A theopoetic reflection on Thomas Traherne, Meister Eckhart and Mother Julian of Norwich

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Abstract

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This study provides a poet’s readings of the non-dualism of Thomas Traherne, Meister Eckhart and Mother Julian of Norwich. Traherne, Eckhart and Julian are interpreted as theopoets of the body/soul who share what might be described as moderate non-dualism. They also share a concern for unitive spiritual experience, expressed in their attempts to balance an absolute level of truth with a conventional level of truth. Separate chapters on Traherne, Eckhart and Julian focus on their differing - yet commensurate - non-dual registers. On their view, the *conditio sine qua non* of ‘being human’ is participation in the divine. Two additional chapters link the so-called mysticism of Traherne, Eckhart and Julian with construals of both ‘the Self’ and spiritual awakening, as enunciated by *Advaita Vedānta*. My own poems are integrated into the text. Many issues explored in the text are contested and aporetical and my own readings may not always be shared by others. Although aware of the usefulness of dualism, and of the subject/object distinction in particular, I seek to provide a countervailing perspective to the general Western over-emphasis on the separateness of the human and the divine. In so doing, I hope to show that Traherne, Eckhart and Julian can be read in consonance and even at times in innovative ways.
Abbreviations

BgG (or Gītā): Bhagavad Gītā

Gk: Greek

KJV: King James Version

L: Latin

LT: Julian’s Long Text

MHG: Middle High German

NJB: New Jerusalem Bible

NT: New Testament

NRSV: New Revised Standard Version

REB: Revised English Bible

Skt: Sanskrit

ST: Julian’s Short Text

Up: Upanishad
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Bibliography
Traherne was there for the last eight years of the Protectorate; and, although the Puritans had power, student and faculty sentiment was
never with them. The more one reads Traherne, the more one is struck by the incantatory effects of repetition. Traherne piles up
words and phrases, proliferating synonyms, as if to suggest that individual segments, isolated by junctures in periodic sentences, might--
or might not--suffice to convey a sense of the immensity of the infinite world: THE Sun is a glorious Creature, and its Beams extend to
the utmost Stars, by shining on them it cloaths them with light, and by its Rayes exciteth all their influences. Meister Eckhart, Mother
Julian of Norwich and Thomas Traherne are interpreted as 'theopoets' of the body/soul who share a moderate non-dualism.
Their work is brought within the ambit of non-dual Hinduism. Specifically, their passion for unitive spiritual experience is linked to
construals of both 'the Self' and 'Awakening', as enunciated by Advaita Vedanta. Charlton draws on poetry, theology and philosophy to perceive fresh connections. A commonality of interest is proposed between the three Europeans and Ramana Maharshi. The concept of non-duality is basic to much of Asian reli

Julian (or Juliana) of Norwich (1343 â€“ after 1416), also known as Dame Julian or Mother Julian, was an English anchorite of the Middle Ages. She wrote the best known surviving book in the English language written by a mystic, Revelations of Divine Love. The book is the first written in English by a woman. She lived practically her whole life in the English city of Norwich, an important centre for commerce that also had a vibrant religious life. During her lifetime, the city suffered the devastating Meister Eckhart, Mother Julian of Norwich and Thomas Traherne are interpreted as 'theopoets' of the body/soul who share a moderate non-dualism. Their work is brought within the ambit of non-dual Hinduism. Specifically, their passion for unitive spiritual experience is linked to construals of both 'the Self' and 'Awakening', as enunciated by Advaita Vedanta. Charlton draws on poetry, theology and philosophy to perceive fresh connections. A commonality of interest is proposed between the three Europeans and Ramana Maharshi. The concept of non-duality is basic to muc

Non-Dualism in Eckhart, Julian of Norwich and Traherne: A Theopoetic Reflection by James Charlton (review). Article. Jan 2013. Hans Gustafson. Intellect and spirit are both fed in the experience of this text. By including many of his own poems and hopes, James Charlton has certainly made this a self-implicating work. He weaves together the qualified, non-dual theopoetical work of Thomas Traherne, Meister Eckhart, and Julian of Norwich with the Eastern non-dualism of Ramana Maharashi in an View. Sacramental Spirituality in the Brothers Karamazov and Wendell Berry’s Port Williams
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