HEIMATKUNDE

Explorations of Place and Belonging

A ‘Feast-Script’ in Honour of Ullrich Kockel

Edited by

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"The Man of Calling"

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Professor Ullrich Kockel

by Alastair McIntosh
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Being a reflection on some qualities of leadership in a scholar of people and their communities of place

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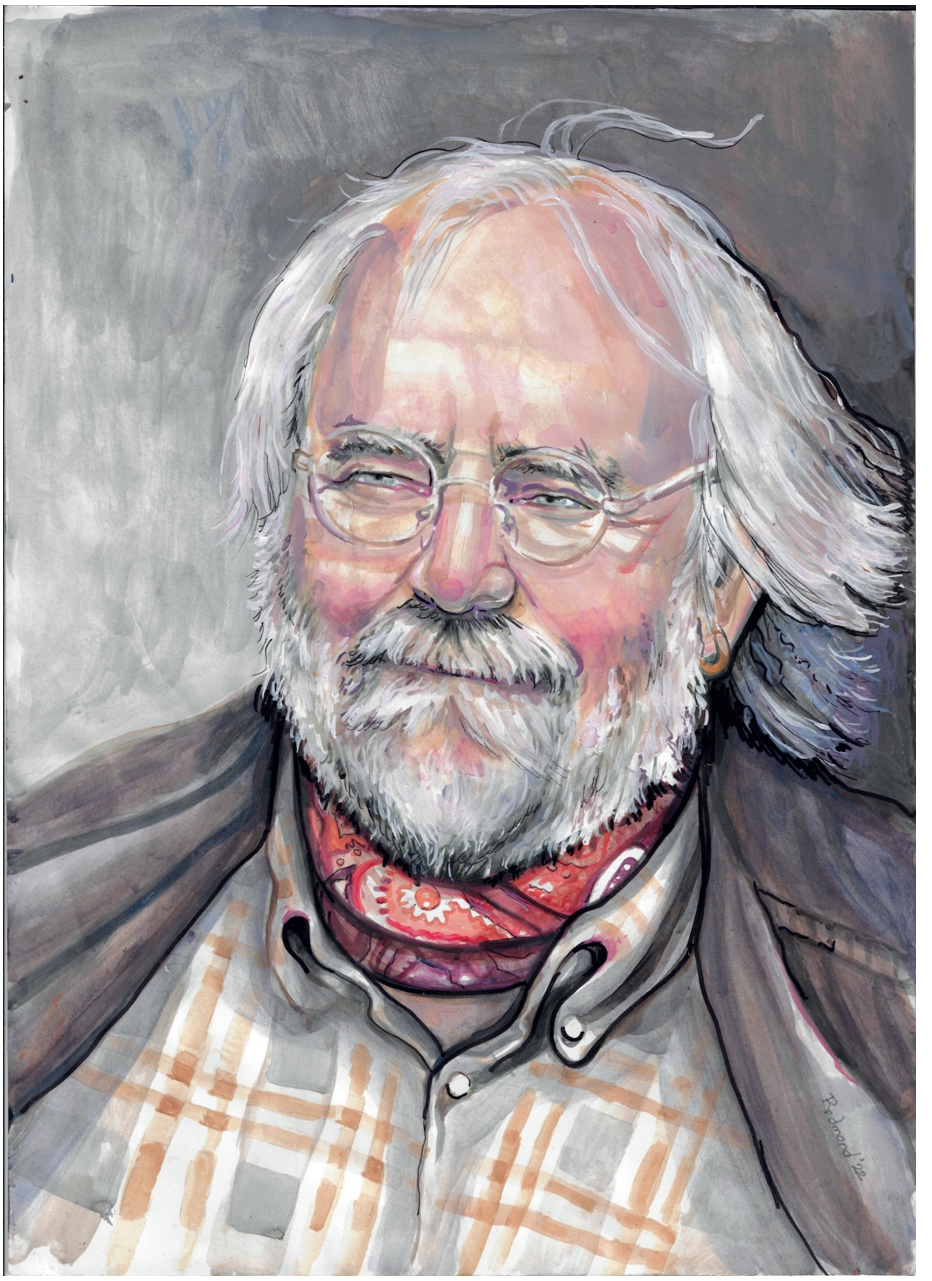

Ullrich Kockel (©Andrea Redmond 2022)

The Man of Calling

Alastair McIntosh

In *The Attitude of Education*, my contribution to Máiréad Nic Craith's festschrift (McIntosh 2020b), I described how she and Ulli Kockel when both spearheading the Academy of Irish Cultural Heritages at the University of Ulster encouraged me to present for a PhD by published works in 2007-08. I described how their influence was inseparable, and how what most impressed me was the way that they *held* their students. I mentioned what the Quaker, Parker Palmer, calls 'spaces that are hospitable to the soul' and suggested that behind all the parties and seminars that they organised was a capacity to sustain fertile ground on which the seeds of many younger scholars could be nourished. Here I will press deeper into that quality. While my emphasis this time will be on Ulli, what is written here again applies to both.

On being invited to contribute to this volume, the editors circulated us with a list of Ulli's key philosophical and scholarly influences. Amongst these I noticed the ancient Chinese classic, the *Tao Te Ching* of Lao Tzu (as the Wade-Giles romanisation has it), or the *Dao De Ching* of Lao Zi (in the more contemporary Pinyin romanisation) (see Wilhelm 1985). I want to unpack an aspect of the *Tao Te Ching* (TTC) that most makes me think of Ulli and the pattern and example that he sets as a teaching academic. The term *Sheng Ren* is variously translated as 'the great man' (*Legge*), 'the sage' (Lau, and Feng & English) or 'the wise soul' (Le Guin),[1] to mention but three translations. As a text of the Mythos more than Logos, the TTC, like all writing of a scriptural quality, invites a kaleidoscopic reading. One tap, and the imagery shifts. The same is probably partly true of the multiple translator's perspectives, and in these senses, scriptures are living oracles and like icons, portals through to whence they speak.

I want to fix on one of the less-well-known but in my view, most important translations and commentaries because of the depth of sympathetic cross-cultural immersion out of which it arose at a time of crucial historical transition in China. It is a translation linked both to Ulli's German cultural provenance and to his Christianity: namely H.G. Otswald's 1985 English rendition of Richard Wilhelm's translation, the preface to which he penned in 1910 (Wilhelm 1985, vii-

[1] James Legge's (1891) is one of the oldest English translations, titled *The Tao Teh King;* D.C. Lau's (1963) was chosen by Penguin Classics as one of the most scholarly. Ursula Le Guin's is not scholarly but is loved by many for its poetic and contemplative qualities.

viii). Wilhelm (1873-1930) was a Protestant missionary sinologist in Tsingtao, a colonial leased trading province that, as Ulli will appreciate, remains famous for its German-established brewery. For our purposes, I want to zero in one particular aspect of the Otswald-Wilhelm translation (henceforth just Wilhelm 1985). Namely, its translation of *Sheng Ren* as 'the Man of Calling'.

Notice the energy shift there compared with the other three translated terms that I have pointed to. To be a Man or Woman of calling, or we might borrow from Le Guin and generalise as a Soul of Calling, infers both dynamism (a calling to something) and relationship (a calling from something or somewhere). I will examine this not just with respect to Ulli, but as a principle that all of us who have been his students might find enriching and hope-giving in our times. But first, some context of those times in the aspect of Ulli's work with which I am most familiar.

Ontological Re-sourcing in *Heimat*

Another of Ulli's influences, the Ayrshire poet Kenneth White, whose 'geopoetics' draws heavily on Far Eastern insight, suggests that 'what Chinese Taoist thought offers us is ontological re-sourcing' (White 1988). I consider that observation pivotal. It nails the need of our times. It is the social function, or rather, the gift of grace of the Soul of Calling.

Ontology is the study of being. It is an aspect of metaphysics, the study of first principles and specifically, that which is behind or beyond the outward physical forms of reality.

Both sit outwith the comfort zones of the modern academy and its contrapuntal scion, postmodernism. In Britain, A.J. Ayer set the tenor with his manifesto of English logical positivism, *Language, Truth and Logic*, in proclaiming 'the elimination of metaphysics'. This, on the supposed grounds that such speculation is 'literally senseless', unamenable to the sense data of the material world (Ayer 1971: 61). Fast forward half a century, and a more seasoned man, one who underwent a near-death experience at around the same time (Ayer 1988) conceded that his early work had been reductionist and 'full of mistakes which I spent the last fifty years correcting or trying to correct' (Ayer 1998). Nevertheless, the spiritual vacuity of early Ayer and others like him marked the tenor of the time and account, in part, for where we're at.

Postmodern philosophy gave no kinder a ride to ontology and metaphysics. It's claim to social traction lay in the deconstruction of power structures, as if all this, too, were not 'footnotes to Plato'. Both ontology and metaphysics give credence to essence, a by-word for spiritual qualities, and thus during the later twentieth century 'essentialism' became the greatest thought crime that could

be committed in the academy. Like to the apocryphal Puritan, you can't have dancing because it leads to sex, and you can't have sex because it leads to dancing. Similarly, you can't have essentialism because it leads to spirituality, and you can't have spirituality because it leads to essentialism. In British philosophy such modern and postmodern dismissals of an underlying ground of being culminated in the New Atheism of the turn of the third millennium; and this, a fashion of both necessary iconoclastic catharsis and effervescent hubris that, from surfeit of the latter, soon turned to pickled relics in the vinegar of its own boredom.

Ulli's work that I know best, on ontological resourcing and the fatwah on essentialism, is set out in the chapter that he wrote for *Radical Human Ecology*, a volume that I co-edited with Kiwi and Canadian colleagues, Lewis Williams and Rose Roberts. This argues for a renewed ethno-ecological framework that regrounds ethnology grounded in *Heimat* (homeland) – 'the place we are from or towards'. *Heimat* is a German sense of home that incorporates not just place as space, but such qualities as identity, emotion, community, culture and tradition. It is where we're from, but also aspirational in that it has an 'idyllic' and even, a utopian quality. It is something to be worked towards, to be accomplished, a sense of both something known and held as heritage and something potential and to be held in its emergence. *Heimatkunde* is the knowledge of *Heimat*, and these, as nothing less than a spiritual framing of the *oikos* or ecology as home (in the Greek etymology), provide us, in his view, with means of 'creating an ethnologically informed Human Ecology of place and belonging.' (Kockel 2012).

So far so good, but Ulli, having been around a bit and not least, through his distinguished presidency 2008-2013 of SIEF, the *Société Internationale d´Ethnologie et de Folklore*, could anticipate the obstacles that essentialism and German history might put in the way. Taking these by the horns, he describes how, growing up in a post-Second World War Europe, he was part of a fiercely cosmopolitan world that assumed any place-bound ideology 'as invariably leading down the path to territorialism and genocide' (Kockel 2012: 58).

We could hardly care less about where we came from, and welcomed the postmodern pop-cultural notion that it was all constructed, imagined and invented anyway. The metaphysics of the past and future had died in the ashes of old Europe, the pure physics of the present was all that counted now [and] we could fashion our individual paces as we wished and discard them, when no longer needed or waned, in favour of the next whim. It was a puerile fantasy world, flimsy narcissistic cocoonery; but at the time it seemed utterly real. And to many fellow academics, it still does.

He tells how, in Germany in the 1960s and 1970s, *Heimatkunde* or home-knowledge was replaced in the primary school curriculum by *sachkunde,* 'the knowledge of material reality', a name, he suggests, that shows 'the evident contempt in which metaphysics such as underpinned *Heimatkunde* was being held by the zeitgeist'. At the same time, ethnology as the study of *ethnoi*¸ of human communities, was being 'stripped of the *ethnos* as *community*' by a constructivism – the postmodern view that social realities (and even 'nature') are entirely social constructions – that 'thrives in the void of placelessness'. This loss of ontological grounding in ethnology is, he emphasises, exacerbated in Germany where *Heimat* had been tarnished by its appropriation by Nazism; a dynamic by which, 'like so many other concepts relating to communities of human beings in their place, *indigeneity* has been usurped by the political Right for xenophobic ends'.

Shallow v. Deep Essentialism

Why not, therefore, reject all sense of ethnicity? In my discussions with Ulli and Máiréad it's why we don't reject Christianity on the grounds of how oppression has been perpetuated under the Christian guise. Any truth bestowed of power - and what truth is not? – will be a magnet for bad actors. Thus, the temptations of Christ, reflecting the abuse, respectively (in the ordering of Luke's gospel), of nature's power, social power and most subtle of all, spiritual power. What Ulli distinguishes in his chapter 'shallow essentialism' sees this, but it misses the mark. Shallow essentialism views *Heimat* only at the level of such external handles as genes, race, or religion, all of which can be objectified, appropriated and manipulated. Like Richard Dawkins mounting a brilliant critique of the outward forms of religion but abjectly failing to engage in any depth with the theology of God, shallow essentialism attracts shallow critics, who don't see the spiritual real presence that underpins community as communion and finds expression in poetry, song, story and faith. Accordingly, it abandons identity, belonging and meaning, and treats them at best as commodities, to be swapped as 'identikits in the postmodern identity warehouse'.

The outcome, Ulli shows, is quite the opposite to that intended. Just as to abandon good religion because it been appropriated and subjected to spiritual abuse does not empower those left with nothing, so to abandon *Heimat* in favour of the anodyne leaves a forest of shallow rooted trees, blown easily from whichever way the next wind comes. Ironically, this privileges the very power that critics of essentialism fear even more: advanced capitalism. In the *Sheng Ren's* own words (Kockel 2012: 60):

> Moreover, the focus on locality and connectedness appeared too parochial in the eyes of a rapidly modernizing post-War academic and political culture that increasingly emphasized cosmopolitanism and mobility. As the accelerating global capitalism demanded pliable subjects ready to obey market signals in accordance with the prevailing ideological model, ecological groundedness became a hindrance to progress, and the possibility of tarnishing any such approach by associating it with the atrocities of Nazism provided a welcome opportunity to silence opposition to what Habermas (1987) calls the 'colonisation of the lifeworlds'.

At this point, and to spare our friend the risk of standing out too much alone, we might recall that Anthony Giddens also recognised the core consequence of modernity as being the rendition of the world to a single homogenous global market surface. To him, '[t]he dynamism of modernity derives from the separation of time and space' – the rhythms of nature and place – resulting in 'the *disembedding* of social systems'. Expressing the same in more relational or feeling-toned language: 'the advent of modernity increasingly tears space away from place by fostering relations between 'absent' others, locationally distant from any given situation of face-to-face interaction.' Money then substitutes for relationship, by enabling 'distanciated transactions', with the alienating result that sense of place 'becomes increasingly phantasmagoric; that is to say, locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them' (Giddens 1990).

To borrow another German word, the *Heimlich* as that which pertains to 'home' becomes *Unheimlich*, 'unhomed', which Freud in an essay that has acquired importance in studies of cultural trauma equated with the 'the uncanny'. Giddens term 'phantasmagoric' is no exaggeration. To Freud, this unhoming from our grounding literally spooks the psyche. 'It undoubtedly belongs to all that is terrible—to all that arouses dread and creeping horror' (Freud 1919). It plays out in literature, where not for nothing is the haunted house haunted.[2] At its root lies the soul's alienation from that which connects in real presence. Not for nothing, therefore, does the crux of the Christian communion service revolve around *anamnesis*, 'memory' in the deeper Greek sense that reconnects through space and time: 'Do this in memory (*anamnēsin*) of me' (Luke 22:19).

Let me summarise where we're at. If I am understanding him correctly, Ulli recognises that what the Nazis did unsettled the ability of Germans to connect

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[2] See my discussion of J.M. Barrie's play *Mary Rose* and war trauma in *Poacher's Pilgrimage: an Island Journey*, Birlinn, 2016, 158-173 (hardback edition, chapter 12).

with a sense of home. I recognise this. In the 1980s I was business advisor to the Iona Community (with which he and Máiréad have close affinities) I often met young Germans who had come to seek a deeper stratum of belonging to which they might find connection in what they sensed to be an underlying pan-European 'Celtic' folk tradition. However, postmodernism to the ironic benefit of corporate worldviews has driven an ideological deracination, this to the injury of the psyche that – pace Freud and Giddens – perhaps goes even deeper than Ulli ventures to take it. Shallow essentialists, who privilege (and thereby, essentialise) their own meaning-wary epistemology, see only shallow essentialist attributes. They miss the deeper spiritual point, and necessarily so, in an academic paradigm that has essentialised materialism. This damages *Heimat*; thus in calling for a renewed 'European ethnology', Ulli sums up: 'My primary aim here is to re-connect ethnology with *Heimatkunde.*'

Native or Indigenous?

But how? Ulli is explicit that, given the history of Nazi and other far right appropriation, an ethno-ecological framework must avoid the 'hostile differentiation' that critics of essentialism accuse it of (Kockel 2012: 66). To connect with *Heimat* authentically 'does not mean *exclusive* and *exclusionist*.' To be so would be to 'commit the fallacy of a shallow essentialism equating age, measured in geological proportions, with veracity and legitimacy...' It would succumb to 'the postmodern denial of essence' as a 'cop-out' that 'reverts inevitably to a shallow essentialism that fetishizes the superficial' (Kockel 2012: 67-68).

On the one hand, then, is the peril of xenophobic ethnocentricity. On the other, a wallowing in superficiality that leaves the ungrounded psyche vulnerable, as Jung so clearly saw, to the blandishments of the age. I see a parallel with the debate around masculinity, where only a few deny that masculinity is important, how to celebrate it without succumbing to toxic masculinity? His suggested resolution is to make a distinction between two words that are often used interchangeably but within which subtle differences can be discerned: 'native' and 'indigenous'. Native is a fixed quality. It permits *Heimat* only as 'the place we are from'. Indigenous, on the other hand, has the latitude to be a dynamic quality. It permits a *Heimat* understand also, or alternatively, as 'the place we are ... towards'. Thus (Kockel 2012: 65-66):

> This is where the distinction between *native* and *indigenous* ... can be drawn in outline. In Spranger's terms, the human being has, wherever he or she is born, an environment (*eine Umwelt*), which forms a significant milieu for the individual who is native to it. But being native to a place does not connect

the individual with it in the deep sense of a spiritual rootedness deriving from the experiential appropriation that creates *Heimat* and through which a native of somewhere else can become *hiesig*, 'from here' – indigenous. An individual may feel no particular bond with his or her native place, or may indeed feel quite alienated from it. That connection between person and place is a spiritual matter, and as such is metaphysical.

Let me underscore the importance of that. Ulli is suggesting that *one can become indigenous to a place* without necessarily being native to it, and that the native is not necessarily indigenous. In other words, 'native' is being positioned as 'nature' but 'indigenous' as 'nurture'. This precisely echoes what in Govan in Glasgow we have developed as the *GalGael* principle: that there is a little of the 'Gal' or non-native, and a little of the 'Gael' or native in most of us, but all if so choosing and chosen, anyone can with time and sensitivity become indigenous (McIntosh 1998). As I have attempted to express this principle elsewhere, with Gaelic translation here by the Skye poet Maoilios Caimbeul (McIntosh 2006: 56):

Scotland	***Alba***
A person belongs	*Buinidh neach an seo*
inasmuch as they are willing	*fhad 's a tha iad deònach*
to cherish and be cherished	*tasgadh is a bhith air an tasgadh*
by a place	*leis an àite*
and its peoples	*agus a mhuinntir*

There is one added caveat to Ulli's formulation. In the poem above, I have predicated the principle on the dynamics of love (as cherishing). In the final part of his chapter Ulli takes this a step further, one with which I wholeheartedly concur. He predicates his vision for 'a place that we are at least as much *towards* as *from* – on truth and the sacred. Truth, not as 'a social construct' but organic, as a function of ecological relationships. And the divine or sacred, as expressed the holistic German philosopher and psychologist Eduard Spranger whereby the world is understood and experienced as an organic whole, permeated by the same divine energy. As such, 'The experiencing and enquiring human being is an integral part of these organic relationships of life and truth' and this offers the

foundation for an ethnological *Heimatkunde*, that (pace Basso) 'contributes towards a better Human Ecological understanding of toposophy, the wisdom that 'sits in places' (Kockel 2012: 68f., drawing on Spranger 1967).

Set within this grounding context of people(s) and place(s), I posit that the 'experiencing and enquiring human being' – they whosoever conditions the world through the 'ontological re-sourcing' of nothing less than divine love - is the Tao Te Ching's *Sheng Ren*. Here we both see and see the importance of the Soul, Woman or Man of Calling. This, not only as an individual, and certainly not as individualism, but as an 'individuated' being in Jung's sense: which is to say, a being that is *undivided* from source, the ground of being. Individuation is Jung's term for self-realisation: as he put it, 'I use the term 'individuation' to denote the process by which a person becomes 'in-dividual', that is a separate indivisible unity or 'whole'.... Individuation does not shut out the world, but gathers the world to oneself' (Jung cited in Samuels *et al* 1986: 77).

Those who are familiar with the 'deep ecology' of Arne Næss and his understanding of self-realisation as the realisation, or making real, of the 'ecological self', will recognise the cross-disciplinary parallels (Næss 1988). The bottom line is that such thinking or rather, frameworks of experience, have the power of resting perennial human problems into a deeper hand and grounding. One that is profoundly of us, but as both Jung and Næss are at pains to point out, and as answers Ulli's concern about authoritarian abuse, profoundly beyond ego. It is the prerogative of the humble, or as another spiritual teacher once put such ethnological deep ecology: 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth' – the English 'meek' being a limited attempt to convey the Greek *praus*, which combines both gentleness and strength. 'Blessed are the gentle strong, for they....' (Matthew 5: 5).

In articulating such *praus*, the Richard Wilhelm's translation of the *Tao Te Ching* takes on instructive importance. The Tao, also translated by some as 'the Way', points towards a reconnected wholeness. The way of the *Sheng Ren* is bigger than Ulli or any other individual. It is an archetypal patterning. But if I might say so, and with a wink to Mairéad, in the current context Ulli will do to illustrate.

Richard Wilhelm, Bridge to the East

Wilhelm's translations have never been the darling of scholars. He is accused of failing to separate his German-Christian worldview from that of the Chinese that he adopted during his quarter century (getting on for half his life) in China, and for privileging the texts' spiritual meaning over philological accuracy (Lakner 1999). But 'accuracy' might be a vain pursuit in the kaleidoscopic world where

Chinese pictograms become spiritual metaphors. His resounding legacy is as a cross-cultural pioneer (School of Wisdom n.d.). He told Jung, 'It is a great satisfaction to me that I never baptised a single Chinese!' Jung, in turn, noted his 'truly religious spirit with an unclouded and far-sighted view of things.' His was the gift of accomplishing 'the miracle of empathy which enabled him to make the intellectual treasurers of China accessible to Europe' (Jung 1967). Indeed, his translation of another Chinese classic, the *I Ching* or *Book of Changes* (1923), was considered by Jung to encode the sum of ancient Chinese psychological wisdom and is held by many to be the gold standard to this day.

What might merit such positioning? Wilhelm's *I Ching* preface tells that began the translation in 1913, just after the Chinese Revolution of 1911 'when Tsingtao became the residence of a number of the most eminent scholars of the old school.' Amidst this influx seeking German protection from Communist persecution, he met his venerated teacher, Lao Nai-hsüan. Although his translation of the *Tao Te Ching* narrowly preceded the Revolution, social upheaval was already in the air, with the Boxer Rebellion coinciding with his arrival in China in 1899. We might speculate, therefore, that his empathy with traditionalist spiritual teachers took hold early.[3]

The Essentialism of Tao and Te

In the introduction and commentary to his *Tao Te Ching* translation, Wilhelm translates the Tao or Dao as the German *sinn*. He equates this with 'meaning', also with 'essence' (Wilhelm 1985: 72). 'DAO, or essence, is unfolded in reality' (Wilhelm 1985: 72). It's an anti-essentialist's nightmare!

The text itself counsels caution with definitions. Like God in (Exodus 3:14), the Tao is ineffable. As the opening couplet has it in a familiar rendition: 'The Tao that can be spoken/ is not the true Tao'. Or as Wilhelm articulates it: 'The Dao that can be expressed/ is not the eternal Dao.' In a translator's footnote (Wilhelm 1985: 13 note 2), Otswald points to the prologue of John's gospel and notes that, 'Chinese translations of the Bible almost without exception, render 'Logos' as 'Dao'.' Like John's 'In the beginning was the Word (*Logos*),' the Tao precedes conceptualisation. 'I call it DAO. / Painfully giving it a name / I call it "great"' (Wilhelm 1985: 37). Painful in the paradox. But like in Genesis where the Holy Spirit hovers over the primordial waters, it permits kaleidoscopic metaphorical imagery:

[3] Doubtless there will be archival and biographical material, probably in German, that takes this further, but such exceeds my competence and remit here.

> Lao Zi quotes an ancient adage in which DAO is compared to the spirit of the empty valley, to the mysterious female, flowing uninterrupted like a waterfall as though it were eternal, its mysterious entrance the root of Heaven and Earth. (Genesis 1:2; Wilhelm 1985: 69)

In Christian history, the imagery of the Holy Spirit is subjected to a gender metamorphosis from Hebrew feminine of *rūaḥ* (just cited), to the Greek neuter *pneûma* and from there, to the Geek masculine *paraclete*, and from there to a general Christian privileging of masculinity. Wilhelm tells that the Dao also underwent a gender shift around the end of the second millennium B.C.. However, the text itself remains explicit (Wilhelm 1985: 29):

> The spirit of the valley never dies.
> It is called 'the female'.
> The gateway of the dark female
> Is called 'the root of Heaven and Earth'.
> it is effective without effort.

Wilhelm translates Te or De into German as *leben*, meaning Life (which he capitalises). He observes that, 'according to Lao Zi, Life is nothing is nothing other than this spontaneously active essence of man, identical, in the final analysis, with the foundation of the world' (Wilhelm 1985: 17). Note that synonymy in our context of ethno-ecological ontology. The text, again, is explicit (Wilhelm 1985: 49-50):

> DAO generates.
> Life nourishes.
> Environment shapes.
> Influences complete.
> ... Therefore: DAO generates, Life nourishes,
> makes grow, cares,
> completes, keeps,
> covers and protects.

The mood by which this holds in place is profoundly nonviolent. The *Tao Te Ching* deplores the violent forcing of events. War a failure of leadership from grounding in the Tao. There is a better way to govern (Wilhelm 1985: 58):

Whosoever knows how to lead well
is not warlike.
Whosoever knows how to fight well
is not angry.
Whosoever knows how to conquer enemies
does not fight them.
Whosoever knows how to use men well
keeps himself below.
This is the Life that does not quarrel;
This is the power of using men;
this is the pole that reaches up to Heaven.

Or, as D.C. Lau perhaps more lucidly translates that penultimate line: 'This is known as making use of the efforts of others' (Lau 1963: 130). But this is not an effete position to be in. Perhaps like the diplomatic immunity said to have been accorded to the Celtic bards of old:

I have heard that whosoever knows how to live life well
wanders through the land
and meets neither rhino nor tiger.
He walks through an army
and avoids neither armour nor weapons.
The rhino finds nothing to sink its horn into.
The weapon finds nothing to receive its sharpness.
Why is this so?
Because he has no mortal spot.

Or, as Feng and English translate that last line with a turn of phrase that might shed light upon the Cross (1 Corinthians 15:55.): 'Because he has no place for death to enter' (Feng and English 1972). I am struck that Wilhelm's introduction mentions Tolstoy's admiration for Lao Tzu, especially his doctrine of 'non-action'. Having just completed reading *War and Peace*, I can see this influence in Tolstoy's oft-repeated treatises on the historiography of the Napoleonic war in Russia. He admires the gentle strength of General Kutuzov, the virtues of which he considers to have been lost on other historians, and he derides what were prevailing 'Great Man' theories of history. Instead, he sets out a philosophy that resonates with Lao Tzu's 'ten thousand things' (Feng and English) or 'myriad creatures' (Lau) that interact in emanation from the Tao. In the context of the war: 'It follows … that all these causes, billions of them, came together to bring

about subsequent events, and these events had no single cause, being bound to happen simply because they were bound to happen' (Tolstoy 2007: 669).

Of the title, *Tao Te Ching*, it remains only to say that Ching means a classic book, and requires no expansion. Thus, the *Tao Te Ching* may be read as 'The Classic of Life's Meaning' or 'Essence'. At this point, let me make explicit what I trust will have been obvious to my reader. Think of the rhino, tiger and sharp weapon in the passage above. Think of the other qualities that that I have aired. And think of Ulli Kockel and the kind of world his life has gently navigated. Think what treasure we have been partakers of (Wilhelm 1985: 59):

> Therefore the Man of Calling
> walks in haircloth
> but in his bosom he guards a jewel.

Let me therefore turn attention to the *Sheng Ren* and the qualities that might help us walk through armies in our times.

Qualities of the *Sheng Ren*

At its heart lies the realisation – both self-realisation and the realisation of what Kenneth White would call a world-sense (emergent from ontological re-sourcing), of the *Sheng Ren*. Again, from Wilhelm's introduction (1985: 18):

> The Man of Calling is the individual who, by putting away his individual inclinations and wishes, completely corresponds to the principle of Life. He does not live himself and does not seek anything for himself, but let's Life express itself through him in this position he is, in a sense a cosmic power.

And the text is one of several such (Wilhelm 1985 27):

> Thus also is the Man of Calling.
> He dwells in effectiveness without action.
> He practises teaching without talking.
> All beings emerge and he does not refuse himself to them.

Again (Wilhelm 1985: 42):

> Thus also is the Man of Calling:
> He never makes himself look great:
> therefore he achieves the great work.

Wilhelm repeatedly shows that the *Sheng Ren* is the individuated individual, not the individualist. She or he is embedded in the substance of the world, a force both with and of nature: 'This is but a necessary consequence, for it is never possible to exclude man from the world, as he is always a necessary factor in that complex we call "world".' As such, the Man of Calling transcends a sense of 'any historically specific personality'. The principle is transpersonal, archetypal, because 'he is an idea beyond time ... an idea in which everyone can participate according to his inner adaptation' (Wilhelm 1985: 18). Recall my summary in this essay's opening passage: 'To be a Man or Woman of calling ... infers both dynamism (a calling to something) and relationship (a calling from something or somewhere)'. There, I propose, we see inside Ulli's otherwise slightly cryptic emphasis on *Heimat* being 'at least as much *towards* as *from*.' I've not known Ulli and for all his life. I've only known him since mid-life. I'd like to imagine that, at one stage, he might have been like one of those young Amish tearaways set loose in rite of passage for their decadent *Rumspringa*! But in terms of Ulli as I've known him - and let's with or without the tearaway dynamic count Máiréad in too– the way of the *Sheng Ren* is how I have experienced them both. I suspect it has had much to do with their successful navigation of today's academic minefields.

The *Sheng Ren* uses ego as a face and representation in the world. Ulli is a professor. He has achieved this and that. But the *Sheng Ren* is grounded not in ego but in Tao. Thus (Wilhelm 1985 49):

> The Man of Calling has no heart of his own.
> He makes the people's heart his own heart.
> 'To the good I am good;
> to the non-good I am also good,
> for Life is goodness....
> The man of Calling lives very quietly in the world.
> People look for him and listen out for him with surprise,
> and the Man of Calling accepts them all as his children.

Ullrich Kockel – Rainmaker

What, then, are the qualities that Ulli has brought to his teaching, institutes and discipline? At the risk of doing damage in my uninformed use of German, he has held *Heimat*. He and Máiréad have held, as suggested earlier, those 'spaces hospitable to the soul' in a wide ethnographic and not just an individualistic sense. As the *Tao Te Ching* has it: 'Heaven's nets are wide-meshed/ but they lose nothing' (Wilhelm 1985: 61).

My experience of Ulli, and I think perhaps others, has been that of a non-directive supervisor. But there is non-directive and non-directive. I have several times seen what passes as 'non-directive' supervision that has supposedly been to let the postgraduate student to pioneer their own way but, in reality, it was a shameful sham of neglect as the supervisor pushed on with their research. That was never Ulli. Ulli's non directiveness was different. In their many social events and academic gatherings, he and Máiréad put their efforts into maintaining the pond in which the fish could safely swim and shoal in scholarly community with one another. At the risk of playing down the sheer hard work that was behind this, his approach, their approach, was what Chinese philosophy calls *Wu Wei*, which means a kind of 'action through no action'; action by grounding of presence and context – *Heimat* in both its broad and a personalised sense – that, by its fittingness with the Tao, or equally, 'the way, the truth and the life' (John 14:6), brings what lives around it into the constellation of right relationships:

> The softest thing on earth
> overtakes the hardest thing on earth.
> ... From this one recognises the value of non-action.
> Teaching without words, the value of non-action
> is attained by few on earth (Wilhelm 1985 47).

> ... Conquering and handling the world:
> I have experienced that this fails.
> The world is a spiritual thing
> which must not be handled.
> Whosoever handles it destroys it...
> Therefore the Man of Calling avoids
> what is too intense, too much, too big (Wilhelm 1985: 39-40).

> ... The DAO is great, Heaven is great, Earth is great,
> and Man too is great ...
> Man conforms to Earth.
> Earth conforms to Heaven.
> Heaven conforms to DAO.
> DAO confirms to itself (Wilhelm 1985: 37-38).

There then, lies a metaphysics of epistemology. In the spirit of *Wu Wei*, in seeking to live in conformity with the Tao, the learning, the scholarly achievements, the institutional good governance and the magic ... just happens. I over-

simplify but trust my reader might get the point. Things happen in the way that, in Tolstoy's appraisal, General Kutuzov saved Russia by not defending Moscow, but by controversially holding back, and letting deeper process take its course. I could not help but wonder what Kutuzov would have done had he been a Ukrainian today.

Let me close by way of illustration of *Wu Wei*. It is said that Jung's favourite story, one that he'd tell at every opportunity, was about Richard Wilhelm's real-life encounter with a Chinese rainmaker.[4] While the story is literally true, I urge a metaphorical reading.

In the province that surrounded Tsingtao there befell a terrible drought. The grass scorched, the animals were failing, and the people knew that they'd be next. In desperation, they called upon the Protestant missionaries, who came and presumably said their prayers and read their bibles and gave suitably long sermons. No rain. So then, they called the Catholic missionaries, who came and presumably said Hail Marys and prayed with rosary beads and sprinkled holy water. Still no rain. So, they called the traditional Taoist and Confucian priests, who came with joss sticks, and set off guns to frighten away the hungry ghosts that presumably had caused the drought. But not a single drop. Finally – and interestingly, as the last resort perhaps because of how it would reflect upon them – they called in the Rainmaker.

The Rainmaker was a wizened little old man who lived far away. He had to walk for some considerable distance from a neighbouring province. 'What do you need?' they asked when he arrived.

'I need nothing,' he said. 'Just a hut to go and sit.'

After three days and three nights, there was an unseasonable heavy fall of snow. It melted and relived the drought. The peasants soon resumed their normal lives. But Richard Wilhelm, being not just any old scholar but like Ulli, *a German Protestant professor*, wanted to know exactly what the little old man had done.

'I did nothing,' said the Rainmaker.

'Oh come on,' said Wilhelm. 'Was it magic spells, or incantations, or did you just hit lucky that you only had to wait three days?'

'None of those,' he said honestly.

'Well, what was it then?' demanded the exasperated Wilhelm.

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[4] Two versions of this are given in Sabini (2008): 211-14. Here I have borrowed a version that I riffed off for use in my climate change book (McIntosh 2020a).

'It's like this,' said the Rainmaker. 'When I was in my home province, my spirit was in the *Tao*, the cosmic harmony. But when I got to this province, I found that it no longer was in the *Tao*.

'So I went and sat inside the hut, and when my spirit settled back into the *Tao*, that's when the clouds began to form.' And so the flow of life came back into the community.

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