Tom Cheetham ***IMAGINAL LOVE: Creative Imagination and the Poetry of the World***

At the beginning of this beautiful book, Tom Cheetham writes – of the French visionary scholar of Islamic mysticism, Henry Corbin – that when you are drawn into his world, it changes you. Cheetham has been changed by his study of Corbin, C.G. Jung and James Hillman, and in sharing his profound insights into their thought, he in turn changes you.

He does so by showing us that the prevalent mode of Western thinking, scientific rationalism, has colonized our lives, beguiling us into attitudes of literalist fundamentalism. Within this totalitarian empire of thought, our souls become slaves, are smothered and die. Subtly, skilfully he teases out the correspondences and differences between his three great mentors, moving beyond them then into the wondrous, creative, imagining world of the poets. On the way, this cradle scientific rationalist, as he has regarded himself, finds that there is no subject nor object in the world, ultimately neither inner nor outer: creation in all its facets is alive and ensouled, and we are inextricably part of it. The text is studded with breath-taking virtuoso passages, as when he feels his way through the nuances of relationship with the Angel, the Face of the Divine that is individual to each of us; or the shattering *experience* and alchemical transmutation of, autonomous 'feeling-toned complexes.' After such passages you just want to stand up and cheer.

The book is about Language, the sea in which we live, and Imagination, through which we may listen to the Soul of the World, and find ourselves deeply in relationship with it. This is the most personal of Tom Cheetham's five books on Henry Corbin. It reaches further than any other as he wrestles with meanings, crafting a language of loving, exploring, imagining - vast and varied enough to be ever open to infinite mystery. It draws us into the company of those who travel this path, into the heart of Imaginal Love. What can you do but thank him and accept?

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