

Beyond personal interest: The politics of Engaged Spirituality

Plato: What a society values, it cultivates

To begin with I like to thank all those brought me to this very moment in time, this talk; however, I do not want to take up your time with a long, long recital of names, places and moments of gratitude instead of a treatise on engaged spirituality. We all know that nothing is really new under the sun, and my inspiration- and note that inspiration is related to the word spirit (literally meaning that what I have breathed in, taken in from my environment) is boundless. I thank the sun, the elements, the manifold beautiful manifestations of energy, the many stars on my way in the form of meetings with significant others, the many people who have pondered about this existence of us, and not in the least I would like to pay my respect to the spirit of the land we are on and the spirit both past, present and future of its ancient people who knew so well to pay respect to their land. I acknowledge the traditional Gumbainggirr people of this area.

Introduction

This talk examines the place of spirituality in politics, however, it is important to note that this paper is not intending to focus on religion or look into the historical origins and traditional divisions between politics and religion. Instead, I will explore whether there is a place for spirituality in politics. This is a two-fold exploration, what sort of spiritual stories are present in the political landscape and should there be more of it? The second part explores whether an active engagement with one's spirituality could result in socially responsible and politically more active citizenship. By necessity this paper involves esoteric and philosophical ponderings which do not mean to give an answer but rather are intended to provoke more questions. I believe that such an inquiry into the nature, place and role of spirituality is lacking in the current political debate and, furthermore, I will argue that a sense of spirituality is paramount to achieving the Bellinghen Institute's aims and objectives.

As some of you know, I am a member of the Bellinghen Institute's management committee; I got involved because I am friends with Richard and Jennifer; but it is equally true that I have been interested in social change, paradigms and discourses, and with that an interest in spirituality for as long as I remember.

My cultural, social and spiritual roots lay in the cold Northern European landscape, I was raised and confirmed as a Protestant. It took not long for me to leave the familiar at home and to embark on a long and winding road, which eventually brought me to Australia. On the way I took sannyas, embraced the precepts of Buddhism and learned to be at home in cathedrals, pagan rituals, sacred chants, pilgrim routes and ashrams. Is it a wonder that I still have more questions than answers?

Personal change is a constant fluid process of repositioning ourselves in relation to our social environments, which shift and change with us. But every now and then there is a major shift in socio-political attitudes; a shift that results from and is formed by the way we understand and think about the human condition. Such shifts have massive consequences for human beings and, equally important, there are consequences for what is often referred to as the natural world (and the distinction between humans and the natural world probably warrants another talk).

In previous talks for the Bellinghen Institute, David Bloodwood and Charlie Brennan gave us an insight into some of the emotional spaces we find ourselves in, as a result of current shifts in the social and political landscape. Their focus was on the darker emotions of fear or grief. In this talk about spirituality and politics I would like to highlight the dimensions and conditions of happiness, an emotion that has the potential to change the world according to many spiritual teachers. More precisely, as the Dalai Lama is fond of saying, the condition of human happiness as the basis for a secular spirituality concerned with virtues, with loving kindness and mindfulness.

What is the matter with you?

I would like to set the scene with a few public commentaries on the absence of spirituality in the current political landscape. Leunig (2007) in a recent open letter in the Age wrote movingly about 'the pursuit of unhappiness', in relation to the joint US/Australian military exercise "Talisman Saber 2007", which took place only a few

weeks ago. 32,000 troops bombed, battered and attacked a wild, natural coastal strip of land near Rockhampton, conquered and freed a make-belief city from the clutches of imagined terrorists and bombed death and destruction on sacred land and innocent ocean. In his letter, Leunig draws a direct line between his personal engagement with this stretch of land; the senseless obliteration of beauty by the military; and the prevalence in our society of 'spiritual poverty' and 'illness of the soul'.

Another example comes from the philosopher Slavoj Žižek (2007) critiquing the movie 'Children of Men'. (I was lucky enough to check the movie out on the web, it was recently shown as a fundraiser for the Greens- and caused great distress). He argues that the dominant Western political discourse is breeding apathy and disinterest; is breeding citizens that seek safety in their suburban houses and gated communities; citizens that are dreaming impossible dreams in front of the TV, sedated by too much food and too many distractions and diversions. For such a person the world and all its woes is kept safely at bay, captured within the limits of the TV set or computer, virtualised and forever remotely controllable.

Paradoxically, Žižek (2007) observes that there is also a heightened interest in feeling good, looking good, being amused and 'being relaxed'. There is an almost morbid fixation and worry about high stress levels, cholesterol and longevity. The ageing bodies of baby boomers are propped up by botox and cosmetic surgery, in fact, we are told that for enduring happiness you can't just be yourself. Žižek borrows Nietzsche's term of 'passive nihilism' to describe the postmodern 'dilemma of being', which he sees as a narcissistic obsession with a complex, fragile self that has lost confidence in 'public or universal Causes', and 'higher" goals'. This is manifested as the current 'paralysis of passion' and a loss of 'spiritual transcendence'.

A last example comes from Steve Salerno (2007) who talks about the 'hying of hope'. He argues that people who have lost their sense of place and purpose are being conned by self-help gurus who keep them on their toes by a plethora of books which recycle the same old, same old in ever new packaging, not unlike the story of the Emperor's clothes. According to Rachael Kohn (2007) who interviewed Salerno, these books offer 'spiritual transcendence', thereby acting as a 'substitute religion'.

Charlie Brennan (2007) talked about the need to re-story our sense of place and belonging and in that spirit I would like to retell an old story I borrowed from the internet

A Thai fisherman was sleeping on the beach in the shade of his boat and a development expert came to speak to him.

"Why are you resting?" he asked.

"I have already been out fishing and have caught enough fish to feed my family," the fisherman replied.

"But if you went out fishing again you could catch more fish."

"And what would I do with those fish?"

"You could sell them and with the cash you may buy a bigger net." "What would I do with this net?"

"Catch more fish"

"And what would I do with those fish?" "Sell them and buy a motor for your boat." "And why should I buy a motor?"

"To catch even more fish."

"And what would I do with those fish?" "Sell them and buy another boat."

"And why would I want another boat?"

"So you can employ other people to catch fish for you, which would enable you to have leisure and rest. "

"But I am already resting!" the fisherman replied.

(http://www.inebnetwork.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=39&Itemid=42)

This little story is more than a parable; it can be seen as a complex metaphor of our current predicament. The fisherman for example could represent our imagining of the 'noble savage' or more contemporary, it could stand for the voluntary simplicity of the back to the land movement that shaped to a degree the Bellingham ambiance; and lastly it could represent Clive Hamilton's (2005) concept of 'down-shifting: But we are also the fish... swimming quite unconsciously in the murky waters of the postmodern world: And we are the developer too, chasing more, bigger and better, whilst making our choices about the way we participate in the market economy. Economy, by the way, my dictionary tells me is 'the careful management of

resources to avoid unnecessary expenditure of waste'. Are you just as surprised as me?

Is the meaning of life 'I shop, therefore God exists'? Could we easily visualise a holy trinity of the market place? Are we blindly following the light that is the promise of globalization? Is a market overrunning all boundaries, differences and otherness the fulfillment of all our heart's desires? Are we achieving Nirvana with the help of the God Mammon? In a more negative light, but not a less familiar way (and David spoke eloquently about that) the global market seduces us by the promise of taking our fears away, dulling our pain, or simply providing a temporary dreaming, a small dream in the arms of the God Morpheus. Completing this unholy trinity is the God Tantalus, who keeps our desires awake, always promising more, always tantalising us to stay in the fold with new ways of packaging the same illusion.

The following quote highlights these issues:

Consumerism functions as a pseudo-religion in its pretense of meeting the deeper needs of every human being, namely, the desire to have an improved identity, to be a new person, or to recreate oneself. Consumerism succeeds because it makes us feel that we can have a better self and be essentially a better person through possessing brand name products...

(Santi Pracha Chamma, 2007)

I'd like to make a proviso here that we are not talking of the ease that comes from having our basic human needs met, in fact, with a nod of appreciation to our colleagues at the Australia Institute, there are many public, social and personal issues and effects that are very important for our happiness, as is shown in the Australian Wellbeing Manifesto (www.wellbeingmanifesto.net) that they have published. What I am talking about is the predominance of an overblown economy that drives our political and corporate agendas, determines our wars and produces lonely, stressed out, egocentric and unhappy individuals that are forever reaching for more at the horrendous cost of untold misery and suffering.

Economy, politics, religion, spirituality and the self... I think I have set the scene for this talk and feel that we now are coming to the crux, the hub and at the same

time the crucible of that illusive 'matter' which matters most, but which, the sages tell us, is really no matter at all.

Religion

I think it is important to talk a little bit about religion first, because it is very difficult to leave religion at the door in a discussion about spirituality. Although religion has been eschewed in the modern political arena, occasionally there are examples where it comes in through the back door. Apart from the obvious involvement of the Reverend Fred Neil, some of you may have noticed the headlines in the Sydney Morning Herald (21 Jan. 2007) reading 'Abbott attacks Rudd on religion in politics'. The article claimed that:

The Australian Labor Party was beset by religious tensions with non-Christian members uncomfortable at the way Labor leader Kevin Rudd has been pushing his faith, Health Minister Tony Abbott said today.

Mr Abbott, a devout Catholic and former student priest, attacked the opposition leader over the role of religion in politics, accusing him of trying to shame Christians into voting Labor.

Mr Abbott - who has been accused by Labor of injecting his own faith into government policy - said it was Mr Rudd who had brought up the issue of Christianity in his 5000-word essay, Faith in Politics, published in The Monthly magazine last October and subsequent debates on Radio National and the ABC's Lateline.

For the purpose of this talk, I will make a distinction between spirituality and religion: Religion is concerned with the institutionalised (and I would offer, sometimes corporatised) expressions of articles of faith, beliefs and assumptions about the nature of life, God and the universe (Newman, 2004). Religion is prescriptive and depending on the particular orientation, it can stifle any inquiry into the articles of one's own faith (whilst being highly critical of someone else's faith). For example, in the US, where religion plays a much bigger and often dubious role in politics, religious leaders have been advocating for the primacy of 'creationism' (the belief that the world was created by God in 7 days, about 8000 years ago) in the school curriculum. Andrew Denton (2007) visited the 63rd National Religious Broadcasters Convention in Dallas Texas and provides an intimate

look into some of the fundamentalist beliefs in the US. Denton's (2007) ABC production 'God on my side' is a frightening example of an unholy mix of religion and politics, invoking the name of God in an astounding display of self-righteousness, belonging and sense of place.

I think that Marx, when he talked about religion being 'the opium of the masses', referred to that human need to find safety, comfort and meaning. The God of the Judeo-Christian and Islamic world explicitly laid down such laws, which prescribe right conduct, the meaning of life, and even promises an afterlife in a heaven above. Created 2500 years ago, it is obvious that the affairs of the world and our being in it have changed enormously and I only have to mention issues such as homosexuality, abortion or marriage to highlight the difficulties with religious dogma.

I hasten to say that it is not my intent to downplay or demonise religion, but merely to highlight the difficulties and dangers of mixing religion and politics. Richard Dawkins (2006) may rant against what he calls 'The God Delusion', but I believe that, at the least, his thesis is incomplete, because in exposing only the dark underbelly of religion he fails to acknowledge the great love, compassion and devotion that is also inspired by religious faiths.

In fact, the most significant defense of religion that I heard came from a devout catholic, not an academic or member of the clergy. She said that her religion showed her a way of 'living well' and if it turned out that there was no God and no heaven after she died 'it wouldn't really matter', because her religion had given her great happiness on earth. I would like to highlight that I know that this person also spread her happiness in a big way.

Spirituality

I've heard countless deeply religious people say that their religion is an expression of their spirituality. However, for those of us who do not have such a strong and uplifting faith, how should we understand our spirituality? What are our beliefs, our ultimate concerns and our sense of meaning and place? Richard Adams (1995) imagined a cold and lonely place, a belief that lacks luster when he indicated that

'42' may be the answer and it is no surprise that the name of his classic novel involves delocation and hitchhiking.

Jokes aside, I think that this is a good moment to stop and ask ourselves this same question: What is the central meaning of my life? What is, in Ivan Illich (1970) words, our 'ultimate concern' or our life's philosophy? I would like to take a few moments to ponder that question, to see what each of us would bring to this conversation...

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The literature tells me that for most people the ultimate concerns in life involve maintaining meaningful connections with self, others, nature, the universe and this can, but does not have to include a relationship with a 'Higher Being' or God. These relationships give us a sense of purpose, 'a reason d'etre', which literally means, a reason for being here.

However, you may have found that it was not easy to come up with a ready made, instant answer to the questions I posed above. Defining one's spirituality is fraught with problems and is as difficult to define as any other subjective mental construct. Yet, as a starting point I would like to offer a fairly old definition of spirituality that is often used in the literature:

A quality that goes beyond religious affiliation, that strives for inspiration, reverence, awe, meaning and purpose, even in those who do not believe in God. The spiritual dimension tries to be in harmony with the universe, strives for answers about the infinite and comes into focus when the person faces emotional stress, physical illness or death (Murray & Zenter 1989: 259).

Described as a quality, or a dimension, one could be forgiven to think that spirituality is a thing; I believe, however, that spirituality cannot be reduced to a noun, a word or two or even a definition. Described as a journey, a quest, spirituality is often seen as a process, a work in progress: Spirituality is our constant positioning in relation to life's inevitable... and I offer here a word that is at the core of Buddhism... life's inevitable suffering. This positioning, our answers and actions in relation to life's challenges, sits very comfortably with (Winslow, 2005).

Winslow's assertion that 'spirituality defines you' in other words, spirituality is your life force, that what you are.

The opposite of love

In Western society, however, we are used to believing that our 'doing' defines us, e.g. one of the first questions often asked is "what are you doing", which is followed by an explanation of our role in the workforce e.g. 'I am an academic' etc. Others would say that they are defined by what they own, e.g. in the article 'their supersize-me boat' (N.I., 401, June 2007) a man in the boat business is saying: 'I think it [size] is frequently an issue of size relating to ego'. Alternatively, a brand name confirms that you are cool and the meaning of life is often depicted in possessing one's very own, exclusive and expensive, boutique 'box of chocolates', which, incidentally, is the question posed by these seminar series.

From our own personal experiences and from those we love, however, we intrinsically know that life isn't such; life is not a hedonists' dream from which we never fully awake. In fact, Slavoj Zizek (2007) argues strongly against the fulfillment of such an unrealistic expectation, against such a plastic and sanitised universe; he says that such a life would lack 'any authentic sensual passion'. Ken Wilber (2003), one of the most prolific writers on the intersections of science and spirituality, talks about the 'spiritual flatlands', the life that is shallow and artificial, a life of disinterested permissiveness where (and here are Zizek's words again) 'everything is allowed, but decaffeinated, deprived of its substance'.

The heart of the question posed in this paper concerns the role of spirituality, not only in the personal, but also in the social and political life: It involves the question of 'How can we regain substance and spirit in those domains?' The following quote may give us an insight into these issues:

Any social activity that ignores the spiritual aspect is doomed to failure. Any development project that succeeds in raising incomes or diminishing the poverty of the people but ignores helping them to be free from materialism will end up turning them over to the mercy of the markets or transforming them into good customers of the transnational corporations. In the long run, their livelihood and social well-being will be affected by excessive

consumption, indebtedness, competition, and tension within the community. In other words, such development projects risk failure in the long run. They are merely reformist. Radical politics must also be spiritual.

(http://www.inebnetwork.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=39&Itemid=42)

'Human satisfaction actually declines as income and commodity rise beyond need' says Robert Lane, in a study called 'the loss of happiness in market democracies' (McMurtry, 2007, p. 34). But it can be forgiven, however, that many of the baby boomers started to believe that life should look like one long summer holiday, on an ever more expensive beach towel or as my partner suggested, on an ever cheaper, throw away Chinese beach towel.

In our first seminar, David Bloodwood (2007) addressed fear as a driving force, fear of losing the beach towel and fear of the wild beasts and fear of the elements (although science has tried to take away that fear) and not in the least our fear for each other. Taking the discourse on fear one step further, our well-fanned fear, both by political and by personal means, is a worse and more disempowering kind of suffering than the actual experience of fear.

Leunig (2007) agrees and quotes the psycho-analyst Donald Winnicott who says that 'the death that is feared has already happened'; that fear is the death of the spirit. Bringing this back to the political we could see the machinations of that death in an ever tighter political agenda, which values security, xenophobia and closing off and thereby forsaking the qualities of sharing and generosity of spirit.

Generosity of spirit

Whilst writing this paper, I picked up a book, conceived by Anita Roddick, the business woman who gave sustainability market value. The book is called 'Brave Hearts, Rebel Spirits; A Spiritual Activists Handbook' and tells stories of 'spiritual activists, religious changemakers and soulful rebels' (Biggs, 2007). Anita writes in the introduction that:

This book is dedicated to all those uncelebrated hell-raisers, truth-tellers, and risk-takers who have lived what they believe with such grace, honor and

courage. Not all of them could fit inside this book, so this book is, instead, a gift to them.

Not surprisingly, Biggs names Jesus Christ, Ghandi and the Dalai Lama as great spiritual and social change agents. I would also like to name Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese monk, who has tirelessly worked with refugees, with spiritual seekers and political leaders. The strength of these 'spiritual warriors' lies in their great generosity of spirit, their ability to embrace even those who cause the suffering. For example, the Dalai Lama regularly mentions that the Chinese, who occupy his beloved Tibet so savagely, are his greatest teachers, teaching him to ever coming back to compassion, especially in the face of mindless cruelty and suffering. The Dalai Lama (2005) argues that, no matter how irrational or cruel, all people; all beings have in common the need to avoid suffering and to seek happiness.

Happiness, like fear, like greed and like grief, is a complex emotion and therefore a slippery, subjective concept. Listening for 2 days to experts on happiness at the recent 'Happiness and its Causes Conference' was a riveting experience, not in the least of having the honour of being in the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

One of the speakers, Corey Keyes (2007), dubbed 'Dr. Positive' is an expert in 'positive psychology', the study of mental well-being and human flourishing. He explained happiness in terms of Aristotle's concepts of 'hedonia', the pursuit of the transient self-serving pleasures of the senses, the good life and 'eudaimonia', the more enduring happiness that is created by good relationships, social responsibility and living a just life. Interestingly, in relation to eudaimonia happiness is rather a by-product, the result of living an engaged life; it is the enduring, transcending happiness of being at peace with the universe. This he calls human flourishing, as Maslow called it self-actualisation and I would add it is our spirituality.

The different shades of happiness and human flourishing are very much bound up with our understanding of the boundaries of the self. 'Eudaimonia', it could be argued, focuses on a self that is in relationship, that is intimately connected with everything else under the sun. It concerns a self that embraces life as interconnected and transcendent; it is in stark contrast with 'hedonia' which, taken to its natural end, results in the hedonistic glorification of the self. In contrast, a widening of the self to include other is the transcendence of the small I-bound self. Transcendence is by its very nature political because it cannot discount other beings suffering. Deep ecology describes this quite poetically as becoming one with

the eagle and 'feeling the wind ruffling your feathers, taking you on the wing, whilst your human self is standing on a cliff top overlooking the ocean'. By necessity such an understanding involves the need to care for all that is self and not-other (in contrast to caring just for self and excluding other); it involves compassion and loving kindness for all sentient beings. Embracing such a way of being in the world is what the Dalai Lama (2007) calls 'a secular spirituality' and what I would call a political spirituality.

A secular, political spirituality focuses on ethical and moral questions, on 'how should I live?' rather than 'what do I want?' or 'what can I get?': It values the human spirit and human flourishing, and I would like to add, it values the flourishing of all beings and is therefore not only good for one's own soul and well-being, but strives to bring good, not goods to the world at large.

I would like to stress that there is nothing wrong with including in one's life a reasonable measure of 'hedonia', the pursuit of a good life; a secular spirituality is not about self-denial, after we all are part of the world and also deserving of loving kindness. A secular spirituality concerns virtues and ethics that have an almost old-fashioned ring and are reminiscent of religious values. I do have some concern revisiting this body of thought which in the past has caused great social harm. Words like moral, restraint and 'should' are still strong enough to make some of us shudder in memory of the cold, loveless commands imposed by revengeful Gods and their equally repressive representatives. After all I am a child of the permissive 70s and the liberal politics of the 'me first' generation. But is it time to revisit these virtues?

Ethics and moral reasoning has been traditionally the province of religion, but now academic research into loving kindness confirms these long standing truths that often seem forgotten in the political arena (Keyes and Haidt, 2003).

May I, at this stage, remind you of the aims of the Bellinghen Institute, because I believe that there is a strong synergy with these aims and the concept of eudaimonia. The mission statement of the Bellinghen Institute is 'to provide an alternate, progressive contribution to national debate on quality of life issues including':

- The meaning and importance of community
- Sense of place and belonging
- Spiritual well being
- Emotionality
- Peace and sustainability
- Social capital

A blue print for pursuing such a mission statement could be read in the following except from a website devoted to 'engaged spirituality':

Ultimately, the real objectives of civil activism are not stopping the dam construction, halting the pipeline project, or gaining compensation for lost lands. More important than all of these is replacing the unjust structures and reducing structural violence, along with changing attitudes and worldviews. All can be achieved only through nonviolence and compassion. Nonviolence opens the hearts of people, while compassion expels the anger, thus enabling people to see the real causes of their problems and suffering. The wisdom that arises is required for one to see alternative solutions to violence. Besides, inner peace from spirituality can restrain the mind from indulging in anger, dwelling in hatred, or reacting out of fear or guilt.

There are two perspectives or rather directions in relation to spirituality in politics. Firstly and most importantly, there is the need to change 'the system'; unjust policies, procedures and practices. Equally important however, is the need to change our own perspective, because politics is also made up of all the personal preferences of individual people; what we eat, choose to buy and how we interact with the rest of the world.

The paradoxical nature of change: how to get there

In relation to the personal, it is important to focus on the differences between the reactive 'shoulds' instilled by law, religion and guilt issues of some of the Green politics *and* the natural virtues that emerge from developing and getting in touch with one's spirituality: Law, culture and religion impose commandments, in contrast, a secular spirituality encourages us to engage with morality, virtue and ethics through analytical inquiry of one's own mind, one's own thoughts and reactive patterns. The monk-scholar Bernie Glassman (1998) describes this as examining 'the ruts and grooves of the habitual mind' to gain greater clarity of perspective and to 'remove the veils of ignorance and conditioning'.

One way (and there are others which are not the topic of this talk) to engage in a systematic, and I would say scientific, inquiry into the workings of the mind is to follow a path of meditation that was refined over 2500 years, by generations of

Buddhist monks. Meditation is divided in two streams, one consists of training the mind to concentrate and focus, and the other is to gain insight into the workings of the mind.

Meditation therefore is really a training into mindfulness, which is incidentally the opposite of mindlessness... get the picture? , Meditation systematically trains the mind in the ability to patiently see into these present moments, moment by moment, step by step. This picture is eloquently explained in a simple diagram that captures the essence of Buddhist spiritual wisdom without the frills of any religious overtone.

1. The purpose of life is happiness.
2. Happiness is determined more by the state of one's mind than by one's external conditions, circumstances, or events—at least once one's basic survival needs are met.
3. Happiness can be achieved through the systematic training of our hearts and minds, through reshaping our attitudes and outlook.
4. The key to happiness is in our own hands.

(Dalai Lama and Cuttler, 2007)

Mindfulness or presence produces what Fuller and Strong (2001) call, 'alive moments', those priceless experiences of clarity, immediacy and wonder. However, a secular spirituality based on mindfulness is not for the feint-hearted because it places the responsibility, the key, gently but firmly back into our own hands. There is no opportunity to blame anyone else, it is not a flight into what Charlie called utopia, the no-place of lala-land, nor a right to heavenly rewards or an absence of suffering, fear and depression. On the contrary, such engagement with spirituality demands the courage to face our fears, to experience the suffering of the world; in short it asks us to engage. Engaged spirituality could, paradoxically, facilitate a

move away from the political paralysis, the current malaise and cynicism born of fear, as understood by Winnicott's disabling fear of fear.

A secular, engaged spirituality invites us to live life holy, as in whole and in a sacred way, mindful of the connection between my happiness and yours. A secular spirituality aims to learn more about compassion and loving kindness to self and others. A secular spirituality could also foster faith in the ability to live in and with the present moment, thereby creating a sense of place and belonging. Engaged spirituality also creates hope and faith in our ability to be response-able; it is not an outcome, nor an achievement or a goal; it is not about who is getting there first, or who is doing it best. Engaged spirituality is concerned with the journey, the process; and wherever we are, whatever we do, whoever we are, we are at home in that moment, we are occupying a sacred space. That to me is bringing the spiritual into the political.

I would like to end with the words of D.H. Lawrence:

When we get out of the glass bottles of our self
and when we escape like squirrels turning in the cages of our personality
and get into the forests again,
we shall shiver with cold and fright
but things will happen to us
so that we don't know ourselves.

Cool, underlying life will rush in,
and passion will make our bodies taut with power,
we shall stamp our feet with new power
and old things will fall down,
we shall laugh, and institutions will curl up like burnt paper

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