

Douglas Hedley, *Living Forms of the Imagination* (London: t&t clark, 2008).

This text was composed as an exercise in hermeneutical metaphysics. The author is a student of S.T. Coleridge and The Cambridge Platonists. It explores the cognitive significance of the religious imagination as based upon the Romantic/Platonic theme that we 'half create/half perceive the world' (Wordsworth) on the underlying assumption of a profound correspondence or bond between the mind and reality. Such a bond between the microcosm of the human mind and the macrocosm of the universe is the very basis of aesthetics, ethics, and science: the beautiful, the good, and the true. Meaning, Hedley claims, cannot be willfully 'spread onto the world' as the Neo-Humeans assert, nor can it be identifiable with the methods of natural science as the positivists insist, but must be grounded in a transcendent Logos. This divine Logos bestows the finite imagination with cognitive power.

In part, the book is a rehabilitation of Romantic Platonic perspective and a critique of naturalism and constructivism; in part, it is a reflection upon the rich seam of Platonic thought among explorers of the human psyche and religion in the last century, not least C.G. Jung, Mircea Eliade and C.S. Lewis and their interest in indirect apprehensions of transcendent reality through symbols, rituals, and narratives. Such experiences point to an unseen reality, like icons and images. These are not to be viewed as crude representations of sterile abstractions but as living forms of the imagination that furnish a chariot for the soul to return to the Divine.