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Peter Hulsroj

What If We Don't Die?

The Morality of Immortality

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Peter Hulsroj
Vienna, Austria

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Foreword

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Hearing this every author must take heart. The only tool of the profession is primordial and divine. 'In the beginning was the Word' should be the tattoo on every author's forearm.

Of course, even if the word was the beginning, it does not mean that words are eternal. Nevertheless, in an ephemeral world surely many who like to write are comforted by the thought that what is written is something durable. A love letter may surface long after love has died. Yet, the lost emotion is glued to the words, be they simple or sophisticated.

Every book has an aspiration, and the aspiration is carried by words. They may not be immortal, but they are instigators, comforters, unsettlers, dumb, wise, sweet, sour, dreamy or crass. The words are not immortal, but as they provoke emotion, reasoning and action, they lead to something immortal, because every emotion and every action that result will reverberate forever, dimmer and dimmer with time that is true, but still forever. Each word has its own butterfly effect!

The book I have written seeks to hold the mirror of immortality to our value systems. By doing so rich colours come out, rather than the black and white of death (bad) and immortality (good). The book holds no claim to immortality for itself, but hopes to have set free a many-splendoured butterfly!

The responsibility for infelicities and errors in this book is mine and mine alone. However, should you find the book entertaining or of some utility, much of the credit goes to my friend and colleague Marco Aliberti. When I had done the first draft, I asked Marco to review it, which he did enthusiastically. And back he came with new ideas, new sources, lots and lots of learning and wisdom. It is true to say that often I turned his inspiration into something quite different from what he intended, which he accepted gracefully, but without Marco's prompting, so many interesting ideas and issues would have been missed.

The fantastic feature of family is how it earths and at the same time gives wings! I am immensely grateful for the fulfilment my wife and daughters have given me. I learn from their common sense, their hunger for knowledge and their boundless imagination, and I hope this book is a decent reflection of what I have learned from them; from my parents, so fearless and restless in their inquiry; and from so many others. No man is an island – and I least of all!

Vienna
July 2nd, 2015

Peter Hulsroj

Contents

1	Immortality Again?.....	1
2	Is That Really a Question??	5
3	Choices, Choices.....	9
4	What Is Eternity?.....	13
5	The Timeless and the Ageless.....	19
6	Time and Existence.....	23
7	Pantheism and Spirit as Substance.....	27
8	Communitarian Happiness.....	29
9	Ex hoc momento pendet aeternitas.....	33
10	Immortality Through Parallel Universes.....	39
11	Death of Compassion?.....	45
12	Identity and Infinity.....	47
13	God, Spacetime and the Mathematical Universe.....	49
14	Winston Decides Not to Die.....	53
15	God Is and Is Not.....	57
16	Linear and Non-linear Logic.....	59
17	What Is Immortality?.....	63
18	Is Anything Forever Existing?.....	75
19	The Limits of You!.....	77
20	The Mind/Body Problem Resolved?.....	79
21	So Why We Were Not Created Immortal?.....	85

22	Ego, Todestrieb and Immortality	87
23	Why Immortality Is Death	91
24	Why Seize the Day?	93
25	Loss and Value	95
26	Are the Gods Immortal?	97
27	Immortality of the Devil	101
28	The Immortality of Not Being Born	105
29	Oh, Jerusalem!	107
30	The Twilight Zone Between Death and Immortality	111
31	Movement and Immortality	113
32	So, What Is So Horrible About Death?	115
33	Lust for Life or Fear of Non-existence?	121
34	Immortality and Intergenerational Justice	123
35	A Return to Immediacy?	129
36	Personal Relativity and Time	131
37	A World of Immortals	135
38	Natural Selection and Immortality	137
39	The Tragedy of the Longest Life!	141
40	Choosing Life!	145
41	Humans and Humankind	149
42	Immortality for Humanity, Darwin for Everybody Else?	153
43	Gaia and Dystopia	157
44	Beyond the Limits of Rationality	159
45	Longer Life or Immortality?	163
46	Birth Undone	167
47	The Medicated Good Death	169
48	Death Elective	173
49	Blessed Are Those Who Have Not Seen and Yet Have Believed	177
50	So	179
51	An Afterthought – The Fifth Dimension	181