

THE “KARL JASPERS FORUM” WEBPAGE UPDATE 8 UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW’S INFLUENCE (1- 28-2006)

Notation: Herbert Muller’s postings this week occurred on 1-27-2006 (though dates on each article shows 1-28). None of Herbert’s postings this week relate their views to Karl Jaspers.

1. Peter J. Bussey, and a Possible Dawkin’s Link

1.1. A review I made of Peters’ Website has been worthwhile. The review was done in an attempt to understand why Herbert might have sought a Comment from Peter on Richard Conn Henry’s Target Article. Herbert had to have done some research and/or someone is advising him. (My guess would be that it is the same force that would suggest to him that he should do a zero-derivation Internet forum and capitalize on the name of Karl Jaspers. He once told me he had a friend who studied under Karl Jaspers. He did not mention the name. I suspect it is someone associated with one of the two Karl Jaspers Societies, maybe even a Heideggerian infiltrator. I’m entertaining two personages.) It is doubtful that Herbert quite expected Peter to refer to the idealism of Mr. Henry as being short on in-depth argument, and says it seemed an extreme form of positivism in the sense that Mr. Henry is saying the mental is all we are conscious of.

1.2. Again, what is so intriguing here is why he might have asked Peter to Comment. Did Herbert find some hint at a radical constructionism in Peter’s works? A possible constructionist thinking might be seen in his “our conscious mind observes” “believes” in an “external world”--but an “ism” is avoided by balanced talk about what is “objectively there”. The latter is what Herbert will use to reference beyond the points of reality and attack Peter for a mind-independent reality fallacy. Continued contributions from Peter would definitely draw attention to and secure Herbert’s Website.

1.3. In <4> Peter could have found support from Jaspers for his view that pure philosophy may lead to further experiment or theory and lead to interpretations different than one assumed correct. Jaspers said “Philosophy has been the fountainhead of science....And it is in philosophy, in the end, that the sciences must constantly be revitalized if they are not to dissipate themselves in a mere endless accuracy.” (Philosophy and the World)

1.4. Peter is known for contributing and associating with the Journal, *Science and Christian Belief*. This Journal carries a debate in which the militant atheist, Richard Dawkins, participated. There's a fine informative free-sample Article by Peter on Eastern views and modern physics. One can suspect that Herbert's commitment to his personal mission includes planning and stage-managing contributions and in this case Herbert's plan could be to bring the evolutionist Dawkins into his "Karl Jaspers' Forum". Bringing a personage of popular status such as Dawkins into his Forum would divert from the charge that Herbert exploits the name of Jaspers. It would also perhaps tend to distract from the adamancy of the Karl Jaspers' Applied Website. Herbert would like to pit Dawkins against the likes of Jaspers' preference for Creation.

1.5. But total planning, selection and prohibiting, can backfire. "Any intellectual act today is bound up with the responsibility for the freedom of man—a responsibility which can materialize only with every man's free judgment in public debate, and without any censorship presuming to act as a selecting and prohibiting authority." (Jaspers, p. 9, *Philosophy and the World*.) Being guilty of violating this responsibility, Herbert, as a militant atheist and evolutionist like Dawkins, might be hoping that Dawkins will feel like he has been subjected to selection too and welcome the chance to take refuge in Herbert's Forum. Total planning requires total control and recoils against the unpredictable, the serendipitous results such as the following:

2. Serendipity and the University of Glasgow--Alma mater of a Great Debater

2.1. Engaging Peter would have unpredictable consequences. Peter is an academic physics reader at the University Glasgow. Although he has absolutely no involvement in my comments here, I'm going to exploit the situation and point out how interesting it is that he is associated with the *alma mater* of 19th century religious reformers Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander. Alexander's mother was a descendent of the persecuted French Huguenots. Thomas and his wife Jane had something in common with Karl and Gertrude Jaspers. The Huguenots were persecuted to the point of designed extinction in France. They were not permitted in Spain or its Territories. In early America a new Huguenot settlement was wholly annihilated by Catholic Spaniards from St. Augustine (not many decades prior to chopping off the feet of the Acoma Indians in what is now New

Mexico). At Glasgow Alexander stood first in his class in logic under a Professor Jardine. These two personages had no small influence in the new world to which they migrated in 1807 and 1809. What is being suggested is that there is at least a history of intellectual honesty and wisdom.

2.2. Alexander was such an affectionate and effective debater that on his tombstone are the words “Defender of the Faith”. He debated with the outstanding atheist/socialist Robert Owen. It took place in 1809 and resulted in stemming the tide of atheism in America. Owen had challenged the clergy to meet him in discussion but none accepted the challenge except Alexander. It was said by an opponent of Alexander that he spoke as a man who seems to have lived in all ages. Owen soon abandoned socialist/atheistic efforts at New Harmony Indiana, and Kendal Ohio. It is said that Owen while treated with great hospitality was moved to tears at Alexander’s unsuccessful appeal to abandon his infidelity.

2.3. Alexander, while in Scotland, had familiarized himself with the effects of Catholicism. In Cincinnati Catholicism had attempted to exclude the Bible from the public schools. Alexander addressed the College of Teachers in Cincinnati on the subject of the moral culture he claimed was made possible in part due to the Lutheran Reformation. A Catholic Bishop, Purcell, responded and expressed the idea that the Reformation had been the cause of great world contention. Alexander was a thorough student of church history and up to the task of the ensuing 1837 debate that lasted seven days. He represented the true spirit of protestant thinking, and this statement by Jaspers applies to Alexander: “To the Protestant principle, a premise of original understanding and adoption of the faith is the learned familiarity with the texts, their study, their historical knowledge.” (Phil. Faith and Rev. Chapter on A Change in Biblical Religion.)

2.4. My religious background is directly influenced by the work of the Campbells. In my judgment, the Campbells sectarian movement is near to what Karl Jaspers had in mind when he said:

The human situation, now as ever, demands a rebirth of man. If I see the best chances for it on Protestant soil, this is due only to the Protestant principle which approximates philosophy: no mediator; direct contact with God; universal priesthood—and a corresponding institutional dismemberment of the Church into many creeds and independent congregations.

The reference to creeds needs to be understood as meaning the biblical interpretations that foster independence, for “In the Bible [one] finds the ground of both...freedom and...earnestness”. (Phil. Faith and Rev. p. 336). The Campbells opposed creeds--as does Jaspers in his works--for they were indicators of denominational distinctiveness and exclusivity, and “no creed but the Bible” was appropriate to the New World’s soil (American), a substitute for the imposing Western traditional Church-authority.

3. Jim Baggott’s Comment

3.1. Jim does not mention Karl Jaspers and in contrast argues for an evolutionism. He argues from an admitted dialectical method of faith. Jim is not selected serendipitously, for Herbert plans his “Forum”. He seeks, with agenda in mind, certain contributors and it is easy to entertain reasons for their selection. Though aligning himself with radical constructionism, he uses educative approaches and methods to predetermine results.

3.2. Jim was one of this week’s ...select....postings. He is a freelance writer and author of some books. His descending leap (see 3.3.) of faith to evolutionism has some economic benefits. Book sales are enhanced if supportive of a popular “belief” now blessed by a vatic authority. In his Comment he searches for some means of resolving the conflict between idealism and realism. He looks to J. Neumann. (To avoid presumptuousness in thinking here, for research shows the distinguishing title of “von” should be dropped for it was “purchased” and his first name was anglicized.)

3.3. After some effort to demonstrate his comprehension of J. Neumann’s analysis of the observable, the means of observing, and the observer, Jim says, “I happen [to] believe that the human mind is a product of millions of years of evolution in living organisms that somehow came to be...” <14> Uttering this creed he leaves...no...room for the revitalization of science, but rather in his evolutionism, in his certainty of humankind’s origin, science is dissipated into an external realism, and meaning is lost “in mere endless accuracy” (Jaspers p.15 Philosophy and the World) which is a major problem with evolutionism. Within the infinity of the finite-possibilities one loses contact with meaningful human and humane connections. The loss was demonstrated in the disagreement at Los Alamos between Neumann and Oppenheimer. The former was committed to greater means of mass destruction, and the latter to the idea that science had already gone too far.

3.4. Jim however mysteriously equates evolutionism—a dialectical idealism—with realism and it is obvious his evolutionism can best be maintained, when needed, by a dialectical realism justified by “an appeal to nothing less than an act of faith”, <14> an uneasy perspective forced into an objectivity of certitude confusing faith with knowledge. My guess is that Herbert here uses Jim in an attempt to show that from either perspective, i.e., a dialectical idealism or materialism, evolutionism is presentable enough to be popular. I’ve little doubt but that Herbert would like to work Richard Dawkins (see 1. above) into the Forum to muddle through Karl Jaspers’ creation slant and to distract from the obvious contrast between Herbert and Jaspers. What Herbert is willing to do is modify his dialectical idealism to make room for the dialectical materialism essential to physic’s research, and the natural short-circuiting ground for a single circuit of evolutionism. He seems willing to risk sacrificing the zero-derivation formula while escaping into remnants of experience that he confuses with mind. His dialectical idealism easily gets bogged down in evolutionary dialectical materialism, and then reverts to vatic popularity for support. If not the Vatican, then it would be a Dawkins or Gould. Dawkins is currently more popular thanks in part to the popularity of Bill Moyer whose fairness of thought but weakened critiquing questions brought fame to Dawkins simply by mere association.

3.5. But realistic thinking includes an openness to learned ignorance, i.e., the more we know the more we know we don’t know. Jim appears to replace learned ignorance with unlearned certainty. He seems to simply come up with a rationalization in economic accountability terms to continue to finance science...and, dare it be said, book sales. His argument is that realism, and evolutionism is truer due to de facto research in the natural sciences including Quantum physics, which is financed, and one does not finance mythology. Herbert knows that most authors welcome an invitation to contribute an article if it means free exposure. I suggest that Herbert and Jim may be participating in a form of complementarily, collusive reciprocity, and vector aiming and guiding--and giving vector DNA a bad connotation. Evolutionism knows no restraints, and an inhumane disturbance of meaningful scientific research is permitted for there is nothing too sacred for exploitation if it can be used to establish the one and only concept, the fallacy involved in evolutionism.

3.6. Complementarity is simply concentrating on the affect between cause and effect. Cause affects effect, and effect affects cause, and the complex-

manifold complicates complementarity. Both the set and system can be subject to some objections according to linguistic spins. Though the system arbitrarily set up for investigation can be a set (object-cause) the effectiveness is determined sometimes more by the seeming infinity of affective state processes. Probability of course has its effective place. Dropping a cause (bomb) on target might have greater negative effect if it explodes just short of the target (an idea Neumann is attributed with). The complementarity of idealism and realism here is clear; somewhere betwixt bomb and objective, detonation-effect can be measurably affected.

3.7. He then contradicts his one true faith in his dialectical realism, i.e., evolutionism, by talking about what has idealized or materialized as a result of Neumann's contributions, i.e., the end of "one true theory..." <15> At an emotionally affective and complex point he limits his wits to his one believed true creed. He too, like Herbert, makes no clear distinctions between mind and consciousness, and eliminates historical and inheritable conscience. Neumann did similarly and was known for his excessive use of alcohol, one symptom of the need to anesthetize one's conscience or preclude its development.

3.8. Jim's talk about the collapse of the wavefunction in physics was informative but left too little room for the more meaningful recollection of the collapse of in-depth emotional spacetime, the collapse of mind particles (ideas) into ripple-waves (coming and going) of consciousness. The child's cry that leaves no breath left to catch, the memory of crying one's self just short of death, or just short of mindfully understanding the incomprehensible, for this *exhausting experience* is void of recallable causes except in terms of feeling total disappointment. Here intense and immeasurable experience becomes a first experience that can suppress consciousness including inherited conscience. And that is probably the situation that gives pseudo credibility only to clear, preferable, and superficial experience and avoids the comprehensiveness only vivid consciousness and conscience can affect. The sobbing into only vague awareness of being conscious of something beyond comprehension, some incomprehensible sensation of injustice that words cannot relay or allay, when ones' whole world groans and momentarily gives up the breath of life, for no in-depth inhaling can be sufficient for the task of the final cry or sigh of despair. On a superficial level, one can cry in one's Vodka with a few of the fellows.

3.9. Herbert makes use of Richard Conn Henry's Target Article 84. Mr. Henry's contribution was obviously sought-out by Herbert, hoping it would present enough conceptual expressions to offer the opportunity to show where positing a zero-derivation formula can affectively subjugate theistic mind-independent-reality.

4. Herbert Muller's Response to Mr. Henry

4.1. Herbert begins his Commentary to Richard C. Henry by being careful not to use his middle name in the same fashion as did Greg Nixon, i.e., by avoiding a spin on the name "Conn" as symbolic of one who is cunning enough to be a con artist. When I was submitting Comments to Herbert's Website, if I left out "von" in reference to Glasersfeld, Herbert would edit and add "von". Greg found something emotive in the sound of "Conn" and negatively capitalized on it, whereas Herbert preferred only the initial in reaction. This is all so trivial but not irrelevant regarding intellectual honesty. It is an insult to Jaspers and fair-minded objective contributors who expect something equal in value to the name of Karl Jaspers, an increasingly popular name, but generally not understood or only misunderstood.

4.2. Herbert compliments Richard for his epistemic approach. Herbert takes satisfaction in being a theoretical epistemologist. He admits he knows little of physics, perhaps the confession indicates he is somewhat demoralized by Baggott's Comment. He claims to be only an expert on epistemic tools, i.e., concepts. *He has yet to admit he knows little of Jaspers.* One cannot be informed on physics and still be given to a dialectical idealism, nor the idealism involved in dialectical materialism. Herbert obviously talked Richard into doing a TA and therefore must squeeze something useful from it. He uses a strange method; he appeals to "edited out material" and hints that there is more similarity to his "as-if realism" ideal than what Baggott can see on the surface of what was posted. Mr. Henry indicated that some new initiative is needed to handle what appears in physics to be mentalism. In this clearly vague indication Herbert finds a window of opportunity for expounded on zero-derivation and propounding against mind-independent reality. Herbert's mission includes avoiding a religion on the basis of mystery unless it can contribute to atheism. He is caught between the soft mysticism of eastern religion, which he interprets as atheistic, and the rigidity of vatic authority. He attempts to wiggle out by now criticizing the Vatican he once celebrated because of its evolving evolutionism.

4.3. Herbert now equates Vodka and the Vatican (and obvious reference to the idea that religion is the opium of the people) <5> and escapes into more verbalizations about the mind, individual and/or collective, and says it means the same thing as what Richard means by reality being mental. Here again he equivocates mind and structure, and both within experience, some reality is as-if, and some are real, and some not. Nothing is new here. He repeats the refrain, “The mind is all-encompassing, nothing ‘exists’ outside it”, and again manifests a lack of lucidity in the expression “experience (the mind)”.

4.4. In item <9> Herbert shows why he encouraged the TA. “The resulting unease [of not believing in God, my comment—GW] prompts maintenance of, or relapse into, MIR-belief.” In an effort to understand Herbert, “MIR” must always be dethroned and reduced to terms, and the terms are: there is no reality independent of one’s thinking and the thinking of all others. The inhibitions formulae can have are seen here in that the formula “MIR-belief” clearly contradicts any functional value of a process reduced to “as-if MIR”. In <10> Herbert contradicts his as-if mind independent logic by saying that when Richard predicated something about the world as being “genuinely mechanical” he did a bad “ontic”, suggesting something to be mind-independent, and given. Then, meaning is said to come from elsewhere and not from anything mechanical. In <11> he repeats what everyone knows that without thinking there is no thinker and no thinker without thinking and remembering. He reminds us that if reality is something independent of mind then the mind cannot be real because it would have to be independent of itself. The fallacy here is in his “individual and collective” “experience (mind)”. He assumes there are no other categories, no encompassing consciousness of varying intensities than what he means by his own personal experiences—which are never revealed in depth.