

## ***Letters and reflections on Peter Fenner.***

*By Bruno Delorme<sup>1</sup> – 2021*

### ***Presentation:***

*I have gathered here the letters exchanged with one of the current gurus of non-dual vision: Peter Fenner. He, of Australian origin, traveled the world to spread his gospel of non-duality, to France where some of my friends followed his teachings.*

*The March 29, 2021*

*Dear Peter, I have gathered our exchanges and my letters as well as my synthesis on transcendentalism.*

*I regret that you do not agree to exchange with me and discuss the subject of non-duality. For me, this does not invite silence, which is often the sign of complacency, acceptance, or submission, but questioning, which is the source of life and remains the honor of the human spirit.*

*However, your attitude of distancing and refusing is not surprising, and I have often encountered such a refusal among several followers of your current, unable to sustain a real, deep, demanding, and sincere debate. You thus carry, in spite of your silence, the responsibility for this failure of the discussion, as well as that of your actions, which you have tried in vain to get rid of for years with your spiritual practices devoid of any morality.*

*I wish you one day to regain the lucidity that you so lack, and hope that you will also know how to question yourself ...*

*Bruno Delorme*

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<sup>1</sup> Author of a work entitled "Le Christ grec" (Paris, Bayard, 2009) devoted to the influence of Greek rhetoric on the constitution of the figure of Christ and the writing of the Gospels, I have also published several articles devoted to ancient and oriental religions, available on the sites of the library of antiquity sciences of the University of Lille III, [bsa.biblio.univ-lille3.fr](http://bsa.biblio.univ-lille3.fr)., that of Tolkiendil and Theravadapublications. Or on my personal website: <http://brunodelorme1.wixsite.com/religionsphilopsycho>



**Peter Fenner via mail.keeo.com** )

Hi Bruno,

Thanks for your email. I don't have a mindfulness method, so I don't know what you are referring to here. Also, it seems strange to review a book that was first written in 1994 and which has been superseded by my other writing some of which have been translated into

French. Re my methods I refer you to the Master's Thesis by Jean-Luc Schneider that describes my current process in great detail, *Sources bouddhiques de la transmission de la non dualité chez Peter Fenner et son cours Radiant Mind*, Université de Lausanne, 2008 (<https://www.unil.ch/issr/fr/home/menuinst/recherches/psychologie-de-la-religion/enseignement/memoires-et-theses.html>) and also the PhD. thesis by J. Axelrad, *The Inheritance of this Moment: An Exploration of Temporality, Subjectivity, and Liberation in Non-Dual Contemplative Practice and Psychotherapy*, Duquesne University (<https://dsc.duq.edu/etd/1728>)

The book you have reviewed is a relic from the now distant past. It describes the first iteration of work that has been developed over 30 years. I refer you to *Natural Awakening*, Richmond Hill, ON, Sumeru Press, 2015 for a more current expression of my work and process.

I would appreciate it if you can include my comments above to your review of my Courage book.

Dr. Peter Fenner

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*My letters and my comments.*

*« Thanks to you, dear Peter, for this information.*

*I will look at the links on the web. And I will add your appreciation in my article.*

*However, I think it is a bit easy to say that you don't have a method.*

*I will look at the links on the web. And I will add your appreciation in my article.*

*It is easy to say that you have no method. In that case, what do you do in your seminars and teachings, and through your books, if not present non-duality and propose a way in? If in non-duality there is no method, there is a way to get there, even if it is paradoxical. This is what Zen, Dzogchen and other spiritualities of emptiness say.*

*I know J.-L. Schneider, but I have no confidence in his judgment. You talk about your books, but whatever the evolution of your thought, non-duality is the same, whether it is in 1994 or in 2021, fifty, one hundred or one thousand years ago. Last year, you sent a letter before you had surgery. I hope you are better.*

*But when I read your letter, I was shocked to discover that you asked your friends to pray for you before the operation. But, dear Peter, in non-duality, prayer is useless, it is even the proof that your practice is ineffective, since after 50 years of meditation and non-duality, you call others to your rescue, and even God since it is a question of prayer in a quasi-Christian mode! How is this possible? And what is the use of all your practices, your teachings, and your books? Isn't this the proof of a spiritual imposture on your part? Like all the other impostors of spirituality like Sogyal Rinpoche, Chögyam Trungpa and other Sai Baba.*

*For me, you are a militant of non-duality or a proselytizer of wholeness, Australian and American version. But why do you propagate it and become a missionary?*

*Isn't non-duality self-sufficient? Why would you want to propagate it, communicate it, share it, spread it? Is it the proof of a desire still present in the heart of what is nevertheless devoid of any desire?*

*This is my vision of things:*

*Sitting in meditation or concentrating on one's breathing are gestures that immediately modify consciousness. They are modified states of consciousness, therefore artificial, and produced by an artifice, and not natural. It is the same with non-duality.*

*Moreover, the states of wholeness, fullness and non-duality are not moments of adherence to the present moment but are states of reactivation of memories and moments of fullness experienced in early childhood or in intrauterine life that the practice of meditation reactivates and exhumes from memory. In other words, these states intensify the present and the feeling of presence, especially maternal and infantile. But they are not stating of non-duality with the present. This fusion with the present is moreover impossible, it is a pure fantasy, a quasi-incestuous desire which cannot be realized.*

*Your non-duality with your pragmatic technique is the expression of contemporary nihilism. You are looking for a world without history, without memory, without past or future, a world that is present and only centered on the present, without conflict or duality which is the real world. This non-dual world is a fantasy and exists only in the imagination. It expresses the rejection of real life, which is conflictual, harsh, complex, dual, and more. It is a form of denial maintained by your non-dual, regressive, and infantilizing techniques because they refuse the exercise of reason, refuse the debate and the existential contradictions.*

*Since for you everything is a matter of pragmatism and practice, you should know, dear Peter, that I have verified it many times by myself. Your non-duality solves absolutely nothing, it is only a form of temporary psychological parenthesis with no impact. At best it can allow us to recharge our batteries, but this can be done in any other way than using paradoxes that poorly hide the insufficiency and the flaws of your "non-method".*

*If you were honest, this is the conclusion you would come to. Instead of letting it be said that in silence and fullness everything is resolved, and nothing is missing. The lack is precisely what specifies the human being, it is the existential dynamic that is in him, and nothing can ever fill this lack.*

*It is the gods, or God himself, as the Absolute, dear Peter, who lack nothing, and live-in eternal fullness or non-duality. And not men who cannot claim this supernatural state.*

*But neither you nor I, nor you dear gurus and teachers, are gods. And we will never be. To believe that one is a god or that one can become divine through practices and techniques, or through awareness and "letting go", is not only an error but a serious fault that can lead to harmful consequences. This is what is not perceived in your teaching: the place of finitude, of fault, of sin, of moral responsibility and of moral conscience. This leads me to think that your spirituality is immoral.*

*I have presented and developed these arguments to people who have followed your teachings, such as J.-L. Schneider or Bruno and Emmanuel Violot, but none of them have received or understood them. For them, non-duality is the royal road to wholeness. It is the same for you. But then, how to explain that none of you manage to live and remain perpetually in this state?*

*How to explain that after having met gurus and so-called enlightened masters and having practiced for decades, Emmanuel Violot has fallen seriously ill psychologically and has been suffering for at least fifteen years from schizophrenic psychosis and paranoia for which he is being treated. But he will never be cured, and especially not thanks to non-duality. I even think that these non-dual states, which he enjoyed very much, have aggravated his pathology.*

*What if it was precisely these non-dual states that he practiced with his gurus, Hindu and then Tibetan, that had caused this pathology?*

*Today, studies show that mindfulness meditation can be harmful for some people and that it does not solve everything.*

*But then, how can we claim that it would be the panacea, the supreme good that our world needs today if it cannot cure or soothe certain states or pathologies? Would we Westerners be mistaken about the virtues of Eastern wisdoms, of which non-duality would be the "summit"?*

*I leave you with these reflections, which I want to be open and "welcoming" to use your language, and which are in-depth reflections on a subject which you have made your profession and even your life, but which, in my opinion, really raises questions.*

*We shall see if you are able to confront it and not flee into non-dual states, like our friends who are vainly trying to heal their wounded human nature as well as their finitude.*

*I remain at your disposal for more information, dear Peter, and if you wish to engage in a serious conversation with me by email, and not refer me to texts or teachings that will teach me nothing, I would be incredibly happy to do so.*

*My sympathy to you again*

*Sincerely*

*Bruno Delorme »*

*Continued reflection with Peter Fenner – 2*

*« Let me come back, dear Peter, to my last submission, which I'm looking into further.*

*One difference that has often appeared to me between the spiritualities divulged by people like you and by gurus of Anglo-Saxon mentality and those of French inspiration, lies in the religious history of the USA and related countries. As you know, religion developed on American soil in a different way than in Europe. Here in France, Catholicism has had a huge influence and it is only recently that Eastern spiritualities and American religion have appeared.*

*This difference can be seen in the individual's apprehension of religion: in an ecclesiastical and traditional way in France until the 1960s, more individualistic and more intimate in America. The individual sensitive experience in the United States very quickly took on considerable importance, to the detriment of religious tradition, churches, institutions, and theology. The result was a different vision of religion that became spirituality. The first is collective, the second is individual.*

*We have thus taken on in France a habit that was foreign to us only for less than half a century. For you, this individualistic vision that emphasizes the intimate and personal relationship between you and the divine or between the believer and his God is obvious. And this relationship has two characteristics: it is lived outside of any tradition and any religious institution, and it unfolds in intimacy through sensitive experience.*

*No tradition to respect, no Church or ecclesiastical magisterium to obey or account for, no imposed dogma, no theology based on reason: only experience, and nothing else but personal and sensitive experience.*

*Your presentation of non-duality and Plenitude is totally influenced by this religious conception, which is not of oriental or Buddhist origin, religions which are still very traditional, but of an American Christianity, which developed through the great "Awakenings", the Unitarian, Transcendentalist and Spirits movements. A Swedenborg would have totally recognized himself in your non-dual vision because it is his philosophy which also influenced this one.*

*Later, at the end of the 19th century, Theosophy appeared, followed by the esotericism of René Guenon, which in turn influenced the Hindu spiritual currents of the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th (Ramakrishna Mission, Vivekananda, Yogananda...).*

*Then, after the second world war, the New Age movement which will have a considerable influence until today. For me, non-dual spirituality is related to this New Age nebula as are many contemporary therapies (Transpersonal psychology, Carl Rogers, NLP, personal development...). But all of them feed on this American religious background.*

*The universalism of the Way that you propose still has this religious background.*

*This difference between two mentalities can also explain the problems I have with your spirituality which wants to be above religions, dogmas, philosophies. This is an immense pretension. And such pretension poses real problems that the experience of the "radiant-mind" only raises. And it does not only bring obvious solutions.*

*Indeed, since experience is the ultimate criterion of everything, especially of the spiritual life, what else would there be? And how can we put forward a critical and nuanced view of experience that it will not reject in the name of personal sensitivity, which is incommunicable, ineffable and does not have to be justified?*

*But this is exactly what I want to argue with and against experience. Because this one, as well as affects, feelings and emotions can be true, and tell the truth of what we feel, or delude us. How then to make the part of the things and to discern correctly among the feelings what is right of what is not?*

*Your non-dual wisdom does not offer any useful element for making such a discernment, which is necessary in the case of a spirituality as powerful and totalizing, as pervasive even, as non-duality. Non-duality can be the expression of a transcendent and existential truth as well as the instrument of a false and misleading vision.*

*As you can see, experience and the use of non-duality cannot be sufficient criteria. Something else is needed. Non-dual experience alone cannot be its only criterion, its only reference, it is not self-sufficient and can even be misleading, as I have verified myself.*

*How else can it be evaluated than by resorting to experience itself, in a closed circle which is not virtuous? Even the masters and the gurus have all been deceived by the power of their experience erected above all else.*

*We can see that the experience of non-duality does not solve everything. Even if it seems pure, perfect, authentic, it is not its own reference and has nothing ultimate, absolute, or definitive. Contrary to appearances, it does not support itself. It needs another to appear and perpetuate itself, like the consciousness of a meditator for example. Moreover, if it were*

*so perfect and totalizing, those who would have experienced it could not even speak about it and would be forever drowned in this ineffable experience.*

*Like any spiritual or mystical experience, it relies on something else that it does not say, or even worse that it does not perceive, such as an invisible but present otherness, but also conditions of possibility of appearance, with the phenomenon of belief in it. Indeed, the more one practices non-duality, the more one believes in it and the more one adds faith in its presence or in its efficiency, which remains however to be demonstrated.*

*Finally, the person who experiences it is not content to live it. They must talk about it, comment on it, analyze it, describe it, share it, and compare it, as you do, like so many other spiritual masters. This means that it is crossed by dual currents or influxes from the world of duality that it cannot encompass, abolish, or eradicate.*

*In this it represents only a non-dual moment of experience. And its exorbitant claim to be the whole of experience or the whole of spiritual and human experience is refuted and defeated, as is the teaching of those who propagate it.*

*This is what you and your followers should be thinking about in depth.*

*I say to you soon.*

*Sincerely*

*Bruno Delorme »*

### *Continuation of the reflection with Peter Fenner – 3*

*Lille on March 24, 2021*

*As you know, dear Peter, for a long time now, people have been criticizing established religions, pointing out that they do not bring what they announce in terms of salvation and happiness. These religions, among which Christianity is generally the most criticized, are indeed struggling to show the salvation they announce and are often problematic means of deliverance and salvation.*

*If we define imposture, especially religious imposture, as the fact of not being what we believe we are not and of not bringing and offering what we claim to bring and offer, we can say that many religions have fallen into imposture. This imposture can be involuntary or*



*unconscious. In this sense, we can say that these religions believe in their prophecies, as we sometimes believe in our own lies, in a sincere way. This does not take anything away from the fact of the imposture.*

*But if this definition applies to great religions whose promises have not been fulfilled, or have not been kept, and which we are still waiting for, it can just as well be applied to lesser currents such as spiritualities and wisdoms, or contemporary therapies.*

*So, dear Peter, the question that arises concerning the current you are spreading around you is this: is this spirituality of which you have made yourself the apostle, a sham?*

*For, if one observes it closely, one can indeed realize that its promises of deliverance and salvation, or of immediate and definitive realization of wholeness, are hardly ever realized. And that its therapeutic effectiveness, as I have observed on myself and others, can legitimately be questioned.*

*Of course, you may object that you have never promised anything to anyone and that the practice of non-duality and radiant mind is the opposite of any form of religion of salvation. That is, prophetic religion. And that its effectiveness is proportional to the detachment made by the person, to his or her "letting go". You can even rely on a teaching such as that of Nagarjuna who claimed to have neither affirmed nor denied anything, to escape all criticism.*

*But nothing is less certain, and your propensity to spread this form of paradoxical wisdom based on paradoxes - such as this method of "no method", which comes from Zen - shows on the contrary that it belongs to the sphere of religions of salvation and which announce a salvation or a spiritual deliverance, even in a paradoxical way. And that contrary to what J.-L. Schneider and Bruno Violot claimed, this wisdom is required to show how it would be more effective and superior to others, especially if it wants to be credible.*

*It is not to offend you that I mentioned the pathology of my friend Emmanuel Violot, but to show you the limits of your non-dual wisdom. Its imperfections too.*

*Of course, if your practical wisdom were a sham, that would make you and all radiant-mind teachers shams. Even if unintentional. But impostors, nonetheless.*

*Rest assured, there would be no reason to sue you or to report you. And that is not my intention. What I want to emphasize and make you aware of is all that is left in the shadow by your practice. What we call in French "son impensé" or what is not thought by this wisdom.*

*Now, what is unthought of or not thought of by your wisdom is precisely what distinguishes it from others: its apparently spontaneous, universal, supramoral, immediate,*

*accessible to all, easy to put into practice, non-dogmatic, non-religious character... And that you yourself put forward in your books. And it is this spontaneity and immediacy of practice that poses a problem. Since everything would be there since always, that there would be no effort to find it, that the Plenitude is under our steps or in us, that it is enough to be welcoming, benevolent to find it immediately..., why should we address ourselves to a religion with its dogmas, its complicated cults, its obscure beliefs, the weight of its theology, its history..., to find the same thing? And in such a simple way that one wonders why it was not thought of earlier?*

*And, indeed, the question arises. As it does about the ineffectiveness of what should be spiritually and therapeutically immediate, effective, and definitive.*

*But it is not.*

*For, in your wisdom, one must keep coming back to the practice in order to find this non-dual state, which appears only very rarely, almost miraculously, and is never stable, never definitive. One could almost believe in a gracious moment, in the sense of Christian grace that falls on the person in a freeway, by the gift coming from a superior Spirit or from a transcendent God, who would freely spread his spiritual gifts. This would mean that this luminous Spirit that you cultivate would be an emanation of Christian grace and revelation.*

*Teachers of radiant mind, are you Christians who ignore themselves? Ashamed or repressed Christians?*

*Personally, and after having verified it many times, I believe so. And you should honestly ask yourself the question...*

*I end this letter by returning to the question of lack.*

*We would not miss anything, you assert sententiously.*

*Is that so?*

*It is then strange to notice that in ordinary life, we always miss something. And I am not talking about consumer goods or the entertainment objects of our society of the spectacle. I am talking about an ontological, spiritual, essential lack that we all seek to fill, whether artificially, by consuming goods or meeting people, or spiritually, by seeking a supreme Good, the divine Plenitude, the Absolute.*

*Now, it appeared to me that this search for Completeness and for what we lack, even illusorily according to you, could well be an Object or an element which would be forbidden to us, even impossible to obtain. And that the wisdom that you spread, designates as being the*

*non-duality. A Good out of our reach and which would be prohibited. Because this lack is precisely what is constitutive of our humanity. And not the Plenitude which is undoubtedly only a fantasy like the non-duality. And perhaps even from a psychoanalytical point of view, the sign of a perversion of the human spirit.*

*As one author wrote: "free love is a fidelity to the lack of any human being, whereas perversion is a denial of the lack of the human being".*

*Would your practice of non-duality be a form of psychological perversion, but a soft and presentable perversion, dressed in the clothes of wisdom and therapy?*

*I leave you with this question while wishing you good health.*

*Sincerely*

*Bruno Delorme*

#### *Continuation of the reflection with Peter Fenner - 4 -*

*"It is not the source of water that moves, but the one who is thirsty will seek the source".*

*It is by this principle, dear Peter, laid down by the poet Rabindranath Tagore in his book "Sadhana" that I discovered incredibly early on, that our respective itineraries can, in my opinion, cross.*

*But can they meet, even in Plenitude or non-duality?*

*This is the question that remains for me.*

*It does not only concern your path and mine, but also so many others that I have crossed throughout my peregrinations.*

*Before answering it in an affirmative or categorical way, it seems to me judicious to re-examine all the elements of our paths and our ideas.*

*What exactly do you and I share? What do we have in common, what connects us or brings us together?*

*First, the spiritual quest. For it is through this that our existential itineraries come together. But are they similar? Are they identical or even parallel?*

*Let us recall the facts:*

*You probably come from a Christian or religious family, like me. For you, this family is of the Protestant faith, or of a parallel church. As far as I am concerned, it is the Catholic Church. As I said in my first letter, this difference is not superficial. But we are both Christian religions.*

*The other element we have in common in this quest is the personal search. When we were young, you and I went in search of ourselves to answer crucial and essential questions, to find a meaning to life or to find an Absolute.*

*What is significant is that your personal quest led you to Buddhism, which you practiced for a long time with a religious commitment. It is the same for me, but in two religions: Christianity first, then Buddhism, first Zen, then Tibetan.*

*But if I left each of these religions, after seriously committing to them, it was not to get married and start a family, which is a slope of ease, of emotional security. But this is to go further and alone on the Way.*

*Which is not your case. Since you have decided to put on the clothes of the guru of non-duality, giving yourself the pompous title of "doctor", and passing yourself off as a professional "teacher". Which is totally contradictory with a heterodox wisdom which, by definition, is wary of any teaching and any hierarchical relationship.*

*Your attitude is, in fact, characteristic of a spiritual current well known whether in Christianity or Eastern wisdoms: transcendentalism<sup>2</sup>. This can be seen in your teachings. So in one of your books "The Edge of Certainty", you present a table that combines two conceptions. Transcendentalism is found in the second, accompanied by spiritual quietism.*

*This is the equivalent of pietism in the Protestant world. It is characterized as follows: to reach the Absolute, which is God, it is necessary and sufficient to allow oneself to be directed or governed by the only grace coming from God or the Holy Spirit. And to cease all research, all effort, all tension which risks breaking the spiritual bond. As these personal efforts are the mark of pride, or to put it in Buddhist language, of the ego, one must abandon them and surrender to divine grace, to his will, and to his omnipotence.*

*Your walk is no different from that of quietism. What differentiates it is the language used and the references which are intended to be religious or non-religious. No reference to*

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<sup>2</sup> See, below, pages 16-18.

*God, grace, or the Spirit. It is only a question of the non-dual Consciousness which takes on the appearance of a non-religious divinity, although mystical.*

*This quietist or pietist conviction was mine for many years, during which I practiced contemplation, and meditation in all its forms.*

*But that is no longer my conviction today, nor my Way. And I saw all the limits, all the imperfections. Because, this quietism, which neither affirms nor denies anything, in the manner of the Buddhist Madhyâmake, is a perfectly refutable sophistry. And it does not represent the best way to access to the Plenitude.*

*I note a problematic point: by testifying as you do in your books and seminars about your experiences, you are doing two different things:*

*- first, you are expressing your experience, which has become, in the modern and especially American mindset, the new religious dogma. Outside of experience, there is nothing, or not much. It is a priori irrefutable, indisputable, and true like the ancient dogmas of religions such as Christianity. Outside of the personal experience, of the feelings and experiences of the person, there is no salvation, if I dare say so;*

*- then you transform this experience into knowledge, a spiritual knowledge, and then progressively into a doctrine: the doctrine of non-duality, which had previously been elevated beyond all dogma and all dogmatics. But it also means that experience, in turn, has become dogmatic, and serves as dogma in a spirituality that was meant to be non-dogmatic or even anti-dogmatic.*

*The experience then loses its empirical character, and becomes a dogma, that is to say a certainty, even a belief. These attitudes that you fight against in your teachings. Personal conviction thus reinforces the subjective experiential given, and the latter, as an always sovereign experience, reinforces your strength of conviction.*

*So that it becomes impossible to establish a true dialogue on a sound basis, let alone to try to provoke a debate respectful of an ethics of intellectual discussion. Faced with your strength of conviction, which is based solely on totally personal experiences, whether yours or those of others, and even if they are presented in an impersonal and objective way, there is nothing and no one that can present itself to you. Unless you agree with yourself and your non-dual practice and doctrine.*

*In other words, no real otherness, no real difference, can appear in your thinking. For either it is immediately rejected outside because of unnecessary disturbance (which must be*

*the case of my letters which surely bother you...). Or it is integrated and drowned in non-duality, which is a state totally indifferent to difference and otherness.*

*In order to make you understand better what I want to underline, I will take an example from American literature. You may be familiar with an author like Nathaniel Hawthorne. In his book "The Blithedale Romance", in French "Valjoie", he tells the story of a community of followers of transcendentalism. And the thesis that he wants to demonstrate is that evil is present within this community that believes itself to be the instrument of Good and of God. And who believes to be able to escape the effects of the evil and the sin that its followers deny in the name of the principles of their spirituality.*

*170 years after the publication of this novel, the situation in communities of wisdom and spirituality, especially New Age and American churches, has not changed. And you yourself are a perfect example. By never naming evil or fault, which is never named in your teachings - so in two of your books: "The Edge of Certainty" and "Radiant Mind", no mention of evil, sin or fault is done - you believe you can escape evil. There are only "negativities" that can easily be wiped off like dust from a window - you think you are on the side of Good, and even beyond Good and Evil.*

*However, nothing is less certain, and your practice of the various Eastern wisdoms should have warned you on this serious question. Or, another hypothesis, it is precisely these wisdoms that have deluded or lied to you. It can be said, in this regard, that you lacked prudence and discernment.*

*You claim not to teach any method, according to the Zen formula of "method without method" which you repeat in your books - thus "The Edge of Certainty", ch. VI.*

*But, in so doing, you believe that you are beyond all methods, even those of Zen, through your practice, in an attitude of "metaposition" proper to the non-dual currents. You believe that one should not fixate on "any point of view" (Ibid., p.147), in order to adopt an attitude of total openness and perfect acceptance, without effort or tension. And to be above the dual world that you think you can surpass and ignore by ignoring it. You also affirm (p.152) that non-dual experience would have no cause and that it would be "an always present state" (p.154). And you drown your reader in the game of paradoxes in which you are apparently a master, and which comes from the Madhyâmaka.*

*But no experience, dear Peter, has the exorbitant power to be causeless or to remain indefinitely stable in the present.*

*The solution to all these paradoxes, which have nothing to do with true spirituality, can be found in one of the Indian or Buddhist authors you quote on p.163 of the same book. It is Manjushrimitra, and here is the quote:*

*"Since the experience of pure and total presence of the joyful One does not exist, it is a magical appearance of that state that appears to those who are deluded ».*

*Although you have previously tried to erase the difference between awakened and unawakened, this master says that there are nevertheless beings in the illusion, as in the orthodox ways. But he also says that the experience itself of oneness or non-duality does not exist and is only a "magical apparition ».*

*A magic then, which has nothing real or existing and which is similar to a magic trick. Nothing else! The gurus of non-duality would therefore be nothing but magicians, without faith or law, who would use paradoxical magic tricks to sell their cheap spirituality!*

*This is what you yourself do, as a magician's apprentice, by ending your book without concluding (p.172), as if you had the ultimate solution, and that you were keeping it for yourself, leaving your reader in disarray, wondering if he is not dealing with a charlatan of spirituality who has made fun of him and taken advantage of his naivety or his generosity!*

*Charlatan and impostor: this is certainly what I think you are, and your books prove it completely!*

*But I still had to prove it, and I think that's what I've done.*

*It is possible, and it is even the wish that I want to formulate by ending this letter, that one day you will know a return of all that you have denied or repressed by your bordering and transgressive practices, and that this will make you become aware not only of the error but also of the fault which is yours and in which you have voluntarily locked yourself for years.*

*Indeed, what is the best lesson of wisdom and spirituality if not the one that makes us understand to what extent we have deluded ourselves, and in what spiritual dead end we have committed ourselves?*

*If one day, having recovered from your errors and fantasies, you decide to seriously question yourself about the meaning of religion and spirituality, you will know who you can turn to. And I will be incredibly happy to help you...*

*Sincerely*

*Bruno Delorme"*

*On transcendentalism.*

On this spiritual phenomenon of transcendentalism, which has had a considerable influence on sects or on currents of non-duality, like that of Peter Fenner, I note some major characteristics which, for me, are absolutely crippling:

**1 /** Its romantic origins and which plunge into the most disheveled German romanticism. However, the romanticism which is nothing other than the return of a pagan repressed against Christianity and monotheism and which will feed the Nazi ideology, as well as the revolutionary, fraternal, egalitarian utopia, making a clean sweep of the past, but also progressive, pantheist ..., will feed the communist ideology.

**2 /** Its naturalism, which is a religious regression turned towards the maternal and which is an idealization of the Mother, erected as a divinity. All ecology feeds on this regressive and transgressive fantasy.

**3 /** Its pantheism, for which Nature is God, but a feminine God or a maternal divinity, and which derives from naturalism and vice versa. This pantheism also represents a spiritual regression from monotheism.

**4 /** The hypertrophy of individual sensitive experience, which has become the new dogma of this religion apparently devoid of dogmas and anti-dogmatic.

The sensitive experience is the heart of all this movement which encourages to experience or rather to experience the divine in oneself and around oneself, because this emotional "experience", overflowing with affects, does not fall within the domain of empiricism, but the most subjective and the most arbitrary experience. I would add that this sensitive experience feeds on all the infantile background repressed by every person, and which resurfaces on certain occasions that this type of sensitive experience inevitably produces.

The states felt by the person in their intimate experience are in fact modified states of consciousness which appear against the background of the first emotions experienced by the child, and which reactivate these primordial affects. Hence their irrepressible power, their incredible character, their "authentic" and irrefutable aspect, accompanied by this feeling of



interior purity or state of innocence, or even by this feeling of reuniting with the lost divine being, or with its own forgotten divine nature (theme of Gnostic origin) ... And these characteristics confer on the sensitive experience this status of totalizing, even totalitarian affect. We cannot question the individual sensitive experience, we can only feel it in turn or remain external to it, since it remains incommunicable.

**5 /** His denial of fault and sin, whether it is sin in the ordinary or original sense. No fault or harm, even less a feeling of guilt, for this current which advocates the purity and innocence of the human being. There are only negativities, epiphenomena without gravity that we can easily purify as we remove dust on a window or a mirror (theme borrowed from oriental spiritualities such as ch'an, Zen, Shaivism ..., or Christian Neoplatonism).

**6 /** Certain fantasies which are widely cultivated: like that of born again, of "twice born", which is the expression of the fantasy of re-generation. Or the feeling of belonging to the divinity as a part of it, which comes from intrauterine life. Fantasies that are both regressive - we actually "resource" ourselves through these strong experiences, but this supernatural "source" is none other than the deified Mother - and transgressive - because the lived experience is of a psychologically incestuous nature. I add the fantasy of divine election which puts the transcendentalists in competition with the Jewish people ...

**7 /** Its antinomianism. Transcendentalism respects the laws of Nature, which are factual and descriptive, of a maternal nature and believed to be of divine origin, but it ignores the moral, imperative and prescriptive laws of paternal origin.

**8 /** Its pre-modern moral side. Which does not stop being paradoxical or contradictory. Because, while being one of the outgrowths of modern consciousness with the affirmation of the primacy of the individual, of his intimate conscience, of his freedom, of his autonomy, this current, like all those who have followed it, presents resolutely pre-modern aspects.

One of them lies in the moral treatment reserved for personal problems, even pathologies.

The Christian faith, traditional, having become obsolete, the transcendentalists and other spiritualists in the American fashion (it is necessary to include all the followers of the therapeutic currents, but also those who use the oriental wisdoms for pragmatic ends, the followers of the New Age.), in fact come back to a moral practice which makes virtues the center of their individual action and evil a secondary problem, an epiphenomenon that can be resolved morally.

Transcendentalism thus comes down to cultivating virtues in the ancient way - as in Platonism, Stoicism ... -, but by omitting and ignoring the decisive criticisms, in particular of

Pauline inspiration, which were at the base of the transformation of our psychology and our relationship to the religious and the spiritual. Because these criticisms have shifted our gaze and transformed our vision of virtuous moral treatment, which had already shown at that time all its limits and weaknesses (with the questioning about the selfishness of the virtuous sage or his indifference, of the human pride, relying only on itself to save itself, from the problem of virtues which can turn incidentally into vices, from the presence of evil and sin located at the heart of Good and good, from the search for happiness to the detriment of Justice...).

**9 /** His spiritual narcissism. The transcendentalists do not count on divine grace to transform themselves, as they do not seek to convert, since they are already of a divine nature and belong a priori to this supernatural nature, but on their own virtues which they cultivate in ancient way and on their own psychic potentialities that they develop. Which announces the ideology of personal development and all its excesses ...

Knowledge, not of God, but of oneself and of the relationship to God, replaces grace and knowledge of God through theology, and narcissism and self-worship supplants self-denial and the sense of self-sacrifice. self.

**10 /** Its religious syncretism, congenital weakness of all currents which claim to be outside the religious field or above all religions.

**11 /** Finally, his use of the Christian faith. For transcendentalism, Christianity is subordinated not to Scripture or the Gospels, but to the figure of Christ only risen, that is to say to an imaginary figure, and coming from the imagination, malleable at will and that can lend itself to all the most fanciful and delirious interpretations.

*Letter sent by P. Fenner, on 05/21/2020.*

## **Touching Death**

Dear Friends / *Chers amis,*

From deep in my heart I thank you for your healing wishes during my recent lumbar fusion operation. The operation took five hours. The primary surgeon said the outcome was perfect. The vascular surgeon reported that it was technically complex and not to be repeated, mainly because it was retracing a previous back surgery.

*Du fond du cœur, je vous remercie de vos souhaits de guérison lors de ma récente opération du dos. L'opération a été menée par une équipe de chirurgiens pour la plupart indiens, elle a duré cinq heures. Le chirurgien principal a jugé le résultat parfait.*

The operation has taken more out of me in the last month than I anticipated. It's been demanding, physically and emotionally. I'm still in a slow recovery process. It is only in the last few days that I've begun to feel normal. This week, I've started walking a few kilometers every day with Marie at my side making sure I don't trip or stumble. It feels incredible to have more energy moving through my muscles and limbs than in a long time.

*Le processus de rétablissement est, physiquement et émotionnellement, plus exigeant que ce que j'avais anticipé. Je me remets lentement. Six semaines plus tard, je commence seulement à me sentir normal. Avec Marie à mes côtés pour m'éviter de tomber ou trébucher, je marche quelques kilomètres tous les jours. Je n'avais pas ressenti autant d'énergie circuler dans mes jambes depuis fort longtemps.*

As I came out of the anaesthetic I had an experience I'd like to share with you. I was in extreme pain and thought I was in the bardo of death. I felt as though I may never return to this life. This experience continues to touch me each day with its great blessing and teaching. It has brought home to me the essence and truth of so many Buddhist teachings. The clearest teaching is that of death and impermanence. When I was inside this experience of "being touched by death", I felt that my life as I know it could be leaving me immediately, irrevocably and unequivocally. This was it. Everything that makes up "me"—whatever I may have accomplished, the huge story I've created about myself, my efforts, my precious wife, and my days and years lost in futilities—were going to disappear. There was no way to turn back, no way to turn off the process I might be in. No putting this on hold or slowing things down while I found a useful resource.

*J'ai vécu une expérience que je voudrais partager avec vous. Au sortir de l'anesthésie, j'ai éprouvé une douleur si extrême que j'ai pensé être entré dans le bardo de la mort. Et, pendant un moment, j'ai bien cru que je ne pourrais jamais retourner dans cette vie-là. Les bénéfices et l'enseignement de cette expérience continuent aujourd'hui d'avoir des répercussions sur mon quotidien. Cela m'a en effet rappelé l'essence et la vérité de tant d'enseignements bouddhistes. L'enseignement le plus limpide est celui de la mort et de l'impermanence. Alors que j'éprouvais l'impression "d'être touché par la mort", il m'a semblé que ma vie, telle que je la connaissais, pourrait bien me quitter immédiatement, sans équivoque et irrévocablement. C'en était fini. Tout ce qui constituait ce que j'appelle "moi" — ce que j'ai accompli, l'énorme histoire que j'ai créée à mon propos, mes efforts, ma précieuse épouse, toutes les journées voire les années perdues futillement — tout cela allait disparaître. Il n'y avait aucun moyen de revenir en arrière, aucun moyen de désactiver le processus dans lequel je me sentais engagé. Pas moyen de l'arrêter ni de le ralentir pour me permettre de recourir à une ressource secourable.*

Now, looking back, I feel blessed that I am alive. I have the opportunity to reflect on what really counts at the time of death. This is an incredibly precious opportunity. Which of our life's actions support us when everything we are attached to is being taken away from us? Which actions from amongst the half million or more hours of our lifespan really give us something of value, something we can use, and benefit from, at the moments of our death? Which actions waste the opportunity we have

with this intelligent human mind to become someone who is capable of creating happiness and well-being for ourselves and others?

*Maintenant, en regardant ce qui s'est passé, je me sens très heureux d'être en vie. Cela me donne l'occasion de réfléchir à ce qui compte vraiment au moment de la mort. Et cette chance est particulièrement précieuse. Parmi tous les actes commis au cours de notre vie, quels sont ceux qui nous soutiendront quand ce à quoi nous nous sommes attachés nous sera enlevé ? Parmi le quelque demi-million d'heures que dure une existence, quels sont les actes qui nous seront utiles, ceux dont nous pourrions bénéficier au moment de notre mort ? Dans tout ce que nous entreprenons, quels sont les actes qui gâchent la chance que nous avons de profiter d'un esprit humain intelligent, l'occasion de créer bonheur et bien-être pour nous-mêmes et pour les autres ?*

This experience has taken me deeper into the many teachings on death and impermanence. In a way I have denied the full importance of these teachings. I've thought, "Ah yes, death and impermanence, that's one of the teachings I need to contemplate each day. 'Live this day as though it could be the last day of my life.'" And seconds later, I'm distracted by the urgent needs and futilities of the day; living one day to the next forgetting the universal dharmic principle of letting go of self-interest.

*Cette expérience m'a plongé plus profondément au cœur des nombreux enseignements sur la mort et l'impermanence que j'ai pu recevoir. D'une certaine manière, j'en avais nié toute l'importance. Je me disais : "Ah oui, la mort et l'impermanence, c'est l'un des enseignements que je dois contempler chaque jour. 'Vivez ce jour comme s'il était le dernier de votre vie.' Et quelques secondes plus tard, j'étais distrait par les besoins urgents et autres futilités de la journée. Je vivais un jour après l'autre en oubliant le principe dharmique universel d'abandonner l'intérêt personnel.*

As the Buddha taught, our human life is unimaginably precious. It offers us a vehicle, a vessel, through which we can develop the wisdom that liberates us from suffering. It is also unique in the way it gives us the opportunity to drop the obsession we have with our own existence and start living for others.

*Comme l'a enseigné le Bouddha, notre vie humaine est précieuse à un point à peine concevable. Elle nous offre un véhicule, un vaisseau à travers lequel nous pouvons développer la sagesse qui nous libère de la souffrance. L'existence humaine est également unique dans la chance qu'elle nous offre de laisser tomber l'obsession de notre propre existence pour commencer à vivre pour les autres.*

We waste our lives thinking and acting like we are the center of the universe. When we die, the central meaning of our life disappears forever. There will be no one here anymore to give our existence the relevance and significance that we attribute to it. Our existence disappears forever. It doesn't matter if we believe in rebirth or not. The sense of me, the memories we cherish, the idea we carry about ourselves and our accomplishments disappears completely. If these remain, it means "we" are still alive.

*Nous gaspillons nos vies en pensant et agissant comme si nous étions le centre de l'univers. Pourtant quand nous mourrons, le sens de notre vie disparaîtra à jamais. Il*

*n'y aura plus personne ici-bas pour donner à notre existence tout l'intérêt et l'importance que nous lui attribuons nous-mêmes. Notre existence disparaîtra à jamais. Croire ou non à la réincarnation n'y changera rien. L'impression d'un moi, avec les souvenirs que nous chérissons, l'idée que nous avons de nous-même et de nos réalisations disparaîtra complètement. S'il en allait autrement, cela signifierait que "nous" serions toujours en vie.*

So what does bring meaning to our life in a way that's naturally present when we die?

*Alors, qu'est-ce qui donne un sens à notre vie d'une manière naturellement présente au moment de notre mort ?*

Anything to do with our ego, or in Buddhism what's called the "self-cherishing mind" will only cause pain, as we are forced to abandon every sense of personal relevance and significance. Every thought and memory that could please us is taken away, never to be recovered. Never again will we be able to think about, and feel for *our* loved ones, *our* children, *our* friends, *our* appearance, *our* possessions, *our* plans for the future. To deny this is to deny death.

*Tout ce qui a à voir avec notre ego ou, dans le bouddhisme, ce que l'on appelle la préoccupation de soi, nous fera souffrir. Nous serons obligés d'abandonner toute impression de pertinence et d'importance personnelle. Toutes nos pensées, tous nos souvenirs agréables, disparaîtront pour ne jamais être récupérés. Plus jamais nous ne pourrions éprouver de sentiments ou penser à nos proches, nos enfants, nos amis, notre apparence, nos possessions, nos projets d'avenir. Le nier, c'est nier la mort.*

We need to realize this—death takes everything from us. There's no such thing as being half-dead, still carrying half a life along with us. We can lose some of our capacities, but this isn't death. This is why death is so confronting. At the time of death, there is nothing to hang onto.

*Nous devons réaliser cela : la mort nous prendra tout. Il n'y a rien de tel que d'être à moitié mort, toujours porteur d'une demi-vie pour s'en rendre compte. Nous perdons peut-être certaines de nos capacités, mais ce n'est pas la mort. Ce qui fait de la mort est un tel défi, c'est qu'au moment de la mort, nous ne pourrions plus nous raccrocher à quoi que ce soit.*

What doesn't disappear at the time of death is any selfless love and service that has moved through us; the giving and love that's free of egocentric impulse, and which can't be grasped by our mind. When we give, without any notion of giving, a virtuous cycle is kept in motion. Selfless giving persists beyond our personal existence. It flows from one person to another, from one generation to the next. Without thinking about it, we support humanity in our continued discovery of the reality of interdependence and expand our foundations for limitless joy and fulfillment.

*Ce qui ne disparaîtra pas au moment de notre mort, c'est l'amour altruiste et les services que nous avons rendus aux autres, le don et l'amour dépourvus d'égoïsme qui n'étaient pas guidés par notre tête. Lorsque nous donnons sans*

*aucune notion de don, un cycle vertueux est maintenu en mouvement. Le don désintéressé persiste au-delà de notre existence personnelle. La générosité coule d'une personne à l'autre, d'une génération à la suivante. Sans y même y penser, nous soutenons l'humanité dans sa découverte continue de la réalité de l'interdépendance et nous étendons les bases d'une joie et d'un épanouissement sans limites.*

Marie and I send you our great love in these demanding times of uncertainty. The wisdom mind of pure awareness is always here, closer than our dearest friend, even when we are being shaken about by the invisible forces of nature. We hope that you and your loved ones are forever protected by pure mind, stable and indestructible.

*Marie et moi vous adressons toute notre affection en cette période exigeante d'incertitude. L'esprit de sagesse de la conscience pure est toujours là, plus proche que notre ami le plus cher, même lorsque nous sommes ébranlés par les forces invisibles de la nature. Nous espérons que vous et vos proches demeurerez protégés à jamais par un esprit pur, stable et indestructible.*

Peter and / et Marie

*Letter of 07/10/2021*

"Dear Peter, rather than continuing a controversial exchange, I have preferred to bring together here a set of proposals which I am submitting to you.

You can simply say if these seem to correspond to your ideas and which, in your opinion, are more questionable:

- 1) perfection like awakening, enlightenment, spiritual realization ..., are of this world, they are achievable from this life and possible in this very body;
- 2) divine life is synonymous with non-duality and vice versa;
- 3) deification is par excellence the finality of human life;
- 4) everything is already present here and now; you just need to be aware of it;
- 5) there is nothing to change in this life to know this sublime state, nor to seek to convert to know God or to obtain enlightenment, it is enough simply to "see";
- 6) vision, of contemplative essence, is superior to action and intelligence;
- 7) Just as vision is superior to action, so affective is superior to intellect and will;
- 8) the obstacles to deification are only false visions, just as human finitude is an illusion;
- 9) Our own nature is already divine and perfect in itself, from all eternity. Recognizing it is the ultimate goal of all spirituality;
- 10) both evil and suffering are only accidents, epiphenomena that can easily be overcome;

- 11) Nature - or the Cosmos - is of divine essence;
- 12) civilization is an evil or an error which must be corrected or abandoned;
- 13) evil lies in the ego, blindness to its true nature and refusal to see one's own divinity in oneself or one's own innate perfection;
- 14) Mind is what separates us from the divine and from our true nature and from our true Self. It distorts all things, it must therefore be eradicated or detached from it;
- 15) there is a spiritual path which allows direct and easy access to this spiritual Vision, it is enough to take it to reach this very vision and to get rid of everything, as well as to know the divine life here below;
- 16) It is in the very vision (that of the Self) that the mystery of this divine vision resides, at the same time unifying, non-dual and liberating.
- 17) silence and contemplation are better and superior to intellectual work and language.

I therefore propose that we exchange on the basis of these proposals or these principles which are far from being exhaustive and can be supplemented or corrected.

What do you think ? And wouldn't that be more positive?

Hoping to read you soon."

*Letter of 10/31/2021*

"Dear Peter,

Despite the silence, no doubt mystical, on your part in response to my letters, I continue my reflections, according to the French adage: "*Qui ne dit mot, consent*". "*Whoever says nothing agrees*".

I would like to share with you my recent discoveries regarding religions and spiritualities. Especially those that you and I have practiced, and which contradict other, older religious data.

Three areas have taught me something essential about the origins of mankind and those of every individual.

These three areas are respectively: ancient mythologies, anthropology and Freudian psychoanalysis.

I summarize these major findings:

For most of the spiritualities in which you revitalize yourself to assert your non-dual method, the origin of the world and of humanity is positive. It is located either in a benevolent divinity who created this world and the beings who inhabit it - this is the case of the Bible, Judaism and Christianity... -, or in an impersonal Principle which governs the world by natural laws . Among these is the cycle of the human soul which, after leaving the Principle and having fallen into the world, must return to it according to a pattern known in Greek philosophy, that of the catabasis and the anabasis.

We recognize in it the conceptions and beliefs of religions such as Taoism, Hinduism of Bhakti and Vedânta, Hindo-Tibetan Tantrism, and Mahayana Buddhism, or philosophies such as Platonism, Neoplatonism, Stoicism ... Whatever the model chosen and its variants, often numerous, the principle is the same.

For my part, I have been convinced for many years that these representations of the world and of humanity are the only true ones and that they affirm the truth of our human existence, from its origins to its end.

The message propagated by these religions was simple and very flattering to human beings: it comes from the divine world. He was lost for a while in this terrestrial world, but he is destined to return to it after a trek or a more or less long journey which will make him understand his "true nature". Being of the same nature as this eternal Principle or as this Divinity, man must return to it, since his true place is in this divine and perfect world. And that whatever the means employed ...

We find this conception in esotericism, mystery cults, Hermeticism, Gnosis, Sufism, Yoga, transcendentalism, Christian mystics ...

However, the ancient mythologies, which date from before these great religions and wisdoms, absolutely do not share this point of view and tell a completely different story about the origins, whether it is that of the Universe or our own.

Indeed, for most of them - I am basing myself in this on the mythologies of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Hittites, ancient Greece, Celtic mythology, Brahmanic and Vedic mythology (and not that of Hinduism, more recent), shamanism... -, the origins of the world and of humanity are neither pure, nor perfect, nor innocent. But they reveal that the evil, at the beginning, was already present. And even that the origins of the world as well as of humanity are bad because they are marred by a primordial murder which is replayed both in the history of human societies and in the conscience of every child, from birth.



In this, ancient mythologies, anthropology and Freudian psychoanalysis, which are based on them, say the same thing. And they contradict the positive and idealized messages of more recent religions and wisdoms, and on which currents like non-duality are based.

But there are two things one, dear Peter:

Either it is these wisdoms and spiritualities, like yours, which tell the truth about our origins, and the others are only vestiges of a distant antiquity which do not teach anything or are approximate and misleading.

Either way, it is these ancient mythologies that tell the truth of who we are and our "true nature", and it is recent religions and spiritualities that are deluded and spreading lies.

But the two positions are incompatible and irreconcilable.

In other words, either our origins are pure and perfect and we can easily find them and unite with them, as all mystics and spiritualities suggest. Either way, these origins are impure and it is useless and even unhealthy to seek to find them. And the human being must make the effort to endow himself with another nature, but which is not the spiritual nature of non-duality, distorted from the beginnings, and which will bring him out of the illusory cycle in which he is dives these wisdoms and spiritualities. Or who will help him demystify these delusional beliefs.

How to decide between the two?

In my opinion, there are two ways to decide on the veracity of each design:

the first is anthropology, the second is psychoanalysis.

With the first, the analysis of human societies, from the earliest times allows us to know how they were organized and what were their religious beliefs and their representations of the world. For the second, it is about perceiving what the human being's unconscious, and not just his luminous and non-dual consciousness, conceals in order to understand what is in us, even without our knowing it.

I will not develop these two respective fields of the human sciences, as that would require me to write almost a thesis. But I refer you to the studies made by authors such as James G. Frazer, Arthur Hocart, René Girard and Sigmund Freud, as well as their followers, and others who have explored these fields.

I also allow myself to refer you to my own analyzes which are available on my site.

And you will see for yourself that the positions of wisdoms and religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Greek philosophies, Christianity, esotericism and the currents of non-duality are neither founded in fact nor in the oldest religious texts, nor in the human psyche, and that they are therefore questionable, and even refutable.

Because here, it is not the ego that leads us astray and from which we would have to detach ourselves in order to find our true non-dual nature. These origins, human, that the great myths reveal to us, are not false or illusory. Rather, it is recent representations in the history of mankind (and which appeared between the 7th century BC and the 4th century AD) which offer us an erroneous view of our origins as well as of ourselves. . And it is these that we must dare to criticize and question ...

It may be too late for you to recognize your mistake and your wandering, but others are not, and it is also for them that I am writing these letters ...

Best regards

Bruno D. "

Niall from The Weekend University 28/10/2022

Hi Bruno,  
My name's Niall and I'm the Founder of The Weekend University - which aims to make the best minds and ideas in psychology more accessible to the general public.

To do this, we organise '**lecture days**', on the last Sunday of each month, where you get a full day of talks from leading psychologists, authors and university professors.

Firstly, as a small thank you for your support of the project, here are three of our best lectures from previous events:

- [The Neuroscience of Consciousness](#) - Professor Anil Seth
- [Existential Philosophy and Psychotherapy](#) - Professor Emmy van Deurzen
- [The Self Illusion: Why there's no 'You' inside your head](#): - Professor Bruce Hood

Secondly, we'll now be sending you a brand new psychology lecture each week.

Fourthly, if you haven't joined already, you might be interested in our Facebook group: [The Global Psychology Network](#).

It's a group for people interested in psychology to share ideas, discuss the latest research and meet likeminded people.

Finally, if you listen to podcasts, make sure to subscribe to our talks on [iTunes](#), [Stitcher](#), and [Spotify](#).

Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions, and I look forward to meeting you at a future event!

Best wishes,  
Niall

*Letter of 10/28/2022*

Thank you for your email dear Niall.

I watched the various videos offered by your site, as well as the CVs of the speakers and their ideas.

Here is a summary of my reaction to your ideas of non-duality:

You all believe in an infinite potentiality of the psyche or of the human spirit which would hold a priori all the answers and the solutions to our problems. And the vision of non-duality would be the summit. It would be enough to mobilize the innate potentialities in oneself to miraculously erase the suffering and find our true nature. And you think you will rely on cognitive science to scientifically prove your vision of human beings and support your methods.

I have three questions for you:

1/ Why do cognitive sciences need to come to the aid of your spirituality? What does she gain from this operation? And isn't this the proof that your spirituality is insufficient as such, and must be based on something other than itself to be credible? A spirituality that needs science, is it still a spirituality? And in this case, should one rather become a scientist than a spiritual one?

2/ You claim that the human being would hold within him all the potentialities to solve his problems and his suffering.

But if reality contradicts your presupposition, what would become of your methods and your wisdom?

If human beings did not possess within themselves the possibility of freeing themselves from evil, as we have seen since the origins of Humanity, what value would your non-dual wisdom have? Could it be an illusion?

And those who practice it and propagate it, wouldn't they be blind or worse, imposters?

3/ Moreover, by wanting to eliminate evil, by believing that it is only an epiphenomenon or a secondary accident, don't you also erase the tragic dimension of human existence, always present?

And by wanting to eliminate evil, don't you risk one day being tempted to also want to eliminate the wicked or the bad people, those who, for example, could resist your cognitive and non-dual treatments? As we do all the totalitarian systems that were determined to eradicate evil and the wicked, to cut them off from Humanity.

And does your spirituality have strong enough ethics to spot these kinds of serious mistakes and fix them?

These are some essential questions about your practices.

Best regards

Dear Bruno,

Thank you for your email - really appreciate the thought you put into that.

Unfortunately I'm not the right person to ask these questions to, as I've only recently discovered the Nondual philosophy.

It might be worth reaching out to people like Peter Russell, Rupert Spira, or Bernardo Kastrup to ask their thoughts - as I feel hugely underqualified to answer.

Warm regards,

Niall

Thank you for your response, your comments and your honesty.

I had already written to Peter Fenner on these subjects, but he never really deigned to engage in a serious conversation with me.

I will always be interested in receiving your emails and news.

Best regards.

B. Delorme

Letter from P. Fenner 03/01/2023

Dear Bruno,

Wisdom traditions typically teach that the awakened mind and compassionate heart are ever-present. Nonetheless, to touch them with any regularity, we have to practice. Join Peter Fenner and Kelly Blaser as they explore non-dual practice in **The Power of Meditation**.

In moments of luminosity, the non-dual spaciousness of the true Self flows through us naturally. In the moments in between, we may slip into divisions of forgetfulness and egoic slumber. In doing so, we unconsciously cut ourselves off from ourselves and from one another.

When we nest ourselves into practice, and hold space with compassion and curiosity, we remember the deep teachings of non-duality: we are not separate from our worlds. There is nothing in the physical world that does not arise from consciousness, and all that we see arises from this one-ness.

When we glimpse non-duality, many of the thought-prisons that constrain us will melt away. We see that all beings arise from the same source. Even in our forgetting, all beings long to awaken. Meditation is the fuel for coming into contact with this capacity for presence and loving kindness, and loving kindness allows us to hold space for the liberation of ourselves and all beings.

To support people in staying open, curious, and loving through times of turmoil, I've joined Kelly Blaser, LMFT, for an inspiring conversation that will be aired as part of the 6th **Power of Meditation Summit**. You can listen in for FREE!

### **The Power of Meditation**

*Portals into Non-dual Healing and Awakening for Seekers and Guides*

#### **Register for The Power of Meditation**

Registration to the Summit includes a private link to a sneak preview section from the upcoming feature film, AWARENESS, which reveals the essence of enlightenment as illuminated in the work of Peter Fenner. AWARENESS will be released later in 2023, and this is the first public preview of portions of the film.

May you step into the field of awakening and turn towards liberation for all beings.

Yours in spirit,

Peter Fenner

Dr Peter Fenner has a multifaceted practice as a writer, author, spiritual coach, and trainer in teachings of deep Buddhist philosophy. The founder of Timeless Wisdom and the pioneer of a number of programs and courses, Peter bases his research on Asian nondual wisdom. Peter is qualified with a Ph.D. in the philosophical psychology of the Madhyamaka school of Mahayana Buddhism.

Peter's main specialty is in the development of freeform pointing out instructions, using silence and unfindability inquiry in order to directly reveal the nature of pure awareness itself. Freeform means his work is relatively unstructured. Peter uses whatever arises in a group in the moment it occurs as the material/constructs, to be seen through, or self-dissolve, revealing the pure liberated nature of unconditioned mind itself—the ultimate medicine.

### *Comment*

This letter, sent by P. Fenner at the beginning of 2023, takes up the themes of his non-dual wisdom with the same paradoxes on which he has never stopped surfing to establish his position as guru and "Doctor".

Let's go back to the different statements of this letter, starting with the one at the beginning:

“ Wisdom traditions typically teach that the awakened mind and compassionate heart are ever-present. Nonetheless, to touch them with any regularity, we have to practice.”

" Wisdom traditions " - but which ones precisely? – would teach that an awakened mind and a compassionate heart are always present.

This is an astonishing statement to say the least, especially in a non-dual context.

Where in non-duality could there exist as an "awake mind" accompanied by a "compassionate heart"? And isn't it contradicting the claim of non-duality to point out that there is not only a "mind" - but which one? - but also a "heart"? In other words, there would be an awakened consciousness that would exist alongside an affect or feelings. But, in non-duality, it seemed to me that there was nothing strictly speaking, not even a consciousness which would be superimposed on non-duality and would impose itself on it in a dual way. Even less a heart experiencing feelings...

In addition, P. Fenner adds that “to touch them with any regularity, we have to practice. »

Truly ?

Again, these words can only cause astonishment. I guess what needs to “touch” that mind and heart is nothing but our own consciousness. But if this is not different and cannot be differentiated from the awakened mind, then it is only "touching" itself. It is the same with the heart and its affects.

However, a feeling which touches another feeling is nothing other than a feeling which can possibly be redoubled, but this one is not made up of non-duality but of affects which are affective flows which are never stable, and constantly fluctuate. The same problem arises with the consciousness which must touch the heart and the spirit, which makes at least three psychic or psychosomatic entities which unfold in the field of non-duality supposed to contain nothing precise or subject to duality .

P. Fenner specifies that you have to “practice”.

This is yet another problematic statement!

Why, in the world of non-duality, present from all eternity, should we train or practice? And who or what, in non-duality, should train? Is non-duality itself training or practicing to become aware of itself or to “touch” its own mind? And would she do it on her own or would she go through us? And if so, wouldn't that be proof that there is an intentionality in non-duality, which would be surprising to say the least!...

If this training concerns us, then it would be a sign that our consciousness would only try to approach, appropriate or immerse itself in non-duality without really being able to become it, since there would be on one side the awakened spirit with the compassionate heart and on the other the individual conscience which becomes aware of the latter, in a dual way. For to be aware of non-duality or awakened mind is still to position oneself in a mode of dual relationships and to maintain a duality.

Finally, there remains the nagging question of why it seems so difficult to touch or enter into non-duality. What sufficiently solid or consistent object or entity could stand in the way of what has always been present and surpasses all?

These are some unsolved mysteries...

P. Fenner adds that there are two types of moments for consciousness:

- those where the luminosity of the true Self would pass through us naturally. Which implies that there must be a false Self;
- and those where, on the contrary, we fall into the trap of selfishness and divisions.

“In doing so, we unconsciously cut ourselves off from ourselves and from one another »

To be cut off from oneself, especially in moments of selfishness, although still remaining oneself and not being another or something other than oneself - for we never are or become other than ourselves when we are under the grip of our ego - would be one of the characteristics of this state considered negative by P. Fenner and his wisdom. The other would be to cut oneself off from others.

Now, isn't it because we have an ego or an ego, an "I" too, that we can enter into contact or communication and with ourselves, as in moments of introspection and intimate reflection, and with others? Without “me”, or without “I”, would there exist another with whom to enter into contact, and vice versa? It is thanks to otherness that we become what we are, and it is through our "self" that others also exist, with whom we can exchange. This is one of the conditions of possibility of their existence.

Conversely, it is when there is no longer any “me” or ego that relationships become impossible and not the other way around.

However, the purpose of non-dual techniques would be to find oneself and to be in communion with others, or not to be separated from them. But this mode of being or non-dual implies that there is neither self, nor me, nor the other who comes to thwart the awakened and non-dual mind. In other words, to be united with oneself and others, according to this wisdom, it is necessary that these no longer exist. This mode of union is therefore the negation of otherness as of our own identity, and not their truth or their apogee. It is this result that all non-dual wisdom seeks: not to be separated from the world, when in fact we are and it is the essence of our human condition.

“There is nothing in the physical world that does not arise from consciousness, and all that we see arises from this one-ness”, writes P. Fenner.

This assertion would need to be validated at length not only by individual experiences, which are always questionable, but above all by a serious philosophy and epistemology. What P. Fenner, in his anti-intellectualism, is incapable of producing.

This assertion is in fact a synthesis of the idealist systems known in India, whether in Buddhism, by the Yogâcâra school, or in Hinduism, by Vedânta or Kashmir Shaivism, schools to which P. Fenner was initiated.



But nothing proves that this idealistic vision, where everything would come from consciousness or from the spirit, is true and offers us a realistic and fair vision of the world and of consciousness.

In fact, this vision of things is above all a projection of the megalomaniacal pretensions of the human mind when it believes itself to be the origin of everything, and itself the origin of everything. Which it absolutely is not. And this vision is only a fantasy of omnipotence that we know in a certain number of pathologies of the psychotic type in particular, where reality serves the phantasmatic projections of the views of consciousness left to itself and does not accepting its own limitations. A delirium, in short, and nothing else, this is what P. Fenner invites us to in his non-dual wisdom...

This wisdom therefore commits an ontological attack on the world and beings, in order to eradicate all forms of duality and opposition, which are nevertheless absolutely necessary for human life and in common.

This non-dual conception, which wants to escape any contradiction and admits of no criticism by silencing oppositions or objections, has an undeniable totalizing, even totalitarian dimension.

In this sense, we can affirm that non-dual wisdoms are not paths of liberation and illumination, but phenomena of control and alienation in which individual identity is summoned to disappear to give way to fantasies of union and unity that have no basis in reality and may even prove psychologically and morally dangerous.

Because what these wisdoms like their propagators do not understand is that to become a human being worthy of the name and to access our true nature or our own humanity, it is not completeness that we must seek obsessively, but it is the lack that must be accepted.

It is because we are not complete beings and never will be that we can claim to evolve and live in the human world. Otherwise we would only be objects or nothingness. This more or less explicit nihilism is also another characteristic of these currents of wisdom.

These formidable, but terribly seductive traps – exchanging one's individual "I" for an impersonal Self, no longer having limits, no longer being subject to finitude or death... - are those presented to us by these pseudo-traditions, such as if by their techniques they could reveal to us our "true nature" that we would be unaware of in our unconsciousness. Yet it is precisely these limits that constitute our true human nature, and not altered states of

consciousness that say nothing about what we are or should be. And it is precisely because these spiritual traps are seductive and so subtly flatter our desires, our fantasies and therefore our ego, that we must resist them.

By favoring only the texts of certain religious traditions, often heterodox or bordering on heresy, which go in its direction and corroborate its ideas, the non-dual school of P. Fenner fell into the trap of confirmation bias . Unable to debate intellectually or philosophically honestly and refusing any dialogue that does not abound in his direction, P. Fenner represents the very model of the Western guru who disseminates his ideas without accepting the slightest contradiction or admitting different thoughts. from his own and above all divergent, or which would force him to question himself and to doubt his methods, that is to say in fact himself. However, it is this doubt that would be beneficial to him and not his fantasies of non-dual omnipotence or phantasmatic completeness...

Why, then, as P. Fenner suggests in his letter, should we invite other people to embark on this spiritual path which does not liberate anything or anyone and which reveals itself in truth as a path of alienation? , that is to say, a totally illusory wisdom?...

Hi Bruno,  
I didn't write most of this. Presenters in these type of events with 10 or so presenters are given a standard text to follow. As it is I agree with nearly all your points. Well made.

Best wishes,  
Peter

My letter 05/01/2023

*Thank you for your answer Peter.*

*I note once again that you have assimilated the principles of the irrational logic of Nagarjuna and his disciples. These fallacies mainly help you to protect yourself from others,*

*and are defense mechanisms of the self that you believe have been erased by your intellectually destabilizing techniques.*

*Thus, according to you, the mail I received and which is signed with your name is not from you, and you are not the author. Just as you would not give importance to the meaning of the sentences written in your name.*

*Moreover, you affirm, as a good Nagarjunian, that you entirely agree with my objections, so that you can claim to have affirmed or denied nothing. Which apparently allows you to place yourself above philosophical debates and escape any risk of contradiction or refutation. But this metaposition is only a spiritual and intellectual imposture. A lama like Sogyal Rinpoche, one of your masters and who played this game to the point of delirium, got caught in the trap of this imposture and fell from his throne as master of non-duality, like his illustrious predecessor, Chögyam Trungpa, locked himself in his role as master of mad wisdom that led him to the worst.*

*So beware, dear Peter! Because by constantly playing with your paradoxes, these puns could one day come back to you and destroy what you have tried to build, even your passion for Buddhist deconstructionism which could just as well deconstruct you in turn.*

### **THE ULTIMATE MEDICINE<sup>3</sup>**

Ultimately all suffering results from a difference between “what we experience” and “what we want.” Whenever these differ we suffer. When the difference is dissolved we experience peace and freedom. The power of nondual awareness lies in the possibility of experiencing ourselves as a centerless field of awareness, where we are no longer the victim of our preferences. When we rest in awareness, we discover we have everything we could possibly want, because we need nothing. We see that we never need more than what we have. No matter who we are, what we have and don’t have, the present moment always takes care of itself.

Here we are right now, for example, me writing this, you reading it. There is nothing we need to add to this, or take away from it. We can’t change the moment anyway. If you don’t have time to finish this, no problem, you move on. If you do, you continue in a relaxed and easy way.

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<sup>3</sup> [THE ULTIMATE MEDICINE - Peter Fenner](#)

Hundreds of thousands of masters in Zen, Buddhism, Taoism, Sufism and other mystical traditions have shown us that what we all strive for—a state of real and lasting fulfillment—is achievable. Furthermore, through their lives and teachings they provide a model for our own evolution.

### **The healing power of nondual awareness**

The experience of the nondual awareness takes us outside the cycle of reactive responses and emotions by connecting us with the nature of our mind as pure, unstructured awareness. When we rest in this experience, we are intimately connected with everything within and around us, yet beyond being disturbed in any way. We come home to ourselves in a totally natural and uncontrived way. In the Vajrayana tradition of Buddhism this experience is called indestructibility. At the same time that we fully accept our finite and conditioned existence, the quality of our experience can't be damaged or degraded by the presence of any thought, feeling, or sensation. In Buddhism the experience of nondual awareness is called the “ultimate medicine.” Other types of medicine—like therapy—have limitations. They work for some people, some of the time. The ultimate medicine is universally healing. Every mind touched by the experience of its unconditioned nature moves closer to the experience of real freedom and liberation. Sometimes the experience may gently encourage us to acknowledge our higher potential. In other instances it may produce a radical reorientation of our experience of reality.

The more time we spend resting in our ultimate nature, the more familiar we become with “this.” When opportunities arise to let go of our preoccupations and daily concerns, we find ourselves moving effortlessly and without resistance into a more open and expanded way of being.

### **Impossible to create “lack”**

The experience of nondual awareness heals us in two ways. First, it relieves us of the need to “fix things up.” It offers us a profound experience of clarity and contentment—of being in total harmony with ourselves and the world. In Buddhism this is called “going beyond loss or gain.” In this state of consciousness everything is present exactly as it is, but we find it impossible to construe that anything is missing. We've moved beyond the familiar cycle of having problems and finding solutions. This

experience is “priceless,” not because we’re attached to its value, but because nothing can increase or enhance our fulfillment.

### **Reconditioning our body-mind**

The other way in which nondual awareness heals is by restructuring our thought-patterns so that we become increasingly open to the ultimate state of awareness. We become less reactive and defensive—and so better able to release our fears and insecurities. In this way, the effects of the experience percolate through the layers of our conditioning long after we’ve finished resting in the state itself. The Yoga Tradition of Buddhism describes this process as the “transformation of the structural foundations of our being.” Through contact with an unstained stream of pure being, the energies and mechanisms that condition our present and future existence lose their power to distort our experience and cause suffering. Other nondual traditions describe how the experience of the unconditioned mind infuses the conditioned mind like a sweet perfume or a soothing breeze.

It’s impossible to predict how this healing will unfold. It occurs at its own pace and rhythm, sometimes smooth and gentle, at other times rough or abrupt. The unconditioned mind doesn’t discriminate in terms of “how” healing occurs—it doesn’t generate a plan or strategy because it exists beyond such conceptual formulations. The healing that occurs can’t be controlled in a mechanical way. Each of us is infinitely complex and our path to full spiritual evolution is unique and often mysterious. Healing is a function of staying open and accepting reality with equanimity and trust. Peter Fenner, Ph.D.

### ***Comment***

Once again, I note in this text the absurdities, the nonsense and the misinterpretations with which P. Fenner, the acrobat of non-duality, constantly plays in his writings.

An "ultimate medicine" capable of curing everything and curing everything is a medicine without a human body and which does not address the human body or the human psyche.

It is a question of "suffering", always this word, and not of evil, strangely ignored by the followers of non-duality. This suffering would come from a difference between the will or rather the desire and the reality of the experience. Non-duality would therefore be this ultimate medicine that would cure us of all our ills. But how does he do it? What means does she use to achieve this? Nothing other than making us stick to the reality from which we should no longer be separated so as not to have to suffer. Non-dual medicine is therefore a technique for adapting the human being to reality, which corresponds to the current managerial ideology.

For the privileged, or the happy few like those seen in the photos and videos of the courses offered by P. Fenner and his acolytes, who apparently have known nothing of the misfortunes of existence or have been miraculously spared, such a technique may perhaps further reduce the gap between their experience and their desires, not by denying these desires or by stifling them in non-duality, as would be the case for human beings ordinary, but by matching their desires to reality, by combining or harmonizing them according to the sophisticated adage: *"Desire what you have and you have what you desire"*.

By sticking as close as possible to reality, suffering should thus diminish and even disappear, and happiness, ultimate like this disembodied medicine which knows nothing of the human body or the psyche, should finally appear.

It is, writes P. Fenner, no more and no less than "restructuring our thought-patterns". We can see here the influence of a current like transhumanism which declared the obsolescence of the human being to germinate a transhumanity freed from old mental patterns inherited from the past.

A vast program to which P. Fenner and his followers visibly adhere without reserve. However, if these mental patterns are not distorted and do not give us an erroneous view of reality, which is often the case with our sense organs, why should we restructure them? And how could this be possible if they are constitutive of our being?

Thus, to take an example that I raised above, when P. Fenner himself had to have surgery recently, he experienced two deep feelings: the first is that of an attitude of very Christian piety in which he asked his followers and friends to pray for him. Incredible and totally inappropriate request from a so-called master of non-duality! The second is to have recognized, in a rare moment of lucidity and honesty, that he had taught for almost half a

century a wisdom to which he himself had never adhered in depth or practiced in a truly serious way. !

Doesn't this mean that these reactions belong to P. Fenner's psychological identity as well as to his past and his history that he never succeeded in erasing or reconstructing according to his non-dual ideology? These psychological dispositions therefore resisted the long non-dual practice and reappeared at a crucial moment in his existence, when he was finally confronted with his finitude and his approaching death. And at that moment, his own non-dual techniques were of no help to him, of no effectiveness. Which proves their inanity as well as the absurdity of these practices and these wisdom teachings.

I noticed that no practitioner was offended by these confessions which completely discredited their own guru and his teaching! And this one has learned nothing from it!

How can we trust such a man who is incapable of questioning himself and confronting his own imposture?

" Hundreds of thousands of masters in Zen, Buddhism, Taoism, Sufism and other mystical traditions...", writes P. Fenner, still sure of himself.

Hundreds of thousands " ? Really ?

Why not millions or billions?

If P. Fenner could just line up the names of those he himself has known or who have historically existed for say 2500 years, he would be hard pressed to find even a few thousand. Which would already be huge. His pretentious vision here borders on the ridiculous and appears in all its obviousness.

No experience is "indestructible". It's an oxymoron. An experience is always conditioned, even one that is believed to be unconditioned.

I also notice that these non-dual techniques or wisdom have nothing rational or scientific about them, so they are in no way "medical" in the proper sense of the term, even less so. , even less therapeutic.

Thus, no figures, no data on the follow-up of people and healings can be consulted. Of all the participants and followers of this ultimate wisdom, how many have been able to permanently heal their ailments, their traumas? Have there been any relapses? Special cases or errors? People who have shown resistance to these practices or who have made mistakes? Or who gave up along the way?

Can we give a modeled and viable diagram of non-dual practices? Are these techniques really universal and suitable for everyone? Are there any contraindications?

And in the case of people on whom these had no effect, or even aggravated their symptoms, their suffering, their discomfort or their ill-being, what became of them and what can teachers like P. Fenner? Will they justify their practice by recalling that they have no obligation of result? That the healing depends entirely on the person and that they are not responsible for anything or anyone? As they are only responsible for probable cures but certainly not for possible failures? So blaming people when this wisdom fails?

“It’s impossible to predict how this healing will unfold. »

This is a wonderful adage that immediately releases all responsibility from non-dual therapists.

Indeed, we cannot say anything about healings, because we do not even know if they will occur, nor how, nor when, nor at what rate, nor in what forms they will appear, nor the time they will take to act. , and if they ever happen...

What a tremendous prescience for a science of ultimate medicine supposed to be a panacea, a perfect and universal remedy!

However, this most total artistic vagueness always hides imposture and charlatanism. Never noted by P. Fenner and his followers.

“Other nondual traditions describe how the experience of the unconditioned mind infuses the conditioned mind like a sweet perfume or a soothing breeze. »

We are reassured!

A soothing breeze and a sweet perfume will perhaps come to calm our anxieties and heal our wounds in a beautiful poetic flight!

But isn't that exactly what we can normally feel at ordinary times, such as every evening, when going to bed and falling asleep, or when we are resting after exerting ourselves, when of a simple walk in nature, when we meet our loved ones or when we relax after a hard day's work? If P. Fenner had worked just once in his life, in any profession, there is no doubt that he would have experienced it many times without having to transmit it to the whole world as something unique and exceptional.

It is that we must never forget that any spiritual experience, however sublime and perfect it may be, could not emerge and unfold without the memorized existence of other experiences, these unique because first in the psyche of human beings and their history. Thus,



no experience of inner enlightenment or spiritual awakening would be possible without that first illuminative experience that every baby has when it comes out of its mother's womb and sees the light of day for the first time.

It is the buried memories of these primordial experiences that are reactivated during these moments of awakening of consciousness, and which thus take on particular forms specific to each human being, while being grafted onto the universal experience of birth. Nothing else.

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