now called the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has national bodies in 188 countries and its operatives have served in countless war zones, disaster areas and public health campaigns.

Our story begins in 1859, when a Swiss businessman named Jean-Henri Dunant went to Italy to meet with the French Emperor, Napoléon III. He arrived at the town of Solferino just after a major battle against Austria (which controlled northern Italy at the time) had left 40,000 casualties in its wake. Dunant was shocked by the paucity of medical facilities on both sides, so he forgot about his business and organised a corps of locals to care for the many wounded. Back in Geneva, he wrote a book about his experiences, paid for its publication and sent copies to political and military leaders all over Europe. In his book, he called for the formation of voluntary relief organisations to care for wounded soldiers, as well as international treaties to guarantee the safety of such neutral medical workers and their field hospitals.

In 1863, Gustave Moynier, a lawyer and president of the Geneva Society for Public Welfare, received a copy of Dunant's book and presented it for discussion by his society. It was decided to form a committee to investigate Dunant's recommendation and eventually call an international conference to discuss their implementation. In addition to Dunant and Moynier, the 'Committee of Five' consisted of physician and former field surgeon Louis Appia, Théodore Maunoir of the Geneva Hygiene and Health Commission, and General Gillaume-Henri Dufour of the Swiss Army. Its first meeting is regarded as the foundation date of the ICRC, though the group took as its name the 'International Committeee for Relief to the Wounded'.

That same year, the Committee organised a conference on 26–29 October in Geneva that was attended by delegates from 12 European states, six representatives of non-government organisations and seven observers from some other countries. It was agreed to found national relief societies for wounded soldiers, whose operatives on the battlefield would treat men from either side and wear a white armlet bearing a red cross as a protection symbol. (That is thought to be a reversal of the Swiss flag rather than having any religious significance.) Noting the need for an international treaty to put these provisions into force, the Swiss government invited all European countries, the US, Mexico and Brazil to an official diplomatic conference in 1864. Of the 16 countries that attended, 12 signed what became the first Geneva Convention.

Immediately after the conference, national bodies were founded in seven European nations and the first Red Cross volunteers served during the Second Schleswig War between Denmark and Prussia in 1864. More countries followed and, in 1876, the Committee took its present name. In 1901, the first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded jointly to Jean-Henri Dunant and Frédéric Passy, a French economist who had campaigned for resolving international conflicts through arbitration. By 1914, there were Red Cross Societies in 45 countries in Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa.

World War I placed unprecedented demands on the resources of the ICRC and its national members, drawing nurses from all over the world to the European battlegrounds. As early as October 1914, they established the International Prisoners-of-War Agency and 1200 mostly volunteer staff were recruited by the end of that year. The Agency distributed letters, parcels and cash to millions of POWs, located missing persons and organised the exchange of 200,000 soldiers from the opposing sides. ICRC delegates inspected POW camps and monitored the warring parties' compliance with the Geneva Conventions, reporting violations to the respective governments. The ICRC even claimed a mandate under the 1907 Hague Conventions to assist war-affected civilians in occupied territories. For all of these works, the ICRC was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1917. After the war ended, the Agency organised the return of some 420,000 POWs to their home countries.

In 1919, representatives of the national Red Cross societies of Britain, France, Italy, Japan and the US met in Paris and founded the League of Red Cross Societies. This was prompted by Henry Davidson, president of the American Red Cross, which had a long history of relief work in natural disasters. The League's goal was to do the same elsewhere in the world, which it did during a famine and typhoid epidemic in Poland, in the Russian Civil War (the Geneva Conventions did not extend to internal conflicts) and when Japan suffered a catastrophic earthquake in 1923. The ICRC was not happy with the exclusive and independent nature of the League, but it proved its worth by raising phenomenal amounts of money for missions in 34 countries in its first five years. In 1928, the two groups adopted a common statute defining their respective roles and the League moved its headquarters from Paris to Geneva in 1939.

In the lead-up to World War II, the Red Cross had given assistance during Italy's war against Abyssinia and the Spanish Civil War. During the actual war, it carried out the same activities as it had in WWI, only on a much larger scale. ICRC inspectors conducted 12,750 visits to POW camps in 41 countries and the Central Information Agency had a staff of 3000 that maintained 45 million records. As in Abyssinia, the Axis powers refused to cooperate and their national societies were oblivious to the Geneva Conventions. Once the reality of the concentration camps became known, the ICRC met even more obstruction, though it did succeed in identifying 105,000 detainees in those camps and delivering 1.1 million parcels. And, once again, massive relief work was done during the post-war reconstruction.

(continued on p. 12)

SERVICE DIARY

Meetings every Sunday from 10.30 – 11.30 a.m.
(followed by coffee, tea and food)

Date	Presenter	Topic
3rd February	Peter Crawford	Fundamentalism in the Modern World
10th February	Sharon Snir	What has Love got to do with Everyday Miracles?*
17th February	Peter Crawford	Armageddon
24th February	Curt Fraser	Waste to Energy: Realistic Energy Alternatives*
3rd March	Peter Crawford	Evangelical Christianity
10th March	Michael Spicer	A History of Hell*
17th March	Peter Crawford	Buddhism in Thailand
24th March	Mike McPhee	Freedom Road: The Civil Rights Movement in the US*
31st March	Peter Crawford	Michiavelli and *The Prince*

* These will include PowerPoint presentations.

Important Notice: We also have two piano recitals coming up: Stephen Whale (see pp. 8/9) at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, 15 February and Joshua Creek at the same time on Saturday, 02 March.

Chalice Lighting

Hol hit ott szeretet,
Hol szeretet ott béke,
Hol béke ott áldás,
Hol áldás ott Isten
Hol Isten ott szükség nincsen.

Where there is Faith there is Love.
Where there is Love there is Peace.
Where there is Peace there is Blessing
Where there is Blessing there is God
Where there is God there is no Need.

Submitted by the Unitarian Church in Hungary; the Hungarian words are from a traditional Home Blessing but it is not known who did the English translation.

[This is the Chalice Lightings from the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists for the month of January. It was circulated quite late in the month and the CL for February has not arrived yet.]

Confusing as it may seem, the Unitarian Church in Hungary is the local branch of the newly reintegrated Hungarian Unitarian Church, which also includes the Transylvanian church. Its website (www.unitarius.hu) can be translated to English if you click on the UK flag in the masthead. In the 16th Century, there were over 100 Unitarian congregations in Hungary but the denomination fell victim to the Reformation. Unitarians came back from Transylvania after the revolution of 1848 and the church in Budapest was re-established in 1876. The congregations in Hungary remained part of the Transylvanian church even after that province was ceded to Romania in 1918 but, in 1948, the Hungarian government insisted that they form a national body.

Now there are twelve churches (three in Budapest) and 21 fellowships in the country, led by the (elected) Bishop, Rev. Csaba Rasmany. The UCH has its headquarters in the building of the First Unitarian Church of Budapest and produces a bimonthly magazine entitled *Unitárius Élet* (Unitarian Life).

TRANSYLVANIA ON THE CHEAP!

The travel service of the UU Partner Church Council has organised a unique pilgrimage to Transylvania over 11–23 May. Unlike many such tours in previous years, this will have a 'budget' price of $US 1140 – a 40% reduction made possible by accommodation in dormitories and guesthouses, cheaper meals and eliminating travel from and to Budapest.

The tour begins and ends in the Transylvanian capital of Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca), where the headquarters of the Unitarian Church and its seminary are located. Participants will visit the most significant of the Unitarian holy places from the days of King John Sigismund II and Ferenc (Francis) Dávid: Torda, site of the famous Diet of 1568 where King John proclaimed the Edict of Tolerance; Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), where he and his wife are entombed in the 1000-year-old cathedral; and Déva, where Dávid died in prison.

Other sites of interest are the frescoed Unitarian churches of Székelyderzs (Dârjiu) and Karácsonyfalva (Oclund), the spectacular 13th Century castle at Vajdahunyad (Hunedoara), the medieval walled city of Segesvár (Sighisoara) and the Saxon fortress church at Berethalom (Biertan). (Székelyderzs, Segesvár and Berethalom are all UNESCO World Heritage sites.) Worthy of special mention is the Alabaster Village of Mészkő (Mihai Viteazu), where the minister, poet, author and social reformer, Ferenc Balázs (1901–1937), rebuilt the jewel-box church and painted it himself. (The Romanian names are provided because they are more likely to be found on maps.)

Those with partner congregations will spend a long weekend with them, while others will have a range of villages to choose from. It will also be possible to add a trip to Budapest to either end of the pilgrimage. For more information and application forms, go to: www.uupcc.org/trips.html.

TOLERANCE VS. TOLERATION

By Mike McPhee

Many years ago, I reviewed a book entitled *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*, co-authored by Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore jr. and Herbert Marcuse. The three were colleagues at Harvard, though Wolff and Marcuse were philosophers while Moore was a sociologist. I didn't notice at the time but I now find that the book was published by the UUA's Beacon Press in 1965.

Wolff's portion was entitled 'Beyond Tolerance' and his specialty being the philosophy of Immanuel Kant (author of *A Critique of Pure Reason*) must have inspired the title of the book. His approach is certainly analytical and he opens with a dissertation on the Platonic virtue of various political systems; i.e., "the state or condition which enables it to perform its proper function". He wrote:

> …the virtue of a monarchy is loyalty, for the state is gathered into the person of the king and the society is bound together by each subject's duty to him. The virtue of a military dictatorship is honor; that of a bureaucratic dictatorship is efficiency. The virtue of a traditional liberal democracy is equality, while that of a socialist democracy is fraternity. … Finally, the virtue of a modern pluralist democracy…is TOLERANCE.

Wolff makes the pivotal distinction between toleration (being good enough to put up with people of different religions, cultures, views, practices, etc.) and genuine tolerance, which is the recognition of the desirability, if not the necessity, of having substantial groups of people with divergent interests under the above (and other) categories. Homogenous societies, such as Japan, tend to be static and inflexible.

Now, 'traditional liberal democracy' exalted the role of the individual as citizen and voter, but this was never the case in practice once electorates and political parties became fundamental to the 'democratic process'. The individual was consigned to representation by any and all regional, religious, ethnic, occupational, etc., groups they might belong to – this despite the obvious fact that most people fall into any number of such categories to which they may or may not feel equally committed, and their representative pressure groups often have contradictory policies.

This, in turn, produced the absurd notion that the 'common will' could be identified as the net result of these countervailing forces. There were two interpretations of this principle: the 'referee' theory, whereunder the government ensures that no single group is unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged when conflicts of interest arise; and the 'vector-sum' theory that the government simply *does* express the common will as a net result of lobbying from all these pressure groups.

Both theories have the fatal flaw of assuming that the government has no in-built interests of its own and that the pressure groups have effectiveness proportionate to their numerical followings, whereas even pluralism can become inflexible. Over time, only the established pressure groups are recognised in government circles, despite the fact that some of them have waned in numbers and relevance while emergent movements, reflecting new constituencies created by changing conditions, have to fight their way into the system.

> We must give up the image of society as a battleground of competing groups and formulate an ideal of society more exalted than the mere acceptance of opposed interests and diverse customs. There is a need for a new philosophy of community, beyond pluralism, beyond tolerance.

Moore's contribution was titled 'Tolerance and the Scientific Outlook' and he was described in the Forward as a sociologist "trained in a tradition that regards all philosophy as absurd and dangerous". He opens with the thesis that "the secular and scientific outlook is adequate for both understanding and evaluating human affairs" and continues:

> Properly used and understood, the secular and scientific outlook leads neither to flaccid acceptance of the world as it is, watery tolerance of every doctrine because there might be some contribution somewhere, nor to the fanatical single-mindedness of the doctrinaire…. [It] can nerve men for mortal combat when the situation calls for it and prevent them from fighting or being foolish when the situation calls for rational discussion…. It can tell us when to be tolerant and when tolerance becomes moral cowardice and evasion.

Moore bases his entire political analysis on the principle that all unnecessary suffering should be eliminated. In any given society, one must determine the causes of suffering and demonstrate "who gains and who suffers, and what concrete interests are at work to preserve the prevailing system". Finally, it must be shown that "good grounds exist for holding that the society could be arranged in such a way as to produce less suffering" before revolutionary change should be advocated.

Moore says that rational debate is only possible "in some version of a free society", which has the crucial aspect of "the absence of an overriding national purpose". He is not convinced, however, that Western societies tolerate a sufficiently diverse range of political tendencies for such rational debate to occur. The preconditions for possible improvements are met, he believes, by the existence of: (a) "a substantial group of people with a material interest in change; (b) sufficient "economic margin" and/or disunity on the part of the rich and powerful to render them unwilling or unable to oppose such change; and (c) workable political institutions such as a parliament that can implement change within the system. He concludes:

> For a clear understanding of how any society works…enables men to see not only the seamy side, to penetrate behind the glorifications and equivocations, but also to realize possibilities of improvement. The notion that a scientific attitude toward human society necessarily involves a conservative tolerance of the existing order…seems to me totally absurd. These things do happen…but [they] constitute a failure to live up to the requirements and implications of the scientific outlook.

Marcuse was a Marxist and his section, 'Repressive Tolerance', opens with the thesis that "the realization of the objective of tolerance would call for intolerance of prevailing policies, attitudes, and opinions, and the extension of tolerance to policies, attitudes, and opinions which are outlawed or suppressed today." This is the meaning of his title and he holds with Moore that tolerance is and should be "a partisan goal, a subversive liberating notion and practice" rather than the acceptance of "policies, conditions and modes of behaviour that should not be tolerated…."

Like his colleagues, Marcuse is not happy with what passes for democracy in Western society, which he says has been subverted by vested interests and affluence. "Tolerance is turned from an active to a passive state. … It is the people who tolerate the government, which in turn tolerates opposition within the framework determined by constitutional authorities." This last is fatal because "within a repressive society, even progressive movements threaten to turn into their opposites to the degree that they accept the rules of the game." He continues:

> Generally, the function and value of tolerance depends on the equality prevalent in the society [which should be] practiced by the rulers as well as the ruled…. [Otherwise] the conditions of tolerance are 'loaded': they are determined and defined by institutionalized inequality (which is certainly compatible with constitutional equality); i.e., by the class nature of society.

Marcuse believes that rising affluence has obscured genuine conflicts of interest (e.g., between labour and management) and generated antipathy for minorities. He even refers to the Western system as "totalitarian democracy", while conceding that it is vastly preferable to actual dictatorships. However, he denies that these are the only alternatives and promotes the "subversive" task of making Western democracy live up to its proclaimed objectives:

> Surely, no government can be expected to foster its own subversion, but in a democracy such a right is vested in [the majority of] the people. This means that the ways should not be blocked in which a subversive majority could develop and, if they are blocked by organized repression and indoctrination, their reopening may require apparently undemocratic means.

Marcuse holds that regressive forces already have an unfair and entrenched influence over every aspect of society through their control of government, the media and the education system. He says: "The Left has no equal voice…not because a conspiracy excludes it, but because…it does not have the required purchasing power." And he concludes: "The tolerance which is the life element…of a free society will never be the gift of the powers that be; it can…only be won in the sustained effort of radical minorities willing to…work for a free and sovereign majority."

[Please see 'Footnotes' on p. 9 for some explanatory notes.]

TO MY VALENTINE

More than a catbird hates a cat,
Or a criminal hates a clue,
Or the Axis hates the United States,
That's how much I love you.

I love you more than a duck can swim,
And more than a grapefruit squirts,
I love you more than a gin rummy is a bore,
And more than a toothache hurts.

As a shipwrecked sailor hates the sea,
Or a juggler hates a shove,
As a hostess detests unexpected guests,
That's how much you I love.

I love you more than a wasp can sting,
And more than the subway jerks,
I love you as much as a beggar needs a crutch,
And more than a hangnail irks.

I swear to you by the stars above,
And below, if such there be,
As the High Court loathes perjurious oathes,*
That's how you're loved by me.

Ogden Nash

- Nash liked making up words or misspelling them create rhymes.

[Frederic Ogden Nash (1902–71) was an American writer of children's books and light verse who produced 14 volumes of the latter between 1931 and his death. He worked in advertising and as an editor for the Doubleday publishing house before his writing became known, after which he went on lecture tours of US and British colleges and universities. He also wrote the lyrics for two Broadway musicals and made guest appearances on comedy and radio shows.]

WITTY WORDS OF ROBERT FROST

It's a funny thing that when a man hasn't anything on earth to worry about, he goes off and gets married.

A mother takes twenty years to make a man of her boy, and another woman makes a fool of him in twenty minutes.

A diplomat is a man who always remembers a woman's birthday but never remembers her age.

Poetry is what gets lost in translation.

Half the world is composed of people who have something to say and can't, and the other half who have nothing to say and keep on saying it.

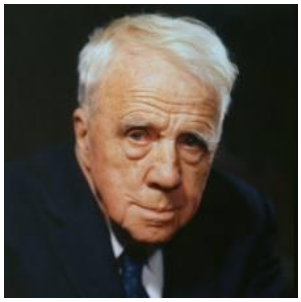
A bank is a place where they lend you an umbrella in fair weather and ask for it back when it begins to rain.

A jury consists of twelve persons chosen to decide who has the better lawyer.

Let him that is without stone among you cast the first thing he can lay his hands on.

CHOOSE SOMETHING LIKE A STAR

O Star (the fairest one in sight),
We grant your loftiness the right
To some obscurity of cloud –
It will not do to say of night,
Since dark is what brings out your light.
Some mystery becomes the proud.
But to be wholly taciturn
In your reserve is not allowed.



Say something to us we can learn
By heart and when alone repeat.
Say something! And it says "I burn."
But say with what degree of heat.
Talk Fahrenheit, talk Centigrade.
Use language we can comprehend.
Tell us what elements you blend.

It gives us strangely little aid,
But does tell something in the end.
And steadfast as Keats' Eremite,*
Not even stooping from its sphere,
It asks little of us here.
It asks of us a certain height,
So when at times the mob is swayed
To carry praise of blame too far,
We may choose something like a star
To stay our minds on and be staid.

Robert Frost

* Interestingly, John Keats wrote a poem entitled 'Bright Star, Would I Were Stedfast', in which he refers to an eremite (religious hermit) staying in his cave just as a star maintains its position in the Celestial Sphere.

This favourite poem of mine is just to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Robert Lee Frost (1874–1963) on 29 January. Various websites say it was written in 1916, 1943 or 1949 but they do not say which of Frost's many books of verse it appeared in. While the poem was doubtless reprinted in later collections, it appears to be regarded as one of his less significant works.

Frost was born in San Francisco and grew up in Lawrence, Massachusetts, where he completed high school and worked at different jobs, including teaching. However, he had always wanted to be a poet and, in 1894, he sold his first poem to *The Independent*, a New York weekly newspaper. He married Eleanor White in 1895 and attended Harvard University in 1897–99, though he left without graduating due to illness.

Frost then inherited a farm in Derry, New Hampshire, which he worked for nine years while writing some of his most famous poems in his spare time. Unfortunately, the farm did not produce sufficient income and he returned to teaching at a senior academy and a teachers college during 1906–11, after which he took his family to England in 1912. There, he published his first two books of poetry and met many contemporary British poets. The Frosts returned to the US in 1915 and he bought a new farm in Franconia, New Hampshire – but now he had a serious career in writing and lecturing at college level, mostly at Amherst College in Massachusetts but he also spent six years at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Between 1923 and 1964, Frost produced 23 books of verse and four plays. He won four Pulitzer Prizes and received over 40 honorary degrees, most notably from Harvard, Princeton, Oxford and Cambridge. In 1961, he read his well-known 'The Gift Outright' at the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy. His farms in Derry and Franconia (bottom right) are now museums and historic sites, as are the houses he owned in Ann Arbor and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Three modes of life: Establishing a relationship with 'The Good', Acceptance and Transformation

By Stephen Whale

Many of us want to live better, more fulfilled lives: to have stronger relationships, be healthier, improve our mental capabilities, yet be able to let go and enjoy life. These same people often have a few, or many, good ideas about how to achieve these qualities. They often have some skills or many skills that they can utilise to make their lives more fulfilling. However, often these ideas and skills are not effectively used. This is because a life situation often demands a particular attitude or attitudes, which in turn requires a set of skills, whilst a different life situation demands a different attitude. We are predisposed to assume certain attitudes more than others – this is part of what defines our personality.

We are blessed by having a huge amount of wisdom from throughout the ages to draw upon and to have the examples of countless human beings to learn from. I've decided to make one extra contribution to the corpus of advice on 'how to live a more fulfilled life' by identifying three modes of living, elucidating their differences and suggesting that life situations are best met by emphasising a particular mode of living over the others (with varying degrees of emphasis). The modes of living are also divided into subcategories, making twelve sub-modes of living in total.

The contents of this article, however, will focus more on introducing and explaining the modes of living than suggesting how the modes could be applied to certain situations. That will be up to the reader to apply to their own life and to the lives of their fellow humans. It may also be the subject of a future article.

Of the three modes of living, the first is the most straightforward: to establish a relationship to *The Good*. This involves recognising what is good, actively searching for it and then hopefully experiencing it for oneself whilst sharing it with others, whether a friend, your family or a larger group. This could involve seeking good people and groups to form relationships with, seeking nutritious food and surroundings or good books and art. In this age it is easier to recognise Goodness in physical things than in the arts, where notions of Goodness are often overwhelmed by relativism.

The second mode, 'Acceptance' is, in some ways, the opposite of the first. Where recognising and accessing *The Good* implies a division of the world into Good and ordinary, or Good, neutral and bad, the second mode is about accepting things as they are and letting go of judgements and reactions to events and entities. Buddhist philosophy, particularly Zen Buddhism and the Western appropriation of Buddhist ideas, emphasises this mode of thinking and behaving.

There are two aspects to this mode. The first is about being 'in the moment' and being physically present. This is the first stage of most meditation practices. The symbol or character I would associate with this is *the inner Child*. This is the aspect of the human that sees things as though for the first time and glories in everything that exists. It does not divide into good or bad.

The second aspect involves the process known as '*qualia*'. When a human practises qualia, they gain more control over how they react to situations and objects. For instance, if you are cleaning a bathroom that is particularly dirty, then your natural reaction is disgust. In order to maintain a healthy state of mind during this process, you can get in between the sensory input of unpleasant odours and sights and prevent your mind from registering disgust, with its concomitant physical reactions. There is a Buddhist exercise where the monk sits in front of a corpse and meditates for as long as twenty-four hours. The corpse is the actual object of the meditation. At first the practitioner would experience horror and/or disgust but, over time, the aim is to reach a blissful state.

This is quite a distinct skill to the search for, or recognition of, *the Good*. Here the practitioner is aiming not to create Goodness itself, or to access Goodness as an object, but is creating Goodness as a state of mind (bliss, transcendence).

The third mode of living unites the two opposites, or combines them. This process is known as 'Transformation'. There are two aspects to this mode. The first is more straightforward: the process of transforming an object, idea or energy from something ordinary, coarse or dense into something *Good*, highly refined, beautiful and/or lighter. This might take the form of physical exercise, transforming food into a more functional or perhaps beautiful body; it is the work of a creative artist transforming an idea into a finished work of art; it is a student learning a subject who transforms his ignorance into knowledge and improves his mental skills.

Whilst the first process is hierarchical and vertical, the second is more relativistic and horizontal. It is related to desire and to attraction, both on an everyday level, a societal level and a cosmic level. Whilst from a certain perspective our personalities and our bodies are constantly evolving, if you freeze us in time we do have a clearly defined set of properties. These properties usually imply some kind of eccentricity or unbalanced qualities, otherwise we would either be supreme beings or mathematical formulas. Often imbalances in our personalities manifest themselves in an inner compulsion to do something – it could be one's whole vocation or something more small-scale – as well as in the kinds of people we are more or less attracted to.

Thus those who are naturally inclined to spend many productive hours alone may find themselves excited by prospects of fulfilling social interactions and networking. The academic may be attracted to certain communist ideas about the necessity of experiencing the brutal reality of the working class existence. The pampered, pretty young princess desires the rock star, the roguish soccer player or the 'cad'. Thus the second aspect of transformation – attraction – sets itself apart as another opposite to the recognising, searching for and accessing *The Good*.

I outlined three aspects of *The Good* above: recognising it, searching for it and accessing it. There is another one, which is 'representing' *The Good* and I may discuss this in a later article. In the last part of this article, I'll share with you my thoughts on recognising *The Good* from the perspective of aesthetics; i.e., Goodness in a work of art.

In short, what makes an artwork Good, as opposed to merely attractive, is that it forms a universe of its own yet it mirrors the basic properties of our own universe – the properties that prompted God to call it Good when He created it. There appear to be three categories that fulfil these conditions. The first involves balance, shape and proportion. The second is about economy, the artist transforming material already introduced to the artwork/universe. The third property involves a mirroring or strong relationship between the different levels of size and scope of the artwork; for instance, the large scale, middle scale and small scale.

[Stephen was our Music Director and pianist in 2006–09, while he was completing a Bachelor of Music degree at the Conservatorium. During that time, he also played for the Sydney University Symphony Orchestra and the Queensland Orchestra. He then did a Master of Music at Yale University and returned to the US later in 2011 for a self-organised tour of performances in the eastern states.]

FOOTNOTES

Sorry if anyone found my article out of character but it was actually a précis of a four-part series that I wrote in a previous publication of mine in 1995 – the International Year of Tolerance. Let me just tell you a bit about the three luminaries who wrote the book:

Robert Paul Wolff (1933 –) is an American philosopher who received his PhD from Harvard in 1957 and eventually became a professor at the University of Massachusetts. There, he moved from Philosophy to Afro-American Studies and became Professor Emeritus in 2008. His books include *The Poverty of Liberalism* and *In Defense of Anarchism* (which, ironically, made him popular with right-wing libertarians).

Barrington Moore jr (1913–2005), also American, did a PhD in sociology at Yale in 1941 and then worked for the Office of Strategic Services (precursor of the CIA) and the Department of Justice. He joined the Russian Research Centre at Harvard in 1948 and stayed there until 1979. He is noted for writing *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* and *Injustice: The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt*.

Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979) was a German Jewish philosopher who completed his PhD at the University of Freiburg in 1922. He emigrated to the US in 1934 and worked for the Office of War Information and the OSS during World War II, then went to the State Department. He entered academia in 1952 and ended his career at the San Diego camous of the University of California, in 1965. His many books include *One-Dimensional Man* and *Counterrevolution and Revolt*.

UUCP History: How It All Started

By Rev. Rebecca Quimada-Sienes

Introduction

In the book, *Maglipay Universalist: A History of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines*, Rev. Dr. Fredric John Muir outlines three teaching points that UUCP should focus on so that Unitarian Universalism in the Philippine context could be well understood. One of these says, "Learning and understanding as much as one can about the Philippines and life on Negros must be a priority to any further or new relationships …this must be an important first step."[1] With this in mind, the Administration is working hard to share the history of the faith. In addition, Rev. Muir also says, "… all theology, regardless of the era, is shaped by personal and social factors…"[2]

The events that follow are the factors that shape the faith: Unitarian Universalism in the Philippine context. It is unique; it has its own shaping factors.

The Philippines underwent a severe domination under the Spaniards and this domination has greatly influenced our cultural, social and religious formation. The coming of the Americans and the Protestant foreign missions added another layer to this life.

Religion of the Early Filipinos

The religion of the early natives was animistic in form. "They worshipped natural objects; offered sacrifices to the deities in order to persuade for favor or appease their anger; venerated spirits believed to be the shadows of their ancestors; and they also believe in life after death…"[3]

The conversion of the majority of the population to Christianity was a great achievement of the Spanish Roman Catholic missionaries. Yet, the "…animistic traditions of the people were too deep-seated to weed out…so, these traditions were *re-interpreted* in the lines of Christian doctrine; e.g., a saint is associated with fishing, agriculture, healing…"[4]

The friars transformed some of the concepts familiar to the natives into Christian concepts – e.g., Bat-hala, the ancient Supreme Being, was adopted by the friars as the name for God – and set about changing the Filipinos' ideas about Bat-hala to conform to Christian doctrine. They adopted some pagan worship; e.g., the "…celebrating rites in connection with sickness and death gave rise to the practice of lay visitation of the sick, accompanied by recitation of the rosary…."[5]

The pagan tradition of having a communal feast after burial of the dead is widely practiced even now by the Catholic churches, as well as by other Christian churches. The "…belief in magic and superstition was carried over into Catholicism, and, in many respects bring Christian faith in the miraculous and supernatural level…."[6] I have mentioned only few of these animistic traditions that were re-interpreted in the line of Christian doctrines.

Split-Level Christianity

The most important effect of this spirituality "…is not its influence on the small minority who consider themselves believers in these deities, but the persistence of animistic practices and beliefs among those who consider themselves to be Christians or Muslims. Religious conversion seldom involves a complete discarding of the older religious forms, and so elements of these tend to persist along with the new faith.**"** [7]

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[1] Muir, Fredric John, *Maglipay Universalist: A History of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines,* Anapolis: Maryland, 2001, p. 78
[2] Ibid., p. 55
[3] Hunt, Chester et al, *Sociology in Philippine Setting: A Modular Approach*, 4th ed., Quezon City: Phoenix, 1987, p. 255
[4] Ibid, p. 256
[5] Gowing, Peter, *Islands Under the Cross: The Story of the Church in the Philippines*, Manila, National Council of Churches in the Philippines, 1967, p. 54
[6] Ibid, p. 55
[7] Hunt, p. 256

Fr. Jaime Bulatao, a Jesuit priest, sees the animistic form of worship not so much as anti-Christian but as a way God is found in Filipino culture. He described Philippine Christianity as a "split-level" Christianity, which he defines as "…the co-existence within the same person of two or more thought-and-behavior systems which are inconsistent with each other…of which, such inconsistency may not be perceived by the person or it is pushed into the rear portions of consciousness, thus it is taken for granted and forgotten…"[8]

Because of this, most Filipinos readily embraced the Christian faith. In addition, early on the friars were dedicated and steadfast with their work, and earnestly extended help to the natives with their other problems. Thus, the Filipinos felt very much at home with the missionaries and with the Christian faith.

Hispanization of the Philippines

But the succeeding waves of friars "…saw themselves as soldiers of Christ waging a spiritual war to overthrow Satan's hold on the pagan peoples of the Philippines. They saw their work as a 'spiritual conquest' of the minds, hearts and way of life of the indios [natives], a conquest which was supplementary to, and the basic justification for, the military conquest."[9]

With the help of the military, the missionaries "…destroyed pagan holy places, burned idols, and obliterated the native literature because of its religious character."[10] This period is known as the Hispanization of the Philippines. During this time the Filipinos were "…told that their native civilization is contrary to the true religion of Christ, so the friars…forced the Filipinos to accept European civilization."[11] The aim of their missionary work was to destroy paganism, root and branch.

Teodoro A. Agoncillo, a noted Philippine historian, had this to say: "The friars control all the fundamental forces of society in the Philippines. They control the educational system, for they own schools, and are the local inspectors of every primary school. They control the minds of the people because, in a dominantly Catholic country, the parish rectors can utilize the pulpit and confessionals to publicly or secretly influence the people; they control all the municipal and local authorities and the medium of communication; and they execute all the orders of the central government.…"[12]

Resistance Groups to Christianity and the Spaniards

Two groups resisted the Spaniards and the imposition of their Christian faith: the Igorots in the mountains of Luzon and the Muslim of the southern Philippines. The Igorots were "…hostile to all that emanated from the lowlands, whether Filipino or Spanish, and this hostility gave the various tribes the strength of unity."[13] The Muslims "…not only resisted Spanish rule and rejected the Christian religion, they also carried on offensive warfare against the Spaniards, and terrorized Christian settlements in Mindanao, Visayas and as far north as Luzon."[14]

Other Filipinos resisted the friars' exploitation, domination and suppression of their culture, religion and native land. As a result of this tyrannical control, there were several revolts staged by the Filipinos against the Spaniards. The longest one was Dagohoy's Rebellion in Bohol from 1744 until 1829, which was led by Francisco Dagohoy. His brother was killed in a fight and was refused a Christian burial by the local Spanish curate. So, Francisco killed that priest and incited the people to arms against Spain.

With this situation the Filipinos lost their identity as well as the meaning of their life. Different religious movements or para-churches came up as a solution to the search for meaning.

[Further instalments of this as-yet-unpublished booklet will appear in later issues. Rev. Rebecca Quimada-Sienes is the long-serving president of the UU Church of the Philippines and the daughter of its founder, Rev. Toribio Quimada. Your editor is assisting with the final proofreading of the manuscript.]

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[8] Martinez, Salvador, *Asian Faces of Jesus*, Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993, pp. 247-248.
[9] Gowing, p. 44
[10] Ibid
[11] Ibid
[12] Agoncillo, Teodoro A., *History of the Filipino People*, 8th ed., Quezon City, Garotech Publishing Co., 1990
[13] Gowing, p. 50
[14] Ibid

Red Cross (cont'd)

In 1944, the ICRC again won the Nobel Peace Prize – as in 1917, that was the only such prize awarded while the war was going on. It won that award again in 1963, the centenary of its foundation, in conjunction with the League of Red Cross Societies. In 1983, the LRCS became the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, changing again to the International Federation thereof in 1991. History was made in 1990 when the United Nations gave the ICRC observer status at its General Assembly sessions and sub-committee meetings, making it the first private organisation to receive such an honour.

The first Red Crescent organisation was formed in the Ottoman Empire and served during a war with Russia in 1877–78. That symbol was officially adopted in 1929 and is now used by 33 Islamic countries. However, the Federation would not accept the proliferation that might ensue when Israel and Iran wanted to use red versions of their national symbols, so the only other recognised symbol is the Red Crystal. (The national societies can do as they wish within their own borders, though, and Israel does use a red Star of David as its emblem. Iran changed from the Red Lion and Sun to the Red Crescent when the Shah was overthrown.)

Today, over 97 million people worldwide are in the service of the ICRC, the International Federation and the national societies. The highest institutional body is the four-yearly International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which elects five members to the Standing Commission for the next period. That group also has two delegates (each) from the ICRC and the Federation, including their respective presidents, and meets every six months. Curiously, the International Committee is not legally a non-governmental organisation because all of its 15 to 25 members must be Swiss nationals – the Swiss government regards it as a private organisation with tax-free status and other special privileges.

COMMITTEE NEWS

The December meeting agreed to send $1000 to the UU Church of the Philippines to assist with repairs after Cyclone Bopha. A sub-committee was formed to purchase a new computer for the office. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 07 March 2013.

Membership renewals for 2013 are now due. Those wishing to join our church can use this form by way of application but should not send payment until their membership is accepted.

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

I, (name) _____

of (address) _____

_____ Postcode _____

Phone(s): (home) _____ (other) _____

Email: _____

I apply to join/renew membership in (delete one) the Sydney Unitarian Church and agree to abide by the rules as set down by the Constitution and management of the church.

Signature: _____ Fee enclosed: $_____*

Cheques should be made payable to: Treasurer, Sydney Unitarian Church. Membership will be valid for the calendar year 2012.

* Annual membership is $20 and includes the SUN journal; subscription to the SUN only is $15.