

The Black Wall by Shawn Nevins

Death is inside each of us. I don't mean that we will all die one day. I mean that if we peer inside, down the mazy layers of noise that pass for a mind, we discover a black wall of the unknown. Behind this, inside us, is death.

Light masquerades as darkness inside you—true Life as death. I don't know why. I don't know why it is easier to look away, toward the mischief of the world, than inside. Yet the resolution of our driving questions is inside. By turning away from that which you see in the field of the mind (since anything you see cannot be you), you will surely travel to these dark gates.

That is the essence of the approach. It starts with the proposition that anything observable is not us. What you see through a microscope is not the microscope, and what you see via the mind is not the mind. "The view is not the viewer," Richard Rose said, though for years I couldn't grasp what he meant. However, I did understand that anything observable is not permanent and that is what I wanted to know: what about me would not change and fade away—was there anything Real?

"Not this, not that," as the Upanishads said over 2,500 years ago. I am not that cup of water on the table. I am not the hand typing this sentence. I am not these words appearing in my mind. I am not awareness. This may take years to grasp. You can't just conclude. You have to experience. You have to look inside your mind and decide for yourself.

Again and again you go a'searching, rejecting every thought as not you, every sound or vision, and your sense of self even, because you see them all in your mind's eye. Yet, some thing turns away from all these objects—an awareness that is impossibly aware of itself and senses something else behind it. It tries to turn upon itself only to find itself. It—you—have come to the black wall.

The image of the black wall is indicative of what I sensed. It was an unknown around which my awareness pirouetted with itself—a desperate dance at the dead end street of the mind. You may explain the feeling with a different image—perhaps simply as fear, or wonder, or perplexity, or intense tension as if trying to grasp infinity or zero.

The method of rejecting what we see as not us, takes us directly to the fundamental uncertainty of our self knowledge. That fundamental uncertainty hides behind the fear of extinction. Your life of honesty and determination will carry you through this wall, through death, to Life.

Following are two quotes that strike at the heart of going within. They challenged and inspired me to keep looking:

"Am I this body of thoughts in my mind? No. One gets a little closer to his thoughts than to anything else, and it's a little harder to untangle this. But if he watches and studies closely enough, the thoughts come to me. I accept or reject

them. That which accepts or rejects them is different from the thought. And then I finally reach this point where I find that I must be this something, in some sense, different from other people. I'm not the mind, I'm not the feelings, I'm not the body—that I see. But I surely am, I surely am an individual, apart from others.

“Now what you’ve gotten a hold of is a very difficult fellow—it’s your ego. He can sneak around and confuse you like the dickens. You can spend years trying to get behind him. And what you do, you can get into an infinite regression. You look at your ego. All right, here am I and all of a sudden it dawns upon you that that which is looking at the ego is really the I. So you stick that one out in front. You look at it again, but then you realize it couldn’t be, because here is a something that is observable. At last it finally dawns that I AM THAT which is never an object before Consciousness. And mayhap, at that moment, in your analysis—the Heavens will open.”

—Franklin Merrell-Wolff, *The Induction*

“From this point, as we look to the right, we notice that we can also look at awareness, and we can be aware of consciousness, and of looking at ourself looking indefinitely. We do not take a step forward, but are taken forward from here, by that which seems to be an accident,—an accident which does not come unless we have struggled relentlessly to find that which was unknown to us, by a method which could not be charted because the end or goal was unknown. We must have first become a vector. We must first have spent a good period of time studying our own awareness and consciousness with our own consciousness until we accidentally or by some unknown purpose,—enter the source of our awareness.”

—Richard Rose, *Psychology of the Observer*