**Meditative walk to mark 2018 World Interfaith Harmony Week**

A World-Views in Dialogue Project

This report is being submitted as a contribution to the interfaith movement, not to participate in the contest. Apart from an advertisement in a local newspaper and through some interfaith groups, there is no public reporting and participants come as groups or individuals, not in any position of spiritual authority other than their own, be they priest, scholar, nun, monk or layperson. It Is designed to complement existing interfaith projects and practices, not to replace them. Instead of established places of worship, the shadow and shelter of groves or shrines, 11 of them, with - makes for a walk of more than half a mile, taking between one and a half and three hours walk: silent along the way, with readings and meditation at the site. As Trentham is a country town, ca 100 km NW of Melbourne, with towns and cities on distances between 25 and 140 away from here, a standard visit takes a day, with a 10am start and 4.30m ending: introduction, the walk itself, communal lunch and conversation. As the place is a dedicated, permanent venue, it is available for the celebration of World Interfaith Harmony Week each day of this week, 1-7 February and at other times by appointment. The week falls in the bush-fire danger season, and not every day may be suitable.

The walk is supported by a hand-out, based on a particular theme and there is a booklet with texts taken from the different world-views , by which visitors can guide themselves on a walk. A dedicated library is available and at the occasion of the walk, I put a number a books on display, including two books that are the inspiration for this project: ***‘Earth Celebration 1997’***, an extensive documentation of an interfaith project in Switzerland, under the motto: **Many Rivers, One Ocean,** initiated by Shin Gwydion Fontalba, Spiritual Teacher, in Switzerland, followed by 2 more celebrations in Switzerland, and one in India. And **Walking Meditation** by Thich Nhat Hanh.

The mediative walk at Evera, Trentham, started in 2007 as a private observance, and became public in 2012 , at the suggestion of a friend. In 2014 another friend suggested I write a book, which is based on the experience, practice and supporting study for this project, as an interfaith study, anthology and reader.

The nature of the project, concentrating on the originating wellspring of each spiritual stream or religion, through meditation and conversation, doesn’t lend itself to making photographs, media coverage and/or authoritative confirmation. And I forget to ask participants for a testimony, probably because they have already expressed their appreciation by the intensity of their participation and their spontaneous comments.

The underlying theme of all walks and conversations is the ‘Golden Rule’, which can be considered as a crystallization an age-long practice in all religions and in humanism, but in recent times has been constricted to people’s private lives, whilst public life is driven by other rules…The question then becomes, where in the religion’s original impulse can religion and secular humanism the inspiration for a revival of the golden rule in the public sphere: not a crystallization, but more like a seed, a new, living form, for times to come…The search for those seeds is part of the meditation and conversation, whether is a new understanding of the Sabbath, of money, of education…It is e.g. interesting to note that the Shinto expression of the golden rule: the heart of the other is a mirror, see therein your own form, resonates in the word ‘Teikei’, ‘see the farmer’s face on your bread’, a motto and motive for the farmers market movement, not only in Japan, but world-wide. And what about Lord Buddha’s Eightfold Path as a path for renewing the golden rule in public life...

The theme of transition of the golden rule from ‘crystallization’ to ‘new life’ or ‘seed’ form, features in the enclosed photographs at the centre of an introductory talk and meditation.

A brief introduction to myself: Henk Bak, born 1931, Nederland, studied philosophy, theology, history, specialized in economic and art history. Doctoral degree, Nijmegen Catholic University. Taught history in secondary school and teacher training college in Nederland, and since 1978 till retirement a lecturer in Australia School of Art and Design, ending up as part of Monash University, Melbourne. Researching and teaching the history of crafts, engaged me in the cultures around the world, where the crafts have been developed and the spiritual contexts in which they functioned. In 1964 I was asked to formulate the theme for an interdisciplinary, international conference at my university, which went ahead under the title: ‘Oecumene of Cultures’ and in 1994-96 I convened ‘Religious Conversations’ at the Caulfield campus of Monash University, at the request of ‘Community Services’, out of concern for the many students from other countries, where religion still integral part of public life …

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