

CLAYMONT READINGS 2019

Theme: Stillness

Burnt Norton by T.S. Eliot

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor
towards,
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.
(from part II)

The Reality of Being by Jeanne de Salzmann

To stay in front of the unknown, my mind must be profoundly silent.
This is a silence that is not obtained by suppressing or by sacrifice. I do
not make the silence. It appears, when the mind sees that by itself
alone, it cannot be in contact with something it cannot measure,
something higher. Then the mind no longer seeks, it does not try to
become.

I need to see that there is never any stillness and that all this thinking of
the known prevents me from having an experience of reality. Then
stillness and silence take on meaning for me. There is the possibility of
a quiet mind. I no longer seek the known. I no longer seek security or
to become. I feel myself freer, more open. The thought becomes free,
moment after moment, and there is then an understanding of truth at
each moment. This is the only way to know. True thinking has no
conclusion. It always begins anew. (59)

A call from the depths of oneself is always here. It becomes more and
more insistent, as if a different energy were wanting to be heard,
seeking a relation. In a state of immobility, in stillness, the relation can
be better established, but this requires opening to a different inner
density, to another quality of vibration. Sensation is the perception of
this new quality. ...

The creative action of the life force appears only where there is no tension, that is, only in the void. If I wish to develop my being, I must come to this point of no tension, which I feel as a void, as unknown. It is void of my ego . . . something I do not know – my essence. I perceive emptiness because the fineness of vibrations is beyond the density in myself that I usually know. At this moment I touch the wish *to be*, the will to be what I am beyond form and time. I become conscious of the void by the change in my sensation, which becomes finer as tensions are dissolved. (67)

There is no death. Life cannot die. The coating is used up, the form disintegrates. Death is an end – the end of everything known. It is a fearful thing because we cling to the known. But life *is*. It is always here, even if for us it is the unknown. We can know life only after we know death. We must die to the known and enter the unknown. We need to die voluntarily. We have to free ourselves from the known. Once free, we can enter the unknown, the void, the complete stillness, where there is no deterioration – the state in which we can find out what life is and what love is. (175)

In order to feel these fine vibrations, I must come to a real stillness of the body, a state without any tension where the thought is simply a witness which without comment sees all that happens. I will then understand what it means to have a pure sensation – a sensation with no intervening image. My body is under this vision with no tension. Relaxation appears by itself as my seeing becomes clear, and with it I feel that separate islands of energy in me need to be more deeply related. This fine sensation is a sign of incarnation, the moment of penetration when the spirit materializes and takes on a definite density. (215-16)

When my body comes to a state where there is no longer any tension, I feel the fineness of the sensation of stillness. It is like the birth of being. And I feel the fineness of the thought, which reaches a level where it penetrates and registers everything that takes place. I come to the extraordinary impression of existing. And when I am quiet in this way,

immobile, totally without tension, I feel that my breathing has an importance that I never give it, a great importance. It is by this act that I participate in life, an act greater than myself. I exist in this movement, a living movement in which I am included. It is not my body that breathes. It is "I" who breathes. (262)

"Empty yourself of everything.
Let the mind become still.
The ten thousand things rise and fall while the Self watches their return.
They grow and flourish and then return to the source.
Returning to the source is stillness, which is the way of nature." ~ Laozi

Stillness Speaks by Eckhart Tolle

When you lose touch with inner stillness, you lose touch with yourself.
When you lose touch with yourself, you lose yourself in the world.

Your innermost sense of self, of who you are, is inseparable from stillness. This is the *I Am* that is deeper than name and form. (3)

From a discussion on Chapter 31 of Beelzebub's Tales on the Sixth Descent.

In another part, the mooring of "Occasion" was done at the North Pole, in order not to be bumped into by ships constantly fleeing about and representing a constant danger.

Now a "North Pole", without a "North Pole" in my life, I am subject to all kinds of impulses. I will be at the prey of what is suggested from the outside world, and from the parts in me which is programmed, and from where I am acting mechanically. Without a *silent point* in me, a

place where I am separated from that which constantly, more or less, (is) attacking me by means of suggestibility, I have no possibility to exist.

And this chapter for me is, and the whole book, is about support for my existence. It is the support for having a life, even though I and bumped into now and then. Without this silent point, I know I cannot return, and return, and return.

... in terms of the North Pole, the poles are, (if) you are standing at the poles, they're the place on Earth with the least rotational movement. Everything else is spinning faster and faster the further away you get from that place, where things don't move. I found that interesting to think about in terms of the **still, silent place** we're trying to father in ourselves, to park our observational viewpoint, to hold us steady, while we venture further out into this spinning world inside of us and outside of us, and trying to investigate it.

All and Everything Conference 2010

When there is no more separation between "this" and "that", it is called the **still-point** of the Tao. At the still point in the center of the circle, one can see the infinite in all things.

-Zhuangzi

There is a still point in eternity. There is a **still point** where all things intersect. There is a still point beyond life, time, and death. Your experience of the still point is enlightenment.

-Frederick Lenz

Reflections on the still point

This is the solstice, the **still point**
of the sun, its cusp and midnight,
the year's threshold
and unlocking, where the past
lets go of and becomes the future;
the place of caught breath, the door
of a vanished house left ajar.

-Margaret Atwood

In the now there is no change. There is no before or after. Each moment is complete in itself. This is part of the intensity of the experience that belongs to the consciousness of the Self – eternal, immutable, the **still center** of our turning world. And yet because life is a single, interconnected, living being, within each moment is threaded the flow of the tides and the turning of the galaxies; to the geese flying south, a “v” across the sky; to lovers caressing each other. These are the stories of life born moment by moment, woven together into a single living tapestry. In each moment what is unchanging and what is always changing are bonded together, telling the secrets of creation to anyone awake enough to listen with the ear of the heart, see with the eye of the heart, feel with a lover's sensitivity.

-Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee
