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About Our Contributors

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About Our Contributors

Ralph Augsburger was born in 1932 in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland. After completing his studies at L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts of La Chaux-de-Fonds, he dedicated himself to engraving and painting. He has been honored with many awards—including the First Prize of the city of Geneva for watchmaking, jewelry design, and diamond-setting (1961); the First Prize of la Palette Carougeoise (1977); and the 1st prize of Aart's Masters Paris Monaco (1996). In 1996 he became Associate Academician in Art at the International Academia Greci Marino. Augsburger's life has been sculpted by a constant drive to travel the world, which has filled him with humorous and poetic anecdotes; including that of a departure from Kenya when he had to pay a tax on his own paintings because, as the custom official declared, "You are taking with you the colors of my country." He has also painted several murals abroad, at home, and on a boat: Mauritius Island, Tahiti, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Basel, and the Transoceanique boat "Le Rousseau." His paintings have been exhibited world-wide in galleries and museums in Basel, Bern, Geneva, Los Angeles, Monaco, New York, Paris, Sidney, Tahiti, Tokyo, and Zurich. Most recently, he contributed to the Pax 2000 event for the United Nations in Geneva. His work can be sampled on the Web at: <http://www.ralphaugsburger.com>

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Asa Baber, M.F.A., is a full-time freelance writer and Contributing Editor at *Playboy* magazine, where he has been publishing fiction, nonfiction, and essays for more than thirty years. In 1982, he originated the "Men" column, which he still writes. Baber has taught English, theatre, and journalism at several colleges and universities. His short stories have appeared in periodicals such as, *Iowa Review*, *Chicago Magazine*, *Transatlantic Review*, *Playboy*, and *TriQuarterly*. His

novel, *The Land of a Million Elephants*, was published by William Morrow and serialized in *Playboy*. A book of essays, *Naked at Gender Gap*, was published by Birch Lane Press. A selection of his short stories, including "Ad Man Monk," was published in *Tranquility Base and Other Stories* by Fiction International. He has received several awards for his writing and his work has appeared in various anthologies.

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Elías Capriles was born in 1948 in Caracas, Venezuela. After carrying out studies in several disciplines, he dropped out and went to the Indian subcontinent, where he did mind research, wrote on the subject, and ran "spiritual emergency" refuges. Since the mid-1970s he has studied Dzogchen with Thinle Norbu Rinpoche, Dudjom Rinpoche, Dilgo Khyentze Rinpoche, and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. From 1977 through 1982 he spent most of the time practicing the Dzogchen *Upadesha* in retreat in the Himalayas. While in retreat in the Himalayas, he also wrote a book of poetry. In 1983, he returned to Venezuela; then, in the mid-1980s, he invited Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to Venezuela, as a result of which the Dzogchen Community was founded there. He has written on different subjects, including books and papers on Buddhism and Dzogchen, comparative religion, and the history of civilizations. In a series of other books and papers, Capriles has attempted to express the Dzogchen view in terms of Western philosophy (ontology, philosophy of mind, philosophy of history, philosophy of religion, aesthetics, political philosophy, economic philosophy, axiology, epistemology, philosophy of science), psychology, sociology, politics, and economics. Capriles is one of the three Venezuelans featured in *La Philosophie en Amérique Latine* (Que sais-je, Presses Universitaires de France); his works have

been published in South America, Spain, Italy, and most recently in Russia and the USA. Currently, he teaches and does research both as Chair of Eastern Studies and as a member of the Department of Philosophy at the University of the Andes (Mérida, Venezuela); he has also taught Namkhai Norbu's gradual Buddhism-and-Dzogchen Santi Maha Sangha training in Peru, Venezuela, and Spain. Capriles has just finished a book in English (for which he is seeking a publisher) entitled *The Unthinkable, Being, and the Gradation of Being: Dzogchen and Western Philosophy*.

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Joachim Galuska, M.D., is a psychiatrist and psychotherapist and serves as Medical Director of the Heiligenfeld psychotherapeutic hospital in Bad Kissingen, Germany. In 1990, he founded the hospital for psychosomatic diseases and psychiatric rehabilitation based upon holistic concepts, including meditation and transpersonal psychotherapy. The hospital has successfully grown over the years to over a hundred beds. In 1992, Galuska became the cofounder of SEN Germany, the spiritual emergency network in Germany. In 1995, he founded the German journal of transpersonal psychology and psychotherapy (*Transpersonale Psychologie und Psychotherapie*)—and he continues to serve as its coeditor. In 1999, Galuska became one of the cofounders of a German association for scientific exploration in the field of transpersonal psychology and psychotherapy, known as the “Deutsches Kollegium für Transpersonale Psychologie und Psychotherapie.” Galuska's special interests include the field of transpersonal consciousness, clinical implications of transpersonal theory, and practice and research in the field of meditation and spiritual emergencies. He has published several articles on such topics in Germany. Galuska is happily married and has two children who are his teachers and healers: Divina, seven years old, and Raphael, three years old.

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Herbert Guenther, Ph.D., D.Litt., was born in Bremen, Germany. He received his Ph.D. in Indian Languages, Philosophy, and Literature from Munich University in 1939, and his Dr. phil.habil. from Vienna University. (This degree was necessary for being allowed to teach at German and Austrian universities: the so-called *venia legendi*.) In 1950 he moved to India to teach at the University of Lucknow and at the Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishvavidyala at Varanasi/Benares, where he was instrumental in introducing Tibetan studies on a nonsectarian basis. In 1964 Guenther was invited to Canada to chair the newly established (now defunct) Department of Far Eastern Studies at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. In 1966 he was visiting professor at Yale University. In 1983 he was the first scholar to be awarded the degree of D.Litt. from the University of Saskatchewan, from which he retired in 1984 as Professor Emeritus of Far Eastern Studies. In 1987 Guenther became the only non-Indian to receive a citation and a silver plaque and ceremonial scarf from the Anantajyoti-Vidyapith Academy at Lucknow for outstanding contributions to Indian culture. In 1999 he was selected as “International Man of the Millennium” by the International Biographical Centre of Cambridge, England, in recognition of his services to education. He is also listed in *Outstanding People of the 20th Century*. Guenther continues research in his chosen field of interest. He is married, has two married daughters, one grandson, and two granddaughters, and lives with his wife in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada.

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Charles D. Laughlin, Ph.D., is an emeritus professor of anthropology and religion at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. His undergraduate work was at San Francisco State College in philosophy and anthropology, and his graduate work in anthropology at the University of Oregon. During his first fieldwork among the So people of Northeastern Uganda, he came to the conclusion that all states of consciousness and all cultural conditioning involve changes in and development of neural structures. So as a postdoctoral student, he spent a year as senior fellow at the Institute of Neurological Sciences, University of Pennsylvania.

nia, learning his way around the brain. During this period he cofounded (with John McManus and Eugene G. d'Aquili) a school of anthropological theory called "biogenetic structuralism." Laughlin became interested in meditation and consciousness research in the 1970s and began researching Tibetan Buddhist techniques for driving extraordinary states of consciousness. He lived as a Buddhist monk for many years and traveled widely in India, Nepal, and Southeast Asia, living in monasteries and studying under various gurus. During this period he met other like-minded researchers and helped found the field of transpersonal anthropology. Somewhat later he did a stint as editor of *Anthropology of Consciousness*, the journal of the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness. In the early 1990s he became interested in the philosophy and religion of the Navajo peoples of the American Southwest, and he has devoted a number of field trips to living with Navajo friends in an effort to understand the relationship between Navajo religious practices, states of consciousness, and the remarkable Navajo philosophy of wholeness. He is a fellow of the International Consciousness Research Laboratories (ICRL) group, and is the coauthor of *Biogenetic Structuralism* (1974), *The Spectrum of Ritual* (1979), and *Brain, Symbol and Experience* (1990), all published by Columbia University Press.

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Vassily Vassilievich Nalimov (1910-1997), D.Sc., Professor, a self-made person, Ugro-Finn by origin, managed not only to survive the gruelling regime of the Gulag (1936-1954)—when hell pursued people—but to oppose it by his "courage to be," his way of mind, and his devotion to the meanings which created his anarchistic personality: love for freedom and nonviolence. He insisted upon being a "free thinker" and proved it by the pioneer character of his works, both in science and philosophy. It was Nalimov, who by probabilistic inspiration, shifted the paradigm of cause-and-effect, revealing the continuity of meanings and the voice of eternity. He created a national school of mathematical methods of

experimental design; formulated the conception of Scientometrics, including coining the very term; elaborated a probabilistically oriented model of language, consciousness, and evolution viewed as a self-organization process; and elaborated the integrated world outlook based on Plato's philosophy. He made a critical analysis of modern science, raising the issue of what "scientific" means in modern science—which contains both rational and irrational elements within it. Nalimov's books were translated into several European languages; five of them were published in the USA, and two more were translated and kept as microfilm in the Library of Congress (USA). His name was in the list of "Citation Classics," due to his contribution to the application of mathematical statistics. Mathematics and philosophy for him were closely combined: Since his youth he had been convinced that philosophic comprehension of the world was only possible by means of mathematical language. He loved "thought as it is," and he worked until the last day of his life. His last words addressed the Universe: "I wanted to look through the open window, behind the window of the whole Universe, and that very Universe to grasp."

Robert D. Romanyshyn, Ph.D., is a core faculty member in the Clinical and Depth Psychology programs at Pacifica Graduate Institute in Carpinteria, California. In addition to his most recent book, *The Soul in Grief: Love, Death and Transformation*, he is the author of *Technology as Symptom and Dream*, and *Psychological Life: From Science to Metaphor*, which is scheduled to be republished in September of 2001. A collection of some of his essays written in the last ten years is also scheduled for publication in the winter of 2001. The major theme of these essays is the journey of the soul in search of home. Romanyshyn is currently also finishing a book of poems entitled *Dark Light*. He travels widely to lecture and give workshops on the grieving process, and the healing power of poetry. He lives with his wife, Veronica, and two of their four children in Summerland, California.

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Carl Sesar is the author of *Hey*, a book of short poems printed by hand under the imprimatur of One Shot Press, which, with two stamp pads, red and black, plus 102 rubber stamps, is the smallest press in the world. Other books are typed, or put on slides and projected on a screen for the audience to enjoy while silently sitting together reading in the dark. His Wang Wei translations and rubber-stamped book of poems were recently on display in Massachusetts at the Fitchburg Art Museum exhibition, "Poetry & Painting, East & West." Sesar is also translator of the modern Japanese tanka poet Ishikawa Takuboku and the ancient Roman lyric poet Catullus. He holds a degree in Greek and Latin from the City College of New York, a Ph.D. in Chinese and Japanese from Columbia University, and was founder and chair of the Department of Asian Languages and Literature at Wesleyan University, where he taught from 1967 to 1975.

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Tõnu R. Soidla, Ph.D., D.Sc., was born in the small town of Rakvere in Estonia as a Gemini (a twin cat/rabbit in his case). He spent most of his conscious life in St. Petersburg, a magical city in the northwestern corner of Russia, a strange traditional attractor for both the Russian and Finno-Ugrish psyche. A geneticist by training, he is a transpersonalist at heart, a Christian involved in Advaita Vedanta practice along the lines of Sri Ramana Maharshi, and a natural dualist in search of nondual experience. Soidla lays claim to be the author of fifteen or so irresponsible essays on transpersonal matters, mostly based on idiosyncratically treated personal material.

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Stuart Sovatsky, Ph.D., has degrees in Religion from Princeton University (where he received the Timothy Leary Award) and Psychology from the California Institute for Integral Studies, where he is a trustee and faculty member, as well as being on the faculty of John F. Kennedy University. He wrote the first federal grants to bring Yoga to incarcerated youth and the indigent mentally ill in the mid-1970s, and is convening a

conference on "Prison Yoga" at the Institute for Noetic Sciences in 2001. Together with Robert Thurman and Rajiv Malhotra Sovatsky, he is also convening a think tank conference at Columbia University in 2002 on "Global Renaissance & Indic Wisdom." Sovatsky was recently elected copresident of the Association for Transpersonal Psychology. Since 1984, he has directed the first-ever "spiritual emergence" service (founded by Lee Sannella), while his clinical work focuses on saving marriages using forgiveness and admiration. He recently coauthored the business plan for the largest, "greenest," urban complex in the USA. Sovatsky is the author of *Words From the Soul: Time, East/West Spirituality, and Psychotherapeutic Narrative* (State University of New York Press) and *Eros, Consciousness and Kundalini* (Inner Traditions), and articles on suicidal linguistics and impermanence, eros as mystery, and gender. As lead vocalist for Axis Mundi on the compact disk, *Mystery School*, he has been called the "John Coltrane of Sanskrit chanting," and is a twenty-five-year practitioner of kundalini yoga.

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Karma Lekshe Tsomo, Ph.D., is a faculty member in Theology and Religious Studies at the University of San Diego (USA) and Director of the Jamyang Choling Institute of Buddhist Studies in Dharamsala (India). In addition to a doctoral degree in Comparative and Asian Philosophy, she holds degrees in Asian Religion, Asian Studies, and Oriental Languages, as well as having completed a six-year program in Prajñāparamita at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, Dharamsala. An activist in the international Buddhist women's movement, she has served as secretary of "Sakyadhita: International Association of Buddhist Women" for many years and has helped found eight education programs for women in the Indian Himalayas. In 1994 she coordinated the visit of H.H. the Dalai Lama to Hawai'i and produced a compact disk based on his talks. In 1995 she directed the award-winning community education project "Living and Dying in Buddhist Cultures" and produced an associated series of educational videos. In addition to articles, she has published the following books:

Sakyadhita: Daughters of the Buddha; Buddhism Through American Women's Eyes; Innovative Buddhist Women: Swimming Against the Stream; Sisters in Solitude: Two Traditions of Monastic Ethics for Women; Buddhist Women Across Cultures: Realizations; and Living and Dying in Buddhist Cultures (with D. W. Chappell).

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H. David Wenger, Ph.D., is a psychologist and psychotherapist living in East Lansing, Michigan. He received his doctorate in Counseling Psychology from the University of Missouri and then spent ten years on the faculty of the Michigan State University Counseling Center, where he was involved both in direct service and the training of graduate students. Since 1982 he has been in private practice. As a student of metaphysics, he has for many years speculated on the application of esoteric and metaphysical principles to the theory and practice of psychology, and has attempted to integrate these principles into his psychotherapy practice. He is currently involved in writing a longer work on the topic of a spiritual psychology which will incorporate ideas from the present paper.

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Kuang-ming Wu, Ph.D., received his degree from Yale University in Philosophy. At present, he teaches Japanese culture/language at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He has been a professor of history at the National Chung-cheng University (Taiwan), John McN. Rosebush University Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh (USA), and a visiting professor at the National Taiwan University, the University of South Africa (Pretoria), Aarhus University (Denmark), and the University of Texas-El Paso (USA). He is working on his eleventh volume, *Nonsense: Cultural Meditations on the Beyond*, from which this essay is derived. Other volumes of his include: *Chuang Tzu: World Philosopher at Play* (Crossroad/Scholars, 1982); *The Butterfly as Companion* (State University of New York Press, 1990); *History, Thinking, and Literature in Chinese Philosophy* (Academia

Sinica, 1991); *On Chinese Body Thinking* (Brill, 1997; National Science Council Distinguished Award, Taiwan); *On the "Logic" of Togetherness* (Brill, 1998); *On Metaphoring* (Brill, 2001), and so on. He has chapters in *Time and Space in Chinese Culture* (Brill, 1995), *Norms and the State in China* (Brill, 1993), *Understanding the Chinese Mind* (Oxford, 1989), and other edited works. At home in Japanese, English, Chinese, and Taiwanese, he is interested in comparative culture/philosophy, philosophy of religion, phenomenology, and aesthetics.

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Photo by Philippe L. Gross