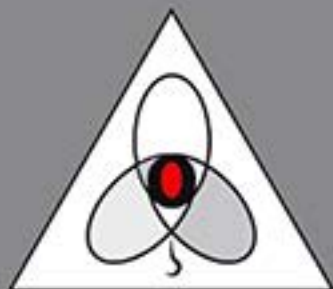


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# CIRPIT REVIEW

n. 5 - 2014



## PROCEEDINGS

Symposium, Baltimore,  
 November 2013

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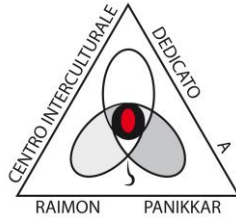
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n. 5 – 2014

## **Proceedings**

*Symposium on the Dialogical Dialogue and Raimon Panikkar  
Baltimore, November 2013*

Under the auspices of  
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In conjunction with the Annual Meeting of  
The American Academy of Religion (AAR)

Edited by Michiko Yusa, Young-Chan Ro

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## From the Editors

It was on a Monday—on October 22, 2012—when the idea of holding an academic meeting on Raimon Panikkar in North America dawned on us. We were in a car, on our way to Siena for the CIRPIT Symposium that was to take place the following day at the University of Siena. Inspired and enchanted by the bucolic scenery of the Tuscan countryside, the initial idea was conceived.

The idea grew into two separate events, both held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) in Baltimore in November 2013. One was the **Friday symposium**, under the auspices of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy, on the dialogical philosophy of Raimon Panikkar (it took place on November 22, at Marriott Inner Harbor Hotel, Stadium Ballroom 5). The other event was the **Roundtable panel** for the Comparative Studies in Religion Section of the AAR on the legacy of Panikkar's imparative study of religion (it took place on November 24, at Hilton Hotel Baltimore, Key 11).

At both the Friday symposium and the Roundtable panel, we paid tribute to the contributions of the late Professor Raimon Panikkar, our mentor from the University of California Santa Barbara days, whose interests ranged widely to encompass the issues of science, technocracy, history, the meaning of temporality, and the spirituality of "post-historical" humanity, clearly reflecting his realistic observation that we live in an unfamiliar world that arose following the "splitting of atoms." While remaining rooted in Christian spirituality, Panikkar engaged in interfaith dialogue, speaking for a radically inter-traditional epistemology. The purpose of the symposium was for friends and scholars interested in Panikkar's thought to get together, critically address important issues raised by Panikkar, and assess the merit of dialogical and intercultural studies in our profession in today's world.

Both meetings were very well attended, beyond the wildest expectations of the organizers, and we must say that we were very pleased with the significant outcome of them. In order to "keep the momentum going" (as we say in North America), we decided to compile this special issue of proceedings. Our heartfelt thanks go to the CIRPIT not only for generously agreeing to sponsor this publication, but also seeing through the onerous task of putting the volume together.

In this volume, presentations made at the Friday symposium are followed by the papers presented at the roundtable session. For the Friday symposium, the presenters were as follows: Milena Carrara Pavan (President of Vivarium), Roberta Cappellini (President, CIRPIT), Michiko Yusa (Western Washington University), Bret W. Davis (Loyola University Maryland), Young-Chan Ro (George Mason University & University of Notre Dame), Fred Dallmayr (University of Notre Dame), Francis Clooney



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(Harvard University), Purushottama Bilimoria (University of Melbourne, UC Berkeley), Abraham Vález de Cea (Eastern Kentucky University), John Blackman (practicing lawyer, San Francisco), and Joseph Prabhu (California State University Los Angeles). Fred Dallmayr gave the keynote speech, in which he was asked to present his thought-provoking paper, "A Secular Age? Reflections on Taylor & Panikkar," which was originally given at the CIRPIT Naples Colloquium in December 2010 and published in the *CIRPIT Review* 2/2011, 76-90. Francis Clooney's response to the keynote presentation is followed by Fred Dallmayr's further response in this present volume.

The Sunday roundtable program was presided over by Gerald James Larson (UC Santa Barbara), the former colleague of R. Panikkar. Fred Dallmayr gave a paper on Panikkar on human rights. Presentations by Catherine Cornille (Boston College), Young-chan Ro, and Michiko Yusa, as well as Francis Clooney's response to the presentations, are clustered together in this volume.

One of the important reasons for holding the Friday symposium on Panikkar's thought in North America was to get together with our old friend Scott Eastham from New Zealand. He was a fellow seminar mate at the University of California Santa Barbara graduate school, and he worked closely with Panikkar as editor for over three decades. We were gravely concerned to learn that his fragile health had begun to fail by mid-summer 2013. On October 4, 2013, on the day of the Feast of St. Francis, Scott died. It was a tremendous moral blow to us all, but nevertheless we dedicated our symposium to his loving memory. We have now also compiled this volume of proceedings to dedicate it to the enduring memory of Scott. Scott's closest friends, John Blackman and Yakshi Vadeboncoeur (the late Roger Rapp's wife), contributed poems to honor the poet-scholar. Other loving tributes to Scott also grace this volume.

To be mentioned here are the passing of three further members of the Panikkar seminar at UCSB: Charles Vernoff on March 11, 2013, Warren Lew on January 11, 2011, and Roger Rapp on February 19, 2010. We carry the memories and presence of these friends, as well as of our mentor Raimon Panikkar, in our hearts, and do our best to spread the bright light they shed on the world around them.

March 17, 2014  
Michiko Yusa  
Young-Chan Ro

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## Foreword

Gerald James Larson

*Tagore Professor Emeritus, Indiana University, Bloomington*

*Prof. Emeritus, Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara*

I first met Raimon Panikkar (or, as I knew him when he lived in Santa Barbara, Raimundo Panikkar) in Varanasi, India, when my family and I were in India for the first time in 1968. I was doing a postdoc at Banaras Hindu University that year. I had spoken with Raimundo by phone earlier in the spring of 1968 before heading out to India with my family, when Raimundo was a visiting professor at Harvard, and I recall that he advised me that it might be better for my family if I were to do my postdoc at Delhi University or in Pune rather than Varanasi (or Banaras) because of health problems that might occur in the sacred city of the Hindus. My wife and I discussed Raimundo's recommendation, but we persisted in pursuing Banaras and BHU. We were fortunate that year, and in subsequent years as well, since Banaras Hindu University regularly provided us with excellent campus accommodations, both when I was a postdoc and later when I was a visiting professor in philosophy at BHU.

Raimundo maintained a regular residence in Banaras in those years, a small "penthouse" room on the roof of a Śaivite Hindu temple at Hanuman Ghat on the banks of the Ganges. His small rooftop room had a veranda with an exquisite view of the sacred Ganga, and I recall attending Raimundo's multi-cultural discussion group that met once a week on that roof. It was a remarkable multi-religious experience with participants from around the world (France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, the US and various States of India), and I was, and still continue to be amazed, that Raimundo had the unusual capacity to converse, at least with the Europeans and Indians, in their various native tongues (English, French, German, Italian, Hindi, Tamil, and Malayalam). He was able to speak, write, and publish in almost all of these European and Indian languages. His famous comment, now almost a cliché, namely, "I started as a Christian, I discovered I was a Hindu and returned as a Buddhist without ceasing to be a Christian," was in evidence at each evening gathering during that academic year of 1968-69. The intense conversations that took place through those many months have remained with me throughout my own personal career.

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So much so that when I joined the faculty in religious studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and became chair of the department in 1970-71, I thought that it would be an excellent idea for the department to get Raimundo Panikkar for our faculty, if it were at all possible, and we were indeed successful in making possible his appointment as professor of religious studies, effective fall quarter, 1971. His was a controversial appointment. Some were persuaded that it was a mistake for the department of religious studies to hire a Roman Catholic priest in a secular, state-funded research university like the University of California. Others were persuaded that it was a mistake to hire any sort of theologian, regardless of the religious tradition involved, since a secular university must be responsible for maintaining a careful distinction between religion and the state.

I argued, to the contrary (fortunately, with a majority of others), that the presence of a first-rate intellectual with demonstrable scholarly training, grounded in a particular religious tradition with theological depth as a believer in one tradition but fully capable of engaging other traditions in a critical and sophisticated manner, widely published with an international reputation, and clearly different from conventional American academics, would be the sort of extraordinary appointment that would signal that religious studies at UCSB would be taking a new turn in the academic study of religion. This was also the time in the department's history when we were undertaking the task of developing our incipient graduate program into a first-rate national operation. Panikkar, of course, was only one of many graduate level faculty appointments that the department was able to make in those years, but his was a crucial first step for our new focus on cross-cultural and interdisciplinary work in the study of religion.

His unusual personal background had a great deal to do with his scholarly identity and his intellectual trajectory. Born in Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain in 1918 of an Indian (from Kerala) father and a Spanish Roman Catholic mother, he spent the first thirty-seven years primarily in Spain, Germany and Italy. In 1946 he was ordained a Roman Catholic priest. He was for some time a member of Opus Dei but later resigned from that order. Later he served in the Diocese of Banaras (in Varanasi, India). He earned three doctoral degrees, in philosophy, chemistry and theology respectively, and, as mentioned above he wrote in many European languages, including Spanish, French, German, Italian and, of course, English. He was also knowledgeable in several Indian languages, Sanskrit (Vedic and Classical), Hindi and Malayalam.

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He left Europe for India in 1954 and shortly thereafter decided to remain in India, eventually choosing Indian citizenship. He was intrigued by the world of Hindu and Buddhist spirituality and spent much of the last half of his life relating Hindu and Buddhist meditation with his Catholic contemplative spirituality. He married late in life, and throughout his career he published some fifty books and several hundred scholarly articles. He was ably assisted in his scholarly work by his research assistant of many years, Maria del Carmen Tapia.

During his sixteen years at UC Santa Barbara (1971-1987), he taught undergraduate lecture courses and graduate seminars. He was quite popular with undergraduate students who were amazed at his charismatic ability to present Hindu, Buddhist and Christian spirituality in ways that took seriously the rich spirituality in each tradition, stressing comparative cross-cultural insights without losing sight of profound differences between various traditions. On the graduate level he encouraged rigorous scholarly research with careful attention to texts in their original languages (Latin, Greek, Vedic Sanskrit and Classical Sanskrit, German, French, and so forth). He clearly realized, however, that scholarly precision and immersion in original texts was only the beginning of serious work in religious studies. What really mattered for a doctorate in religious studies was critical insight along with original reflection into the meaning of the spiritual quest in the traditions under scrutiny.

Panikkar retired from UC Santa Barbara, becoming professor emeritus in religious studies in 1987, and for the remainder of his life took up residence in Tavertet (Osona) in Catalonia where he continued to pursue research, teaching, and writing until his death in 2010 at the age of 91.

Raimundo Panikkar and I remained good friends during our many years together as colleagues at UC Santa Barbara as well as during the years before and after our time at UC Santa Barbara, and it is a great honor for me to write this Foreword to this remarkable collection of essays.

Professor Michiko Yusa and Professor Young-chan Ro, both former students of Raimundo Panikkar, deserve great credit for co-chairing the all-day symposium on Panikkar's work during the American Academy of Religion meetings in Baltimore, Maryland, in November 2013. Also they were instrumental in putting together a special session at the AAR meetings in the Comparative Studies in Religion Section, entitled "Raimon Panikkar—Enduring Legacies." The essays in this collection derive largely from these gatherings.

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## Opera Omnia: The Philosophical-Spiritual Pilgrimage of Raimon Panikkar in Dialogue with Other Cultures and Religions

Milena Carrara Pavan,  
*President of Vivarium*

### Abstract

*Each of Panikkar's writings can be considered a step of his long pilgrimage on earth, a physical step in time and space of human history, and a philosophical-spiritual step, by considering philosophy not as the 'love of knowledge' but the 'knowledge of love,' and being aware—to use the last words of his philosophical testament, *The Rhythm of Being*—that more important than the tree of knowledge is the tree of Life. To achieve fullness of life Panikkar always considered indispensable a dialogue with other religions and cultures, expressions of man in his inexhaustible search for that harmony, which unites the earthly and the heavenly. The publication of his *Opera Omnia* is also a testimony of the one who accompanied him for a long part of his journey, assisting Panikkar in the colossal task of organizing, translating, and spreading his writings in the world.*

I joyfully accepted the invitation to take part in this seminar at the prestigious American Academy of Religions to present the *Opera Omnia* (The Complete Works) of Panikkar. Much of his most important writing dates back to the long academic period spent here in America, first at Harvard University and then at the University of California, Santa Barbara. My greatest thanks go to the organizers, Professors Michiko Yusa and Young-chan Ro, who were also Panikkar's students in that period. They are now loyal proponents of his thinking, like Roger Rapp and Scott Eastham, whom we mourn today. Roger assisted the process of the publication of *The Rhythm of Being*, dedicating one year to the transcription and insertion of all the notes. Scott was due to make a final reading of all the volumes of the *Opera Omnia*.

As organizer and compiler of R. Panikkar's *Opera Omnia*, I am here to speak about its development and dissemination in the world.

The decision to publish the collection of his writings did not come easily for Panikkar. More than once, he had to overcome the temptation to abandon the attempt, the reason being that, though he fully subscribed to the Latin saying that *scripta manent*, he also firmly believed that what actually matters in the final analysis is to live out life. "The great masters, Pythagoras, Socrates, Buddha, and Jesus, did not actually write a single word, other than in the hearts of their disciples," he used to say.

It took me years of working alongside Panikkar to collect and

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systematically organize his writings, which include not only all of his books but also major articles, which helped to present the most complete picture of his thinking. The work involved selecting and classifying his writings according to different subjects, and at times also editing and updating them, as he frequently felt the need to change or add something. The work led us to draft the general outline of the *Opera Omnia*, which consisted of some twenty books, each one with an introduction by Panikkar himself. He managed to see only three of these volumes published in print, leaving me the task of continuing and completing the work, along with instructions on how to proceed.

I have been supported in this arduous task by the Vivarium Raimon Panikkar Foundation, which continues the work of the Center for Intercultural Studies, whose founder and driving force was Panikkar. In compliance with his wishes, Vivarium inherited his intellectual work, with the specific task of publishing and spreading his thinking in the world.

I must emphasize that without the initiative of Sante Bagnoli, president of the Italian publishing house Jaca Book, which had already published various important books by Panikkar, the *Opera Omnia* would not have come to light in Italian, and certainly not in other languages. Sante Bagnoli, who had a relationship of reciprocal respect and friendship with Panikkar, wisely suggested to him while he was still fully active that he should organize the entire *Opera Omnia* for publication.

It is thanks to the renowned reliability of Jaca Book, which guaranteed to publish the original edition, that other foreign publishing houses have had the courage to embark on such a challenging enterprise.

To date, eight volumes have been published in Italian by Jaca Book (the ninth is in the making; in the last five years we are already halfway through the road); seven volumes in Catalan by the publishing house Fragmenta, and three in French by Editions du Cerf. In Spanish, the books will begin to be published in 2014 at a pace of two volumes per year by the publishing house Herder of Barcelona.

Last but not least, the English version will be published by Orbis Books of New York, represented here by Robert Ellsberg, editor-in-chief, and Jim Kean, who will take care of the editing of the various volumes. Robert and Jim are here to present the *Opera Omnia* to the American public, as you can see from the brochure. Next year the first two volumes, dedicated to *Mysticism and Spirituality*, will be published.

We can say, therefore, that the project of spreading Panikkar's philosophy throughout the world is well underway, and the Vivarium Raimon Panikkar Foundation and I myself, as President of the Foundation and close assistant of Panikkar in this great work, as well as Jaca Book, which is also the international agent, are extremely satisfied with what has so far been accomplished and planned for the future.

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## **Meditations of a Mediator: Applying R. Panikkar's Insights to Dispute Resolution**

John S. Blackman  
*Attorney/Mediator, San Francisco*

### **Abstract**

*As a trial lawyer and professional mediator I have seen the wisdom of Raimon Panikkar come to life in many ways in the everyday world. This paper explores three major realizations that have unfolded from my studies of Panikkar. The first is an awareness of the multivalent nature of Reality: No one person can tell the 'Whole Story.' Second, we are all mediators—mediators and co-creators of the Real—and all disputes can be understood by analyzing the mistaken assumptions and dashed expectations of the parties involved in the dispute. Third, as Panikkar has famously said, "Peace can never be imposed; it can only be received." The resolution of conflict is always more authentic—more powerful and longer lasting—if it comes willingly from within rather than being imposed from without.*

### **Introduction**

Reading and reveling in the philosophical works of Raimon Panikkar is an utter delight. Bringing his intuitions into play in everyday life is even more exciting.

I studied under Dr. Panikkar at the University of California at Santa Barbara for four years in the early 1970's, and stayed in touch with him until his passing in 2010. One of my closest friends throughout these years was Scott Eastham, whom we all knew and loved not only as Panikkar's right-hand man in the English language, but also as a formidable scholar in his own right. Scott's untimely passing in 2013 has left a void that cannot be filled. I dedicate this paper to him, and offer it as a prayer that others might take up where Scott left off, and that Panikkar's work may be carried forward on strong shoulders.

After taking some time off to enjoy the world, following my graduation from UCSB, I became a trial attorney, then later a mediator as well. I have mediated all manner of civil disputes, from small interpersonal disputes to commercial disputes involving millions of dollars. As a dispute resolver—a modern day shaman of the tribe, if I dare say—I have used many insights in my mediation practice that I gained from Panikkar during my years at Santa Barbara and beyond.

Today I speak of three of those insights.

When Scott and I were living in Santa Barbara in the 1970's, I remember mentioning to him how potent Panikkar's insights were, and how difficult it was for the 'man on the street' to read his works and benefit from

his incredible insights. It was almost as if reading Panikkar was like touching the Ark of the Covenant, giving unsuspecting seekers a shock that would throw them clear across the room.

But Scott was so adept at understanding what Panikkar was saying it sometimes took my breath away. He was the only person I have ever known who could go toe-to-toe with Panikkar. Scott's sharp but graceful editorial hand is evident in much of Panikkar's greatest work, most notably *The Cosmotheandric Experience*<sup>1</sup> and *The Rhythm of Being*.<sup>2</sup> He had a way of explaining Panikkar's insights to us mere mortals that was uncanny, and I told him more than once that I saw his role of 'translating' Panikkar for the masses as acting as a sort of 'human capacitor.' (In electronics, capacitors are devices that among other things are used in order to 'step down' the energy from a more potent source, so that energy can be channeled into safer, more easily usable forms.)

If each of us who has read and internalized the insights and intuitions of Panikkar could take this energy, save it, reconfigure it, and in effect 'translate' it into our daily lives, then somehow we might honor the intent of his life's work, which always favored actual practice and concrete action over theories and abstractions.

It is important that we carry on this work of 'translating' the insights and intuitions of Panikkar into the 'real world,' as it were, and to continue to act as human capacitors (and mediators!) of the magnificent insights he laid before us. In this spirit, I offer these comments, as my small contribution to actually living the "new *mythos*"<sup>3</sup> to which Panikkar dedicated his life.

### **Reality is multivalent; no one person can tell the 'Whole Story.'**

In nearly every mediation I have conducted the participants are convinced that their interpretation of the events leading up to the dispute is unassailably correct, while the other side's perception of what happened is at minimum horribly flawed, if not a downright confabulation.

But this is nothing new. Human history is littered with examples of people attacking those whose perceptions differ. What did surprise me, at least at first, however, was how difficult it can be to get each side to step outside their own limited perspective and appreciate the fact that not only

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<sup>1</sup> R. Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience: Emerging Religious Consciousness*, edited with introduction by Scott Eastham (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993).

<sup>2</sup> R. Panikkar, *The Rhythm of Being*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> "The new *mythos* will certainly contain elements from all the strata of humanity, but it will need a glue, so to speak, a leading thread, a dynamic force that will meld old and new into something we cannot yet properly foresee. I believe that the cosmotheandric insight may have sufficient traditional elements, and just enough of a revolutionary character, to serve as that catalyst for hope." R. Panikkar, *The Rhythm of Being*, *op. cit.*, 404.



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## Intertraditional Dialogue: From Gadamer's Diachronic to Panikkar's Diatopical Hermeneutics

Bret W. Davis  
*Loyola University Maryland*

### Abstract

*Raimon Panikkar is undoubtedly among the most significant intercultural philosophers of the past century. In his life and in his thought he traversed the borders between Western and Indian traditions of philosophy and religion. This essay attempts to plumb the depths of Panikkar's hermeneutics of intertraditional dialogue by way of setting it into sympathetic and critical dialogue with the intratraditional hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Panikkar is best read after Gadamer, not only because in some ways he builds on the foundation of philosophical hermeneutics laid by Gadamer, but also, and even more importantly, because in other ways he digs beneath that foundation. Specifically, Panikkar's thought enables us not only to appreciate, but also to question the limits of, the fundamental roles played by language and tradition in Gadamer's hermeneutics. Panikkar's own hermeneutical reflections arise directly out of intertraditional as well as interlinguistic experience; and they ultimately point us to the profoundest dimension of dialogue, a dimension in which the words we share arise out of and gesture back into the depths of an originary silence.*

Raimon Panikkar (1918–2010) is undoubtedly one of the most significant intercultural and interreligious thinkers of the past century.<sup>1</sup> He traversed—in his life and in his works—the borders between Western and Indian traditions of philosophy and religion. He has thought more persistently and deeply than anyone about the hermeneutical as well as political, ethical, and religious issues involved in building dialogical bridges between these traditions. This article attempts to plumb the depths of Panikkar's *intertraditional* hermeneutics by way of setting it into sympathetic and critical dialogue with the *intratraditional* hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002). Panikkar is best read after Gadamer, not only because in some ways he builds on the foundation of philosophical hermeneutics laid by Gadamer, but also, and even more importantly, because in other ways he digs beneath that foundation.

Although direct references to Gadamer in his writings are few and far between, Panikkar taught seminars on Gadamer's texts and is said to

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on a longer article, "Sharing Words of Silence: Panikkar after Gadamer," forthcoming in *Comparative and Continental Philosophy* 7.1 (2015). I thank the editors of that journal and Maney Publishing for permission to reuse this material.

have always spoken very highly of him and his thought.<sup>2</sup> Yet, while Gadamer shared many of the same concerns and insights and, as we shall see, was moving in much the same direction as Panikkar, in the end the radicality and reach of Gadamer's hermeneutics is curtailed by his lack of consideration of, and engagement in, dialogue with non-Western traditions. To the extent that Panikkar is able to attain to some *deeper* hermeneutic insights, it is because he *expands* the field of hermeneutical inquiry. By expanding the range of his interest and experience to include dialogue between radically different traditions, Panikkar is lead, and leads us, to face such questions as: How can people learn to speak with one another if, to begin with, they do not share a common language? How can hermeneutical bridges be built between persons who belong to radically different traditions? We shall find that such questions, arising out of intercultural experience, lead us back to the profoundest dimension of dialogue, a dimension in which the words we share arise out of and gesture back into the depths of an originary silence.

### **The Fundamental Role of (the Western) Tradition for Gadamer**

Gadamer was primarily concerned with advancing his thesis of “the universality of hermeneutics” by way of examining the dialogue that takes place between a reader and a classical text, an event of interpretation which spans the historical distance between the past and the present of (the Western) tradition. Nevertheless, Wilhelm Halbfass—whose own central concern was the dialogue between Western and Indian thought—has suggested that “there is, however, no compelling reason why [Gadamer's] hermeneutical concepts and perspectives should not be applicable in a wider, trans-cultural context.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed Gadamer himself suggests on occasion that his hermeneutics can be applied to the question of “the coexistence of fundamentally different cultures.”<sup>4</sup>

Let me be clear that I do think cross-cultural philosophers have a great deal to learn from Gadamer's hermeneutics.<sup>5</sup> Let us not be ungrateful to this giant on whose shoulders we are standing! He has much to teach us regarding, for example, how foregrounding our prejudices moves us along

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<sup>2</sup> This was related to me by a number of former students of Panikkar at the 2013 meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Baltimore, where a version of this paper was presented.

<sup>3</sup> Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 165.

<sup>4</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Europa und die Oikoumene,” in *Europa und die Philosophie*, Hans-Helmut Gander, ed., (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1993), 72.

<sup>5</sup> In addition to the above referenced work by Halbfass, I would point to the richly instructive work that Fred Dallmayr has done in this regard. See in particular his *Beyond Orientalism: Essays on Cross-Cultural Encounter*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), xiii–xiv and chapter 2.

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## Panikkar's intra-inter-dialogical philosophy: imparative vs. comparative? <sup>1</sup>

M. Roberta Cappellini  
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### Abstract

*In response to Ralph Weber's critique of Panikkar's essay regarding 'the epistemologically unfounded statements' about the distinction between comparative and 'imparative' philosophy, this essay raises a question as to the basis of Weber's presupposition referring to the dyadic epistemological dilemma. In reality Panikkar's critique of the whole dialectical western monoculture, as it emerges out of a careful reading of his work, clearly addresses its basic principles, in particular, its founding myth, and consequently it questions the epistemological certainty that forms such understanding. Differing from this approach, the awareness of contingency, or "radical relativity" of all philosophical forms, seems to be the fundamental view suggested by Panikkar to renew the way of doing philosophy today. My reflection then moves into the contents of Panikkar's 'imparative philosophy', considering its intra-inter-cultural aspects that, unlike the comparative dialectical approach, indicate a different, new, and triadic dialogical method, oriented to the transformation of the subjective individuality into a new relational identity through the process of humanization that is able to develop into humaneness.*

### Introduction

Referring to Panikkar's article of 1988, "What is Comparative Philosophy Comparing?" and to the differences that the philosopher draws between 'comparative system' and 'imparative attitude', Ralph Weber opens an epistemological question, investigating its philosophical foundations.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, Weber admits that the above article of Panikkar does not present a detailed analysis to provide a dialectical demonstration apt to assert the superiority of a specific system over another, or defend a particular philosophical position. According to Weber Panikkar misses the target.

In my turn without entering Weber's analysis in detail, I will just take a cue from it, and go through some considerations in my brief reflection, the first of which examines a different approach to the dialectical

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<sup>1</sup> Raimon Panikkar, "What is Comparative Philosophy Comparing?" in *Interpreting across Boundaries, New Essays in Comparative Philosophy*, G. J. Larson and E. Deutsch, ed., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 116-136.

<sup>2</sup> Ralph Weber, "Raimon Panikkar, and what 'philosophy' is comparative philosophy comparing?" in *Cirpit Review* 4/2012, (Milano), 167-176.

epistemological dilemma proposed by Weber's critique, asking whether it may be relevant to investigate it in the direction of a supposedly panikkarian dialectical approach according to the clear and distinct definition of philosophy, or if Panikkar's vision indicates another direction, as I am going to show .

We are undoubtedly faced with a *novum*, perhaps not sufficiently taken into account by Weber, in its philosophical consequences. Panikkar states that "today we have to face a challenge, a radically new vision of reality." *Radically* is the key word here, which indicates that the transformation that is required by the current epochal change we are experiencing is deep, and must reach the myths that constitute the roots of our cultures, and consequently also of our thought systems. It is important to highlight that Panikkar does not propose a new philosophical 'system', but a change in our philosophical 'attitude'. *Attitude* is the second key word referring to a different view of reality and of praxis, which reverses the canons of modern philosophy.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Epistemology of the Hunter<sup>4</sup>**

Starting from premises subsequently confirmed by the Gifford lectures and the text, *The Rhythm of Being*, Panikkar begins his critique, through the exposure of three philosophical approaches: historical, scientific, and 'sophianic', with an explicit reference to the monotheistic, monomorphic limits of modern culture, by taking the critical distances from its thought systems—while of course without denying them—particularly those related to Parmenidean, Cartesian, Kantian assumptions: the identification of reality with thought and its universalistic claim, the dialectical method of 'the armed reason', its unique principle of non-contradiction, the dichotomy of binary logic, and the concept of pure reason. Panikkar called this thought system 'the epistemology of the hunter', as being based on an instrumental reason that for centuries has separated thought from life, mind from body, matter from spirit, reason from love, and immanence from transcendence. This created the conditions for a fragmentation of knowledge in multiple specialist drifts, breaking the vision of the whole and disabling the intuitive faculty.

Consequently 'the real epistemological problem' presents itself every time we apply this discriminating, dialectical attitude, pretending to

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<sup>3</sup> Raimon Panikkar, *The Rhythm of Being, The Gifford Lectures*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2010), 22-24, and *Pluralismo e Interculturalità*, Vol.VI/1 *Opera Omnia*, (Milano: Jaca Book, 2009), 45, 255 ff.

<sup>4</sup> R. Panikkar, *Pace e Interculturalità*, (Milano: Jaca Book, 2002), 45-6; (*Pluralismo e Interculturalità*, *op. cit.*, 265). Concerning the epistemological questions see A. Calabrese, *Il paradigma accogliente, la filosofia interculturale in Raimon Panikkar*, (Milano: Mimesis, Triquetra, 2012).

## **Śruti-prāmānya (scriptural testimony) and the 'Imparative Philosophy' in Raimon Panikkar's Thinking**

Purushottama Bilimoria  
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### **Abstract**

*This tribute to a revered mentor of mine, Raimon Panikkar, will focus on just two of the theses that Panikkar developed over the course of his illustrious career. The first thesis draws from Panikkar's work toward figuring out just what the Indian hermeneuticians meant by Śruti ('authorless scripture'). Panikkar discusses this puzzling doctrine in the context of understanding Ṛgvedic mantras on 'Vāk,' (speech) and 'Gāyatrī (meter), drawing in Indian theories of word and meaning, and the relation between texts and orthopraxis. Panikkar revealed his leanings towards the idea of 'transpersonal revelation'. I relate these insights to my own work on śabdapramāṇa (verbal testimony) and śrutiprāmānya (scriptural testimony), about which Panikkar and I carried out in dialogue over several years. The second thesis deals with what Panikkar proposed as imparative hermeneutics. I discuss how this proposal differs from comparative philosophy, and its ramifications for comparative philosophy of religion as well as for cross-cultural dialogue. Panikkar speaks of diatopical discoursing to underscore differences, critical tolerance, plurality, and perspectivism, while still seeking for emergent universality in human experience.*

### **Introduction**

This essay is my tribute to Raimon Panikkar. I will focus only on two theses that I developed in conversation with Panikkar over the course of his illustrious career.

The first thesis draws from Panikkar's work on the Indian traditions, wherein together with him, I attempted to investigate just what the Brahmanic hermeneuticians, especially of Mīmāṃsakas, meant by *Śruti*. *Śruti* is freely rendered as 'revelation,' but better, 'authorlessly revealed scripture.' Panikkar discusses this issue at length in the context of understanding Ṛgvedic mantras on '*Vāk*,' (Speech) and '*Gāyatrī* (Meter), that deal with the specific Indian theories of sound and meaning, and the relation between text and rites, where he demonstrated his leanings towards transpersonal revelation.<sup>1</sup>

The second thesis concerns the transformation of the practice of

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<sup>1</sup> Raimon Panikkar, *Vedic Experience: Mantramañjarī (An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration)*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977).

comparative philosophy (and to an extent it extends into comparative religion). Panikkar had a good deal of insightful things to say about the motivations and mechanics of comparative philosophy. Given the orientalist origins of this sub-discipline, of which everyone is nowadays ever cautious, Panikkar proposed something he called "imparative hermeneutics," which he first properly articulated at the international research conference sponsored by the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy (SACP) in 1984.<sup>2</sup> I shall discuss what is novel in this proposition, and how radically it differs from comparative philosophy.

### First thesis: *Śruti*

So to the first thesis, beginning with some background to the ensuing dialogue. I had arrived in Santa Barbara armed with a two-volume work on *Śabda Pramāṇa: Word and Knowledge in Indian Philosophy*,<sup>3</sup> and I tried to describe to Panikkar in our meeting over the course of my visit how I might be able to gain an epistemic justification for *Śruti* being a *prāmāṇya*, or authoritative word from within the linguistic epistemology of *Śabdapramāṇa* that I had already extensively worked on. The argument I had been developing was that there is a particular way in which 'testimony' (*Śruti* as *śabda*: what has come to be known as 'scriptural testimony') can be considered to be authoritative if the truth conditions satisfy the structures of warrantability and when certain conditioning criteria are fulfilled, which would range from linguistic causal processes, phenomenological meaning and intentionality assimilation, to epistemological determinacies and conformity to principles of coherence, testability for defects, and possible falsification, as well as assertability in all possible worlds.

So basically, I had wanted to apply my philosophical thesis to a major trope of scriptural testimony in history and philosophy of religion, namely, *Śruti* as scriptural testimony. I felt that the word *śruti* was much misunderstood and badly translated as 'revelation' or its cognate in Indian, basically Hindu, tradition. The etymology of the term conveys nothing of the sort; it is couched in the 'word' in its very literal rendering as 'heard word,' echoing a sharp resonance with 'logos,' but with a difference, and this difference bears on the origins of this 'heard word', 'the voice.' It has nothing to do with 'whose word it is,' 'who spoke,' even whether a person or some non-personal trans-human being is the source of the voice, for it might be the wind, whispers of the sea, and so forth.

<sup>2</sup> The Conference theme was "Interpreting Across Boundaries," East-West Center, University of Hawaii, Honolulu. I was in attendance for this presentation and the debate that followed. Panikkar's presentation was later published (see note 28, below).

<sup>3</sup> Purushottama Bilimoria, *Śabdapramāṇa: Word and Knowledge A Doctrine in Nyāya-Mīmāṃsā, towards a Framework for śruti-prāmāṇya*, (Dordrecht: Reidel/Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988); 2<sup>nd</sup> edition: *Śabdapramāṇa: Testimony in Indian Philosophy*, with Prologue and additional Appendix, (New Delhi: DK PrintWorld).

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## Cross-cultural Hermeneutics

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### Abstract

*Raimon Panikkar called his cross-cultural hermeneutics “diatopical.” This paper goes into the three main concepts that constitute Panikkar’s method to achieve understanding of other religions and cultures, namely: the “principle of understanding as convincement,” the “imparative attitude” and “dialogue dialogue.” Panikkar’s hermeneutics has several advantages: it goes beyond the phenomenological method and Gadamer’s hermeneutics; it improves the scholar’s critical self-awareness and contributes to a fuller understanding of religious traditions; and it avoids some of the most controversial dilemmas within the field of religious studies, i.e., the dilemma between insider’s and outsider’s perspectives, and the dilemma between theological versus social scientific studies of religion. Dialogical methods, of which Panikkar’s hermeneutics would be one excellent example, are not only desirable but also indispensable for historical-critical scholarship today. After the postmodern and postcolonialist critique of the history of religions and its old comparativism, religious studies carried out without paying proper attention to the “multiple voices” involved in the process of understanding are today simply unacceptable. And one cannot pay proper attention to “voice” without actually entering into a profound conversation both with oneself (intra-religious dialogue) and with others (interfaith/interreligious dialogue).*

### Panikkar's Diatopical Hermeneutics

For Raimon Panikkar, the ultimate goals of interreligious dialogue are communication and mutual understanding, not agreement, conversion, or the creation of a new universal religion. In Panikkar’s words: “The ideal is communication in order to bridge the gulfs of mutual ignorance and misunderstandings between the different cultures of the world, letting them speak and speak out their own insights in their own languages.”<sup>1</sup>

Communication and mutual understanding are ends in and of themselves, though they may also serve as the means for variety of practical goals including social justice, peace, personal realization, and the mutual enrichment of human traditions. But what exactly does Panikkar mean by understanding? What is the proper method to understand other religious traditions?

According to Panikkar, cross-cultural understanding requires a new type of hermeneutics, which he calls “diatopical.” That is, a hermeneutics that involves “two (or more) cultures, which have independently developed

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<sup>1</sup> R. Panikkar, *The Intra-religious Dialogue*. (New York: Paulist Press, revised edition, 1999), 10.

in different spaces (*topoi*) their own methods of philosophizing and ways of reaching intelligibility along with their proper categories.”<sup>2</sup>

The fundamental assumption of diatopical hermeneutics is that the other does not necessarily have the same self-understanding as I have.<sup>3</sup> Each person—a term Panikkar uses to refer to individuals as well as to cultures and religions—is a source of understanding and self-understanding. This assumption has important consequences for the study of religions. Given that members of other religions are the sources of self-understanding, we do not have the right to superimpose our parameters and categories of understanding on them. Another consequence is that we cannot understand others’ religions unless we participate to some extent in the believer’s horizon of intelligibility. This is what Panikkar calls the “principle of understanding as conviction”: “we cannot understand a person’s ultimate convictions unless we somehow share them.”<sup>4</sup> The principle of understanding as conviction does not entail that the interpreter must convert to the other religion in order to understand it. The principle is hermeneutical, not religious—it only assumes that in order to understand other religious person, one needs to share to some extent the source of her beliefs, what Panikkar calls *mythos*—that is, the horizon of intelligibility that give rise to that person’s convictions.<sup>5</sup>

The principle of understanding as conviction goes beyond phenomenological approaches to the study of religions. For Panikkar, the phenomenological method “has its own merits and justification, because there is room for a clear and valid description of religious phenomena.”<sup>6</sup> However, the phenomenological method as it is commonly understood is insufficient to capture the belief of the believer. Since there is no naked or pure belief separate from the person who believes, the knowledge or *noema* of a religiously skeptical phenomenologist does not correspond to the belief or *pisteuma* of the believer.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, studies of religions are somewhat incomplete as long as they limit themselves to analyzing and describing religious phenomena from the outside. The problem is not solved by interviewing members of other religions and including their opinions in

<sup>2</sup> R. Panikkar, “What is Comparative Philosophy Comparing?” in G. J. Larson and E. Deutsch, eds., In *Interpreting Across Religious Boundaries*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 130.

<sup>3</sup> R. Panikkar, *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 9.

<sup>4</sup> R. Panikkar, *The Intra-religious Dialogue*, *op. cit.*, 34.

<sup>5</sup> R. Panikkar, *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man: Icon, Person, Mystery*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975), 132-167; R. Panikkar, *The Intra-religious Dialogue*, *op. cit.*, 38; R. Panikkar, *El diálogo indispensable: Paz entre las religiones*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Península, 2003), 70-71.

<sup>6</sup> R. Panikkar, *The Intra-religious Dialogue*, *op. cit.*, 76.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.



## Panikkar's Trinitarianism and His Critique of (Mono) Theism

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*Among those who have made the transition [to the future] some become mediators of the future for others who can make passage...I suggest that Raimundo Panikkar is such a spiritual mutant, one in whom the global mutation has already occurred and in whom the new forms of consciousness have been concretized...they (the spiritual mutants) are cross-cultural, for in them the great cultural traditions—formally distinct through their diverse historical origin and development—now converge, making these mutants heirs, for the first time in history, to the spiritual heritage of humankind. As such they become multi-dimensional, for they combine the polarities of the East and the West, outer and inner consciousness, science and mysticism, mythic and rational thinking, pragmatic involvement in the world and spiritual detachment.<sup>1</sup>*

### Abstract

*Raimon Panikkar was a prophetic thinker. Not only was he cross-cultural in outlook, he saw it as his task to absorb and assimilate the religious experience of humankind of the past five thousand years and point the way forward. In philosophical terms this meant charting the course of a post-historical and post-ontotheological religious imagination. In this quest, his theory of cosmotheandrim, a secular reworking of his interreligious account of the Christian Trinity, is crucial. The core of both accounts is a relational energy that he variously called "advaita," "Trinity" "radical relativity" and other homeomorphic equivalents. In his account of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit come into "being" in and through their co-relationality. The same logical structure is present in his theory of cosmotheandrim. This has implications for both monotheism and theism in general. Panikkar points the way to a post-theistic future.*

Let me begin by thanking the organizers for putting together this conference held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, the premier meeting of religious studies, as widely acknowledged by scholars of religion in the contemporary world. By pitching this conference at an academic level, they have honored their mentor, Raimon Panikkar, who considered his intellectual vocation to be

<sup>1</sup> Ewert Cousins, *Christ of the Twenty-First Century*, (Rockport, MA: Element, 1992), 73-74.

inextricably tied with his spiritual one. Panikkar probed and examined the demands and tensions of his intellectual-spiritual vocation in a number of different writings,<sup>2</sup> and his ongoing inquiry into the complex relations between what he, in his last work, calls the "Tree of Knowledge" and the "Tree of Life," runs like an Ariadnean thread throughout his work.<sup>3</sup> Panikkar was a multifaceted thinker and human being, who in his life performed many roles as a thinker, teacher, mystic, writer, and priest to mention only a few. Needless-to-say, the impact of his life and work will correspondingly be diverse. I am grateful that the organizers have chosen to focus on, and stress, his wide-ranging thought. Panikkar used to frequently invoke the Hegelian idea of the "*Anstrengung des Begriffs*," the hard labor of the Concept, in order to emphasize both the importance and the necessity of rigorous intellectual inquiry.

By contrast, there are people who choose to see Panikkar as a merely "inspirational" figure. This, I believe, is a mistake. Not only does it detach the "spiritual" from the "intellectual," which Panikkar took great pains to join together, but it also distorts and impoverishes his thought and risks turning him into a sort of New Age guru. Whatever the dubious merits of the latter role, it does a great disservice to someone whose inspirational value lies precisely in the profundity of his thinking.

With these introductory remarks, and being mindful that this contribution can only be a brief one in this particular setting, I will focus on two large themes: Panikkar's trinitarian ontology, and its implications for theism as a religious option. In the process, I will, of course, be touching on a number of related themes—pluralism, inter-religious theology, and the time—given the interconnected nature of Panikkar's thought. These themes, I believe, go to the heart of Panikkar's vision. In explicating them, I will be drawing on previous writing of mine.<sup>4</sup>

### **Panikkar's Trinitarianism**

What for long has driven and unified Panikkar's thinking has been his cosmotheandric vision of reality, what he calls the "trinity" of cosmic matter, human consciousness, and divine freedom in co-constitutive relationality. These three basic and irreducible dimensions of reality interpenetrate each other and exist only in relation to one another:

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, R. Panikkar, "Preface," *The Vedic Experience: Mantramajari*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), xxxv-xxxvi, and R. Panikkar, "Philosophy as Life-Style," in *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 77-108.

<sup>3</sup> See the "Epilogue," R. Panikkar, *The Rhythm of Being*, (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 2010), 405.

<sup>4</sup> The next few pages draw on my "Foreword" to *The Rhythm of Being*, *op. cit.*

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## How Then Is Raimon Panikkar Different from Charles Taylor?

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In his published essay, “A secular age? Reflections on Taylor and Panikkar,” presented in an abbreviated form at the symposium, Fred Dallmayr offers a masterful reflection on *The Rhythm of Being* and *A Secular Age*, the Gifford Lectures given respectively by Raimon Panikkar and Charles Taylor.<sup>1</sup> While it is not possible in this brief response to take up the many rich insights marking Dallmayr’s essay, I do wish to take up one issue with respect to Panikkar compared with Taylor: Dallmayr’s remarks on a seeming key difference between the two renowned scholars regarding how today’s secularity is to be assessed, how the immanent is related to the transcendent, and whether the trajectory of world history a cause for hope or sadness. Near the end of the essay Dallmayr steps back and assesses Panikkar’s overall position:

Toward the end of his book, Panikkar returns to the relation of meditation and praxis; of thinking and doing in a transformative process. As he writes: “The task of transforming the cosmos is not achieved by a merely passive attitude nor by sheer activism.” What is needed is a “synergy” in which human beings are seen neither as designing engineers nor as victims: “The world does not ‘go’ independently from us. We are also active factors in the destiny of the cosmos. Otherwise, discourse about the dignity of man, his ‘divinization’ or divine character is an illusion.” Seen from an advaitic angle, “man” is a “microcosmos” and even a “microtheos.” Hence, human participation in the rhythm of the cosmos means “a sharing in the divine dimension” or what is sometimes called “salvation history.” Participation in this dynamism is indeed a striving for a “better world”—but a striving where the latter is “neither the dream of an earthly paradise nor [a retreat into] the inner self alone,” but rather a struggle for “a world with less hatred and more love, with less violence and more justice.” ... As Panikkar finally pleads: “Plenitude, happiness, creativity, freedom, well-being, achievement etc. should not be given up but, on the contrary, should be enhanced by this transformative passage” from man-made history to a triadic redemptive story.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Editors's note: This essay was first published in *CIRPIT Review*, 2/2011, 76-90. It was subsequently published in the *International Journal of the Philosophy of Religion* (2012) 71:189–204. The present reference to this paper is made based on the latter.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 201

Dallmayr adds a word in approval of this vision of life:

The Rhythm of Being is an affirmation and celebration of “life” in its deeper advaitic meaning. Panikkar uses as equivalents the terms “plenitude, happiness, creativity, freedom, well-being;” another customary term is “flourishing” (often used to translate Aristotle’s *eudaimonia*). At another point, he introduces the word “life” “at the level of Being, as a human experience of the Whole;” the term here means “not only *anima*, animal life, but *physis*, *natura*, *prakriti*” referring to “reality as a Whole.”<sup>3</sup>

Regarding Taylor, however, Dallmayr expresses a certain disappointment:

On this issue, A Secular Age appears astonishingly (and unduly) dismissive. As Taylor notes in his Introduction, in modernity “we have moved from a world in which the place of fullness was understood as unproblematically outside or ‘beyond’ human life, to a conflicted age in which this construal is challenged by others which place it ... ‘within’ human life.” For Taylor (as mentioned before), the basic question raised by the modern secular age is “whether people [still] recognize something beyond or transcendent to their lives,” that is, whether their highest aim is “serving a good which is beyond, in the sense of independent of human flourishing” or involving “something other than human flourishing?”<sup>4</sup>

Dallmayr immediately makes clear that the point of his essay is to seek the common ground shared by Panikkar and Taylor, but only after making very clear indeed which side of the dispute is more to his liking:

Taylor’s comments here are puzzling — and also disturbing. They are disturbing in a time when many, presumably religious people are ready to throw away their lives in the hope of gaining quick access to the “beyond.” They are puzzling by jeopardizing the very meaning of faith. For most believers, salvation (or “*moksha*”) signifies precisely the highest level of flourishing and the ultimate fulfillment of life. What, then, does it mean for believers to seek something “outside or ‘beyond’ human life,” or something “transcendent to their lives?”<sup>5</sup>

It is not that Dallmayr does not respect Taylor’s work – he clearly does – nor that he proposes a rigid contrast – he insists on the enduring importance of both authors in the whole of their work — but by the contrast marked above, his puzzlement, which I share only in part, raises an interesting question for our consideration. Why are Taylor’s and Panikkar’s outlooks on the world so different, at least at this “Gifford moment” in their

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 201-202

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 202

## An Epistemological Foundation of Raimon Panikkar: A Mystical Approach

Young-Chan Ro

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### Abstract

*One of the major concerns for Panikkar was the modern Western concept of epistemology or ways of knowing, especially concerning the problem of the Cartesian dualism that separated epistemology from ontology. According to Panikkar, the modern Western world has elevated epistemology over ontology, i.e. “rational thinking” over “being” or reality. In this modern mentality, “thinking” has been reduced to and identified with “reasoning,” although “thinking” is a larger and a broader category than a simple “reasoning.” As an attempt to overcome this dualistic tendency, Panikkar takes a non-dualistic or an advaitic approach. This non-dualistic approach is deeply rooted in Panikkar’s mystical awareness in stressing the way of “being” that shapes the nature of thinking, rather than “thinking” defines “being.” In this sense, his epistemology is not based on a rational and intellectual frame as for a tool to obtain and grasp knowledge— what he calls, “the epistemology of the hunter.” Instead, Panikkar’s epistemology is ontologically oriented, i.e., “being” is the source of inspiration in shaping “thinking” and “reasoning.” I will also extend this mystical insight of Panikkar to the mystical dimension of Daoism.*

### Epistemology and Ontology

One of the key issues that Raimon Panikkar dealt was the ways of knowing, epistemology. For Panikkar, the human capacity for knowledge, understanding, or intelligibility, is broad, comprehensive, and even complex; it is not a simple process in reducing it to a rational process by appealing to reason and rationality. “Reason” and “rationality” among others characterize the modern Western world that was deeply influenced by the three major events that came to shape “modernity”: the Reformation, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment. In this “modern mentality,” “thinking” has been identified with “reasoning,” although “thinking” is a larger and a broader category than a simple “reasoning.” Human ability for consciousness for example is not to be reduced to the realm of “reason” and “rationality.” Moreover, the category of “being” is certainly larger than the realm of “thinking.” For Panikkar, “being” is larger than “reasoning” and “thinking,” and “being” should not be subjugated to “reason” or “thinking.” Panikkar’s main criticism of modern philosophy was based on his critical reflection on the modern Western epistemology shaped by Descartes’ formula in equating “thinking” with “being.” In this way, “thinking” or “consciousness” defines “being,” and “being” is conditioned by “thinking”: “I think, therefore I am.” Since Descartes Western philosophy tried to understand “being” or “reality” from the perspective of “rational” thinking

and intellectual analysis, which employs “language,” “term,” “concept,” and “rationality” have played a critical role in shaping “knowledge.” In this process “knowledge” is “obtained,” “acquired,” or “gained,” through a tool, an intellectual “network.” As a result, we no longer distinguish the difference between the “ways of knowing” of “reality” and “reality itself,” i.e. epistemology and ontology. Furthermore, we often identify the knowledge gained through our intellectual tools with reality itself. By doing so, we inevitably reduce “reality” or “being” into the process of how we obtain or capture the “knowledge” of reality. According to Panikkar, the modern Western philosophical and intellectual tradition was shaped by this kind of epistemology, i.e. in using a certain intellectual framework of thinking, namely, a purely rational interpretation of reality or being. Consequently, we see the dominion of epistemology over ontology. In this process, reason, rationality, language, and concept are set as a weapon to capture or attain the knowledge of reality. This is what Panikkar calls it “the epistemology of the hunter.”<sup>1</sup> The hunter’s epistemology is an active, aggressive, and readymade process to “obtain” and to “acquire” knowledge. The tool of the hunter’s epistemology is “reason” and “rationality.” Reason has become not only the “tool” but also the “judge” in determining “truth” and “reality.” In this paper, I am expounding on Panikkar’s epistemological approach in relationship with Western modernity, linking “reason” to “thinking,” and “thinking” to “being,” i.e., ontology, and its implication for a “mystic” way of thinking found in Daoism.

Let me begin with a personal anecdote to help explore Panikkar’s epistemological approach. When I was a student of Raimon Panikkar at the University of California Santa Barbara, I had a chance to ask him about a personal question. At that time, Panikkar, in addition to his regular teaching at UCSB, also preached on a regular basis at the Santa Barbara Old Mission, a historic Catholic church in Santa Barbara. I was not only impressed by his energy but also curious about the source of inspiration that enabled him to prepare such a formidable task of maintaining teaching and preaching at the same time.

I was also interested in the relationship between teaching and preaching in Panikkar because he was not only an excellent teacher but also an inspiring preacher. Teaching and preaching may differ from each other in that teaching is factual, intellectual, informative, and somewhat objective, while preaching is devotional, spiritual, inspirational, transformative, and subjective. For Panikkar, however, teaching and preaching are closely related to each other in the sense that teaching can also be inspirational and transformative as much as preaching can be informative and intellectual. To be sure, Panikkar certainly knew how to distinguish his teaching as a

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<sup>1</sup> Raimon Panikkar, *The Experience of God: Icons of the Mystery*, (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2006), 56.

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## Gender, the Feminine, and Cultural Disarmament in the Thought of Raimon Panikkar

Michiko Yusa  
Western Washington University

*Why are we responsible for our joy?  
One metaphysical anthropology has a simple answer:  
The goal of human nature, of any nature, is blessedness.<sup>1</sup>*

### Abstract

*Panikkar addressed the critical issues of peace and disarmament, our indifference to which would threaten the very existence not only of humankind but also of the environment. Conceiving military disarmament must be preceded by the transformation of humanity's consciousness, Panikkar saw the active role that intellectual-mystics must play today, while himself alertly engaging the dire issues of the world. For Panikkar, what he called the "feminine attitude" offered the key to each person's inner disarmament. First, however, we must clarify Panikkar's orthographic practice of "Man," which has given rise to controversies among scholars. We need to look to Panikkar's intention behind his effort at this orthographical challenge; a friendly emendation may be due. Next, I sketch Panikkar's understanding of "the feminine," understood ontologically, as a viable means of reducing conflicts on all levels, so that we may come a step closer to a harmonious coexistence of all beings on earth.*

### Introduction

Let me begin with the quotation above. It is extraordinary that Panikkar lived by this conviction, when he was acutely aware of the undeniable presence of destructive and life-threatening forces that are on the rise all over the world. "War," he writes, "is a *cultural phenomenon*," and not something natural. He cites the following data on the trend of increasing frequency of wars since 1480 in Europe:

Every culture since 1500 has seen more wars than the previous century. In the sixteenth century, Europeans fought 87 battles; in the seventeenth, 239; in the eighteenth century, 781; in the nineteenth, 651; and in the first forty years of the twentieth century, 892 battles were fought, according to

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<sup>1</sup> R. Panikkar, "Preface" to *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 2. Panikkar's prefaces typically contain the date and the location where he wrote them, each of which represented an intellectual signpost for him. In this case, it was "December 8, 1990, Kodaikkanal; February 2, 1991, Tavertet." Originally published in German as *Der Weisheit einer Wohnung Bereiten* (Munich: Kösel Verlag, 1991).

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statistics compiled by Wright and cited by Erich Fromm. [ . . . ] We now have thirty million persons permanently under arms.<sup>2</sup>

Panikkar remained a sober observer of global situations until the end of his life. And yet, despite all the odds-or because of all the odds stacked up against humanity-he deepened his conviction in the possibility of developing an alternate kind of being the world, by affirming the strength of spiritual power. His conviction that the goal of any nature is blessedness strikes me to summarize Panikkar's daring challenge to post-modernity, which also goes with the deep affirmation of peace.

One may also detect an element of mystical intuition in Panikkar's conviction. Here, let me qualify the word 'mystical,' which is prone to misunderstanding. For Panikkar, it stood for our *direct apprehension and radical affirmation* of life. Granted, some of us are more attune to this kind of awareness than others, but Panikkar went so far as to say that "We are all mystics."<sup>3</sup> Moreover, today's mystics are called to action, to be socially engaged, and not just live as hermits in the mountains. The world desperately needs the presence of the awakened.

If the "goal" of human or any nature is blessedness, how do we become aware of it? Once a young student said to Panikkar that she was depressed. To that, he responded: "But why? You have *no right* to be depressed." His point was that 'being' is beyond anyone's 'possession,' and that precious life force 'cannot be' depressed by definition. It is the cluster of ego-centered psychological junk that we pile upon our being that obfuscates our eyes and leads us to believe that we are 'depressed.' À la Gilson, Panikkar might have explained the principle behind his statement as: "To be a person is to participate in one of the highest excellences of the divine being"; the "person" is "an individual of a rational nature."<sup>4</sup> Affirmation of being is the hallmark of great world religious traditions. *Ananda* (blessedness) is one expression, "Everyday is a good day" (Chan Master

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<sup>2</sup> R. Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament, The Way to Peace*, trans. by R. R. Barr from Spanish, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press 1995), 82. Cf. Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (New York, Chicago, San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973), 215.

<sup>3</sup> DVD, "De Nieuwe Onschuld" (The New Innocence), (The Netherlands: IKON, 1997), 22:40-50:

[Let me speak of] a type of mysticism [which is] much more normal contact with reality, and if we do not live alienated, because of newspapers, or because of your passions, or because of all the things with which we are bombarded in the modern style of life, then, we are all mystics. In as long as I live, really authentically, genuinely, I touch something, which is ultimate. We may call it divine, *karma*, *kami*, God, whatever. Let's cease to put labels first.

<sup>4</sup> Etienne Gilson, *Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy* (Gifford Lectures 1931-1932), (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), 205.



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## Holism and Particularism: Panikkar on Human Rights

Fred Dallmayr  
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### Abstract

*The paper discusses a central issue troubling the discourse of "human rights"—the conundrum of universalism and particularism. According to the Declaration of 1948, human rights are proclaimed to be universal; at the same time, the roots of that Declaration in features of Western modernity cannot be overlooked. The issue was addressed by Raimon Panikkar in his essay, "Is the Notion of Human Rights a Western Concept?" For Panikkar, the answer is basically "yes" and "no." The historical and geographical limitation of the prevalent rights discourse is shown by its linkage with central aspects of Western modernity, such as anthropocentrism and methodological individualism. These Western contours emerge still more clearly in a comparison of that discourse with premodern Indian assumptions and concepts, which stress the embeddedness of human life in the "three worlds" (triloka) of the cosmos. Although appreciating the traditional Indian worldview, Panikkar does not believe that its holism can be preserved under modern conditions - where the presence of "mega-powers" (mega-states and mega-corporations) can pervert holism into totalitarian domination. Thus, his recommendation is to integrate or sublimate the older "cosmocentrism" and the modern "anthropocentrism" into a new "cosmotheandric" vision" reconciling rights and responsibilities.*

The notion of "human rights" is a pivotal conception of modern thought, and especially of modern democracy. And clearly, given the experiences of autocracy, despotism, and totalitarianism, the importance of human rights is beyond doubt. Yet, despite the obvious significance of the conception, its meaning and range of application are not easily determined—which has to do in large part with the elusive character of its terms.

The rights in question are called "human," which has a certain intuitive appeal. But what is "human"? Does the term denote a compact entity, with fixed or clearly defined boundaries? Sometimes (or rather most of the time) the rights are called "individual rights," in conformity with the modern penchant to identify "human" and "individual." But again, does the latter term designate a compact entity with fixed and unalterable contours? And when we turn to the composite expression "human rights," are rights here somehow humanized, which would yield something like "humane rights"? Or is it not rather the common assumption that rights are attached to the "human" like a rightful possession or property? which means that, in addition to other belongings, human beings also "own" rights? And when it comes to the notion of "rights," can we assume that their exercise is always rightful or "right"? Hence, what is the rightness of rights?

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The preceding questions only scratch the surface of the cauldron of issues connected with the concept of human rights. What is clear is that the concept stirs up difficult questions about human nature, justice, and the good life; hence, its discussion can hardly proceed without attention to such fields of inquiry as anthropology, philosophy, and even cosmology. It is commonly acknowledged that the phrase “human rights” arose basically in Western modernity and hence forms part and parcel of a complex constellation of ideas which circumscribes the meaning of “modernity.” This constellation differs significantly from the premodern nexus of ideas and life-forms prevailing in (Western) antiquity and the Middle Ages; and it also differs profoundly from many non-Western constellations of thought and conduct. In addition, as many writers have suggested, our contemporary period is marked by a transition between paradigms, bringing into view new horizons of life—including new horizons for the understanding of “human rights.”

Hence, the notion (to the extent it is transferrable) occupies a different place in different cultural constellations and cannot simply be transposed intact. All one can do is to look for 'equivalences' (provided the differences are not ignored). Moreover, different cultural contexts are not available for neutral inspection; they are not reified pieces in a cultural museum. If paradigms, especially linguistic paradigms, are also “forms of life,” as Wittgenstein said, then any move beyond a given paradigm involves an existential agony, a wrenching experience challenging ingrained assumptions and habitual modes of conduct. In the following, I want to explore some of the 'wrenching' induced by cross-paradigmatic comparison. In particular, I review arguments advanced by the Spanish-Indian thinker Raimon Panikkar about human rights, focusing on his comparison of the modern Western conception with traditional Indian views. By way of conclusion, I explore what character “human rights” might assume in the dawning post-modern and post-Western era.

Probably the most troubling and frequently debated issue about human rights is whether they are culture-specific or at least potentially universal. As it happens, Panikkar has discussed this issue in an illuminating way some three decades ago in an essay titled “Is the Notion of Human Rights a Western Concept?”<sup>1</sup> He answers the question ultimately with

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<sup>1</sup> Raimon Panikkar, “Is the Notion of Human Rights a Western Concept?” in *Diogenes*, No. 120 (1982), 75-102. Hereafter cited as “Human Rights.” The essay is an expanded and revised version of his presentation at the “Entretiens de Dakar” in Senegal, 1982. The meeting in Senegal was preceded by a UNESCO symposium held in Bangkok, Thailand, in December 1979, under the title “Meeting of Experts on the Place of Human Rights in Cultural and Religious Traditions”; see *Final Report*, SS-79/CONF. 607/10 of February 6, 1980. This essay is compiled as Chapter 7 of Raimon Panikkar, *The Invisible Harmony*:

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## **Raimon Panikkar: Between Comparative Theology and Imparative Philosophy**

Catherine Cornille  
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### **Abstract**

*Panikkar's work in the area of Hindu-Christian dialogue offers a rich opportunity to reflect on some of the methodological issues raised in the nascent field of comparative theology. His intellectual journey sheds light on the mutual dependency of the disciplines of comparative theology and theology of religions, while his particular way of engaging the dialogue between Hinduism and Christianity represents a test-case for what I have called a meta-confessional approach to comparative theology.*

Raimon Panikkar was ahead of his time in various disciplines or areas of theological and philosophical reflection. Prior to the formal establishment of the discipline of theology of religions, he was engaging in advanced theological reflection on the question of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ in light of the reality of religious plurality. And well before comparative theology had become a distinct field of theological research, he was involved in the serious theological engagement with Hindu texts and teachings. He also was at the forefront of the development of the area of comparative philosophy, developing clear methodological proposals for how it was to be understood and executed. His work in fact escaped clear disciplinary boundaries, drawing from any discipline relevant to the particular question or problem being explored. In spite, or because of this, it allows for fruitful reflection on some of the theological and methodological questions which have arisen in these fields. I will focus here in particular on Panikkar's contributions to the still nascent discipline of comparative theology. Two questions which are currently being discussed involve the relationship between comparative theology and theology of religions, and the confessional nature of comparative theology. Though Panikkar did not directly express himself on either of these questions, the actual example of his work does shed some light of these ongoing debates.

### **Comparative Theology and Theology of Religions**

The question of the relationship between comparative theology and theology of religions has been at the heart of many of the theoretical discussions of the past decade. The discipline of theology of religions involves the internal religious or theological reflection on the reality of religious plurality and its challenges for one's religious self-understanding. It focuses on the soteriological and/or epistemological status of other religions and on the resources one may find in one's own religion to allow for or encourage dialogue with the other. The various religious responses to

religious diversity were soon classified in terms of the paradigms of Exclusivism, Inclusivism and Pluralism,<sup>1</sup> which, though often criticized, have largely endured.<sup>2</sup> While theology of religions thus focuses on the religious and theological presuppositions and legitimations for engaging in dialogue with other religions, comparative theology refers to the actual theological engagement with another religious tradition. In a definition that is becoming standard in the field, Francis Clooney states that comparative theology

marks acts of faith seeking understanding which are rooted in a particular faith tradition but which, from that foundation, venture into learning from one or more other faith traditions. This learning is sought for the sake of fresh theological insights that are indebted to the newly encountered tradition/s as well as the home tradition.<sup>3</sup>

Unlike comparative religion, comparative theology is thus a confessional discipline which is oriented to advancing one's understanding not only of the other, but also of the truth. And unlike traditional theology, it does this by also considering other religions as potential sources of insight or revelation.

Wary of the debates within theology of religions, some comparative theologians have called for a moratorium on intra-religious preoccupation on whether or not there might be truth in other religions and what the status of that truth might be in relation to one's own tradition, in favor of actual engagement of other religions. In his 1999 book, *Faith among Faiths*, James Fredericks goes further and argues that comparative theology should be practiced as an alternative to theology of religions, since none of the existing models is truly able to affirm differences between religions, and since they are unable to overcome the hegemony of their discourse.<sup>4</sup> In response to this, theologians of religions (and some comparative theologians) have argued that every engagement with the religious other presupposes some implicit or explicit presupposition regarding the validity

<sup>1</sup> Alan Race, *Christians and Religious Pluralism*, (London: SCM, 1983).

<sup>2</sup> In his book, *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2002), Paul Knitter has attempted a different classificatory system of Replacement, Fulfillment, Mutuality, and Acceptance, which, however, largely coincides with the older model.

<sup>3</sup> Francis Clooney, *Comparative Theology. Deep Learning Across Religious Borders*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell 2010), 10.

<sup>4</sup> James Fredericks, *Faith among Faiths: Christian Theology and non-Christian Religions*, (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1999). His arguments are repeated in summary form in the introduction to *The New Comparative Theology*, J. Fredericks and F. Clooney, ed., (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), xiv-xv.

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## Four Ways to Think About Raimon Panikkar's Legacy: A Response to the Panikkar Panel

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Allow me to begin this brief response by expressing my own pleasure at the fact of this panel, and at the opportunity afforded to me to respond to these insightful and forward-looking papers. Like the Friday symposium earlier in the annual meeting, our panelists have by their thoughts composed a substantive tribute, as it were sketching the beginnings of the era of "Panikkar after Panikkar." In these presentations, we see extensions and applications of his insights in the new situations. They very ably introduce questions and corrections, arising in part due to new generational questions regarding politics, gender, and the nature of interreligious understanding. These papers help us to assess the Panikkar legacy; to explore the possibilities as we now see them, I take up the insights of each paper, serially.

*Catherine Cornille* sorts out what we do well to see as stages or strata in the development of Panikkar's thought, in relation to the study of religions and comparative studies. His early work is more traditional and confessional. While he never leaves behind the Christian mythic language, he does turn gradually to larger, broadly philosophical issues, working through what might be called a "meta-confessional comparative theology." It becomes increasingly difficult, with the later Panikkar, to fit him into any neat category of comparative work. Depending on how one sees this movement, it seems, one can say, that Panikkar is reaching deeper into, or stepping beyond, the Christian *mythos*, looking for a universal manner of speech and spiritual insight that everyone might resonate with.

For there is always the possibility that Panikkar's rendering of the comparative, or better, imparative studies, may end up seeming to be homeless—reaching everywhere, but without roots anywhere. As he "hides" his great learning for the sake of smoother and more holistic communication with his audience, and for the sake of giving the impression of easier, natural, seamless access to the divine, he may seem later on to be something of a spiritual master, speaking simply by his own insight and not with great indebtedness to any particular community. This erasure of the sources of learning and attenuation of the appearances of groundedness in community may in the long run reduce the influence of Panikkar as an important intellectual figure with an academic contribution to make. But, as Cornille notes, the disciplines of theological comparison are still developing, and whether and how Panikkar's work will serve as a model in the long run remains to be seen.

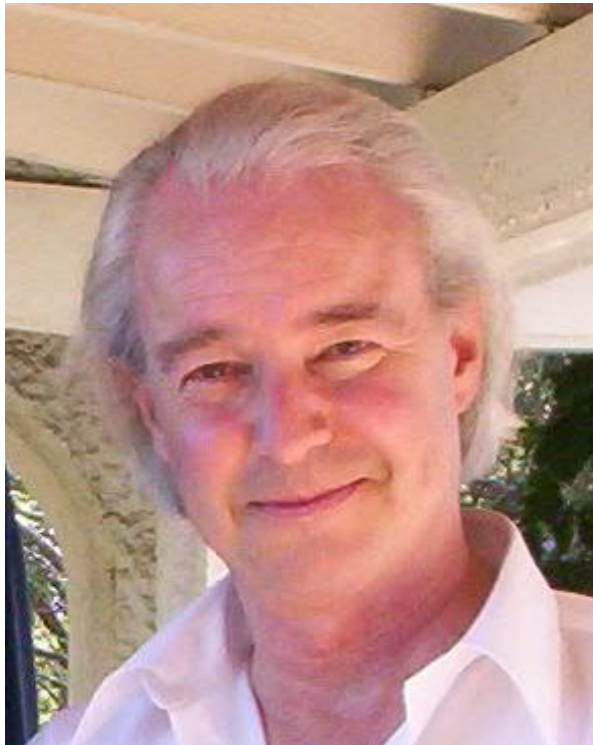
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*Fred Dallmayr* highlights for us a certain usefulness of Panikkar's thought, his role as an explainer of the West to India and India to the West. In particular, Dallmayr takes up the vexed issue of human rights in a global perspective, and he notes the fact that we are still not agreed as to whether human rights, as ordinarily discussed, really are potentially universal or remain culturally specific. In order to address this matter, he takes Panikkar as an authoritative guide, using his essay, "Is the Notion of Human Rights a Western Concept?" Here Panikkar explores the meaning of rights with great sensitivity to the categories of Indian religious thought, both deepening the discourse of rights, and showing that "human rights" is just one of the several lenses through which care for the human might be focused and argued.

If we observe how Dallmayr uses Panikkar's essay, we see that Panikkar serves as a reliable informant and translator, the trustworthy witness who knows both sides well. His work is a stand-in for more technical learning about various cultural and religious views of reality. The tricky element in using Panikkar's explanations is that they might actually make things too easy and familiar, particularly given that Panikkar is also sensible, moderate and in the middle, as the bridge, yet attuned to a moderate mainstream of Christian thinking on human rights. He can make the translation process seem easier than it is, perhaps attenuating the otherness and complexity of the Hindu traditions, and is less likely to communicate to use what is truly other, different. (Insofar as my own work too is a kind of bridge, a work of translation of the Hindu traditions for a Christian audience, it would be subject to the same critique.) All scholars translate, of course, but Panikkar's unique authenticity and broad learning and attractive writing may lead us to overlook the fact that deep down his reading is a Christian reading of the Hindu and Indian views of reality.

Yet still, Dallmayr shows us that Panikkar really is saying something new. Panikkar says that rights are "not *human* rights only," since these mesh with "the entire cosmic display of the universe." Thus, animals, all sentient beings, and even supposedly inanimate beings are all involved in the interaction or correlation of "*dharmic*" rights. Finally, human rights are "not *rights* only," because they are also duties and both are interdependent. Thus, taking the core right in the Western model—that of survival or self-preservation—one can say that human beings, in the Indian vision, have the right to survive only insofar as they also perform "the duty of maintaining the world" (*lokasamgraha*). Panikkar hopes that humans will intentionally exercise the richer, deeper right to participate in the full life of the universe. Consequently, human rights are broadened into a commitment to rights and duties in relation to all of reality. Here the authority of Panikkar's experience and learning can be tested in a practical sphere, for it is no small step to think of the *dharmic* rights of animals and all sentient beings. Whence the insight? It flows from Panikkar's meditations on the India and the West, the Hindu and the Christian, read and contemplated together.

**In Loving Memory of Scott Eastham**



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**Scott Eastham RIP (b. 10<sup>th</sup> June 1949 – d. 4<sup>th</sup> October 2013)**

Gerard Hall, SM

I am writing this without having yet had the chance to really come to terms with news of Scott's sudden death in New Zealand, yesterday, on the feast day of St Francis of Assisi. Our thoughts are with his wife Mary, their daughters Casey and Alison, as well as son-in-law David, and grandchildren Jordan and Damon.

However, I find myself reflecting on the life of a true scholar, mentor and friend. I first met Scott at the Catholic University of America in Washington DC in 1982. As a Masters student, I enrolled in the "Religion and Culture" Seminar course directed by a then-young lecturer, Dr. Scott Eastham. I soon learnt what a brilliant mind was before me and, before long, who Raimon Panikkar was, what interdisciplinary study entailed, and how the search for intellectual truth, with the right discipline and spirituality, was a pathway to wisdom. Scott was a wonderful lecturer with that all too rare ability to be absolutely excited by the world of ideas and, at the same time, demonstrate their practical, political, ethical and spiritual relevance for our lives.

As a result of the two courses I did with Scott, I resolved that if ever I was to pursue doctoral studies, it would be on the thought of Raimon Panikkar. Only after did I realise I had been privileged to sit at the feet of the best Panikkar scholar in the known universe. After my time at Catholic University, another young student arrived: she was so impressed by Scott, she married him! However, I was not left out of the picture, as I later followed Scott and Mary to Montréal in Canada where Scott was then teaching at Concordia University. I was doing doctoral research on Panikkar at the Intercultural Institute of Montreal and a frequent visitor to Scott and Mary, with their two young daughters Casey and Alison.

In 1989, Scott and I shared a hotel room in Edinburgh for the three weeks of Panikkar's Gifford Lectures. This was the first time I had met Panikkar in person, attended all his lectures and was gifted to share several meals with two people who inhabited a similar universe, namely Scott and Raimon. The way they interacted, bouncing ideas off one another, "learning through dialogue", was a privilege for me to witness. Subsequently, Scott, Mary and the girls moved to the Antipodes where Scott gained a position at Massey University in Palmerstone North, New Zealand. In the mid-90s, with my Mum and Dad, we made a visit and were wonderfully hosted by the Eastham family who later came to Australia to visit me and my parents in Brisbane and Ballina.

Following this, Scott and I were participants in and co-presenters for Panikkar Conferences in Barcelona, Mumbai, Venice, Brisbane and Virginia. At the Barcelona Conference I remember stating that my paper (the logos)



on Panikkar (the mythos) was all due to the power of the communicating symbol, Scott. He felt I was claiming too much, but from my perspective this was and is certainly the reality. Moreover, Panikkar himself told me that nobody truly understood his intercultural and interreligious vision as profoundly as Scott Eastham. This is acknowledged by inference in Panikkar's final work, *The Rhythm of Being*, which is dedicated to Scott. In fact, it was Scott with his wife Mary and their then-two young children who gave three months living in Tavertet, working on the Gifford Lectures, that enabled this work to finally come to fruition in the eventual publication of the text.

Scott's amazing record of publications across multiple disciplines—literature, religion, hermeneutics, communications, media studies, film and the arts, philosophy and theology, culture studies and the sciences, ethics and the ecology—set him apart as an original thinker and prophetic voice in the academy and society. For decades, he was editor of the journal *Interculture*. His major works include: *Paradise and Ezra Pound* (1983); *Nucleus: Interconnecting Science and Religion in the Nuclear Age* (1987); *The Medial Matrix* (1990); *The Radix: Revisioning Philosophy* (1992); *The Way of the Maker: Eric Wesselow's 'Life through Art'* (2002); *American Dreamer: Bucky Fuller and the Sacred Geometry of Nature* (2007); *Biotech Time-Bomb: How Genetic Engineering Could Irreversibly Change Our World* (2009). As well, Scott was major translator, editor and advisor for Panikkar's English publications. He was also Panikkar's most outstanding English-speaking spokesperson.

Yet, this is not the time to focus on Scott's magnificent contribution to the academy in general, or to Panikkar studies in particular. And here I have not even mentioned his more public voice on local radio, in newspapers and social media, which was significant. Now is the time to mourn with Mary and the family for the loss of a uniquely intellectual and socially conscious human being who developed his immense skills and lived his all-too-short life with enormous passion, profound depth and, until the last, untiring energy. All these were a cloak for love of family, friends and strangers who, with Scott and Raimon, are called to live the "cosmotheandric mystery".

Finally, I am a little struck that the day of Scott's death was the feast of St Francis of Assisi who, like Scott, a lover of nature, knew the divine reality is present in all creation. Our prayer is that Scott will come to know that divine mystery in its fullness. But, meanwhile, I and you will still miss him as husband, father, grandfather and friends. And, so, I can do no better than finish with the Prayer of St Francis which captures much of Scott's own spirit—and concludes with the prayer we all make for Scott, that his dying is a birth to eternal life:

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*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy.*

*O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.  
Amen*

October 5, 2013



## My memory of Scott Eastham

M. Roberta Cappellini

This is a short dedication to my beloved friend who recently passed away. Scott was the first friend of Panikkar's circle I came to know. We made friends paradoxically 'over the air,' as we were on the polar opposites of the planet. The personal encounter took place some months after our mailing exchanges. We asked for his participation in our newborn Association. His immediate response was humanly warm, friendly, and generous. He was the first one to send us his writing, to support our cause in the first steps of our initiative. And in times of trouble, he was the first one to participate actively, as the first one to believe in CIRPIT by bestowing his blessing on us. I remember him sending us an auspicious image of white lilies, wishing us prosperity. With that ethereal gift, without knowing it, he metaphorically baptized us, anticipating his editorial role, when three years later he would give the name "Triquetra" to our book series, and generously participated in our editorial project. Triquetra, the ancient celtic symbol representing the triune mystery of the Trinity, was chosen to indicate Raimon Panikkar's 'cosmotheandric intuition.'

If there is one characteristic of Scott, that I would like to mention today, is precisely this openness, his availability, his care and human concern that arose in him spontaneously—an attention rising from his heart—that rare virtue which Panikkar called 'the new innocence,' because real friendship is free.

So every time I think of Scott, I also thank him not only for his assisting us with his wide cultural expertise, but also for teaching us that at the origin of friendship there is something like a 'special touch' we cannot define, because it implies an act of faith in human being.

*Lord, I know now that you exist, but who knows where?  
 All that I behold resembles you in me...  
 Let me, then, believe that you are here.  
 And when the dreaded moment comes  
 in which these human eyes are closed,  
 then open up still greater eyes in me,  
 that I may gaze upon your endless face.  
 Let death for me be a yet greater birth! (Joan Maragall)*



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## To Scott Eastham, A Paean and Eulogium

John S. Blackman

*I have tried to write Paradise*

*Do not move*

*Let the wind speak  
that is paradise.*

*Let the Gods forgive what I  
have made*

*Let those I love try to forgive  
what I have made.*

– Ezra Pound  
Canto CXX<sup>1</sup>

Scott,

You rogue, you raconteur

you poet!

– *waymaker*,<sup>2</sup> as you were fond of saying –

bard, philosopher, merry prankster  
wizard-singer, wordsmith extraordinaire

ever startling –

We miss you.

We miss your poking and prodding, your needles and barbs  
that kept us on alert  
that kept our eyes sharp, our ears attuned.

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<sup>1</sup> E. Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York, 1972, 803.

<sup>2</sup> S. Eastham, *Paradise & Ezra Pound: The Poet as Shaman*, University of America Press, Lanham, Maryland, 1983, 146.

Now that you have passed  
through that Zero that was your favorite –

*Out of nothing  
no-thing  
comes . . . .  
everything that is  
arrives  
in and out of  
this nihilum,  
out of the blue  
sky, clearly  
everything  
that comes to pass  
passes through  
its zerophase (Vector Equilibrium<sup>3</sup>)  
to be (or not)  
whatever  
it might be; i.e.,  
that – tattva,  
it might be  
thus – tathata.<sup>4</sup>*

Scott,

in the presence of elders  
you stood tall, unflinching,  
your words firmly  
but lovingly in hand:

*And at the heart  
of these Rites of Man?*

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<sup>3</sup> See S. Eastham, *American Dreamer: Bucky Fuller and the Sacred Geometry of Nature*, The Lutterworth Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 75 - 80, and Appendix A, "Unfolding WHOLES: A Synergetics Primer," S. Eastham and J. Blackman, pp. 147 - 150 and 167 - 71.

<sup>4</sup> S. Eastham, *The Radix, or The Original Radical Poem*, Peter Lang, New York, Revisioning Philosophy Series, 1991, Vol. 8, pp. 3 - 4.

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*It begins with sincerity,  
sinceritas, at its best  
derived from xin:*

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*The man  
standing by  
his word.*

*To perfect . . . what did he say? The Word,  
Heaven's decree.  
How? Sincerity, via the Da Xue,  
the Great Learning:  
Looking straight into one's own heart,  
and acting on the results.<sup>5</sup>*

Scott,

you dedicated your life  
to making sacred

the world  
the divine  
and that spark of craziness we call human

You waved your thunderbolts in the sky  
like Thunderbird,  
stirring a ferocious wind,  
devouring ignorance with every word

You expected us to be there  
each time you came down from the mountain

You expected us to see the diamond in the rose –

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 146 - 147.



asking us to receive peace, yes, but with a jolt:

“Lightning must be cloud for a long time.”<sup>6</sup>

By your words you shed light  
yet darkness too was your friend

You gave us hope  
when our souls ached for understanding,  
desperately seeking the thoughts  
that would free us from thought,

*and so we found,  
as you yourself  
might find,  
no way out, but  
through the center  
– just perhaps,  
a way in, an opening  
and a deepening.*<sup>7</sup>

And a way through . . .

You showed us *Ravensgate*,  
due west of Santa Barbara,  
portal to the Other World

*. . . the spiritual door through which the soul  
must pass  
to join its ancestors;*

*the bridge between this world and all that it is not.*

*. . . the balance point of the entire creation.*<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> R. Panikkar, personal communication to S. Eastham, 1979.

<sup>7</sup> S. Eastham, *Wisdom of the Fool, Stories and Poems*, Wyndham Hall Press, Bristol, Indiana, 1985, 129 - 130.

<sup>8</sup> S. Eastham, “Ravensgate: The Other Face of the Point Concepcion Controversy,” *Parabola Magazine*, New York, May, 1981, Vol. VI, No. 2, 86.

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Scott,

You brought us to the edge  
then back again

You startled and surprised us,  
yet gave us comfort too.

Now you have sung your way across the Great Water,  
yet we still hear your melody, even if faintly

and although we can only see you with eyes closed,  
we still feel you.

As you go before us  
we are left to wonder  
what it must be like

to hear the soundless sound  
but never again to see the moon  
or feel the breath of wind . . .

This stings the souls of those you have left behind,  
and we stand here alone, knowing  
there are only two things to protect us  
from the sheer naked terror of the universe:

our thoughts – and each other.

Scott,

we will miss your songs, your poetry –

“There is only poetry”(!)<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> S. Eastham, *The Media Matrix: Deepening the Context of Communication Studies*, (University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland, 1990), 76, quoting Norman O. Brown, *Love's Body*, Random House, New York, 1966), 266.

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And we will continue to write our lives  
in song and dance  
if for no reason other than to celebrate the Mystery

and pretend for a moment  
that we can make the wind arise  
or touch the river of stars . . .

(Surely the greatest evidence of our divinity  
is our ability to pretend!)

Scott,

We will miss your *way-making*  
like no other

But we will not cry for you  
– only for ourselves

And we will not fail you.

We will continue to make our way,  
because love is all,  
all is love  
and love knows no other way.

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San Francisco  
February 12, 2014

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## Following After You

Yakshi Vadeboncoeur

For Raimon, Roger, and later Scott

*Having gone before us  
do you leave a trail  
through the wilderness  
of the Spirit's air and what  
might be its look and feel?*

*An Everest-like thinning of oxygen  
the sky holding  
a hint of snow near the summit?*

*A transparent emptier emptiness  
with no place  
for the mind's eye to settle?*

*Each breath bent or bearing the scent  
of the leaves and lungs  
through which it has passed until*

*following it silently  
into and out of the woods  
into and out of our bodies*

*we know the Way  
the Blessing  
and the Breather*

*and are here together with you  
here where love  
has always made its home*

*No need to scale the peak  
No need for trackers  
to bruise the forest floor with footfall  
or to blaze the trunks  
of the innocent oxygen-making trees*

Yakshi 9/01/2010



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## A Remembrance of Scott Thomas Eastham

Joseph Prabhu  
*California State University, Los Angeles*

When I first thought about what aspect(s) of Scott I might focus on within the space of a brief remembrance, I considered touching on his brilliant mind and the broad range of his publications, or on his significant contributions to Panikkar scholarship, or again on his deeply felt poetry. There were, in short, a number of possible points of entry into this fascinating and multi-faceted personality. I decided to meditate on the task and allow a response to emerge from the depths. What surfaced were memories and sentiments of Scott as a personal friend. This surprises me because we were not close friends in the conventional sense of people who knew each other intimately or interacted frequently. In fact, we met just three times, but each of those meetings was significant, and the combined effect quite powerful—for me at least.

The first of those meetings was in Barcelona in February, 2002. Even though I used to visit Panikkar from time to time ever since I came to Los Angeles in 1978, and used to teach his classes occasionally at UC, Santa Barbara when he went on leave in the spring quarter, I do not believe Scott and I met in any significant way until 2002. We both expressed surprise at this because we had known about each other through Panikkar. He had told me about Scott being one of his very best students, who had, among other things, done his doctoral studies with him and attended his Gifford Lectures in Edinburgh in 1989. I had also, of course, read Scott's marvelous "Introduction" to Panikkar's *The Cosmotheandric Experience*, where in a matter of a few short pages Scott was able to evoke Panikkar, the man and the thinker, his habitat in Tavertet, his Catalonian context, and the heart of his cosmotheandric vision. At the time, I thought it a tour-de-force for both its style and its sweep. I still do.

As a way of setting the stage for our meeting in 2002, I should mention that in 1996 I published an edited *Festschrift* for Panikkar with an "Introduction" that expressed some reservations about Panikkar's cosmotheandricism and its epistemological basis, while, of course, being in awe about the depth and power of his vision. I was also critical of Panikkar's gender insensitive use of words like "Man" and "Mankind." In Barcelona Scott came resolutely to the defense of his teacher, and we had some lively arguments about both the style of Panikkar's work and its content. We ended up spending a few wonderfully spirited days together after the conference, and I got a strong sense not only of the range and depth of Scott's creative mind, but also of how deeply he felt about the state of the world in the wake of September 11, 2001 and the crises sparked by economic globalization and neo-liberalism. It was bracing to experience

Barcelona together—one of our favorite cities—and to savor Scott’s appreciation of Catalan art and culture as we walked through the city of Gaudi, Picasso, and Miro. I felt I was being introduced to the city by a cultural guide and savant who brought alive for me its cultural treasures and on subsequent visits to the city remembrances of our time there together have stayed powerfully with me.

Shortly after that visit, he sent me a gift of his brilliant book *The Radix or the Original Poem* with the inscription: “For Joseph—in friendship, reliving some very fine days in Barcelona. Your friend, Scott.” Inside the book was a longer letter with a photograph of Panikkar and me, and text which said, among other things, “Blood on La Rambla this week! We’ve got to bridge the gap between the critique of globalization (already here) and the anger and outrage on the streets---plus make the alternatives more visible. Great to meet you at last! Best for now, Scott.” I hope on another occasion to spell out the riches of that extraordinary and lengthy poem which clearly displays the influence of Panikkar, but also of Heidegger, Ezra Pound, Buckminster Fuller, Marshall McLuhan, among others.

We had an intermittent correspondence for the next six years before we met again in Venice in May, 2008, for a conference celebrating Panikkar’s ninetieth birthday. Panikkar was already in failing health at the time, and there was some uncertainty as to whether he could make it to the conference, but it was a joy for his many students, friends, and admirers gathered there to actually see him again. Scott and I were living in the same residential facility and in addition to our interest in matters Panikkarian, discovered our common passion for the great art-and-culture critic John Ruskin. I had known that Ruskin had regarded himself as an adopted son of Venice and had written a three volume masterpiece, *The Stones of Venice*, but I had just dipped into it whereas Scott had read it carefully. Ruskin was a polymath, who wrote perceptively on subjects ranging from art and architecture and education to botany, natural history, and political economy. I knew him principally through his influence on two significant figures in my own work, Mahatma Gandhi and Ananda Coomaraswamy. Once again, it was a joy and an education to walk the streets, bridges, and piazzas of Venice with Scott and to see the city through his eyes and those of Ruskin. It is also a joy to be reminded of those times by pictures of that conference, especially one of Scott and Panikkar seated side by side.

Our last meeting—and alas a final one—took place in Wellington in December, 2009, when my wife and I were visiting New Zealand on our way to Melbourne for the Parliament of the World’s Religions. Mary was away at a conference, and Scott drove down from Palmerston to meet us and spent the better part of a day with us. As usual, he was a marvelous host and guide to the city. We were able this time also to discuss Panikkar’s work at some length. Both of us were deeply concerned about the fact that *The*

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*Rhythm of Being* had not yet appeared more than twenty years after Panikkar had delivered an early version of the book as Gifford Lectures in April-May, 1989. Scott, accompanied by Mary and their two very young daughters, had in fact devoted three whole months to working on the text in the summer of 1990, but Panikkar, ever the perfectionist, kept modifying and adding to the text, which in some parts had seen as many as nineteen different versions.

Scott and I had a chance to compare and contrast both the personal and professional contexts within we received Panikkar's work, and our assessment of it almost twenty years after he left the U.S. and returned to Catalonia. I had first met Panikkar in 1964 in the context of my involvement with the Catholic Students' Union (CSU) in India, and Panikkar had served for many years as the chaplain in Varanasi of the Benares (as it was then known) branch of the CSU. I had never been a formal student of his. My studies in economics, politics, philosophy, and theology in India, Germany, England, and the U.S. were conducted far outside his orbit and influence. I, of course, keenly followed his work, especially as it was being published in English and German from the 1960's onward, but I did not have the opportunity for discussing it with Panikkar until I reconnected with him in Santa Barbara in 1979. Scott, by contrast, had been one of Panikkar's best students in Santa Barbara after Panikkar moved there from Harvard in 1971. By the time I started teaching (part-time) at UC Santa Barbara, Scott had already left and even though it is possible that we had met at one or other of Panikkar's Easter services, we did not, as I've said before, really engage each other. Barcelona in 2002 was our first encounter.

Three or four strong impressions emerged from our Wellington meeting. First, Scott and I were both primarily interested in Panikkar as a multi-dimensional thinker and visionary. We were aware, of course, that he was a charismatic person with a powerful personality, but we were not much interested in the cults or the pious disciples that tended to form around him. Second, we had our own independent interests that to some extent lay outside the main foci of Panikkar's work, wide-ranging as it was. In Scott's case those interests were in art, culture and media studies, and ecology and contemporary globalization; in my case, trained as I was at the Delhi School of Economics and partially within the Frankfurt School of Philosophy and Sociology, in the conjunction of philosophy, religion, economics and politics. Thus, we were both vitally interested in the application and extension of Panikkar's thought to areas of contemporary political and cultural concern. Third, we both operated on the hermeneutic principle: *amicus Plato, sed magis veritas* (Plato is my friend, but truth an even greater one); or as Aristotle puts it in the *Nicomachean Ethics*: "while both [friends and truth] are dear, piety requires us to honor truth above our friends" (1096a15). It was refreshing for me—and bracing—to encounter someone who understood the depths and range of Panikkar's thinking and who engaged with it both critically and creatively. It was only fitting that



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Panikkar chose to dedicate his last work, and in many ways his *magnum opus* to Scott.

When *Rhythm* finally appeared in June 2010, both Scott and I were happy that Panikkar had lived long enough to finally see it in print, but we were also deeply dismayed that a work of such profundity and complexity had been rushed into print with a distressingly large number of errors. This was painful to both of us, but especially to Scott, who had devoted so much of his time, energy, and care to the book. He and I corresponded about this, and with his permission I approached Robert Ellsberg, editor-in-chief of Orbis Books, to commission Scott to revise at least the most glaring errors. In spite of failing health, Scott was able to do this, and the paperback edition that appeared in 2013 is a considerable improvement on the original edition.

We had spoken about collaborating on at least a couple of articles detailing our reception of Panikkar's work. And I approached him for his advice and suggestions on my current project of a commissioned volume on Panikkar to be published by Orbis Books. He was excited by the prospect and promised to send me some of his thoughts and ideas. But, alas, his life was cut tragically short before he was able to deliver on his promise. The world of scholarship has lost one of its brightest lights and I have lost a dear friend and conversation-partner. I do hope, Scott, my friend, that you continue to smile, in your usual kind and quizzical manner, on my humble efforts carried out now in your absence.

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## Remembering Scott Thomas Eastham (1949-2013)

Young-chan Ro

*George Mason University and the University of Notre Dame*

It was a warm bright Saturday in April 2013, Scott and Mary came with their daughter Casey, my goddaughter, and her husband and two young active boys to my home. They were visiting Mary's family in Baltimore from New Zealand for a week or so. Scott generously took a day out of his busy schedule and brought the family to visit us in Northern Virginia, a suburban of Washington D.C. It was truly an exciting occasion for me and my family to see Scott and his family, including Casey, whom I had not seen since when she was baptized in a small rural Catholic church near Baltimore. Scott and Mary met and married in Washington D.C. while he was a professor at the Catholic University of America and Mary was a graduate student there in early 1980's, and Casey was their first child.

We spent the whole day together and talked a lot about the Panikkar symposium we were planning in Baltimore later that year at the Annual Meeting of American Academy of Religion (AAR) in November. Scott came to Baltimore, a long way from New Zealand, a little over a month of recovery from a major surgery. He looked remarkably well and healthy, although he was very careful about foods and ate only small portions. However, we were all highly optimistic that he would be strong enough to travel from New Zealand to Baltimore again by the time of our symposium in November. He seemed cautiously optimistic about his health and told us that Mary's care had been indispensable on his way to recovery. When he and his family departed later that day, Scott and I shook a firm hand and looked at each other's eyes with an earnest hope that we would see each other again at the Panikkar symposium in fall. Yes, it was a bright, sunny, and warm April day. That was the last day Scott and I spent together.

Our teacher and mentor, Raimon Panikkar, brought us among many other people together from the different parts of the world. As I recall, it was the spring quarter of 1974, my second quarter after arriving at UC Santa Barbara in the fall of 1973, when I met Scott in Panikkar's seminar (UC Santa Barbara was on the quarter system and Panikkar taught only in the spring quarter every year for a while).

We took many Panikkar's seminars together, including the seminars on Gadamer, Heidegger, Aquinas, Cross-cultural Hermeneutic, Dialectics and Dialogue—to name just a few (amazingly, Panikkar almost never repeated the same seminar or course, and he offered a new seminar each time he taught, so we took different seminars from Panikkar over several years), and eventually we were working on our doctoral dissertations under the direction of the same mentor, Panikkar. Although our dissertation subjects were quite different, we were in the same spirit in developing

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Panikkar's approach and his insights, and applying it to the writing of our respective dissertations. Scott was gifted with English language in both oral and the written. He had a poetic instinct in minimizing words and sentences to illustrate the beauty and simplicity of the language. This may be one of the reasons why Scott was interested in Ezra Pound (1885-1972) and his poetic simplicity of the language, and his expertise in the East Asian traditions. He had a unique ability in taking Panikkar's ideas and thoughts that were highly complex and sophisticated, and turning them into English sentences of poetic power and aesthetic beauty. Scott worked on many of Panikkar's manuscripts including *The Rhythm of Being*, the book based on his 1989 Gifford Lectures that went through many reversions over decades and finally published in 2010. Panikkar dedicated this book to Scott as his last tribute to Scott's long, arduous, and painstaking editing of many of his volumes of English writings, over decades starting in the 1970's. Scott was a poetic visionary rather than a strict philosopher. He was an alchemist, who turned rigid and lifeless philosophical concepts into live and inspiring phrases. Panikkar as a mystical visionary found Scott's linguistic talent so nicely fitting to transform his philosophical ideas and thoughts into an art of writing through Scott's hands.

Scott, beyond his linguistic talent, was also a visionary. His poetic ability and linguistic precision were closely related to his aesthetic and architectural mind. He was able to visualize the complex philosophical ideas and reconstruct them in the form of aesthetic architecture. His fascination with R. Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983) was an example of how Scott combined the architectural mind and the aesthetic vision. Furthermore, for Scott, Panikkar's "cosmotheandric experience" was well fitting in Buckminster Fuller's aesthetic architecture of the universe. His study of Ezra Pound's poetic insights and Buckminster Fuller's architectural vision of space was a remarkable reflection on Scott's own vision of the world.

When Scott met Panikkar, his vision was profoundly deepened and transformed, just like many of us who studied with Panikkar. Scott was one of the best who were able to interpret Panikkar's insights most clearly and eloquently. Recently we have lost the four most valuable friends, who were the integral part of our lives with Panikkar in the 1970s at Santa Barbara. Roger Rapp, Warren Lew, Charles Vernoff, and Scott Eastham now have joined the company of Raimon Panikkar to enjoy his heavenly seminars.

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## In memory of Dr. Scott Eastham: academic supervisor, mentor, and friend.

by Charlotte Šunde,  
*University of Auckland, New Zealand*

Scott Eastham and I arrived at Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand, in the same year, 1993: Scott from Canada to take up the position of lecturer in English and Media Studies, and I as a fresh undergraduate student in Resource and Environmental Planning. It was a time when interdisciplinary study was encouraged in the academy, and I was fortunate that other students (Dr Peter Raine and Adrian Hayes) preceded me in scoping out the most interesting lecturers on campus, and so guided me to Scott who agreed to supervise my PhD thesis from 1999-2003. It is a testament to Scott's tremendous breadth of scholarship and generosity that he could easily accommodate students from a diverse range of academic disciplines. I will always be grateful to Scott for his major influence in my academic life.

Scott was a generous and gifted teacher who inspired students because he was himself inspired by the ideas that literally leapt to life in his presence. He was vitally interested in everything, but his basis for engagement was far more than academic. He thought and cared deeply about those things that truly matter: the plight of the Earth under our misguided technocracy, the challenge of pluralism and intercultural dialogue, respect for the wisdom of native peoples, and the necessity of pursuing peace in the face of grave nuclear and technological (e.g., genetic engineering) threats. His passionate enthusiasm for an idea or a fresh way of looking at things typically found expression through an extraordinary gift for storytelling. Under his mentorship, Scott taught me (and undoubtedly many others) to love the very process of learning, and he showed us how – or perhaps more importantly – *why* we must think and question. I recall a sketch by the renowned Canadian artist Eric Wesselow that illustrated the simple but profound aphorism: “A student is not like a barrel to be filled, but a candle to be lit”. Scott ignited many fires and the embers continue to glow both at home and afar.

In his teaching and through the books he wrote, Scott introduced us to the worlds of those scholars, philosophers, poets, inventors, artists, musicians and catalysts of free thinking who had influenced him – many of whom he had met and befriended. Here I recollect Raimon Panikkar, Ezra Pound, R. Buckminster Fuller, Martin Heidegger, Marshall McLuhan, Eric Wesselow, Keith Jarrett, Ivan Illich, Lewis Mumford, Jacques Ellul, among others. He sometimes jokingly lamented that he spent his academic life conversing with “old men and their ghosts”. [He was, after all, a ‘Deadhead’; that is, a fan of the American 1970s rock band, the Grateful

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 Dead!]

Among Scott's qualities that I admire most was his innate curiosity of ... well, pretty much everything! He would devour books and films, his exploration seemingly boundless in its scope, depth and breadth. And he wouldn't settle for simply parodying his academic forefathers: rather, Scott breathed new life into those giants' works, illuminating their ideas through novel insights, forging new connections and conversations between them<sup>1</sup>, and reinvigorating their timeless wisdom by applying it to the critical challenges most relevant to our times.<sup>2</sup> Scott crafted his writings with the sensitivity of a poet and the highly attuned finesse of a philologist not obsessed with one language in and of itself, but with the entirety of language (the *logos*). He was in a constant dialogue with text, its context and the very texture of each word – sounding them out, carefully selecting and combining words for the best fit. In short, Scott Eastham was a pleasure to read.

Many know, or know of, Scott for his lifelong collaboration with Professor Raimon Panikkar (1918-2010), who supervised Scott's PhD on *Paradise and Ezra Pound*, and with whom Scott remained closely connected as English editor and collaborator on several of Panikkar's major works in English, including *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics* (1979), *The Cosmotheandric Experience: Emerging Religious Consciousness* (1993), and more recently, *The Rhythm of Being: The Unbroken Trinity* (2010). Others, namely Scott's peers at the University of California (Santa Barbara) in the 1970s, told me how Scott was one of Panikkar's best students. I was privileged to bear witness to their bond in May 2008 when attending the Venice symposium "Mysticism, Fullness of Life"; an international assembly of Panikkarian scholars from around the world held in celebration of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Scott and I were in a small café, and Raimon Panikkar was seated with others close-by. When Raimon saw Scott, he rose and with arms

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example: Eastham, S. Battle of the Titans: Bucky Fuller and Lewis Mumford offered contrasting ways of looking at technology and civilization, *Compass*. January/February 1996, 6-9.

<sup>2</sup> In 2002, Scott presented to New Zealand's Royal Commission on Genetic Modification in the world's first such public inquiry, from which this book emerged: Eastham, S. (2003) *Biotech Time-Bomb: How genetic engineering could irreversibly change our world*. Auckland, New Zealand: RSVP Publishing. He elevated the debate far beyond that of a technological innovation in science but rather to a deeper question of worldviews in collision, bringing it into intercultural relief through three challenges: linguistic, philosophical and religious. In this venture, he called on the strengths of some of the most critical thinkers in Western and Eastern philosophy.

outstretched came over to greet Scott with such joy alighting his face. There was deep mutual affection and love in their friendship forged over decades of close collaboration. I am sure that Kalpana Das (*Interculture*, Canada) and Roland Ropers (Germany), who were also present, recall this special memory with similar sentiment.

When Scott died on 4 October 2013, although physically exhausted and ailing, he had begun to sketch out a framework of ideas for the paper he intended to deliver at the Baltimore symposium in November. He had entitled his latest thought-piece, “Flight from the Antipodes”. Indeed, we Antipodeans have sometimes wondered – and marveled – at the treasure (*taonga*) we received when Scott and his family chose Aotearoa New Zealand as their new home. I know that Scott loved the New Zealand landscape – for its breathtaking physical beauty and the sacred *cosmotheandric* dimension: “Highway One down the Coast around Kaikoura is much like Highway One in California... I guess I’m a ‘Pacific Plate’ kinda guy, tectonically speaking. Just loved it, felt right at home. So here’s a sunrise at Kaikoura for you for 2008!” (email to me, 23 January 2008). Besides the open horizon, I also believe he saw hope and potential in the down-to-earth, can-do Kiwi attitude of those who the Easthams warmly embraced. Scott and Mary welcomed many friends and family to their home, and hosted numerous meals that nourished a community’s heart, body, mind and soul.

To my mind, Scott’s private study at home remains his sanctuary: lined with books and decorated meaningfully with artwork, poetry, photographs, stones and feathers, and other treasured mementos. I am grateful to Mary Eastham for extending an invitation to his former graduate students to make use of his study, and for encouraging us to continue in the exploration of ideas in a place where Scott’s presence is still strongly felt, and deeply missed. While Scott’s inner life was explored in the sacred space of his Antipodean writing sanctuary, his essence was epitomised in the closing signature he used in correspondence with friends: “love and light”. His work literally shone with ‘light’, and the commitment and care of his life as a scholar was a profound expression of ‘love’, *agape*, *philia*. His books, commentaries and editorial passages remain an enduring gift to the Panikkar and wider global communities.

Charlotte Šunde, Auckland, New Zealand (7 April 2014)

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11 October 2013

Dear friends,

*Like all of you, I was shocked and am deeply saddened by the news of Scott’s sudden death. I understand that in the two weeks prior, his health*

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*had been in decline and he couldn't shake off a chest infection. I heard from Mary the day before he went into surgery, where the surgeons found the prognosis was not promising. No one had expected that he wouldn't survive the examination.*

*I attended Scott's funeral yesterday. On Wednesday, as I left Auckland city and drove the six hours through rolling hill country and farmland I was aware of an abundance of beauty everywhere – the Spring flowers are out, and the intermittent showers of rain seemed only to enhance the vivid greenness. Today, Friday, the rain has not yet stopped and it has been bucketing down at a persistent rate since early morning. But yesterday – the day of Scott's funeral – there was sunshine. Given that Scott always signed his emails to me with "Love & light", I think this was wholly appropriate.*

*The funeral was held at their local Catholic church in the small town of Feilding. Scott's daughters, Casey and Alison, were there as well as his son-in-law and two grandsons. Alison had flown back from Montreal. Scott's brother, Todd, who lives in Maryland, U.S.A., has been visiting for the past few weeks. Our friend Peter Horsley read a very moving eulogy and incorporated into it Gerard Hall's fine words. Mary read Sonnet 15 by William Shakespeare – a favourite of Scott's. I had the honour of being called on to be a pallbearer. The priest gave a most enlightening homily. He said that when he thought of Scott, the word "synthesis" came to mind. He went on to talk about Scott's wide-ranging search for synthesis across cultures, religions, philosophies, and nature. [But as Mary Eastham reflected, that understanding of Scott wasn't quite right: Scott's life wasn't about 'synthesis'; his focus was on profound relationship.] And he acknowledged that Scott was not a practising Catholic; that he considered Catholicism was too small for Scott. I think you'll appreciate his understanding of Scott – as we all know, his love of life was truly catholic.*

*Scott's ashes will be scattered at Mount Lee's Reserve. It's a small nature reserve close to Scott and Mary's home that comprises both indigenous and exotic trees – including the mighty redwood Sequoia from his native Pacific Northwest. Scott visited regularly as part of his ritual in crafting his writings.*

*I will sorely miss my teacher, my mentor, my friend. He knew he was loved by many. I wish you all the very best for the Panikkar reunion in Baltimore next month. I have read Scott's abstract – "Flight from the Antipodes" – another powerful thought-piece was to follow.*

*Love & light to all,*

*Charlotte*

## Leaf-Catching

*Sharp shapes,  
shifting autumn light, grey  
cloud raining colour - saffron,  
crimson, amber - leaves funnel  
down  
the quickening breeze - golden  
ash,  
sugar maple, swamp cypress -*



*Trees baring  
the year's harvest of sunlight, and I (& thou?)  
standing tall here, arms high branching,  
eyes full of sky, hands held open -  
Can you catch it? Not by grasping! -*

*Just that  
one leaf will save us, caught  
mid-air before touching ground,  
before slipping away, before we all  
sleep, settle softly, gently resting  
now still in earth's bed.*

Scott Thomas Eastham







## CIRPIT

### Intercultural Center dedicated to Raimon Panikkar Italy

CIRPIT, a Center for international, inter-university studies, founded in June 24, 2009, under Raimon Panikkar's patronage and honorary presidency, is a no-profit organization that promotes intercultural initiatives and dialogical practices inspired by his philosophy.

CIRPIT activities are open to all disciplines (humanistic and scientific) and aim at creating a national and international network of people, associations, and institutions interested in Panikkar's philosophical legacy and in contemporary intercultural studies and interfaith dialogue. Its founding members are M. Roberta Cappellini, Giuseppe Cognetti, and Anna Natalini.

#### ACTIVITIES OF THE CIRPIT:

1. Creating and maintaining a website ([www.cirpit.raimonpanikkar.it](http://www.cirpit.raimonpanikkar.it)) which is connected to social media, with an updated bibliography and the agenda of the related fields.
2. Academic, international Publications, in collaboration with Mimesis Publisher (Milan), a journal, *CIRPIT Review*, and a book series, TRIQUETRA.
3. Organizing meetings, seminars, and conferences at national and international universities, institutes, and centers.
4. An annual benefit fund on behalf of children of the world.

#### ABOUT TWO PUBLICATIONS:

The **CIRPIT Review** is a multilingual, annual publication, comprised of the Proceedings of Conferences, Seminars, as well as intercultural philosophical contributions.

**TRIQUETRA** is a book series of intercultural studies dedicated to Raimon Panikkar and to the interfaith dialogue, based on the cooperation with the philosopher's direct students and international scholars.

Both of these publications are edited by the Academic and Editorial Boards, subject to the Peer Reviewing process, are duly filed in the Court of Milan and have an ISSN code for the print and digital versions. They are internationally distributed by *Google.com* and *Amazon.com*.

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**THE LIST OF OUR PUBLICATIONS TO DATE (2009-2013):**

**CIRPIT REVIEW**

- CR 1/2010 (The Inaugural Issue)  
 CR 1/2010 Supplement ("Homage to Raimon Panikkar")  
 CR 2/2011 ("First CIRPIT International Colloquium, Naples, 2010")  
 CR 2/2011 Supplement ("Follow up contributions to the Naples Proceedings")  
 CR 3/2012 (Essays on the "crosscultural transformation" of philosophy and theology)  
 CR 3/2012 Supplement ("Proceedings of International Conference, George Mason University, 2011")  
 CR 4/2013 ("Proceedings of three International Events organized by the CIRPIT, 2012")

**TRIQUETRA BOOK SERIES**

M. Roberta Cappellini:  
*Sulle tracce del sogno dell'uomo: A colloquio con Raimon Panikkar tra tradizione e pensiero contemporaneo* (2010)

Victorino Pérez Prieto:  
*Raimon Panikkar, oltre la frammentazione del sapere* (2011)

Alessandro Calabrese:  
*Il paradigma accogliente: La filosofia Interculturale in Raimon Panikkar* (2012)

Mohamed Haddad :  
*Le Reformisme Musulman: Une histoire critique* (2013)

Giuseppe Cognetti:  
*L'età oscura: Attualità di René Guénon* (2014)

