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On Anger  
04/04/88.

Dear Pam

This is the second part of the letter to you on Violence/Anger. I presume you, as a Bear, are testing my Peace Research. I can assure you that by doing Peace Research I have come to know "nothing". Peace is a kind of gem that you cannot "Possess" nor can you "Manufacture" by Science. It is not a question of Knowledge, but more to do with "Grace" in Christian term, or "Cosmic Love" in Buddhist term. You might call it "Gii Li" in your favorite term. I tell you about this later.

Last weekend, I went to Calgary and saw the "Spirit Sings". It was a poor show. It was said to cover from 1600 to 1800. But the choice of the period was Political, as if from unconscious Cultural Bias. It neatly avoided the violent history of Invasion, Oppression, and Genocide. It evaded pre-colonial Native Culture. The main body of the show was Bead Work. The cheap glass beads were European imports. Indians sold two continents for these damned glass beads made in places like Firenze, Italy or Amsterdam, Holland!!! There was no display of native Copper Work etc. It implied that Natives had no culture before Europeans "taught" and supplied materials.

A few artifacts were genuine Native American. Several canoes, wood crafts, stone carvings, and one earthen pot, etc., were there. But they were the ones Europeans liked and collected. And the famous Sacred Mask was not placed properly, but crowded with other displays around. The arrangement of the surroundings was like a supermarket commercial display. The Mask deserves a room to itself, and it has to be placed appropriately in a "sacred" context. The Glenbow bookstore ought to sell books like the Vanishing White Man (Stan Steiner) to educate about what is happening to the World. The "Civilized" people who celebrate the Olympics only in Narcissism make me sick.

The only one that caught my attention was a "Wampum" made of natural seashell beads, purple and white, depicting people joining hands. It is a documentation of a Treaty. Perhaps it was from Iroquois, or from East Coast. The Museum does say it is a Treaty Document, but does not tell what the Treaty was. Nobody wants to remember the Treaty. White Culture is indifferent, or rather does not wish to know. The Natives would think it too painful to remember. So it sits in a Museum as a dead artifact whose meaning is lost forever. I wonder if anyone now can read the Wampum. (Purple is a sad color, but it is my favorite color. It

appears just before the Red of Dawn. I can feel the kind of people who made the Wampum.)

Looking through Glenbow show, my niece commented that the Japanese would not have traded nothing for the cheap beads. She could not understand why Native Americans were "crazy" about the damned beads. I do not understand that either, and could not explain to her. I thought of explaining it in terms of "Pride" which blinded Natives. But I stopped short of saying that. I have to check that with you. [\*1.]

Old Japanese did not have a taste for "bright colored" stuff. Europeans who came to Japan apparently found that out soon enough and did not even try. Japanese art designs had to be "simple" and unobtrusive. They did not like the "Complexity" of Chinese Art much either, when they came in contact with it before the Europeans came. Their sense of beauty demanded "subtle authentic elegance", half-hidden in "ordinary practicality". Until recently, they despised "show offs" as superficial. They did use ornaments, but valued "gems" in purple more. Stones and metals may be valuable enough, but they praised "Artists", not "Artifacts".

Tea ceremony, Flower arrangement, Poetry, and even Cooking, are typical of Japanese arts which are performance-centered, non-objective and ephemeral. They are "done", just like Love-making, and that's it. Or they are like the punch-line of jokes, there is no "justification", no "explanation", and nothing more can be added.

They are "Gems of the moment" created and gone, just like the momentary smile of a beautiful girl. There is nothing more to be asked. Nobody can "keep" the Gems as such, let alone "possess" it. And because they are ephemeral, they are more precious.

The above story has to do with your question. It is not Japanese art that I wanted to tell you about. If I could, I might have tried House Made Of Dawn to bring you here. Unfortunately, I don't know enough about the House Made Of Dawn to do the same. I guess there must be Anger behind House Made Of Dawn". You know it and that is why you can read it. But I cannot find Anger in the story. There are many references to "drinking" in Momaday's story. You know what it is. But I do not know what "drinking" means. Perhaps, to understand contemporary Indians, one has to understand Alcohol. I fail in that.

So I talked about Glenbow Show to Japanese Arts to say the following.

Peace is like the passing of a Gem of the moment. When Pam looked at the Oklahoma Moon, that was a moment of Peace in this sense. She might say "Aha", or Weep, but she cannot keep it. She cannot display the "gems of the moment" as such in Museums either. The only thing she can do is to try to create moments. It may take a great anger to bring out such a moment. Then, one is obliged to act out the anger.

I heard Woody saying "It Hurts. It Hurts", on CBC broadcasting from the picket line against the Glenbow show. It was a "primordial scream". For that moment, CBC crews must have sensed a meaning in Woody's "scream", for otherwise it would have been "edited out". But then, how many people heard it as a scream? I mean Natives. It is offensive to say this, but I wonder if Natives are "sensitive" enough. To be sure, if a lot of Natives scream loud, I would be frightened. After all, I am a parasite on the dominant power structure that oppresses the Natives. Yet, I cannot understand why Natives are not angry.

At the beginning of knowing You, someone referenced you as "She is one angry woman". I thought it very interesting. But, so far, you disappointed me. I have not seen you angry in any big way. Why aren't you angry? Are you getting too old? I say this to you, because not angry means that you don't love enough.

I am not a great guy to talk about Anger. I am too "intellectual" to be angry. But you should not use my failure for your exercise. By writing to you, I am guilty of making an "intellectual" out of you. I know that. But I count on your Spirituality to resist that. And what happened to your "Aquarius Conspiracy"? You are supposedly a "Believer", "Revolutionary Doer", and "Passionate Lover". I am a "doubter", "technician" and "critical analyzer"; a typical "Virgo" which is the dead opposite to Aquarius. We have to make the best out of our bad match. And I think it would be best that you be in anger.

It is strange for a Peace Researcher to say such a thing. But, I don't see a point in being just another nice guy who would dare not go beyond his reasonable defensive safety. Peace is not the keeping of Defense. It calls for the creation of a Defenseless World. For that, the world needs extraordinary, crazy guys. Any fool can be "reasonable". Don't be one. In anger, You can have all the fun and excitement that alcohol can give and extras such as creating something and giving it to the World.

[\*1.] As to "Pride", I have a suspicion that it also has something to do with Alcoholism. Sometime ago you said that Alcohol makes the drinker feel "Powerful". That was a clue.

The "Power" in the sentence is not the "power" in the sense of "Facilitator", but rather the "Power" of those who seek domination. It is the same Power that The British Empire sought. It is a denial of vulnerability. British called it "Invincible". But Alcoholics seem to take it in a defensive sense. They "forget" defense, but there is nothing to give out. The Pride in Power there is empty of authentic content and does not facilitate creation of Love-Eros. They seem to not be aware that all human beings as bodily existences are just passing things, and no better off than alcoholics. Non-Alcoholics are just as miserable beings to whom alcoholics need no alcohol to feel superior. I would think of "En-noblement", beyond "Empowerment" for Natives. And to avoid the romanticism of the "Noble Savage", I recommend Fallible Man. By understanding Vulnerability, one gets into a state of mind called "Caring" which is needed to substantiate being "Noble" in daily life beyond ritualistic moments. The Power sense from Alcohol is superficial ritual, romanticism without authentic content, and worse, alcoholics know it, and hence are defensive. Life in anger and love is unconsciously full and overflows its limitations, and hence is "unreasonable".

Alcoholics may be very sensually sensitive people, more so than others. And they are vulnerable because of the sensitivity. But they may also have more "Pride" than others. And because of it, they get hurt more. As a result, they are Defensive all the time. If Alcohol gets them to feel "invincible", that is a welcome relief, however momentary it may be. An alternative would be the acceptance of vulnerability. But that is apparently not an Option to Alcoholics. Somehow, they feel being vulnerable is incompatible with their Pride.

I hesitated to ask you about this. I sense that you are an Aquarius to whom "Pride" is very important and at the same time it is the stumbling block. It is called "Pigheaded" --- Pigs have big pride, if you know them ---.

Now that I made you somewhat angry, I would like to introduce you to a book; Fallible Man by Paul Ricoeur. It is not a book on Science, but rather about Metaphysics of "Subjective Mind", I shall send you the introduction and the table of contents. If you are interested, I shall copy the rest for you. It looks very "snobbishly intellectual" - it represents the best of "European Academic Intellect" at the moment. I do worry it might "brainwash" you into an intellectual Snobbism. The combination of snobbism and your stubbornness (pig-headedness) would be deadly. You might become not only incomprehensible to People, but also

"arrogant". But being "arrogant" is not the same as being "angry". I hope you know the difference, and do not forget that you are a poet.

Please note the term "Affective Fragility" appears in the table of contents as a "mistranslation" of "Vulnerability in being Sensual". "Pride" is the dialectical opposite to Sensual Vulnerability.

Yours

Sam K.