

# Re-enchantment of the World

## Is it possible and how?

---

### Lenore Kulakauskas

Re-enchantment is a difficult word to use in an article geared toward western adults. 'Re-enchantment' evokes images of fairy tales, magic and things that are usually kept in the nursery. This placement in the nursery, with its relegation of things magical to childlike concepts keeps 'the adult world ..... protected from the fairytale mentality.'<sup>1</sup>

However in choosing a word to replace it, we would need to think about the meaning we are trying to give to 're-enchantment', to examine it, while holding the childish concept at bay. Words that come to mind are - re-souling,- again a difficult word, while ever 'soul' is envisaged as a 'property of the human'. James Hillman's use of 're-imagining' and 're-visioning' spring to mind, and while they open up new vistas and encourage new thoughts, they somehow remain ungrounded, requiring a further step to match them with reality.

A single word seems therefore, inadequate, so perhaps a phrase will allow for a more fruitful discussion. **Binding what is real with what is true**, could be a helpful starting point.

This phrase, inspired by Wolfgang Giegerich in his article *The Nuclear Bomb and the Fate of God*<sup>2</sup> also requires a bit of unpacking before we can use it effectively, and to this end the following quote is presented:

Originally, truth and realness belonged together as a matter of course.  
The real was also the true and the true only true to the extent that it was real. The situation in which truth and reality are the same, even though

---

<sup>1</sup> Giegerich Wolfgang, Collected English Papers Volume 1 *The Neurosis of Psychology Primary Papers towards a Critical Psychology* Spring Journal Inc; New Orleans 2005 p77

<sup>2</sup> Giegerich Wolfgang, Collected English Papers Volume 11 *Technology and the Soul* Spring Journal Inc; New Orleans 2007 pp 69-99

not alike, has the character of *phainesthai*, appearance, shine. It is the situation of mythical or ritualistic reality.<sup>3</sup>

The reality we westerners are situated in today is not a mythical or ritualistic reality, no matter how hard we might try to make it so. Our mode of being-in – the-world has divorced itself from experiencing the real as true. The Christian tradition, in which western thought is steeped, disassociated truth from reality when it postulated truth as absolute and posited it in an abstract God.

In this mode of being-in-the-world, truth split into true and false, so that reality itself became true or false. Of course this is an impossibility,

The real is simply what it is, and in this does the unshakeable truth of everything that exists lie. There is no true or false weather, are no true or false trees, but there are many kinds of weather and trees. Opinions and statements can be false, but not realities.<sup>4</sup>

And truth, unacknowledged as truth, doesn't cease to exist, it goes somewhere else, is renamed, 'degraded'<sup>5</sup> in our case, into 'idols' and 'false gods.'

Ontological truth is confounded with logical truth, i.e., the truth of *our* statements or predicates. Actual Being and our recognition of this actuality as valid and binding are split apart. The recognition becomes something independent, similarly as with paper money, the value of things became a separate entity. It can now be granted to or withheld from any reality *ad libitum*.<sup>6</sup>

So to return to our question, now posed as **Binding what is real with what is true – Is it possible and how?** we can start to ask is it possible?

The possibility for binding could only occur if we were to don our psychological hats, think of a reality such as say, money, and look for its truth, for its binding or compelling truth.

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid pp 85-86

<sup>4</sup> Giegerich Wolfgang, Collected English Papers Volume 11 *Technology and the Soul* Spring Journal Inc; New Orleans 2007 p 87

<sup>5</sup> Id

<sup>6</sup> Id

The meaning of truth in this context is something that binds or even compels us and that is acknowledged by us without reserve.<sup>7</sup>

As psychological thought requires that we absent ourselves from opinions, emotions and cultural underlays, we would dispense with – ‘money is good, money is bad’ – ‘money makes me happy, money makes me sad’ – ‘I need a lot of money to be happy’ - and look for the binding and compelling truth of money, a truth that can never be found in the actual paper and metals which it is made from - it’s physical essence - but in the imagery embedded in money itself.

Money is behind much of what happens in the world; it drives industry, entertainment, sport; it appears to have a life of its own when considered in the context of the Global Financial Crisis of 2009, it impacts on where people need to go to be employed; it determines whether governments succeed or fail; in short it is a driving force over which humans have no control.

This is the imagery thrown up by money – no empty image this, instead an image full of power, answering to no-one except itself

Can we recognize this experience as binding ... our thinking and speaking?<sup>8</sup>

the image contained in it as compelling?

Can our experience correspond to ‘a conscious recognition of the substance of this experience’?<sup>9</sup>

These are the questions we will need to answer in order for us to ascertain whether **Binding what is real with what is true** is possible.

But even when we start to grasp the implications of these questions, there is still the ‘how’? In this respect, The following statement was made above: ‘The possibility for binding could only occur if we were to don our psychological hats,

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid p 86

<sup>8</sup> Giegerich Wolfgang, Collected English Papers Volume 11 *Technology and the Soul* Spring Journal Inc; New Orleans 2007 p 96

<sup>9</sup> Ibid p 99

.....' The 'how' is tied to the meaning we attribute to psychology, which does not mean adopting one of the many psychological theories that abound in the west.

Rather it is 'an objective psychology,' allowing 'the psychological phenomena to have their say' by way of '.....a passive, receptive, listening attitude.'<sup>10</sup>

This attitude is not able to be learnt by memorizing a set of rules, nor by merely intellectually appreciating of a set of principles. It is not something that can be taken up by the ego in any way, nor can it proceed from an '.....*a priori* ... (commitment) ...to the standpoint of the human being'.<sup>11</sup>

It can only be encouraged, pondered, nurtured, until it is accepted as our way of being-in-the-world, whereupon it *becomes* the *a priori* to thought.

Lenore Kulakauskas © 2010

---

<sup>10</sup> Giegerich Wolfgang, Collected English Papers Volume 1 *The Neurosis of Psychology Primary Papers towards a Critical Psychology* Spring Journal Inc; New Orleans 2005 p113

<sup>11</sup> Giegerich Wolfgang, Collected English Papers Volume 1 *The Neurosis of Psychology Primary Papers towards a Critical Psychology* Spring Journal Inc; New Orleans 2005 p111