

# **INTEGRATIVE EXPLORATIONS**

***Journal of Culture and Consciousness***

**The Journal of the Jean Gebser Society**

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**The Self as Problematic Construct: An Excursion  
into Magical Cultural Traditions**

**Eveline Lang**

**All That We Are Is The Result of What We Have  
Thought: Deficient Magic and Child Abuse**

**Guy Burneko**

**Protosymbols of**

**Consciousness** Algis Mickunas

**Die Welt in Neuer Sicht: Reflections on  
Gebser's Language and Vision**

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**Democracy, Spirituality and  
Transformative Possibilities**

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(Translated by Georg Feuerstein)**

**Jean Gebser**

**Two Essays: "The Conscious and Unconscious,"  
"Psyche and Matter"  
(Introduced and Translated by Noel Barstad)**

**Jean Gebser**

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*Integrative Explorations* is the official journal of the Jean Gebser Society. The journal is edited in cooperation with Division of Communication, Governors State University. The journal publishes integrative explorations in the form of articles, bibliographies, or reviews of research about culture/civilization, consciousness, or Jean Gebser's life and thought; as well as, poetry, short essays, etc. Submissions should loosely conform to discussions of culture/civilization and consciousness, be scholarly and footnoted. The journal seeks interdisciplinary work and is open to creative and "alternative" styles of investigation.

**The Cover** was inspired by a cosmic "sun" and "starfield" used on the cover of one of Jean Gebser's publications.

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**About *Integrative Explorations Journal***

*Integrative Explorations Journal* is the result of thirteen years of publication as the Gebser Network Newsletter. The newsletter and the journal are the result of the efforts of Algis Mickunas to spread the word about the works of Jean Gebser. The Gebser Network Newsletter was begun in 1980 by Elaine McCoy then a graduate student in the School of Interpersonal Communication at Ohio University. In 1983 Michael Purdy took over the editorship of the newsletter and published the newsletter from Governors State University.

The newsletter was originally developed to be an information sharing instrument for the Jean Gebser Society. The Gebser Society is patterned after European societies, or circles, pursuing the work of a particular philosopher. The philosopher here, Jean Gebser, was born in Posen, Germany in 1905. He studied and worked in Germany until the rise of the Nazi party in 1931. From Germany he fled to Spain where he wrote poetry (*Poesias de al Tarde*, 1936) and served in the Republican Ministry of Culture. When war over took the country in 1936 he fled to Paris where he associated with the circle of artists surrounding Picasso and Malraux. He finally fled Paris as the city fell in 1939 and went to Switzerland. He became a Swiss citizen in 1951 and he assumed the chair for the Study of Comparative Civilizations at the University of Salzburg.

It was in Switzerland that Gebser finished his monumental work on the comparative study of civilizations, *Ursprung und Gegenwart* (1949/53). The English translation was undertaken by Noel Barstad with Algis Mickunas and published as *Origin and Presence* in 1985 by Ohio University Press. This massive effort of over 500 pages is a phenomenology of civilization. From a vast collection of work covering many fields, historical and current, Gebser described the modalities of consciousness of historical cultures, as well as the extent and openness of human consciousness in general. His work is penetrating and offers an understanding useful to scholars from many fields of study.

Those wishing to pursue the study of Jean Gebser's work must read *Origin and Presence*, still published by Ohio University Press. This work is very accessible and eminently readable. Some of the authors represented in *Integrative Explorations* have published more extensive works on Gebser and provide an excellent basis for study of Gebser (e.g., see G. Feuerstein, *Structures of Consciousness*, Lower Lake, CA: Integral Publishing, 1995). Back issues of the Gebser Network Newsletter also contain information about the Jean Gebser Society, short articles, poetry, translations of short works by Gebser, excerpts from longer works, poems of Gebser's with commentary, and reviews of books about Gebser's work. (All of the back issues of the Gebser Network Newsletter may be obtained from the editor on a PC compatible disk for a fee of \$5.00.)\*

## Editor's Word

Michael Purdy

Finally, another completed volume of our journal. There are several unique features of this issue, including an extended article on child abuse and its relation to structures of consciousness, and our first official ad. It is also very gratifying to see that articles in the journal are building upon earlier work in the journal, this is a strong sign of the importance of the journal.

The theme of Jean Gebser conference, held this year at Governors State University, was magic, and coincidentally there is a significant focus on magic in this issue of the journal as well. It is revealing to discover elements of the magical operating historically (Native American cultural traditions), it is another thing to find magical consciousness operating openly in the modern world (as revealed in the deficient patterns of child abuse). Actually, Gebser's structures of consciousness are all integral components of our contemporary life and the magical is, as Eric Kramer said in announcing the Gebser conference this year, "is probably the most primordial power humans express, indeed it is the essence of expression, that effort to make a world." Guy Burneko in his article on child abuse demonstrates the stultifying power of deficient might-magic at work; he also offers answers in the integral "freedom from" of Gebser, Verela, Buddhism and other aconceptual approaches to experience.

Eveline Lang offers "lessons" from the Native American culture that expand our limited understanding of human identity, while at the same time tracing out the deficiencies of contemporary psychoanalytic, scientific, and postmodern discourses regarding human experience.

Mickunas goes further to explore the very civilizational morphologies, the protosymbols of consciousness, the constitution of the activity of the integral Self "underlying" all structures of consciousness, all permanence and flux, all expressions and symbols. This piece extends and surpasses his earlier piece on integral consciousness (Integrative Explorations Journal, vol. 2), tracing out the protosymbols which point to the integral: "What Gebser means is the following: the integral consciousness is not a sterile gazing or a pure immersion, but an event of transparent differentiation and integration." Mickunas concludes with a very interesting explication, "The Tracing of the Divine," in integral consciousness and the task of deciphering the always present origin.

We are fortunate to have in this volume also, Georg Feuerstein's new translation of Jean Gebser's article "Cultural Philosophy as Method and Venture," which Mickunas drew on for his last piece on the integral, and which is invaluable for understanding the Gebser's way of working. He discusses how he proceeds from concrete facts in a phenomenology of culture. Feuerstein also has a piece he has authored that is very timely. He discusses Gebser's choice of language with regards *neuer sicht* (the new insight). His exploration of the terms of the integral is very helpful for understanding Mickunas' tracing of the Self and the Divine in the integral. We are also reprinting (from the newsletter) two essays of Gebser's translated by Noel Barstad. If that weren't enough we are treated to "Reflections on Gebser's Language and Vision," which provides insights into Gebser's thinking and epistemology.

Finally, we have a piece by Arthur Stein, “Democracy Spirituality and Transformative Possibilities” on how to apply Gebser’s work in the area of the democratic organization of spirituality. Relating to Feuerstein’s article he discusses the need for a new insight, a “revisioning,” a “change of heart.” There is also an interesting comparison here with Burneko’s article emphasizing the shortcomings of rational consciousness for human growth and the importance of the integral in transforming our everyday life. Finally, this article is an attempt to concretize ideas of the integral presented in Mickunas and Feuerstein’s presentations.

We have our first ad in this issue introducing a second edition of Georg Feuerstein’s book, *Structures of Consciousness*. There was no charge for this ad, partly because the journal has no formal policy on ads. This will need attention at the next Gebser conference.

**Announcement:** The next **Jean Gebser Conference** will be at University of Pennsylvania, California. Information and a call for papers will follow in May or June. The theme will be **Mythic Consciousness**.

<p>Georg Feuerstein announces that he still has copies of a translation of Gebser’s article “In Search of the New Consciousness,” written in 1972 and published in Gebser’s book <i>Verfall and Teilhabe</i> (Salzburg, 1974). Copies are \$3 for US and Canada and \$4 others (US currency, shipping included). Copies can be obtained from: Integral Publishing, PO Box 1030, Lower Lake, CA 95457.</p>
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## The Self as Problematic Construct: An Excursion into Magical Cultural Traditions<sup>1</sup>

Eveline Lang

Shippensburg University

In Native American ceremonies, the holy man acts as a channel for the spirits (universal mind). . . . I was working on 'The Flowering Tree' for this book. One day the idea just came to me that the entire universe was a giant brain, and that half of it was left-brain energy and the other half was right-brain energy. . . . Being a left-brain person, I needed to know if this was really true (Ross, 146, 147).

I wanted to compare Jungian psychology with the traditional D/Lakota philosophy and thought. What Jung called the conscious mind or ego, D/Lakota people would call the senses. Native Americans would call the conscious portion of the mind the spirit level (. . .). Jung also said that when dreams are analyzed properly, they can be used as a means to guide a person's life. My studies in D/Lakota history pointed to a similar concept. Two hundred years ago we had dream societies with such names as the Buffalo, Elk, Bear, Wolf, Thunder, and Winkte Societies. It was determined which society the person belonged to by the type of dream he had (Ross, 28–29).

Jung said that modern man is looking outside for salvation when he should be looking inside. I wondered if this purification that so many cultures address is actually inside rather than outside. Cayce remarked in one of his psychic readings that Armageddon will be fought in the spirit world. The spirit world, to me, is the collective unconscious (Ross, 177).

The passages quoted above were selected from a book entitled *Mitakuye Oyasmin*. "We Are All Related" whose author attempts to grasp Native American traditions from a mental-rational as well a psychological perspective. References to right and left brain research, brain wave studies, findings in parapsychology as well as to research in psychology (mainly Jungian) are interspersed throughout the chapters to yield a kaleidoscope of answers to the questions raised. Concepts from a host of different traditions are brought together in analogies, explanations and comparisons, leaving the reader with the notion that the magical, mythical as well as mental-rational traditions are basically identical in their insights and teachings and that ultimately the cosmos can be understood in its entirety as a system of rational interconnections, as the giant-brain metaphor above suggests.

With this conclusion, the author performed the kind of reductionism which has invaded uncountable scholarly endeavors of today in the different disciplines; indeed many of the sources used in the second part of this book employ terms from psychology and brain research. The reductionism operative here can be seen as indicative of the trend to justify cultural traditions whose cosmology has no place or legitimacy in the Western (mental-rational) tradition, i.e. magical traditions.

Phenomena which defy measurement/quantification and prediction and which do not follow a linear logic obtain their validity only when forced into rational schemata. Rational accounts of phenomena, moreover, are laden with abstractions and thick with jargon through which they acquire an air of sophistication and objectivity and through which the observer is distanced. It is through this supposed neutral stance that scientific discourse

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<sup>1</sup> The paper was adapted from a presentation at the first Interdisciplinary Symposium on Dissociation and the Self on "Explorations in Unity and Multiplicity," organized by the Pittsburgh Multiple Personality and Dissociation Study Group, Pittsburgh, September 9–10, 1993.



masks its reductionism, i.e. the act that rational explanations simplify by excluding the nuances of the experiences described and make us blind toward the multitude of meanings inherent in phenomena and to that which cannot be spoken. The reductionist view is further accompanied by a discourse which operates on the basis of fixed definitions of concepts and does not tolerate ambiguity. The naming of phenomena proceeds in a precise and clear-cut way, a process subtended by an ideology which centers around mastering, i.e. the subject having power over the interpretation of the universe.

The rational cosmology thus evidences an ego-centric universe. In it the subject who names/dominates the world applies a dualistic framework—right/left, up/down/ light/dark, etc.—and not only separates the poles but erases the dark, fluctuating, unpredictable, volatile realm (a realm which is also associated with the feminine) (Lang, 1987).

It is precisely this sphere which needs to be attended to in order to grasp the manifestations of the magical dimension of consciousness. Jean Gebser's explication of this dimension of consciousness constitutes an important basis for the following discussion (Gebser, 1985).

Before exploring the magical dimension, however, the subsequent sections will address the attempts by postmodern scholars to expose the fallacies within Western rationalism. The focus of the discussion will be their exploration of the speaking subject/the self and language. As this analysis will show, postmodern scholars, by embracing all human experience and expression as text, perform a reductionism as well, which makes them blind to the pre-reflective, corporeal level of consciousness which subtends the discursive realm. In the second part of the discussion, the vital-magical level of awareness will be traced out with reference to Merleau-Ponty's work on the primacy of perception and with illustrations of how entire cultural traditions center around the vital-magical. Native American ceremonies will be included as prime examples to distinguish linear logic as well as experiences on the level of the psyche (the imaginary) from the logic which guides the vital-magical level of awareness.

### **Postmodernism and the death of the subject**

A crucial challenge to the supremacy of the Western metaphysical tradition was presented by post-structuralist pursuits. The Derridian school of thought, most notably, undertook a comprehensive attempt to debase logocentric theories, which upheld the speaking subject as transcendental (Ulmer, 1985). While disclaiming that his work involves a new metaphysics, Derrida proceeded to elaborate a systematic argument against the metaphysics of presence in his *grammatology* (Derrida, 1976). By declaring language the primordial level of awareness and thus positing all experience to be text, Derrida was able to conclude that the speaking subject is never present to itself; rather, the speaking subject is only given in differentiation to the act of signification.

According to Derrida, human consciousness does not exist in co-presence with the world but emerges as an inscription, and the inscription is constitutive of experience. The speaking subject is inevitably part of a culturally constituted field which defines words, modes of expression and syntax (Derrida, 1978, 18). The signifier, in Derrida's framework, acquires total autonomy in that the speaking subject is mediated by the language of a cultural tradition which surpasses the interpreter (Mickunas, 1983, 11). It is thus language

which acquires the position of final mediator—the mediator which is not mediated by anything other than itself. Subject and object, theory and the realm of the transcendental are posited as effects of language in postmodern approaches.

### **Psyche as text in post–Freudian psychoanalysis**

Psychoanalytic theories in the postmodern vein also proceed from the assumption that the psyche is given as a text and psychoanalytic practice is closely affiliated with Derridian deconstructionism. A parallel is established, first of all, between the concept of difference and the notion of psyche. According to Lacan, for example, an identity will not be acquired until the human being becomes aware of differences. The awareness of sexual differentiation is the first awareness of difference, guided by the principle that the human subject can only know itself in terms of what it is not: the human subject becomes subjected to the law of signification in what Lacan terms the mirror stage; the subject is given only in its differentiation to 'other', not as self-identical (Miller, 1977, 161). The subject, in other words, is caught up in a play of differences, determined in its position by the signifier (Miller, 1977, 163).

Elaborating on these hypotheses, Lacanian psychoanalytic theory proposes that the human subject is continually caught up in the process of mediating between the processes of the "imaginary" and the "symbolic" orders. The imaginary order, or the realm of the unconscious, is caught up in a strife toward an end to difference, which stands in conflict with the symbolic order, or the order built on difference (Miller, 1977, 164). The subject is understood to be trapped in the continuous attempt of the imaginary order to attain coherence and unity, yet this effort is frustrated repeatedly as the subject takes up its position in the order of the symbolic. The act of speaking is subsequently described as a transference of pre-conscious images to the realm of language (Miller, 1977, 164). Lastly, the notion of the drive is introduced as a process emerging in the act of transference, a drive for objects of desire which is constantly deflected as the subject becomes caught in the chain of signifiers (Miller, 1977, 165).

To conclude, both grammatology as well as post–Freudian psychoanalytic theory view the human subject as ruled by the psyche, immersed in the play of signifiers and, as a consequence, entrapped in contradictions and paradoxes, which can only be repressed, not resolved (Culler, in Sturrock, 1979, 155). What both approaches crucially overlook, however, is another level of human awareness: the level of the corporeal, or the vital–magical dimension of consciousness. It is this level which needs to be accounted for in order to avoid falling prey to yet another form of reductionism and to be able to grasp human engagements which are more fundamental than the realm of the imaginary.

### **The vital–magical level of consciousness**

Merleau–Ponty's existential phenomenology evolves a thorough examination of the primacy of perception in human awareness, a level which both rationalism and empiricism had ignored (Lang, 1987). While his work addresses both language from a semiotic perspective and language in its lived context, or its vital dimension, for the discussion at hand the latter is of primary significance. Merleau–Ponty reveals how all forms of human experience, such as historical, imaginary, aesthetic, etc., are subtended by the structures of

perceptual awareness. The experience of the lived world is more fundamental than cognition or psychological processes.

He thus establishes the phenomenal field as the primordial level of awareness. Rational thought as well as psychological experiences, in other words, are grounded in the lived world (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 57–59). Empiricist and rationalist approaches, furthermore, erroneously assume that the world is meaningless, that human consciousness is the arbiter of meaning. Merleau-Ponty, on the other hand, shows how the world in which we step is already meaningful, how we are met by a depth of meaning, or a field logic, with which our body becomes co-extensive. At the level of perception we are immersed in a field depth with its own significations. It is within the logic of this field that our body signifies (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 166). By regarding the body–subject and the world as completely intertwined he overcomes the subject–object dualism maintained by empiricism and rationalism (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 69, 186).

In his discussion of speech and its being grounded in the body, Merleau-Ponty points to the dimension which is the focus of this study: the vital–magical realm. Spoken language carries power, the power to make things happen (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 401). It is through our corporeal presence that a vital force emanates from us which has the power to make the events our incantations speak manifest (Mickunas, 1990). In the act of speaking the event or performing a certain ritual the articulation or performance become identical with the event: the vital–magical realm transcends time and space. Ruled by their own logic, the processes which unfold in the vital–magical realm are not merely representations of the events that are being evoked and thus cannot be explained with reference to the workings of the psyche, nor can the processes be captured by rational explanations. The vital–magical domain is not governed by the laws of cause and effect. To concretize this dimension of consciousness, the following part of the discussion will describe ceremonies found in Native American traditions which embrace the vital–magical sphere.

### **We are all related**

In general terms, the cosmology of magical traditions can be characterized as holistic in the sense that a vital connection is recognized between everything that exists. At the vital level no differentiation is made between humans, animals, rocks, etc., since animate as well as inanimate forms of existence are suffused with power and vitality:

By virtue of the primal emanation of power that constantly creates the cosmos, everything in nature participates moment by moment in the primal unity, in the celestial mystery of archetypal creation. "Archetypal creation" means that everything we see in the natural world reflects the celestial archetype, its spiritual Origin (Versluis, 1992, 19).

Paula Gunn Allen in this context refers to tribal people as perceiving "things not as inert but as viable and alive . . . subject to growth and change as a necessary component of their aliveness" (Allen, 1986, 69) and continues to clarify that

(s)ince all that exists is alive and since all that is alive must grow and change, all existence can be manipulated under certain conditions and according to certain laws. These conditions and laws, called "ritual" or "magic" in the West, are known to American Indians variously. The Sioux refer to them as "walking in a sacred manner," the Navajo as "standing in the center of the world," and the Pomo as "having a tradition." There are as many ways of referring to this phenomenon as there are tribes (Allen, 1986, 69).

## All That We Are is the Result of What We Have Thought

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In the realm indicated in this passage it is the vibrating, pulsating vital force which connects everything to everything else. That which gives and sustains life cannot be defined: *wakan tanka*, commonly translated as the Great Mystery or the Great Spirit, is a force which is the source of all there is (Freesoul, 1986, 8). It should be noted, however, that the spiritual power is not present equally in everything:

The high place in the mountains to which we have come manifests more spiritual power than most places; in it one feels the subtle energy of the rocks and of the sky gathered, and in it we are closer to the origin of things. The same is true of some animals, of some objects, of some people (Versluis, 1992, 20).

Every manifestation, whether animate or inanimate, contains its own "medicine Power," meaning that "(e)very person, animal, plant or rock has a message or lesson . . . ." (Freesoul, 1986, 16). The concept of medicine can also be described as a "unique power resident in, or attributed to, each thing or being." (Medicine Eagle, 1991, 101).

The eagle, for example, is considered the most sacred of birds because it can fly "higher than any other winged ones" and is "the only creature that can look directly into the sun." (McFadden, 1992, 35). The eagle brings illumination and its teachings are related to "the ability to live in the realm of spirit, and yet remain connected and balanced within the realm Earth." (Sams and Carson, 1991, 41–42).

Thus the eagle's medicine is that of the spirit of illumination. Among plants, sage is held to be the most sacred of herbs in many Native American traditions because of its cleansing and purifying power (Medicine Eagle, 1991, 100). In almost all ceremonies a sacred pipe is used as a way of communing with *wakan tanka* as it is believed that tobacco was given to the Native people to bring messages to the Great Spirit and to receive messages in return (Allen, 1986, 16–17; Erdoes, 1989, 17; Freesoul, 1986, 10–16; McGaa, 1990, 3–11; Neihardt, 1972, 1–5).

Being based on the recognition that nothing is exactly like something else and that there is a multitude of purposes and options, Native American teachings are non-dogmatic and non-prescriptive. All that exists has its own unique path and can know what its purposes are in an immediate, non-rational way (Lame Deer and Erdoes, 1972, 146–147). In the Native American traditions, humans receive this knowledge in different ways, such as through vision quests, Spirit-calling ceremonies, prayers and fasts, sweatlodge ceremonies and dreams. Some of these rituals, which reveal the epistemology of the vital-magical cosmos, will be addressed in more detail later in the discussion.

With regard to the magical cosmology in general, it is important to realize that the power evoked in ceremonies is not to be viewed as a person's assertion of dominance and control. The power is received through *wakan tanka* and employed to evoke changes by awakening the vital powers, for example, in the person to be healed, or attuning oneself to the forces which are capable of making the desired events happen. The ceremonies which are performed to create the changes open up the person to the powers. The explanation Black Elk gave in this context clearly shows the difference between the form of power asserted in the mental-rational cosmos, i.e. having power over the world and others, and the form of power articulated in the magical traditions:

. . . many I cured with the power that came through me. Of course it was not I who cured. It was the power from the outer world, and the visions and ceremonies had only made me like a

hole through which the power could come to the two-leggeds. If I thought I was doing it myself, the hole would close and no power could come through (Neihardt, 1972, 173–174).

In the same vein, Fools Crow clarified that

The Power that we receive is for curing, healing, prophesying, solving problems, and finding lost objects. It is also for spreading love, transforming and assuring peace and fertility. It is not to give us power over others because the source of power is not ourselves. It comes to us and moves through us as hollow bones. . . (Mails, 1991, 39–40).

The interconnectedness between everything that exists can best be grasped when looking at specific ceremonies, such as dances. Hunting dances, rain dances, dances for purification and healing are ritual enactments in which dancers *become* the powers they bring forth. The dances, in other words, do not merely symbolize the desired events; rather, the dances are identical with the events. Henry Crow Dog's description of the eagle dance clearly points to the dancer's transformation:

I used to eagle-dance. I could dance so good, people forgot I'm human and I'm *wanbli*, the eagle. That's the way I felt sacred. I feel I'm an eagle and, while I dance I am an eagle (Erdoes, 1989, 5).

As the dancer is transformed into the powers the dance calls forth, he/she enters a timeless sphere, a sphere which implicates past and future but does not separate them (Allen, 1986, 149–154). Referring to the hoop dance, Allen describes this transcendence of time as a connecting of "pain and praise . . . knitting the person and surroundings into one" as the dancer dances "in the midst of turning, whirling hoops. . . ." (Allen, 1986, 150). In the green corn dances, water and sky are brought together, to make rain (Allen, 1986, 150). When a person receives a sacred name a transformation takes place as well, making the person identical with the powers the name carries:

There is no difference between a bear and one who goes by the name of a bear; both are one and the same. The fox and a member of the fox clan are one and the same person. The fox is guardian for all who bear the Fox name (Quoted in Versluis, 1992, 29).

What the various ceremonies further reveal is that in the magical sphere, the distinction between "I" and "other," "agent" and "act," "inner" and "outer," "here" and "there," dissolve into complete unity. As shown in the examples above, the healer becomes the medicine power, the dancer becomes the animal, the person who receives a name becomes the powers of the name. The dissolution of inside and outside can be illustrated with the sweat lodge ceremony. As more and more water is poured onto the glowing rocks and more and more steam and increasing heat engulfs the participants, the sense of where one's body meets the surroundings is completely lost and one merges into the womb the sweat lodge manifests, surrendering to the enormous heat. All judgment of time is lost in the process as well (Freesoul, 1986, 27–31; Lame Deer and Erdoes, 1972, 164–171).

Finally, the logic which guides the vital-magical processes is not bound by space. The curing of a person, for instance, does not require the presence of the person to be cured (Mails, 1979, 96, 100). Images of the person are formed or drawn, pieces of the person's clothes or hair, nails or skin are the vehicles for effecting the cure. The same holds for rituals in which a person's actions are to be influenced in some way or even the visions of a person are to be accessed. Fools Crow includes ample details in his accounts of how he was

able to communicate with vision-questers with the help of a number of the items mentioned above (Mails, 1991, 83-88).

When the person is present at the site where the curing takes place, he/she becomes totally integrated in the process. The sand painting used in the Navajo tradition exemplifies this integration very well (Gill, in Dooling and Jordan Smith, 1989, 75-87). The detailed account of this ceremony by Richard Erdoes reveals how identities shift and boundaries dissolve in the process of curing:

Sand paintings are parts of a "sing," which is the Navajo term for many curing rituals. To have a "sing," it is necessary to procure the help of a medicine man—a *hatali* or chanter. . . . Sometimes he is a hand-trembler. A hand-trembler's whole body shakes. His trembling hands wander, hesitate, hover over a patch of cornmeal until finally his finger traces upon it some ancient design indicating the cause of the disease and the appropriate chant for the cure. . . . The patient sits on the painting. The *hatali* transfers some of the sand to the sick one's skin, bringing him in tune with its symbols and power. Thus the human beings and the painting are physically united. After the sing, the sand painting is destroyed (Erdoes, 1989, 110-111).

### **Dreamtime**

Another form of human experience which is typically misinterpreted in scientific as well as psychoanalytic frameworks are dreams (Cunningham, 1992, 20). While scientific explanations reduce dreams to mechanistic processes which can be measured and manipulated, other commonly circulated theories hold that dreams are instances of tapping into the "collective unconscious," a highly abstract notion which has become widely accepted yet is removed from the experiential level. Psychoanalysis, in turn, views dreams solely as processes which unfold at the unconscious level and create symbols to be interpreted at the mythical level. Dream symbolism, in other words, is read as a text. While such interpretations are certainly possible with some dreams, there are dreams of a different nature which need to be understood as manifestations of the vital-magical level of consciousness.

The dreams which are significant in the context of the magical dimension are those that are prophetic or visionary in nature and those in which encounters with the spirit world take place. Dreamtime is of high importance in vital-magical traditions, often equally important as the waking state (Dolfyn, 1990, 155). Ceremonies are held to act out visions received in dreams as a necessary component to realizing what the vision held and awakening the powers contained in it (Dolfyn, 1990, 156-157). The powers are released as the dream is being performed at the corporeal level.

The core function of dreams in the sustaining of the tribe is visible in the role of the Dreamer of the Kashia Pomo. The Dreamer, a female, is responsible for securing the continued existence of the tribe:

It is through her dreams that people have being; it is through her dreams that they find ways to function in whatever reality they find themselves. It is through her dreams that women keep children safe in war, that healings are made possible, and that children are assured a safe passage through life. . . (The Dreamer) is the mother of the people not because she gives physical birth . . .but because she gives them life through her power of dreaming—that is, she en-livens them. . . .

It is by virtue of her gift, her ability, that the people live and are a people, connected to one another in ways more than language, culture, or proximity can assure (Allen, 1986, 204–205).

As this account reveals, dreams which emerge in the magical dimension of consciousness are guided by a vital force which makes things happen in an immediate way—the dreams *are* the assurance that the tribe will persist, that its members will be protected and cared for. There is no symbolic distance which would necessitate the tracing of what dreams mean.

Having described significant ceremonies and rituals to lay out the cosmology and epistemology of the Native American traditions, the remaining sections will discuss in more depth a number of the characteristics the events have in common.

### **The sacred power of the word**

While some ceremonies are carried out in silence, many times prayers are said aloud, chants accompany dances, sweat lodge and other ceremonies. With the magical incantations power is generated that conjures up the forces which evoke the desired processes (Dolfyn 1990, 164–168). The therapeutic power of the spoken word in this case is a manifestation of the vital–magical dimension, not of the mythical. For it is the experience of sound, the vibrations with their transformative power, which induce changes by effecting cures, bringing forth visions, communion with the spirit realm, and so forth. Employing psychological concepts in an effort to explain these processes or a psychoanalytical framework to understand these forms of human experience would be a reductionist move. The phenomena are not manifestations of the unconscious/the imaginary nor are the utterances which make things happen symbolic of events.

### **Multiple identities**

Since at the vital level of consciousness identities are interchangeable, concepts such as multiple personality disorders and related categories which point to a pathological condition are not applicable. Assuming or accessing multiple identities, shape shifting, communing with the spirit realm, having visions, and similar phenomena are intricate parts of the vital–magical domain, not delusions or hallucinations of a so-called schizophrenic (Hughes–Calero, 1991, 7–20). Yet in the mental–rational systems, these phenomena are treated mostly as pathologies and hence the understanding of magical traditions is fundamentally distorted. All too often, as a result of the power structures in the globally dominant cultures, Native Americans themselves who still adhere to their traditional ways accept the ruling explanatory scheme and become removed from the immediacy of the understanding of their culture.

Psychotherapy, which is often implemented as cure, would have to rethink its assumptions about human consciousness and the notion of self in order to grasp the totality of human engagements, regardless of the cultural traditions which form us (McGaa, 1992). Until then it will continue to legitimize practices of exorcism of the evil forces which dwell in some dark, sinister realm and participate in the well–disguised form of erasure of vital–magical traditions.

Moreover, the current schools of thought limit and distort our understanding of ourselves and our being toward the world by providing answers for everything there is. The imperfect

bead or weave found in the otherwise symmetrical patterns in Native American artifacts (Erdoes, 1989, 117) is exchanged, as it were, for one that fits the pattern, removing the trace of imperfection which is of crucial importance in the Native traditions. Ultimately, the strife to understand the cosmos perfectly and systematically needs to be abandoned in order for us to partake in the mystery and become whole.

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## ALL THAT WE ARE IS THE RESULT OF WHAT WE HAVE THOUGHT

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The young child which lieth in the cradle is both wayward and full of affections; and though his body be but small, yet he hath a reat [wrong-doing] heart, and is altogether inclined to evil. . . . If this sparkle be suffered to increase, it will rage over and burn down the whole house. For we are changed and become good not by birth but by education . . . . Therefore parents must be wary and circumspect . . . they must correct and sharply reprove their children for saying or doing ill.

ROBERT CLEAVER AND JOHN DOD, *A Godly Form of Household Government* (1621)

The gentle rod of the mother is a very soft and gentle thing; it will break neither bone nore skin; yet by the blessing of God with it, and upon the wise application of it, it would break the bond that bindeth up corruption in the heart . . . . Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die, thou shalt beat him with the rod and deliver his soul from hell.

JOHN ELIOT, *The Harmony of the Gospels* (1678)

*It is quite natural for the child's soul to want to have a will of its own, and things that are not done correctly in the first two years will be difficult to rectify thereafter. One of the advantages of these early years is that then force and compulsion can be used. Over the years children forget everything that happened to them in early childhood. If their wills can be broken at this time, they will never remember afterwards that they had a will, and for this very reason the severity that is required will not have any serious consequences.*

J. SULZER, "Versuch von der Erziehung und Unterweisung der Kinder" [An Essay on the Education and Instruction of Children] (1748)

*It was constantly impressed upon me in forceful terms that I must obey promptly the wishes and commands of my parents, teachers, and priests, and indeed of all grown-up people, including servants, and that nothing must distract me from this duty. Whatever they said was always right. These basic principles by which I was brought up became second nature to me.*

RUDOLF HÖSS, Commandant at Auschwitz

*What good fortune for those in power that people do not think* ADOLF HITLER

Alice Miller. *For Your Own Good:—Hidden Cruelty in Child-rearing and the Roots of Violence*. (New Preface). Trans. Hildegarde and Hunter Hannum. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1990.

The twentieth century has bequeathed us both boons and banes aplenty; so, as we enter the twenty-first, I'd like to use Gebser scholarship, however awkwardly, to address, and perhaps to help redress, some of the injury. For that reason, I'd like to begin this essay with a note on context.

Just as, perspectively speaking, I'd identify the physical universe as our maximum material context, so is consciousness our noetic one. Similarly, as local and global issues in the physical environment overlap, so too do local and global, private and public, noetic issues overlap.

For example, a deficiency in the local domain of childrearing manifests in farspread deficiencies in polity, policy and practice. This is to suggest that global issues such as those of the environment, resource distribution, technocracy, authoritarianism, militarism, racism and so forth are not separate from the ways of child–nurturance, child pedagogy and, above all, of the bonding and relation between child and adult in society. The interhuman context of earthbuilding is in this view not foremost the transnational boardroom or the secretariat, but the bedroom or nursery—and, more precisely (since not all people enjoy the options of bedrooms and nurseries) the primary context of earth–building is childhood eunoia and integration. Good sense and good feeling in early childhood development conduce to sanity and care in the larger geopolitical sphere from which may feed back to family, parent, and child, yet fresher influences that enable wholesome upbringing and emotional, mental and spiritual wholeness. Childhood and cosmogenesis, in this dramatic sense, are not two separate events.

In the manner of a Buddhist hermeneutic, then, we may say that all that we are is the result of what we have thought—and much of our larger thinking and many of the large–scale circumstances of our time are shaped by influences in childhood when we are most susceptible, impressionable and vulnerable. The basic attitudes towards life shaped in our childhood remain as the foundations and sources of our later existence.

## IIA

In his memorable book entitled *The Ever–Present Origin*, (EPO, from which all citations of Gebser are drawn) Jean Gebser identifies several “consciousness structures” which together comprise the integrum of human noetics (cf. Harman, Foreword). Among these is the one Gebser calls the “magic structure,” and about which he writes very earnestly in his “concluding summary” to chapter four of part one (152–155) with a focus on the excessive, immoderate or “deficient” expressions of this consciousness structure. His comments here bear on the global context of a “terrifying . . . *incursion of deficient magic phenomena into our world*” (153) especially as this occurs in tandem with a “regression noticeable everywhere of our rational attitude . . .” (153).

I will use Gebser’s “global” comments as a foundation for connections between them and reflections from other sources on the “local” phenomena of emotional child abuse. My thesis is that emotional child abuse and related practices and attitudes manifest the cultivation and cross–generational transmission of deficient magic consciousness in a deficiently mental/rational “epoch.”

In order to argue this, I should first remind the reader of Gebser’s broader thesis on all the “foundational” consciousness structures, viz, the “archaic,” “magic,” “mythic,” and the “mental”—and of the fact that each structure has both an efficient and a deficient or immoderate form. I will provisionally assert that abuse is the practice of a deficient consciousness.

Ordinarily, in “every human being the one or the other structure predominates over the others” (152). Furthermore, the “simultaneous” compresence of these consciousness mutations” is realizable in the “equilibrium” of one more, the “integral” consciousness structure; for “man is the integrality of his mutations” (153). And to the extent that we live the entirety and wholeness of our consciousness structures in an integral manner, we supersede their fractionation or deficiency and “possibly surmount the . . . dead–end into which we have maneuvered ourselves” (153). This dead–end, depending on which structure prevails, may be deficient in its over–emphasis on unitary, dualistic, perspectival or other constructions and representations of reality and polity. Argues Gebser, only an integrated “integral” consciousness structure affords the “aperspectival” freedom of ego–free “verition.”

Since this paper is prepared for students of Gebser's work, I won't recount here in detail the characteristics of all the various consciousness structures in general. They are, in any case, admirably explicated in English in Gebser's own EPO as translated by Noel Barstad with Algis Mickunas, in Georg Feuerstein's *Structures Of Consciousness*, in *Gebser Studies*, edited by Elizabeth A. Behnke, and in such essays as Lama Anagarika Govinda's “The Concepts of Evolution and Mutation in the Philosophy of Jean Gebser.” Scholars may also be familiar with the *Integrative Explorations Journal* and the work of the International Jean Gebser Society.

I will, however, turn to the specifics of the magic consciousness structure and, in particular, to aspects of its deficient or immoderate manifestation as described by Gebser. I'll attempt to show how the global, geopolitical and social manifestations of deficient magic consciousness resonate with current understanding of the “local” phenomenology of emotional child abuse as described in Object Relations and Inner–Child theories of child development; and a discussion of Systems Dynamic and Enactive theories of mind will follow providing, along with the Gebser and Inner–Child views, a third reference with which to negotiate the issues of interhuman consciousness development.

A consideration to be kept in mind as this portion of the essay proceeds is that for Gebser, the deficient magic structure and the deficient mental structure have in our present perspectival world a tendency to reinforce or aggravate one another's debilities (in a way, for instance, that neither does with respect to mythic consciousness): as Gebser puts it, “the relation of both the magic and the mental structures toward something outside of themselves—that of the magic to nature and of the mental to the world—results in a stronger affinity between them . . .” (153). This would be demonstrated by the “parallel deficient forms of sorcery and utilitarian thinking with their goal and purpose orientation” (93–94, 153). Both structures emphasize “making” and “power” in their deficient phases, and tend toward collectivization or mass–phenomena” and, alternatively, to “isolation” (153). As possible magic clan–attunement” in deficient form,

political parties are a compelling example, particularly the extreme ones dominated by the fanatically blind point–relatedness of the magical. And isolation or individualism may well be nothing more than the reactivated point–like unity become deficient . . . Or, stated differently, we might say that the hyperobjectivation—the overemphasis of the Ego—leads to the limits of Ego–capacity where the ego, reverting to its psychic conditionality rather than mastering the psyche, is itself ruled and condemned by it; it is absorbed by the consciousness, by immoderation, by the mass (153–154).

Gebser's caveat here concerning the deficient magic and mental structures should be sustained throughout our treatment since the premise of child–abuse as a deficient magical phenomenon might well not hold in a time and place unlike our own exaggeratedly perspectival one. If our worldview were not so preponderantly rationalistic in Gebser's sense of the word, unexamined and unconscious magic structure incursions might not be so malign or so misfortunate as I will propose they so often are in child–rearing. And if our present civilization were more consciously sensitive to mythic polysemité and enantiodromia than it is, the mutual rational–magic reinforcement might be much relaxed. The realm of mythic complementarity, of soul as psyche, provides a “metaxy” (Avens 67) among nature, mind and spirit that can compensate the conceptual–perspectival and magical point–forms which exacerbate the “uniqueness” or “separateness” of any one of them conceived independently. Roberts Avens, citing in his *Imagination Is Reality* the French Islamic scholar Henri Corbin, alludes to the mythic realm of the “imaginal,” the “*mundus imaginalis*” as pointing to an order of reality that is ontologically no less real than physical reality on the one hand, and spiritual reality on the other” ( 8). Mythic poly– and ambi–valence “deliteralize” both magical and mental uni–valence; and myth's symbolic dynamism, to use terms in Avens reminiscent of those of Gebser on diaphaneity, renders a “fully transparent” universe ( 94).

The issue, of course, is not reducible to the naively quantitative one of whether or not *more* mythic consciousness would remediate the instance of child–abuse. Indeed, we have yet to be persuaded that emotional child–abuse is a function of a deficient magic consciousness structure in a predominantly rational world. But it is the primary question to keep in mind.

And the moreso, because it is also an unanswered question (and one not to be resolved in this presentation) whether and to what extent the whole Jungian corpus, on which Avens' comments are a reflection, is in accord with or complements Gebser's own thinking. Gebser offers several favorable and unfavorable criticisms of Jung's work; but he writes at one point of the “seeds of extremely dangerous complications” (397) in Jung's theory of “individuation”—the very term Gebser uses, apparently pejoratively, in his previously cited statement that “individuation may well be nothing more than the [ magic] unity become deficient” (153–154).

I dare neither gainsay Gebser, nor need here to champion Jung, but I would like to suggest, first, that Jung's notion of individuation rests on his recognition of what he calls psychological types—or functions—called: thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition. The former two he describes as “rational” (in the sense of evaluative); the latter two are considered “irrational” ( in the sense of perceptive) ( DeLaszlo xv). Moreover, for Jung it is the “integration” (e.g., *Psychology Of Religion* 157, 188, 198) of the irrational and the rational functions, as for Gebser it is of the irrational, the rational and the arational , that helps constitute the individuated, i.e., integrated, Self. That for Jung this is understood generally to be couched in religious or even theophanic cultural terminology should no more tend to “dangerous complications” than that for Gebser the theme of “integration” should lend itself in EPO to his own idiom of “latent teachers,” “transfiguration,” “Pentecost,” or even to the assertion of “a profoundly Christian religious intensification” (530–533 passim). Finally, just as for Gebser one consciousness structure may “prevail over” the others, so too does Jung recognize that integration or individuation is mitigated

by the dominance of one function over the other, less consciously developed, ones (deLaszlo 199–201).

Again, the point here is not one of Jung versus Gebser since both are great lightbearers, but more of the various ways by which (a deficient) consciousness can be described, understood and accepted or rejected. Yet, as a final comment in this regard, I invite the reader to consider the possible symmetry between Jung's rational and irrational functions—thinking, feeling, sensation, intuition—and Gebser's own consciousness structures—mental abstraction, magical emotion, mythical imagination, and integral presentation/concretion. Though there is no question here of a one-to-one correspondence, there is one of serious attempts at understanding the human condition in its structural and processual complexity. This is especially pertinent since both Gebser in his discussion of ego-free *praeligio* and Jung in his of the (integral) individuating Transcendent Function and the Self make explicit and sustained reference to the spiritual and not merely mental, affective, or sensory purport of consciousness development.

This qualification aside, let us now consider the various contents and modes of the magic consciousness structure with increasing focus on its deficient expression and its bearing on the question of emotional child-abuse.

## II B

For our purposes, one of the most telling of Gebser's reflections on the magic—and deficient magic—consciousness begins with his assertion that

someone at home in a predominantly magical attitude will find it difficult to cope with the demands of life posed by the mythical, not to mention the mental, structure . . . such a person can only react to the dictates of drive and instinct in emotional, noncommittal, and chaotic or predominantly magic responses. This means that he or she will founder in the face of important questions of life (such foundering is mainly expressed in major, protracted, and chronic illness) (152–153).

This particular passage is useful because, first, it notes that the consciousness structures work in daily and family life and not solely at the level of global and epochal awareness. Secondly, it underscores the issues of power and might central to magical entanglement in drive and instinct. And thirdly, it allows us to consider to what extent the emotional (and related physical and sexual) abuse of children may be the result or symptom of major or protracted emotional illness in adults or parents who were themselves victims in childhood of such abuse and of intolerable family “enmeshment.”

A further focus on Gebser's treatment of deficient magic consciousness with attention to those characteristics of it connecting the local with the global brings us to this synopsis:

Wherever we encounter a predominance of insistent requests (and fanaticism is a request blindly elevated to a demand which not only petitions but compels); wherever we find a prevalence of the idea of unification in whatever form. . . . Wherever we encounter a stress on the concept of obedience . . . or of belonging and belongings, as in . . . family patriarchies; and in general wherever we meet up with overwhelming emotionalism as in mass assemblies, propaganda, slogans, and the like, we may conclude that we are dealing mainly with essentially *deficient manifestations of magic*.

Their deficiency can be recognized by their very claim to *exclusivity*, as if they alone had validity or worth . . . [they lead to] brutal power and, ultimately, to impotence (154).

I will introduce other of Gebser's comments on deficient magic and its signs, but these will provide the primary reference for the relation I want to make between it and the issue of emotional child abuse. Most, if not all, of the descriptions Gebser has offered of deficient magic are made in the same or similar words by Inner–Child and Object Relations theorists of child abuse. Gebser was, of course, careful not to psychologize consciousness; and I respect his venue. But I also think we should study unexpected congruencies between his large scope and the minute particulars of our psychocultural family contexts. The child, inner and outer, is, after all, a presence of origin, a literal and figurative *origo* of what constitutes adult culture.

Yet another depiction of deficient magic consciousness—and one which occurs in a place where Gebser shows the linkage between deficient magic and contemporary rational consciousness—is in the “conviction of present–day man that he is the maker of the future” (85). This implies with respect to child–rearing that a perfectly understandable tendency on the part of parents to feel they are shaping their children into future “persons” may become, when coupled with great exclusivity of orientation, even to the point of familial sloganing or fanaticism, a matter of the chronic emotional sickness intimated above.

In our patriarchally–laden socio–religious foundations, the concerns with creating children and manipulating their future in “our” image are mingled under the icon of family unity and family values and in the preservation of family uniformity through secrecy, especially as issues of an abusive or hurtful nature are concerned: “and *unity* always *has an innately magic character*. This magic character is further accentuated by the conception of the creator–god or demiurge who makes or fashions the world . . .” (89).

In the Freudian sense, deficient magic consciousness among men was projected cosmically in a theory of omnipotent creator gods that justified exercising complete authority over women and children in the reproduction of social power and values. Vestiges of this remained until our own era in laws of chattels, property, marriage, and in the Southern plantation ethos of the senior male patriarch in physical superiority and security holding utter and absolute control over his land, house, women, concubines, slaves and cattle—not unlike the Biblical patriarchs of old. And as with them, religion and the authoritarian dogma of unity and obedience went together in “fashioning the world.”

Primitive Jahwism and William Blake's “Nobodaddy” (Frye 62–63) are the archetypes of magic absolutism and its subsequent postulations from the doctrines of “divine right” to those of “law–n–order” today. And the accompanying self–righteousness is an inevitable component of a deficient magic “point” fixation unamenable to polyvalence, paradox and the sharing of power or perspective.

With a look more at ecclesiastical polity than at its imitative domestic authoritarianism, Gebser observes that for millennia the church constrained man “to the archaic–magic–mythical zones” which had for the most part been outgrown. “The magic element of might was perhaps too strongly maintained by the church even to the point of bloodshed in its struggle against all other traditional communities . . . [through] concern for the constraining bond . . .” (91).

To the degree *might* over children is a perversion of adult solicitude for them on the one hand, and also an expression of an adult lack of true *strength* in dealing with the complexities of the world on the other ( EPO 46, 1 54), the deficient magic drive for unity by “might” in the name of some kind of ethnic, blood or property–based sense of “right” is noted by Gebser and linked with the sectoral–perspectival agenda of a deficient rational consciousness of the sort evident in the 20th century. He states, in words apposite both to doctrines of “national interest” or “national security” and to the time–honored family ideology of “for your own good,” that:

The very act of setting aims or purposes emphasizes the negative effect of these two deficient forms of the magic and mental structures; every set purpose is always charged with might and is, moreover, emphatically self–serving. Thus it is the very antithesis of the wholeness of the world . . . . The connection is already evident in the root of the Greek word *daimon*, *da–*, which in its Sanskrit form in the word *dayate* means “he divides or severs.” The cognate Greek verb *daiomai* means in fact not merely “to divide,” but “to split apart, dissect, tear asunder, mangle” (94).

And here we can step away from Gebser's work for a brief preview of how the interrelated themes of deficient magic might and authoritarian right expressed in a dysfunctional adult or family may conduce to the alienation and “division” of a child from her true and authentic inward feeling in order to serve the (unconscious) manipulations and goal orientation of that adult. In considering this, we should keep in mind that just as before Gebser's global arguments were being applied with a local focus, so may these following comments by the child psychiatrist Alice Miller in her book *The Drama Of The Gifted Child* (GC) similarly be read for their tacit global and geopolitical import and extension. Miller offers the generic history of emotional child abuse:

There was a mother [any person closest to the child during the first years of life] who at the core was emotionally insecure, and who depended for her narcissistic equilibrium on the child behaving, or acting, in a particular way. The mother was able to hide her insecurity from the child and everyone else behind a hard, authoritarian, and even totalitarian facade . . . . This child had an amazing ability to perceive and respond intuitively [as if bewitched], that is, unconsciously, to the need of the mother, or of both parents, for him to take on the role that had unconsciously been assigned to him. This role secured “love” for the child . . . . This ability is then extended and perfected . . . . One serious consequence of this early adaptation is the impossibility of consciously experiencing certain feelings of his own (such as jealousy, envy, anger, loneliness, impotence, anxiety) either in childhood or later in adulthood (3–21 passim).

Paraphrasing Gebser here to underline my own point, I'd say that the “set” parental purpose” in this case is “charged with might and is, moreover, emphatically self–serving. Thus, it is the very antithesis of the “ever–present wholeness” of the child and substitutes a kind of “witchcraft” or “ritual” for the “organic processes”; and in so doing, it is a “demonic force” which can “dissect, tear asunder , [ and] mangle“ the nascent child (EPO 94).

In the name of a deficient magic unity imposed by the abusive parent on the abused child, division, dismemberment or alienation are the compound effects of deficient magic sequestration reinforced by the oral ( EPO 1 45) command–imperatives of the parent plus the rationalizing and privatizing ideologies of deficient contemporary individualism and territorial or property values disguised as family values. States Gebser:



These consequences of the perspectivization of the world evident in the isolation and mass-phenomena of our day are patently characteristic of our time. Isolation is visible everywhere: isolation of individuals, of entire nations and continents . . . in the form of ideological or manipulative dictatorship, in everyday life in the form of immoderate, “busy” activity devoid of any sense-direction or relationship to the world as a whole; isolation in thinking in the form of the deceptive dazzle of premature judgments or hypertrophied abstraction devoid of any connection with the world. And it is the same with mass-phenomena: overproduction, inflation, the proliferation of political parties, rampant technology, atomization in all forms (95).

Yet another voice by which to reference this overlap of public and private, global and local, in the complex that compasses Gebser's ideas on consciousness structures and Miller's on child development and abuse is that of Erich Fromm in his *Escape From Freedom* where he asks a question whose answer will tell as much about our home life and upbringing as about our national life and policy (or lack of it).

Is submission always to an overt authority, or is there also submission to internalized authorities, such as duty or conscience, to inner compulsions or to anonymous authorities like public opinion? Is there a hidden satisfaction in submitting, and what is its essence? What is it that creates in men an insatiable lust for power? Is it the strength of their vital [ magic] energy—or is it a fundamental weakness and inability to experience life spontaneously and lovingly . . . [We] need to be related to the world . . . Religion and nationalism, as well as any custom and any belief however absurd and degrading, if it only connects the individual with others, are refuges from what man most dreads: isolation . . . [C]ommunication with others is a matter of life and death for the child. The possibility of being left alone is necessarily the most serious threat to the child's whole existence . . . [and if adults and children by deficient upbringing cannot communicate with the world] in the spontaneity of love and productive work [they will] seek a kind of security by such ties with the world as destroy . . . freedom and the integrity of [the] individual self (21–38 passim).

In this light, it seems more apparent that such issues as racism, prejudice, political terror or indifference, and the painfully familiar “darkness at noon” found in almost every society are related to the attitudes already mentioned by Gebser and Miller. However, we can here focus only on emotional child abuse. Emotional child abuse, it seems, is the parent of political and military abuse, abuse of the natural environment, and the self-abuse of “going along in order to get along.” As with children, so in adulthood, we acquiesce to abusive norms because we fear losing face, or the “love” of authority and peers. Emotional child abuse and other child abuse are the essence of disintegration, self-alienation, and mangling, in this view.

This disintegration is a degradation of the human potential, and our recognition of it raises the serious question of whether those who degrade have themselves been degraded: whether unresponsive and irresponsible political leaders are victims of a child abuse they in turn as adults unwittingly and in rationalized form inflict on the world of other humans and nature. Is their indifference to their own pain and that of others a function of their own repressed and suppressed memory of their own alienation and (self-)division and dismemberment? Is the great prize of a rationalized dehumanized scientific commercial and political practice in fact the hypocritical etiquette of a profound deracination, the societal camouflage of abuse victims-become-abusers?

Gebser provides us a clue to the link between issues of child abuse and abusiveness in politics or technocracy when he raises a question that, not incidentally, also reminds us of his occasional congruence in outlook with Jung.

In every extreme rationalization there is not just a violation of the psyche by the *ratio*, that is, a negatively magic element, but also the graver danger, graver because of its avenging and incalculable nature: the violation of the *ratio* by the psyche, where both become deficient. The authentic relation to the psyche, the mental, is perverted into its opposite, to the disadvantage of the ego that has become blind through isolation. In such an instance, man has become isolated and his basic ties have been cut; the moderating, measuring bond of *menis* and *menos* is severed. Cut, severed: what was again the meaning of the root *da-*? It is this 'cut off, severed, divided,' the 'demonic' (97).

This question might also be raised concerning not only the traits or the dispositions, but also the parents and the upbringing, of our criminals, our authorities, and our bosses in business, the business of government, and elsewhere in the polity. The question is not solely whether Jeffrey Dahmer was guilty, but whether his parents were sick; and the issue is not only how to rebuild Los Angeles, but how to find political leadership that has not been deadened in emotion or spirit since childhood.

## II C

In his descriptions of and his discussions about the deficient magic consciousness structure, Jean Gebser has given us some tools and a vocabulary by which to approach anew the questions of emotional child abuse. Deficient magic's obsession with unity, might, oral control and command, patriarchy, authority, obedience, insistence and compulsion, power and manipulation may in some situations lead to the abuse of the child and to the alienation and repression of the "inner child" in the adult. Clearly, and especially if emotional abuse is indeed more widely spread than was thought in earlier "spare the rod and spoil the child generations"—spread to the degree that even "good" and "upstanding" homes may be perpetrating its ethos and behaviors, clearly, then, this is a matter of global and not merely local import. Whose hand is at the tiller, whose on the button; who makes our policy, enforces our law, arbitrates and publishes our concern? All were once children, and all alike must bear and tend the wound of childhood abuse and misuse regardless of where and since when and in whom that wound has remained.

Of course, this is not to suppose either that only deficient magic consciousness is the context for abuse—not even that incursions of deficient magic in a deficient rational domain are the sole sources of abuse. Nor is it to suppose that child abuse and its later adult manifestations betoken some sort of invisible social plague or contaminating "original sin" by which, perforce, all and sundry are infected.

There is a serious and growing problem—even more so as the economy deteriorates and, notably in the USA, as trigger-happy fingers point blame in all directions for America's declining world status.

Yet Gebser does not merely identify our consciousness aptitudes and deficiencies, he also describes a "leap" (99) we are making whose outcome will be a rectification and complementation of these consciousness structures in an "intensification of consciousness" (99) that, interestingly, bears a resemblance in part to the reclaiming of the inner child

that contemporary theorists propose as a remediation of widespread child abuse and its punitive social, political or technocratic consequences.

In speaking in this connection of the “concretion of time” as “one of the preconditions for the integral structure” and in noting that “only the concrete can be integrated, never the merely abstract” (99), Gebser is promulgating not only a noetic metanoia or *metastrophe*, but, as well, a *theraipeia* and *eunoia*, a therapy in soundness and wholeness. Without at all reducing Gebser's thought to psychologism, we can see that one feature of his “time–concretion” is the (psycho–) therapeutic feature of re–living, re–experiencing, and re–feeling, in real time, the concrete memory and pain and meaning of long–repressed experience with its full, and even explosive, content.

Bringing the past into the present, “re–claiming the inner child” can be comprehended in Gebser's language as the “concretion of everything that has unfolded in time . . . [to] reconstitute the 'magnitude' of man from his constituent aspects, so that he can consciously integrate himself with the whole” (99).

In the idiom of inner–child reclamation, itself colored by the broader vocabulary of the therapeutic re–appropriation of contents lost to consciousness (e.g., transference, abreaction), Edith Sullwold writes of the syndrome of the abused individual and her or his treatment:

This new being, out of necessity for nurturance and guidance, finds himself in a particular family, a particular culture, a particular education. Within these particulars are rules, values, and systems to which the child begins to adapt, becoming shaped by them. This shaping often happens to such an extent that the child is no longer connected to those aspects of his being which do not fit within the structure of these outer forms and expectations. For some, adaptation means that those gifts which do not fit within the structure or are not valued are submerged and consequently lost, not only to the individual but to the culture as well..

In others, the vitality of these gifts cannot be so easily submerged. Lacking appropriate channels for expression, the energy behind these gifts will cause pain, as can any energy when it is blocked and pushes for a chance to live (in *Reclaiming The Inner Child*, RIC, 17–18).

To retrieve and re–integrate these lost gifts (and their relevant structures) is at once to see the action and effect of the imposition of the consciousness structure by which they were lost or repelled in the first place. In this case “time–concretion” is also “gift–reclamation.” Or, in Gebser's words:

The integrator, then, is compelled to have not only concretized the appearances, be they material or mental, but also to have been able to concretize his own structure. This means that the various structures that constitute him must have become *transparent* and *conscious* to him; it also means that he has perceived their effect on his life and destiny, and mastered the deficient components by his insight so that they acquire the degree of maturity and equilibrium necessary for any, concretion . . . . Only when they are integrated via a concretion can they become transparent in their entirety and present, or diaphanous (and are not, of course, merely illuminated by the mind) (99).

It is important to note I am invoking Gebser in this way to underline the time–concretion not only of consciousness structures but also of contents lost to consciousness or deformed by (the imposition of) deficient consciousness. To repeat Gebser's words, the art is not one

of “mere illumination by the mind” in abstract conceptualization. It is an experiential, an existential, heartfelt participatory hermeneutic or *phronesis* of consciousness mutation. As Alice Miller is quoted as saying in John Bradshaw's essay “Liberating Your Lost Child”: “It is not the traumas we suffer in childhood which make us emotionally ill but the inability to express the trauma” (RIC 228) Bradshaw continues the point, (which I take with respect not only to children but to all who experience time–concretion in this way—and particularly those who through such concretion seek to liberate the gifts of the inner–child from deficient magic enmeshment):

When a child is abandoned through neglect, abuse or enmeshment, there is outrage over the hurt and pain. Children need their pain validated. They need to be shown how to discharge their feelings. They need time to do the discharge work and they need support (RIC 218).

“But as long as the protector/controller is in charge of the personality,” argue Hal Stone and Sidra Winkleman in “The Vulnerable Inner Child,” “the child will remain buried and therefore inaccessible” (RIC 177). Who are the protector/controllers? They may be the parents and their incessant demands and scripts, or a sense of shame and guilt at expressing one's true feelings, or a deficient consciousness structure and its handmaiden public ideology and morality. And the controller may be cognitive abstraction, the supplanting of authentic feeling–consciousness–experience by an insipid conceptual map. “What happens with many people who go into therapy is that they simply repeat to the therapist words they have been repeating over and over again in their minds. Talking about feelings is not the same as experiencing the feelings themselves” (Adelaide Bry in RIC 254).

Since the deficient rational consciousness has become, with its emphasis on abstraction, conceptualization and antiseptic dehumanizing, objectivistic–quantitative orientations—the official methodology or noetic “policy” of our day—it's easy to see how in tandem with deficient magic–might and instinctual entanglement it may impede fundamental time–concretion and integration or individuation in a society already indisposed to the examination and counsel of its own psyche or soul.

Thus, in our personal and local lives, our nescience is reinforced by a public and global ideology of political, managerial and reductionistic objectification—a deficient magical–rational obsession with externalized quantities as opposed to internal qualities—that denudes life of its authentic feeling–tones and trivializes or supplants them by what Blake knew as the arid sands and snows of “single vision and Newton's sleep” (Blake 693, Frye 50). His mythic Urizen is the demonizing abstraction which, writes Gebser, is what a

. . . person tortured and overwhelmed by anxiety uses . . . to deal with an object or a phenomenon causing . . . anxiety in order to distance himself as far as possible from it. 'Abstraction, as such, is magic procedure, a way of ruling the world' [according to Herbert Guenther who in turn cites Jung saying that] . . . 'the person who abstracts finds himself in a terrifyingly animated world which seeks to overpower and crush him . . . ' (360).

The coda to this, expressed by Alice Miller, is that:

Several sorts of mechanisms can be recognized in the defense against early feelings of abandonment. In addition to simple denial there is reversal . . . changing passive suffering into active behavior . . . projection . . . [and] intellectualization is very commonly met, since it is a defense mechanism of great reliability . . . the true self has been in a ‘state of

noncommunication,' as Winnicott says, because it had to be protected . . . the child does not [even] know what he is hiding . . . : 'I lived in a glass house into which my mother could look at any time. In a glass house, however, you cannot conceal anything without giving yourself away, except by hiding it under the ground. And then you cannot see it yourself either' (RIC 136).

## II D

We might take up as further clues to the mentality behind emotional child abuse two bits of phrasing in *The Ever-Present Origin* drawn from different discussions that are, however, internally cross-referenced in the body of the text. In an aside, Gebser observes that “only magic knows fanaticism; it has its parallel in perspectival point-fixation which is, for the most part, not mental but deficiently magic . . .” (354). And, again, in a treatment of “the rise of the left,” Gebser chooses at one point the wording, “magic attempts at uniformity, and the deficiently tinged magic claim to power” (262). It is an understanding of the symmetry between “uniformity” and “fanaticism” that I think may help clarify the argument that relates emotional child abuse to deficient magic in a deficiently rational environment.

Neither here nor elsewhere, of course, do I desire to re-work Gebser's ideas out of their contexts, but his choice of terms in these places especially lends itself to our consideration.

It is probably a premise that doesn't need demonstration that the exaggerated quest for uniformity in society—and with it the cognate ideas of stability, purity, totality, homogeneity, standardization, equalization, equilibrium, etc.—can lend itself to fanaticisms of race, ideology, creed, and to a painfully authoritarian/totalitarian mindset. The world is a diverse, rambunctious and unpredictable place; so uniformity in human affairs, in order to be complete and total must generally be imposed. And the imposition must be reinforced and sustained. Where this is the case, “uniformitarian” restrictions bleed across the sectors of society; descriptive and normative categories are conflated; and the names of things are redefined or strategically mis-applied. George Orwell's *1984* is a good example of how these things happen. In these situations, ordinarily welcome and useful exceptions to or departures from the norm become indicted as immoral by religion, as subversive by state, as sick by medicine. Expressions similar to “weakening of the moral fiber” are tossed about, dis-equilibrium becomes equated with chaos, and chaos with sin or madness. And by the same token, stability, exclusivity, unanimity and consistency—along with loyalty, obedience, acquiescence and denial—fall together as important and customary societal or familial virtues. Fanaticism, in this perfunctory analysis, is simply immoderate uniformity; it is the authoritarianism of deficiently holistic sensibility; and it is the deficiently quantitative and reductive version of genuine order.

We know from evolutionary and process theorization, from nonlinear dynamics (Gleick), systems theory (Laszlo), chaos theory (Prigogine), theory of self-organization (Jantsch), studies in structural coupling (Maturana, Varela), enactive theories of mind (Varela, Thompson, Rosch), and numerous other sources, that order is more complex—even unpredictably chaotic and far from equilibrium—than the uniformitarian purview allows; and I'll speak about these fresh views of order in a later part of this essay. But here, I want to stick to the idea that emotional child abuse is an expression of a potentially fanatical imposition of a deficient magic compulsion of might, order, and uniformity on

young ones who have neither the physical ability nor the strength-of-consciousness to ameliorate it. Such children may be seen as victims of an adult “rage for order”; and as they grow and internalize the parental dicta—having no sustained alternatives to compare—these abuse victims become themselves emotionally abusive. The fanaticism of power and might reproduces itself by reproducing the fetish for total order and, perforce, total control and domination. The irony, repeated over and over again in households and political revolutions throughout the generations as it is also in Blake's mythopoeia of Orc and Urizen, (Blake 69) for instance, is that to overcome such an ideology and practice of total control as is based on a view of itself as “the one and true” and therefore as being *eo ipso* always in confrontation with all dissent, departure and dialogue, the dissenter is forced to emulate the same puritanical and compulsive power-structure in herself.

Thus, as Anthony Wilden points out in his *System And Structure*, the dissent remains at the same logical level as the original imposition: they mirror one another. It is only by moving to a different status of consciousness and affection that we can escape this reproduction of power relations and their ideology. And this is the issue that makes so noteworthy Gebser's arguments concerning integration, Jung's on individuation, and Alice Miller's and other developmental theorists' on re-claiming the ever-present authenticity of the (inner-) child: by first acknowledging and (re-) experiencing the pain of authoritarian imposition and then by integrating the “soul-—portions” whose denial had been mandated by it, we free ourselves, even in childhood, to a different and less parochial mode of human relation and of self-knowledge—to one at a more integral “level.” This is the “wounded-healer” theme of the myth of The Fisher King.

We have Gebser's license to parlay this conjoint matter of human interrelationship and self-knowledge a step further on the basis of some of his words that allude both to religious sources of authority and the nature of God in a discussion asserting that, “every sociology, every aspiration that does not reach the truly divine aspect via relationship among persons, is merely renunciation . . . . all other inter-human bonds that neglect this fundamental aspect are merely deliria, transient feelings, and shifting projections of the transitory ego” (425).

One key understanding of this citation—both in its original context and in the context of this essay—is in recalling the wonderful doctrines of Pseudo Dionysius and of the superlative John Scotus Eriugena who tells that: “God is best known by our knowledge that He is forever unknown” (Weinberg 53); and who relates, in one of the finest apothegms of the West, “*Deus itaque nescit se, quid est, quia non est quid,*” i.e., God does not know what He is because He is not a “what” (Bett 27). Thus, we cannot say what God is because He (or it) is not a what, not a perspectively denominable thing among things, not a fixed univocal *centrum* of recourse for patriarchal or other ideological validation or for the legitimation of authoritarian impositions of “unity magic.”

The move to a different and less perspectively limiting or less might-and-control-obsessed-consciousness structure, that does not merely reproduce old structures with new contents, opens us to domains of dialogical *therapeia* and *eunoia* as well as to an intensified consciousness of what it means to be a self decentered from the fixations of fanatical group unanimity on the one hand and ego-centered manipulation on the other. Traditionally in the West, the notions of societal authority and individual self or soul have been premised on the ontotheological “metaphysics of presence” and entitative or substantialist ontologies

of the “bottom line” sort (e.g., Platonic *eidola*, Middle–Eastern God, scientific matter) that posit not only foundationalistic but also dualistic themes in being and cognition. One of the most influential of these notions has been Old Testament religious dogma of a proto–positivist or proto–reductionist kind following the formula of the *via affirmativa* that “God is . . . X.”

By asserting positively and reiterating the attributes of God, especially those concerning God's maleness, oneness, trueness, power, might, vengeance, and transcendence and, next by using them to define and justify societal consensus and obedience before such familiar derivative imperatives as those of “divine right,” “*droit du seigneur*,” “*le droit de cuissage*,” “make room for daddy,” “father knows best,” the right to liberty and the pursuit of gratification, executive privilege, national security, and the “elect” ethic so much reinforced by the spirit of invisible hand capitalism and by ideas of property, conjugal authority, and that “a man's home is his castle” or Genesis 1–3 (Pagels *passim*), our civilization has engendered many of the boons and the banes alluded to at the very outset of this discussion. Among the banes has been the deficiently magic emphasis on group unity and solidarity under, and in imitation of, the one parental god–authority to whom all obedience is due and by whom alone, through his patriarchal minions on earth, all intercourse and relationship has been controlled and mediated. (Admittedly, patriarchy is not alone a source either of authoritarian or abusive practice—but neither is this a study in comparative anthropology.)

The neglected apophatic or negative (mystical) experience of Eriugena introduced above, like aperspectival/aconceptual integral consciousness, complements and supersedes the positivism of the attributions of “essential” properties to God and mankind, and of the propensity not only to “de–fine” what God is but the perspectival–sectorizing impetus itself, the “divisive” aspect of definition; “and thus” writes Gebser, “the predominance of patriarchy within ourselves [is] superseded . . . we . . . have transcended the conceptualized God . . . we should not conceptualize God” (425). And, he concludes by counseling us that, “the renunciation of the paternal principle is a liberation; for the moment it is the last and most decisive liberation that will permit mankind to achieve an undistorted rather than one–sided understanding of the divine. Every sociology, every aspiration that does not reach the truly divine aspect via relationships among persons is . . . grave–digging without resurrection . . .” (425).

Again, we find, what we are is the consequence of all that we have thought. The concepts of God and the conceptual attributions to God we have made we have also tacitly made of and to ourselves; and the power ascribed we have likewise arrogated to ourselves. Had we in aperspectival (and humble) “apophasis” been less quick to define God, we might have been less likely to define Him in Our own image and used Him to approve and legitimate Our own deficiencies and abuses of power. The prospective response at this point—that (perspectival–rational definition of) a powerful monotheistic God–concept was necessary to the consolidation or individuation of the human ego—is entirely useful and apt, but it is also open to amendment on at least three grounds. First, all consciousness structures are compossible; there is no necessary “first” one in cultural significance (though there may be in perspectival “time”); second, even if necessary, such hegemonism is not alone sufficient; and third, what, finally, is the percentage in ego anyway? Only in mono–onto–theo–centric civilization is the canon and fetish of substantial egohood so prized. This is, of course, a

polemical statement. And Gebser expressly will disavow “egolessness” But it draws our attention to the reflection that cultures may do very well without “ego” as it has become familiar to us and may manifest less of the demonic divisiveness about which Gebser has spoken without lapsing into magical unanimity compulsions.

Nevertheless, we may cite Gebser again on this heading and simultaneously prepare for ourselves a transition to a review of some emotional child abuse literature—with the final end of proposing (an understanding of) abuse remediation in the compound idiom of Gebser, Inner Child, and Embodied Mind speculations. (It's a curiosity of this exposition that Eriugena's negative theology will again become germane in our discussion of self-organizing systems and enactive theories of mind.)

Two of Gebser's reflections will help us to round out this portion of our discussion and bring us to the child development agenda proper. The first is from a section that relates generally to literature and, more significantly at this point in his argument, to depth psychology: “. . . the many present-day child-father conflicts, as any clergyman or psychotherapist can attest, are acute individual attempts to overcome the mental-paternal world that has outlived its previous form, and—since an aperspectival, universal humanity-consciousness has emerged [ sic]—can no longer claim exclusivity” (494). Again, in his “Summary,” Gebser elaborates:

The new attitude will be consolidated only when the individual can gradually begin to disregard his ego. As long as our thinking is exclusively self-centered the world will remain fragmented . . . . What is necessary is neither egotism nor egolessness. Egolessness is a deficient regression into magic while a mere egotism is a deficient continuation in the mental-rational structure. Only the overcoming of the “I” the concomitant overcoming of egolessness and egotism, places us in the sphere of ego-freedom . . . . Ego-freedom means freedom from the self; it is not a loss or denial of the “I” not an ego-cide but an overcoming of ego. Consciousness of self was the characteristic of the mental consciousness structure; freedom from the “I” is the characteristic of the integral consciousness structure (532).

### III

Yet we aren't likely to “disregard” the claims of ego or “overcome” the “I” unless and until an authentic ego has first been achieved (cf. Wilber, et al. on the “pre/trans fallacy”). In other words, most of what passes for ego in children and adults is the replay of adult scripts imprinted in childhood to such a degree that the authentic ego-self has been suppressed in favor of and by them. We are often egotists because we're desperately, if unconsciously, seeking our true identity—and yet simultaneously denying it. In the same way that integrality is eclipsed by the dominance of any one consciousness structure over the integrum of them all together, so is the ever-present “true self” or “inner-child” eclipsed, repressed or stolen by what in childhood has been imposed upon us. We are forced into a kind of egolessness or a premature, exaggerated, and inauthentic egotism in consequence.

Some of the mechanisms of imposition are those mentioned in our “reference” citation from Gebser on the deficient magic consciousness (and related deficient rational consciousness):

Utilitarian thinking, point-like unity, predominance of insistent requests (and fanaticism . . . not only petitions but compels); . . . a prevalence of the idea of unification in whatever form . . . a stress on the concept of obedience . . . or of belonging and belongings, as in the



property claims of capitalistic trusts or family patriarchies . . . overweening emotionalism, propaganda, slogans . . . [are] deficient manifestations of magic. Their deficiency can be recognized in their claim to exclusivity . . . a deficient acquisition of unity does not lead to strength but . . . to brutal power and, ultimately, to impotence (153–154).

The problem in emotional child abuse is the lack of genuine ego–strength and its (attempted) replacement by ego–might fixation in the adult at the expense of the child or inner–child whose own ego, never achieving the authenticity of strength, in turn becomes a manipulative “parent.” Since in earliest pre–literate childhood all “socialization” proceeds by way of oral parental–adult communication “into” the child’s ear, the oral command–imperative—along with, of course, various physical and visual means—constitutes the pre–eminent channel for shaping the early ego or for robbing, deforming and repressing it, in keeping with Gebser’s etymology:

to belong (*gehören*, derived from *hören*=to hear); to obey (*gehörchen*, related to *hörchen*=to hearken); and to submit (*hörig sein*, related again to *hören*=to hear), These words and what they convey are always subordinated to power that we ascribe to things, events, or human beings, whether as possessions, authoritarian beliefs, or sexuality; and they are always connected to the loss of ego and responsibility. It is . . . the *labyrinthine ear that is the magic organ* (60).

In the beginning was the word—into the visceral ear that could never close—inscribing and “carving” (Watson 95, Girardot 95–96) the child into the image of the parent–God by the authority of that God–parent.

As Jeremiah Abrams writes in the collection of some thirty–seven articles and essays edited by him and entitled *Reclaiming The Inner Child*:

This problem can generally be attributed to a defective parental love: the parents, caught in their own impoverished sense of Self, and unable to separate the child from the parental ego, create a bind for the developing Self in the child. The parents’ incapacity to see or to meet the child’s needs creates in the child an “as if” Self, one that will please the parents. The nascent real Self of the child is thus split off or hidden and becomes, in effect, the lost inner child (117)

The key point I’d like to underscore concerning both magic–might–obedience consciousness and emotional child abuse is, however, brought out in various places in the abuse literature as, for example, where Alice Miller says of the (abused and abusive) parents: “Their relationship to their own childhood’s emotional world . . . is characterized by lack of respect, compulsion to control, manipulation, and a demand for achievement” (in Abrams 128). Again, writes Miller:

However paradoxical this may seem, a child is at the mother’s disposal. A child cannot run away from her as her own mother once did. A child can be so brought up that it becomes what she wants it to be. A child can be made to show respect, she can impose her own feelings on him, see herself mirrored in her love and affection, and feel strong in his presence, but when he becomes too much she can abandon that child to a stranger. The mother can feel herself the center of attention, for her child’s eyes follow her everywhere. When a woman had to suppress and repress all those needs in relation to her own mother, they arise from the depth of her unconscious and seek gratification through her own child, however well–educated and well–intentioned she may be, and however much she is aware of what a child needs. The child feels this clearly and soon forgoes the expression of his own distress (RIC 131).

## All That We Are is the Result of What We Have Thought

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How does this come to pass we may ask in pained bemusement. The answers are both numerous and incomplete, and a sampling among them—always with Gebser's own reflections on deficient magic and deficient rational consciousness in mind—may include:

the inevitable one-sidedness and extravagances of the conscious mind.[in concentrating] on relatively few contents and . . . rais[ing] them to the highest pitch of clarity. A necessary fault and precondition is the exclusion of other potential contents of consciousness. Our differentiated consciousness is in continual danger of being uprooted; hence it needs compensation through the still existing state of childhood (Jung in RIC 27).

Alternatively, writes James Hillman,

. . . we do not take children as they are given; they must be removed out of childhood . . . . The child per se makes us uneasy, ambivalent . . . .It evokes too much of what has been left out or is unknown, becoming easily associated with primitive, mad and mystical (RIC 83).

We learn, once again from Hillman's essay, that “maturity and regression become incompatible. We lose respect for regression, forgetting the need of living things to 'go back' to 'beginnings’” (85). In Rose–Emily Rothenberg's understanding, “the orphan [sic] . . . becomes the child victim to the other person's induced authority. He feels that ‘if I'm the good little child, maybe they will mother me.’ His helpless–victim identity elicits the compensatory witch–bully archetype on the other side” (RIC 91).

As we grow and begin consciously to behold the precedent of deficient consciousness, Marion Woodman thinks along Jungian lines,

Since the natural gradient of the psyche is toward wholeness, the Self will attempt to push the neglected part forward for recognition. It contains energy of the highest value, the gold in the dung. In the Bible, it is the stone that was rejected that becomes the cornerstone. It manifests either in a sudden or a subtle change in personality, or, conversely, in a fanaticism which the existing ego adapts in order to try to keep the new and threatening energy out (RIC 99).

And Joel Covitz adds, “the repressed rage and hurt must ultimately come out in some form , whether it be a failure to thrive, a poor self–image, self–destructive tendencies, or an adoption of the same mechanisms of defense used by the parents: tyranny, promiscuity, inadequacy” ( RIC 121). While at the heart of understanding the “abusive–magic” complex with respect to young childrens' relations to powerful adults and parents is Alice Miller's trenchant insight that:

They have all developed the art of not experiencing feelings, for a child can only experience his feelings when there is someone there who accepts him fully, understands and supports him. If that is missing, *If the child must risk losing the mother's love, or that of her substitute, then he cannot experience these feelings secretly, 'just for himself,' but fails to experience them at all* (RIC 130, emphasis added).

Once again, in a comment that might be related both to Gebser's reading of magic point–fixation and the magic emphasis on group identity, and also to Gebser's treatment of deficient magic and deficient rational preoccupation with manipulation, Robert M. Stein claims that,

the more ego–directed and collective are our attitudes and goals, the more trouble we are likely to have with our inner child, because the archetypal child contains knowledge about its own developmental needs which is often in opposition to our ego orientation. And those of

us who are not clever enough to manipulate and control the child verbally often resort to abusive physical measures to keep it in its place ( RIC 1 94).

Though a somewhat simplistic litany of citations, all drawn from one emotional abuse anthology, the above comments may have given the reader new to this topic a sense of the why and wherefore of Inner Child theorization. If it has sharpened our sense of the connections among authoritarian, patriarchal and power values in the context of family and societal pressures toward submissiveness and denial, it will have served in its clumsy way to have provided a bridge from the ideas of deficient magic and rational consciousness to the problem of emotional child abuse.

We can with dismaying ease see how this abuse imposed on children translates, as they grow, and as it is repeated, reiterated and refined from generation to generation, into unquestioned ideas, premises and practices in industry, management, military, and technocratic or technopolitical imperatives, in bureaucracy, education, institutional hierarchy, and in executive and legislative policy, rhetoric, attitude and decision—or indifference.

Similarly, some of our major and semi-major canonical narratives describe and/or sanction emotional child abuse, while in others it is present to our mind's eye, but we do not see it for what it is. For over a century, to give one example, we've *Read Wuthering Heights* as a romance—but it may as well be studied as a treatise on the sources and consequences of emotional child abuse. Richardson's *Clarissa* is as much about the brutality of family unity-obedience-and-paternal-might ideology as about a rake's progress. *The Secret Garden*, soul-salving as it is, is also, and is so because of being, about serious neurosis in upper-class children neglected, and whose feelings are left unvalidated, by their parents and elders. Conversely, *The Velveteen Rabbit* teaches a homely and unexpected lesson in philosophical and existential hermeneutics: if a boy's toy rabbit becomes “real” through an authentic sharing of life, how much more must depend on authentic bonding (*religio*), exchange, and attentiveness (*relegere*), rather than inauthentic role-playing, the reality and the coming-to-realization of our own flesh-and-blood children. And in how many unexpected places have we overlooked the ways we betray, neglect, abandon and traduce—divide, maim, and mangle—children in the name of our own vanities, specious societal roles and expectations, or doctrinaire self-images. Who recalls Becky Sharp's son in *Vanity Fair*, or the child of Emma Bovary? How did Mr. Rochester fancy Adele? And recall the circumstances of child treatment in *The Little Princess*, or the issues of status and rank in the development of *King Matt The First*. What of insecurity and obsessiveness in *Anna Karenina*, or the supremacy of state stability and uniformity in *1984* and *Brave New World*. Consider the hollowness, “unmastered importunity” (*Hamlet* I.iii) and “distemper” of Wasteland civilization in *The Thanatos Syndrome*.

The literature and the myth of our culture present curious and sometimes quite disconcerting reflections of ourselves when read with a special eye on their depiction of the treatment of children and, in the case of Adam and Eve, the childhood of our species. Power-imposition, outrage, the violation of selfhood and the deracination of personal realities in emotion, memory and experience are at least as much the portion children have endured as are the caresses and affections we idealize in our greeting-card fantasies of family life and values. Too often, even the material and emotional heed we pay our children is merely the instrument of our control and manipulation of them, e. g. the themes

of the film *Careful, He Might Hear You*. It's a painful irony that an ego-self allowed to develop along the lines of its true feeling-response to the world even in the stereotypically straightened circumstance of the ghetto is, in adulthood, far better off than that abused into a self-falsifying conformity by the machines of class-preparatory private schooling, religious fear and guilt-mongering, the insulations of money and privilege, and the manipulations of parents (or "caretakers") for whom the child is a scion of a domestic imperium and not a true person with a soul, a direction, and a gift-voice of her or his own. It's not all dark and gloomy for children, and in any case life goes on for them as for ourselves, their parents and their offspring. But the polemical point of this essay is that emotional child abuse is a problem because we don't see that much of what adults do to and with children—often for the best apparent reasons—is, in fact, emotionally abusive. It is a sign of the adult's own inadequacy and lack of connection with the "inner" as well as the "outer" child. And the more and the longer emotional child abuse continues—reinforced by governmental or "expert" platitude, religious cant, media stereotyping, educational cliché and parental self-doubt, mistrust, or even self-loathing, the greater and more protracted will be the incidence of political, military, economic, social, legal and ethical irresponsibility in the land and abroad So-called leaders are victims, hostages, or inheritors of whatever impositions and inauthenticities were levied upon them in childhood; they can only reproduce the values and power relations of their upbringing in their adult office. If they were raised to deny and repress home truths and genuine feelings, so will the entire body politic be influenced and infected by their neglect and falsity. The culture of denial, irresponsiveness and the neglect or abandonment of authentic interhuman evocation is the civilization of law-and-order, control, imposition, self-hate and the hate of real life wherever it does appear. Its motto will be, "I don't want to talk about it now; I don't want to talk about it ever"; and its ideology will be that of a Potemkinesque "New World Order": deficient rational egotism and deficient magical ego-submersion all in the name of stable and unanimous obedience to authoritarian might-obsessions (themselves disguised, perhaps, as "freedom" of consumer choice, or as fetishes of national "security").

Nevertheless, as esoteric lore teaches, the way up is the same as the way down: the issues and practices of emotional child abuse may provide the clues to therapeutic cultural eunoia; the complementarity of ego and non-ego to a new experience of growth; the politics of power to the integrality of consciousness; and deficiently magical-rational reproduction to syncretic originality. In keeping again with the myth of the Fisher King, only those who have been wounded know best how to heal—to make whole.

#### IV A

From time to time in the preceding pages, I've used the word "reproduction" (as in "the reproduction in the emotionally abused child of the values and attitudes of the adult," or as in "the reproduction in society of the power relations dictated by its dominant class and/or ideology") in connection with the idea of the cross-generational transmission of deficient magic-might imperatives (or of deficient rational consciousness). This use of the term reproduction stems in part from such studies as that accomplished and difficult book by Anthony Wilden, *System and Structure: Essays in Communication and Exchange*. In this treatise several synonyms for, or algorithms of, reproduction occur, including repetition,

representation, mimesis, or “modeled on the image of” as in Wilden's declaration that “‘mind’ or ‘self’ for example, often turns out to be modeled on the image of the body—and when we sell control over our creative capacity in the market . . . our minds and our bodies and our hearts and our souls go with it” (xli).

This complex of terms, then, each of them constellated around the basic ideas of reproduction and representation, can, with all the other synonyms and derivatives we might think of, be taken to indicate a simple replication, transmission or mapping of X into X'. And thus we use these terms regularly. There is, however, a metaphysic behind this innocent mimetic notion or tactic, and it includes a metaphysical assumption that serves as a point of deconstruction of this metaphysics. The manner in which I'd like to develop this deconstruction is to suggest, first, that if we accept the foundational idea of reproduction/representation as a “given” of (a theory of) art, pedagogy, mind, politics, onto-epistemology, etc., we are generally obliged also to accept the related idea of “equilibrium” in the sense that, in representationalist or mimetic theory of art, say, there is some equilibrium, some static and stabilizing correspondence between the “thing-in-itself” and the artistic “copy” or image of that thing.

In naive pedagogy, the equilibrium aimed for is between the content and skill of the learner and the content and skill of the parent or teacher: once the learner is seen to have approached, to have begun to “equal” the teacher, to have in her head what the instructor has in his, the degrees are awarded. Or, once again, by reproducing the “canon” of the past in scholarship or in awareness, one somehow becomes equilibrated with it or with the “experts” and demonstrates thus “mastery” of it, and is in turn qualified or licensed to transmit or replicate its values insights and assumptions. To the “degree” one can do so, one is certified as a person of learning and even—if moneys and honors are at stake—of “authority.”

The brief illustrations I've offered are meant to be mildly polemic—obviously other points can be made concerning them, particularly in the case of pedagogy with respect to providing learners via mimesis with a ground or foundation for cultural self-understanding. I neither disregard nor minimize these, but I do have other points to emphasize.

And one of the alternative points that is of importance to me is that the doctrine or assumption of representation (a term more apt than reproduction at the moment) is needlessly or one-sidedly static in its implications. It lacks an inherent process or dynamism beyond its methodological “monkey see, monkey do.”

Another point is that it is painfully dualistic. Thirdly, it lends itself too much, I think, to exclusively conceptual-perspectival formations of experience: it is deficiently holistic or integral in that it is insufficiently experiential.

These three issues, “statism” or “statistics,” dualism and cognicentrism are the provisional bridges, at this point, to carry our discussion from the shore of emotional child abuse (the imposition and reproduction of deficient adult attitudes and behaviors in the child) to that of what may be called “the Theory of Self-Organizing Systems” or the “Enactive” theory of mind or, in Gebser's idiom, integral consciousness. The reason for this bridge-building is, once more, that all that we are is to some considerable extent the result of what we have thought, of what we have desired, of what we have sought to avoid, and of what we have

opted to reproduce and transmit. If much or most of our thinking about mind, self, childhood, culture and the “nature of things” has been colored by a statist, dualistic and conceptual/perspectival episteme, an alteration of our epistemic and experiential “assumptions” might give us a way to do and be differently—perhaps even to do “better” and to abate the reproduction of certain sorts of “mindstuff.”

Of course, the issue of betterness is an endlessly negotiable one; nor could I pretend to write a manifesto of cultural eunoia. So it will be easier to flirt with this matter by putting it in terms congruent with Gebser's own where he speaks not of a quantitative “expansion” of consciousness but, rather, of its qualitative “intensification” (99–100 et passim). The foremost rationale for doing this is that “consciousness is not identical with intelligence or rational acuity” (EPO 99); indeed, for Gebser, integral consciousness is “ego–freedom” from the imposition and reproduction of partial consciousness structures in “the actualization of a more intensive consciousness” (358). In this sense, “doing better” in raising children would entail “doing more integrally.” And “doing” integrally may well entail “not–doing” so exclusively some of the deficient (quantitative) magical–rational things so familiar in our culture, including the imposing, transmitting and reproducing of statist, dualistic and predominantly conceptual values—among ourselves and our children.

(Non–) doing more integrally will also entail a realization that the ways by which, and the assumptions on which, we raise our children are inseparable from the more far–flung ways and assumptions by and on which we conduct our politics, our environmentalism, our religion and law, our media dissemination, technocracy, etc. In other, somewhat reductive, words, the ways of raising our children powerfully influence how all other aspects of culture play out. (And, of course, “global” features of culture in turn shape “local” child development.) An integral awareness “of” the global/local overlap in pedagogy is a complement to the integrality of mature synaeresis in itself, i. e., to synaeresis “as” an existential mode, practice, knack or *phronesis* (Hoy 60 et passim) and not simply as some variation on the theme of a mental–rational objectivizing re–presentation of our situation: an experience—a noetic and holistic experience if you will—and not merely a fancy sort of idea.

Let me say this another way: in the exemplary analogy of environmental degradation, it would take about as long to begin to effect a global remediation—one generation—as it does to raise an age–group of children to mature responsibility in their local circumstances. But if environmental remediation is attempted without a corresponding change or (re)education of persons in successive age groups and generations from childhood up, the effect of a “one–time–only” remediation is immediately swallowed by the continuation of their otherwise unaltered habits and practices. On the premise that if you teach a man to fish he eats for a lifetime, it is clear that in all spheres of planetary and particular existence, sustained attentiveness (*relegere*) in child–rearing is the most influential factor. We must in this case consider that the acknowledgment of the local/global overlap of pedagogical issues is not simply one way of “talking about” the human condition, it *is* that condition. In the deliciously cosmic patois of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, this means: “The consciousness which we are gradually acquiring of our physical relationship with all parts of the Universe represents a genuine enlarging of our separate personalities . . . . education is a universal biological function, co–existent with the totality of the living world” (*The Future Of Man* 17, 28); “and that doubtless, is why the history of the living

world can be summarized as the elaboration of ever more perfect eyes within a cosmos in which there is always something more to be seen” (*The Phenomenon Of Man* 31).

#### IV B

If we take the local/global matrix for our consideration, we can think of it in the Gebserian—terms of integrality and *synairesis* rather than in the Teilhard—terms of cosmic noogenesis, if we like. But the focus is on the idea and the lived experience that integral consciousness cannot comprehensively develop in a cultural milieu skewed primarily by static mimetic cognicentrism in all its pedagogical, political, religious, philosophical, technological and other forms. But statism, mimetic dualism and cognicentrism are exactly the primary inheritance of our Platonic, foundational, (mono-) onto-theological tradition which, as effected through patriarchal authoritarianism, illustrates the predominance of deficient magic–might imperatives and deficient rational consciousness in culture. The epistemological and metaphysical doctrines of re–production and re–presentation have alloyed our sensibilities in pedagogy, polity and earth–dwelling so profoundly as to have formed among themselves a seamless web of premise and practice—one beyond which it is very hard to see and to feel. Our concepts and our actual practices and experiences have mutually reinforced one another so much that our metaphysics could very possibly be inferred from the structure of our child–rearing practices and behaviors; and these behaviors and experiences could well “predict” the nature and structure of our philosophical assumptions. Notes Gebser:

We must first of all remain cognizant that these structures are not merely lost, but are in fact still present in more or less latent and acute form in each one of us . . . .In our reflections on the presentation of the past (thus making it present to consciousness), we . . . include the future as latently existent and already present in us. We not only leave open the possibility of a new consciousness toward integral awareness of the aperspectival world, but also bring it closer to us, that is, effect its presentation (42).

What, then, is the presence of the future in a world shaped and denominated by “all that we have thought”? More pointedly, what are the manifestations of integral consciousness that loose ego from its deficient magical–rational fixations and refresh both the practice and experience of child development? More generally, what is integral consciousness that it makes new (and diaphanous) the subtending consciousness structure(s) of our cultural phenomena? To answer these and related questions, we must continue our bridge–building from the issues of temporal concretion and the consolidation of “antecedent” consciousness structures discussed by Jean Gebser to the issues of “self–constituting consciousness” (EPO 529) and its processual, nondual and aconceptual integrality. It is time more explicitly to speak *Of the Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* by Francisco Varela, Evan Thompson and Eleanor Rosch.

By this turn, the contemporary theory of mind understood in the light of self–organization and enactive theory (as well as of Continental and Buddhist philosophy and eteology) can be seen as an expression of (incipient) *processual* (and interpretive or hermeneutic), *nondual* (and constitutively hermeneutic), and *aconceptual* (participatory, experiential, synairetic), integrality. Deficiencies of reproductive and representational or foundationalistic “prima nota” metaphysics can be pointed out. And an interpretation of

the self-organizing and embodied-mind dynamic of the ever-present child can be offered in complement with the synaeresis of Gebser's ever-present origin."

In order to introduce some of the ideas from Varela et al. that make a systatic contribution to integral consciousness "description," I'd like to offer (from Varela) a selection of allusions—each one bearing on the questions of the processual, nondual and aconceptual nature of what Gebser knows as integrality. I'll then offer some corresponding ideas from Gebser to supplement and provisionally secure the bridge.

In a passage headed "Defining the Enactive Approach" which offers both clarification, summary and précis of the topic, *The Embodied Mind* (EM) states: "cognition in its most encompassing sense consists in the enactment or bringing forth of a world by a viable history of structural coupling" (rather than "problem solving" on the basis of "representations") (205). This is a compact and pithy assertion claiming, in effect, that mind, consciousness, is not a mere map of reality, but a co-constituent and participant: not only with other minds, but with the (putative objective) reality in question. Mind and reality co-produce one another and co-evolve with one another; they are not two. Though this is a fairly obvious nondual and processual tack to take, it may not be immediately clear that though the discussion is about mind, the nature of mind in this context is not exclusively or exhaustively "conceptual." The aconceptual (and aperspectival) feature of mind becomes more clear as we recall this is a view of mind and consciousness as "embodied action" and not as simple (re-presentational) ideation. "Thus, cognition . . . both poses the problems and specifies those paths that must be tread for their solution"; . . . and on the other hand, cognition is "always about or directed toward something that is missing: . . . there is always a next step for the *system* in its perceptually guided action" (EM 205).

Stated more pointedly, "since representations no longer play a central role, the role of the environment as a source of input recedes into the background" (and with it millennia of idealistic and behavioristic tabula rasa conceptions); "accordingly, intelligence shifts from being the capacity to solve a problem to the capacity to enter a shared world of significance" (EM 207). That is, it becomes better understood by, or even as, a hermeneutic or interpretive ontology. A shared dynamic world of significance is more than a stable, (equilibrated) conceptualized world; such a world brought forth through coupling together with others is a nondual and processual world; and such a world, in which what used to be called "subject" and "object" mutually specify one another, is indeed an integral world. The question to be kept in the back of our minds, however, is: how would the experience of such a world change our child-rearing attitudes and practices. What is the import of enactive integral consciousness for the remediation of emotional child abuse?

A broader unpacking of the compact citation offered above in the three-fold focus of nondualism, aconceptualism and processualism in the structures of (what I am "equating" with) integral consciousness might proceed further by noting a shift: . . .

away from the idea of the world as independent and extrinsic to the idea of a world as inseparable from the structure of [the] processes of [brain/mind] self-modification. This change in stance does not express a mere philosophical preference; it reflects the necessity of understanding cognitive systems not on the basis of their input and output relationships but by their *operational closure*. A system that has operational closure is one in which the results of its processes are those processes themselves . . . processes that . . . form autonomous networks, such networks do not fall into the class of systems defined by external



mechanisms of control (heteronomy) but rather into the class of systems defined by internal mechanisms of self-organization (autonomy). The key point is that such systems do not operate by representation. Instead of *representing* an independent world, they *enact* a world as a domain of distinctions that is inseparable from the structure embodied by the cognitive system. . . . We must call into question the idea that the world is pre-given and that cognition is representation (EM 140).

In the extreme case, representationism may be seen as one of the sources and expressions of emotional abuse in that it creates an anxiety not unlike the either/or of the Cartesian anxiety: “the feeling that arises when we sense that we can no longer trust the world as a fixed and stable reference point. . . . This feeling of anxiety arises from the craving for an absolute ground. . . .

but given the basic logic of representationism, the tendency is to search either for an outer ground in the world [deficient magic and rational consciousness] or an inner ground in the mind [ego point-fixation and abstract perspectival conceptualism]. By treating mind and world as opposed subjective and objective poles, the Cartesian anxiety oscillates endlessly between the two in search of a ground.

It is important to realize this opposition between subject and object is not given and ready-made; it is an idea that belongs to the human history of mind and nature . . . what Richard Rorty describes as the ‘invention of the mind as a mirror of nature’ (EM 140–141).

The abusive adult, in this analysis, may be seen to have never had a “stable reference point” in his or her parent as is considered essential for wholesome development by the Object Relations school of psychological growth spoken for by D. W. Winnicott or Alice Miller. In this case, this person “would not find himself in his mother's face but rather the mother's own predicaments. This child would remain without a mirror, and for the rest of his life would be seeking this mirror in vain” (GC 32) either by imposing, in turn, on his or her own children or by recreating in adult life the interpersonal structures of his or her childhood. In both instances, the desire would be to find mirrored back the constancy and accepting attention never found in childhood—either by acquiescing to internalized messages from childhood and to external societal norms, or by commanding (tacitly or overtly) one's own children to abrogate their own “autonomy” in order to defer to the heteronomic needs of the parent-God in whose image they are thus (re-) made.

We must be clear in distinguishing the mirroring of the child to the child, via the stable and attentive parent, from the metaphysical and epistemological premise of the mirroring of the stable world via the objectivizing mind. The former is a psychobiological “given,” the latter a psychocultural construct. The latter may be a derivative of a deficiency in the former, however; and in that case it may have been exacerbated over the centuries as an epistemological response to a dissonance (deficiency) in child-rearing: a way of playing civilizational catch-up. This is less facetious than it at first sounds if we keep in mind explorations like Morris Berman's *The Reenchantment of the World* in which he points out, with respect to Newton, “the triumph of the Puritan view of life, which . . . helped to create the ‘modal personality’ of our time—a personality that is docile and subdued in the face of authority, but fiercely aggressive toward competitors and subordinates. The severely repressed Newton, as Blake pointed out, was everyman; and various paintings of Newton done over the period 1689 to 1726 . . . reveal an increasing amount of what Wilhelm Reich brilliantly termed “character armor” (117–119). We can also parenthetically speculate in

this regard whether Newton's "intense interest in the occult" (Berman 116) bespoke a deficient magic consciousness structure in his early and late years.

Whatever may have been the case with Newton, the point being made can be expressed: where the adult, living out the problems of her own deficient upbringing, doesn't mirror the child, the child as an adult in turn can only mirror externals of nature and society and in turn find himself only in deficient magic and rational consciousness. He has never achieved, nor been validated as, a truly self-organizing and autonomous Self. Thus inauthentic or false ego becomes all he has, and on this basis he can "strive" or "grasp" for integral, individuated Selfhood only by imposing on prospective (juvenile) mirrors from whom he is, nevertheless, alienated as he is from himself. But that alienation and division is "masked" by deficient magic unity imperatives and the reproduction of power relations from childhood. The rise of dualistic/representationist perspectivalism may be seen as a culture-specific (and unconscious) attempt to find in re-presentations of "external reality" what was absent in primal bond relations with the parent, and cognitively and epistemologically to legitimize and simultaneously suppress or distance (through abstraction and conceptualization) the mourning of that absence or loss.

But this is not an essay in psychohistory (and detail is better available from such sources as Alice Miller's *The Untouched Key: Tracing Childhood Trauma in Creativity and Destructiveness*, for example). The larger point is that static representationism and dualism have gone together with foundationism in our culture, and may have needlessly skewed not only our thought forms and institutions by their deficiencies or excesses, but also the manner by which we raise our young, in keeping with the maxim, once again, that all that we are is the result of what we have thought.

Another way of addressing the questions of nondual, processual and aconceptual/integral consciousness and its potential "insights" concerning emotional abuse is in turning once more to the (nondual) features of structural coupling over (the processual aspect of) time, history. On the basis of structural coupling, we can say the system, a parent plus a growing child, "selects or enacts a domain of significance" (EM 156). If things go well, the child individuates herself, makes a distinction between herself and the parent and becomes "autonomous," and is thus/yet capable of real relationship. If things go less well, she cannot properly integrate or individuate and is always to some degree submerged by, or in, the deficient parent—becoming herself deficient through emotional abuse.

In a non-abusive coupling, the world is progressively enacted through a history of open-ended relationship; and autonomy (having closure) and structural coupling characterize child development. The relation of this point concerning non-abusive child development to that of the enactive view of integral consciousness, especially with respect to its processual features, is expressed in the observation that "such autonomous systems stand in sharp contrast to systems whose coupling with the environment is specified through input/output relations" (EM 157). Such systems are equilibrium based—they are based on the static mimesis in the child of the consciousness and behavior of the adult. There is not growth in a true sense, only an accumulation and replication of invariant outlooks and responses according to the God-parent template—cloning, reproduction, stasis. Only a system open to fluctuations from its internal dynamics and its environment in genuine inter-action and inter-relation, rather than one in constrained replication, escapes the bondage of "output" to "input." We are not representational beings; consciousness is not a simple mirror or

playback: “the meaning of this or that interaction for a living system is not prescribed from outside but is the result of the organization and history, of the system itself” (EM 157).

In order at this point further to treat of integral consciousness and its relevance to child-rearing in the context of the processual, nondual and aconceptual features of the “enactive” theory of mind, it will be illustrative to invoke some of the previously mentioned thinking of John Scotus Eriugena (c. 800–c. 877). In an adroit expression of processual aconceptualism, one we might see as linking our earlier themes of interrelationship and self-knowledge with the more recent ones of structural coupling and autonomy, Eriugena argues (through his student Dermot Moran's *The Philosophy of John Scotus Eriugena* (SE): “Man cannot be defined in terms of . . . quiddity, since strictly speaking, he has no essence or he is all essences” (*officina omnium*) (SE 210). In Eriugena's understanding:

individuals are not other than each other. Human minds come together when they do not seek to impose definitions on each other, but understand each other's existence in a mutual form of non-dominating knowing or ignorance, which leads to the highest wisdom . . . (SE 211).

Though Eriugena writes as an Idealist, his thinking here somewhat prefigures the mutual specification and processual structural coupling of more recent Continental and Systems thought while at the same time—“they do not seek to impose definitions on each other”—providing us with a glimpse in his premodern way of how these themes bear on the matter of emotional and magic-imperative or hyper-rational abusiveness. The fulcrum of his insight is the previously noted apothegm concerning the archetype of a God/(parent) who, because “*nescit se quid est quia non est quid*,” therefore permits man to say of *himself* that he knows and does not know what he is (SE 208) and thereby liberates successive generations of men from the imposition of their (self-) definitions upon one another. And again, though situated in the early medieval period, Eriugena points ahead to a postmodern view of mind as being not entirely the passive recipient of heteronomous ‘input’ but also self-organizingly active through autonomous closure. Moran summarizes Eriugena's view of human nature saying:

. . . mind has an infinite capacity for understanding things in different ways . . . the human mind then is a set of ways of viewing, which . . . generates a world in which it comes to an understanding of its own inner nature as both *causa sui* and as the perfect paradigm of God's own infinite, anarchic nature (SE 184).

These allusions to Eriugena would not be important had we not earlier made a tentative connection concerning the issues of the might, power and obedience imperatives of a traditionally conceived patriarchal, authoritarian and highly defined God with the practices and attitudes of emotional child abuse. These reflections surfaced again with Berman's brief comment on Puritan ideology and its role in the modernist agenda, and especially in the rise of scientific-industrial authority as arbiter of cultural patterns and consciousness. Eriugena's negative theology raises the question of whether or not such apophasis would have sponsored a less “phatic” and “positivistic” societal morality and, therefore, a less compulsively authoritarian, magic-might and rationalist “definitive” theo-epistemo-political civilization.

Raising this another way, Elaine Pagels would “reassess and qualify” the quite different “Augustine's singular dominance in much of Western Christian history” (153). For with his assertive doctrinaire positivism and “pessimistic views of sexuality, politics and human

nature would” come “the dominant influence on Western Christianity, both Catholic and Protestant, [to] color all Western culture, Christian or not, ever since . . . to affect our lives to the present day” (Pagels 150).

Eriugena is also noteworthy, though in a collateral way, for offering very early a processual view of world-making which, additionally, is nondual to its very marrow; “all things, then, are theophanies of God and 'proceed as it were out of non-being into being” (SE 239). Moreover, his is a pronouncedly aconceptual cosmology both in that it is “deeply subversive of the metaphysical tenet of the primacy of being” (SE 218), and in that “God is not intelligible to the mind . . . *nihil per excellentiam*” (SE 219).

Perhaps even more radically, and surely not less interestingly, Varela, et al., in a portion of their book that introduces Buddhist (into its Continental and Systems) themes, suggest:

But now we discover that we have no mind; after all, a mind must be something that is separate from and knows the world. We also don't have a world. There is neither an objective nor subjective pole. . . . As mind/world keeps happening in its interdependent continuity, there is nothing extra on the side of mind or on the side of world. . . . Whatever . . . happens is open . . . perfectly revealed just as it is (EM 225).

This is Madhyamika or “middle way” teaching: it avoids objectivism and subjectivism, absolutism and nihilism. It is a groundless, aperspectival, processual, nondual and aconceptual Buddhism; and for Varela, Thompson and Rosch, it is, with Continental philosophies (e. g., Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger) a strategic and substantive adjunct to the Embodied Mind findings that consciousness “emerges from the background of a world that extends beyond us but that cannot be found apart from our embodiment . . . organism and environment enfold into each other and unfold from one another in the fundamental circularity that is life itself” (EM 218).

Along with the Madhyamika tradition in relevance to Embodied Mind or Enactive theory of consciousness and its dynamics is another one which posits the relation between the “all that we are is the result of what we have thought” doctrine and the idea of circularity, mutual co-specification and co-evolution of self with other, or of mind with reality. In familiar phrasing, it is that of karma, i.e., of “the historical formation of various patterns and trends in our lives . . . the accumulation that gives continuity to the sense of ego-self, so evident in everyday, unreflective life” (EM 116). Less familiar, it is also known as the doctrine of *pratityasamutpada* which literally means “dependence on conditions that are variously originated: codependent arising” (EM 110). The codependent-arising model is one of “how habits form and continue over time . . . [and] the concern is also pragmatic: How can [our] understanding . . . be used to break the chains of conditioning mind . . . and foster mindfulness and insight?” (EM 111). The doctrine, then, is entirely apposite, and especially in a context which includes Gebser's own thinking and that of Embodied Mind theorists, to the issues of the advent, continuing transmission, and abeyance of the habits of emotional child abuse.

In brief, the teaching holds that:

Ignorance is the ground of all karmic causal action; . . . out of ignorance, one acts on the basis of a self . . . Because of ignorance of the lack of an ego-self, the urge toward habitual, repetitive actions based on a self arises. . . . Ego-self, then, is the historical pattern among moment-to-moment emergent formations . . . [in] a process of becoming that is conditioned by past structures, while maintaining structural integrity from moment to moment. On an

even larger scale, karma also expresses phylogeny, for it conditions experience through the accumulated and collective history of our species (EM 110–121 *passim*).

It is to be emphasized here, however, that karma as a doctrine of psychosocial causality and habit formation is merely *instrumental* to the more fruitful insight explicitly developed by the authors of *The Embodied Mind* where they state, in a section entitled “The Society of Object Relations,” that in Object Relations theory, “the basic developmental process is the internalizing of a rich array of persons in various aspects . . . the basic motivating drive of the human is not the pleasure principle but the need to form relationships” (EM 108). And they go on to assert (emphasis added) that, “in more general terms, it is apparent that *object relations analysis, like other contemplative traditions*, has discovered the contradiction between the lack of a self that analysis discovers and our ongoing sense of self.” (EM 109).

The problem with Object Relations psychology as Varela and his associates see it, however, is that it “employs analytic discoveries about the disunity of the self to cater to the demands of the ongoing sense of self” (EM 109). And the point is driven home that if we have no self, whatever coherence our lives do have is in “a never–ending circular quest to anchor experience in a fixed and permanent self” (EM 110). And this brings us again to the insight to which that of karma was merely instrumental: “codependent arising,” or the realization that what we think of as a self–subsisting ego–self is really a bundle (or chain) of “habitual, repetitive actions” (EM 111) based on the misprision that there is such an ego–self. All “grasping” for such identity “sets off the reaction toward becoming–intiat[ing] the formation of new patterns that carry over into future situations” (EM 114). However, a disciplined “mindfulness to every moment” ( EN I 1 5), or what Gebser has called *relegere*, a careful attentiveness to the activity of the consciousness structures, can “interrupt the chain of automatic conditioning” (EM 115); and such “Interruption of habitual patterns results in further mindfulness” (EM 115) both in what we call normal and in abusively conditioned development, “eventually allowing the practitioner to relax into more open possibilities in awareness and to develop insight into the arising and subsiding of experienced phenomena” (EM 115). In other words, mindful meditation is a dynamic species of integral verition, open and ego–free presentiating and synairesis—the experience of origin.

Mindful of all conscious structuring and its variation, meditation is itself the free and open aconceptual transparency of integral consciousness in this “systasis,” by which the entirely and mutually co–conditioned and co–produced habits of mind are “voided” of independent existence and, thus, by which the sense of ego premised upon such habits is rendered “diaphanous.”

More particularly, to the degree “intention” is the “main” and “omnipresent” motivational factor in the process of ego–maintenance whose “volitional action leaves traces . . . resulting in the historical accumulation of habits, tendencies, and responses” (EM 116), then “cotention” (cf. Galt in Behnke 45–47), “mindfulness/awareness meditation” (EM 23 ff.), integral verition (EPO 300, 529, et *passim*), and the self–constituting synairesis ( EPO 300, et *passim*, cf. also EPO 153 on “goal and purpose orientation” of integral consciousness) fall together as the simultaneous “releasement” (*Gelassenheit*) from a false sense of self and from the static habituations of abusive consciousness.

If emotional child abuse and the cross-generational cultivation of such abuse are understood as the imposition of consciousness habits on oneself and others, and if these habits are understood as tactical attempts to reinforce a jeopardized sense of ego by “grasping,” “manipulating,” and “intentioning” the posture of others—children notably—by reproducing what Winnicott calls the “false self” (in GC 12), then the free, open self-constitution of a “true” sense of self in integral mindfulness is an apt remediation both of local abuse habit-patterns and of global impositions of deficient magic, rational, or other consciousness structures.

Varela et al. write, in a section of their book called “Mindfulness and Freedom”:

People often worry that were they to loosen their hold on craving and grasping [or ego] . . . they would become numb and catatonic. In fact, exactly the reverse is the case. It is the mindless, the unaware, state of mind that is numb—swathed in a thick cocoon of wandering thoughts, prejudgments, and solipsistic [deficient magic-rational] ruminations. The point of mindfulness/awareness is not to disengage the mind from the phenomenal world; it is to enable the mind to be fully present in the world . . . to be fully present in one's actions (EM 122).

Let's gather the threads: there are two related but nevertheless differentiable issues here. The first is the seeming onto-metaphysical dichotomy between the ideas that “there is an ego-self” and that “there is not an ego-self.” Then there is the second apparent dichotomy between “an autonomous, healthy ego-self” and one that has by parental authoritarian deficiency been “heteronomously inscribed and deformed into a false-self.” Through these two sets of contradicting views is the “middle way” of integral mindfulness.

With respect to the first, the onto-metaphysical, issue, we can now see by the theory of consciousness as embodied action that we are not simply “embedded within and constrained by the surrounding world” in merely and passively static/representational responses to it, i. e., devoid of self, but we also contribute to its “enactment” as self-organizing co-authors of the reality process—“bound together” with it “in reciprocal specification and selection” (EM 174). “We are always constrained by the path we have laid down, but there is no ultimate ground to prescribe the steps that we take” (EM 214). The recognition that our habits of “grasping, anxiety, and frustration” are “empty” of separate existence or self-subsistence, that they are artifacts of our various consciousness structures and are susceptible of “diaphanous verition” in integral consciousness, “manifests itself experientially as an ever-growing openness and lack of fixation. An open-hearted sense of compassionate interest in others can replace the constant anxiety and irritation of egotistic concern “ (EM 234).

Varela, Thompson and Rosch continue this reflection saying that the two extremes

. . . of absolutism and nihilism both lead us away from the lived world; in the case of absolutism, we try to escape actual experience by invoking foundations to supply our lives with a sense of justification and purpose; in the case of nihilism, failing in that search, we deny the possibility of working with our everyday experience in a way that is liberating and transformative (235)

These comments on the global or “onto-metaphysical” dimension of our problem bear also on the second one, the specific local issue of psychological heteronomy and self-organizing autonomy. With respect to this, we can now see, foremost, that the abatement of abuse begins in the mindfulness/awareness, or integral meditative presentiating, of the

habituations of our consciousness structures—and especially of our interwoven or enmeshing deficient magic–might imperatives in a deficient rational–directed environment of egocentrism. By “concretizing time,” we can see how we may have been manipulated in childhood. We can see what desire for revenge and ego–confirmation this may have left us with, and we can see through manipulation more readily and have less need to impose upon others (GC 112).

More importantly, integral mindfulness demonstrates on the pulse of our lived experience—and not merely theoretically—that in mutual coupling with others and with the world, the self emerges irreducible either to a self–subsistent subject or to an other–determined object but as a self–organizing openness to a world of similarly open and interrelated lives whose compound interactions both bring forth world and selves as they are influenced by them. “It is the anxiety about feedback—the response of the other—that causes us tension . . . when action is done [spontaneously, as a non self–centred event in the overall co–constitution and mutual specification of things] without the business–deal mentality, there can be relaxation” say the authors of *The Embodied Mind* (249). In the idiom of Taoist philosophy, “the loosening is the way of nourishing” (Wu 324). To “undo” the structures of consciousness is to be (always mutually self–) nourished as ever–present origin.

Bringing the global and the local question together once more, Varela and his colleagues conclude on this note:

. . . this is not merely a philosophical dilemma; it is also ethical, religious, and political. Grasping can be expressed not only as fixation on ego–self but also collectively as fixation on racial or tribal self–identity, as well as grasping for a ground as the territory that separates one group of people from another or that one group would appropriate as its own. The idolatry of supposing not only that there is a ground but that one can appropriate it as one's own acknowledges the other only in a purely negative, exclusionary way. The realization of groundlessness as nonegocentric responsiveness, however, requires that we acknowledge the other with whom we dependently cooriginate ( 254).

## V

The reason I have repeatedly invoked processualism , aconceptualism and nondualism as the marks of genuinely integral consciousness in the materials under discussion is that for Gebser these appear as the “inceptual supersession” of the foundational, and particularly of the rational–mental or perspectival consciousness structure in the form of: 1) “the incorporation of 'time'”; 2) “the admission of the inadequacy of rationality; and 3) the turn toward the *Whole* and diaphaneity” (EPO 404).

More generally, they manifest in integral consciousness under the headings of:

- 1) “Temporics,” under which term are subsumed all endeavors to concretize time;
- 2) “Diaphaneity,” that which is pellucid and transparent, which we can perceive as the form of spiritual manifestation. It is perceptible only in a “world” where the concretion of time transforms time into time freedom and thus makes possible the concretion of the spiritual;
- 3) “Verition,” which as the integral “a–waring” or perception and impartation “of truth,” is the realization form of the integral consciousness structure which lends to the

aperspectival world a transparent reality . . . .

The new consciousness structure has nothing to do with might, rule, and overpowering.

Thus it cannot be striven for, only elicited or awakened. . . .

What is needed is care; a great deal of patience; and the laying aside of many preconceived opinions, wishful dreams, and the blind sway of demands. There is a need for a certain detachment from oneself and the world, a gradually maturing equilibrium of all the inherent components and consciousness structures predisposed in ourselves, in order that we may prepare the basis for the leap into the new mutation (EPO 300).

I would like to conclude somewhat simplistically. Emotional child abuse, in view of the forgoing pages, is a kind of stabilization and equilibrium: it imposes on the child a static behavioral and attitudinal template obliging her to reproduce the mentality of the parent or the adult who has in turn been so obliged. Deficient magical–might and obedience preoccupations, local and global, are in part expressed as single–minded constraints on the nascent ego–self’s tendency toward self–organization and autonomous self–constitution through wholesome and undeformed structural coupling with other persons and with the natural environment. In this respect, integral consciousness is less the “equilibrium of consciousness structures” than a dynamic ecology among them; and in this sense, as a corrective to abuse, integral consciousness is a noetic “far from equilibrium.” In the words of Alastair Taylor, “living organisms and sociocultural systems alike may be regarded as partially open systems which interact with their respective environments and are themselves states of nonequilibrium” (in Jantsch and Waddington 176). Magorah Maruyama understands by this that, “the basic principle of the biological and social universe is increase of diversification, heterogeneity, and symbiotization. What survives is not the strongest, but the most symbiotic” (in Jantsch 202).

To sustain symbiosis among one another and among consciousness structures without also lapsing into mutual and unanimous magic unity–immersion, our society requires an integral pedagogy of noetic ecology inclusive of processual, nondualistic and even aconceptual/aperspectival modes. At the same time, though we cannot force–feed integral consciousness to abused children (and thereby recreate the precedent manipulation to which they’ve been exposed), we can create for them a learning environment that emphasizes not hollow authoritarian and cognitive reproduction but the freedom of authentic open–endedness: pedagogy far from equilibrium/stasis. And the once (and still?) abused adult can through therapeutic time–consciousness come in behalf of children to concretize—this time consciously—the wounding that heals.

All this presupposes to some degree a nondual cosmology and, perforce, an experience—not solely an idea—of cosmogenesis, local and global, as individual and societal growth to freedom. One way to such an integral cosmology is that offered by aperspectival meditation dynamics (mindfulness awareness): a noetic mode of origin/integration, the contraception of magic–might and univocal rational fragmentation. By this (though not necessarily by this alone), we may learn ourselves anew, “invent” ourselves anew, as mutually constitutive egos in a world co–evoked and co–evoking: selfless, in a way, but precisely therefore more entirely and integrally ensouled. By this, too, may we find the coincidence of ever–present origin and ever–present child, the always present and ever–various “thusness” (Watts 67) of world–making.



I opened and will close with a comment on context. Blake, always in the wings, once said “less than all cannot satisfy man” (2). That being the case, nothing less than a lived experience, no concept, of wholeness will moderate our screaming impotencies. This betokens a cosmos that is also a self—a Self undivided from its cosmos. An integral or meditative cosmology, a hermeneutic ontology, a conscious cosmogenesis is the recreational discovery of the twenty-first century.

Big mind is something to express, not something to figure out. big mind is something you have, not something to seek for (Suzuki 90).

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# PROTOSYMBOLS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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## Introduction.

Although in most diverse ways and modes of asking, the problem of consciousness remains the fundamental problem. It remains the fundamental problem not only for psychology, religion or philosophy but also for the sciences of nature such that physics orients itself to the possible structures of epistemological, theoretical and methodological consciousness. The left sociologists investigate the material conditions of consciousness, while the right sociologists are concerned with its immanent structure. No doubt, such undertakings have demonstrated their value. Yet it appears that these undertakings have left something out: consciousness itself.

The following undertaking is oriented toward the structure of consciousness which is unavoidably given and behind which we cannot ask. This kind of consciousness was called by Gebser "integral." The attainment of this consciousness requires a path which moves through diverse strata and byways. These byways include the systematic expressions of religions, mythologies, sciences and philosophies. In this undertaking the expressions will be taken as examples of a more fundamental and latently present consciousness. It will turn out that the expressions and symbols are temporary and limited signs of consciousness. Moreover, we shall not raise the question concerning the existence or non-existence of these signs. Although the mythological deities, demons, the material objects, etc., will function as signs, we shall not question whether such deities, such material objects exist. In brief, we shall not raise the ontological and metaphysical questions, although the structures of both can be revealed as signs of consciousness.

## Expressions

The Hebraic-Christian mythology assumes the following morphology of heaven: the absolute divinity, comprising at the same time the origin of absolute law, becomes completed by the creation of Satan. Satan represents a dynamic figure whose function is to maintain the divine law. The dynamic activity of Satan is correlated to the divine permanence. Yet the same mythology expresses a reversed representation. Satan becomes a rebel whose aim is the disruption of the permanence of the absolute law and authority of God. Although correlated in various ways, there appear two components: permanence and dynamism. The permanence can be either enhanced or disrupted by the dynamism. It can be noted that this correlation was developed into morality. For example, the permanent order, the lawfulness and its maintenance was regarded as good, and its disruption as evil. It seems then that the morphological expressions, the permanence of the divine and the disruptiveness of the demonic can assume moral characteristics.

The same mythological morphology can be found in the social and political domain. The absolute law giver of the Persian empire demands that every activity should serve to maintain the permanence of the emperor. Any disruption of this permanence is characterized as a release of the evil and primordial chaos. The absolute law of the emperor and its active maintenance is regarded as good, and its disruption as evil. The same correlation of these two components stretches through the medieval and all the way

to Marxian conceptions. For example, the dynamic Marxian revolutions are characterized as the enhancements of the unavoidable permanence of historical dialectics. This dialectic and the revolutions which maintain it are regarded as good, while their hindrance is called evil. The diverse kinds of this correlation between permanence and activity constitute the mythological as well as the social morphologies.

The relationship between the streaming and the permanent assumes diverse forms in various cultures. In Confucian China the permanent and the streaming are understood harmoniously. As Wolfgang Bauer has suggested, in China the permanent *li* is characterized as "immanence" while the streaming, the energies, *ch'i* are regarded as "exteriority." Yet this correlation can assume variations: the spontaneity of life can belong to the immanent, the *li*, while the order, the lawfulness can characterize the *ch'i*. The permanence, and the spontaneity which maintains it and is correlated to it in a balanced way are natural and good. Yet the energies which flow from the immanence of man and disrupt the balance are regarded as evil.<sup>1</sup>

The permanent and the streaming can assume a temporal relationship: at times the permanent and at times the streaming aspects can assume preeminence over the other. Hinduism can be regarded as a case of this relationship. These aspects can also be correlated into a hierarchy; this correlation can be exemplified by medieval and early modern Europe. They can also be regarded as a strife between them until finally one becomes victorious over the other. Some examples would be the modern revolutionary movements such as Marxism, anarchism, and the various Christian orientations such as prophetism, millianism, and eschatolism. Other examples of this correlation are to be found in Buddhism and gnosticism. In the former, the permanence is merely a form of Maya which hides the dynamic processes, while in the latter, the streaming is so completely suppressed by the permanent component that the sole possibility of liberation consists of a complete emancipation from the permanent. These examples show that the most diverse expressions from various cultures reveal the correlation between permanence and flux. It must be emphasized that our undertaking does not raise the question whether the permanence and streaming are conceived as divine, natural, immanent, external, demonic, feminine or masculine; they are treated as cultural expressions which reveal something common.

Let us consider the main kinds of expressions of the streaming. The streaming is seen as (1) the life preserving energies, such as eros, development and impulse. These energies are grasped either as natural spontaneity or supernatural influences; (2) they can be characterized as destructive, demonic, thanatic—deadly, and also in Durkheimian sense as Faustian; (3) they can be regarded in Weberian sense as primordial, as a hurricane, revolution, as charisma and can appear as disruptive or vitalizing; (4) they can be understood as civilizing and will be recognized as an impulse for the creation of symbolic structures; (5) they are also conceived mechanistically as is the case in physics or associative psychology; (6) they can manifest themselves as ethereal spontaneity consisting of moral and aesthetic sensibilities; at times they are characterized as transcending movements longing for a transcendent home and (7) they can appear as free floating animistic energies which chose to enter various phenomena.

Throughout the diverse expressions and in various cultures, the streaming reveals two activities of consciousness; they are either preserving or disrupting. In historical China, the

energies aim mainly toward the enhancement, the preserving of order and life. Although not for Taoism, for Confucianism they express the civilizing movement. The disruptive spontaneity of "selfishness" appears mainly only in humans. In China, the primordial energies in their animistic form develop toward the preservation of life or as transcending movements toward the highest spirituality.<sup>2</sup> In Indian mythologies, although distinct, the preserving and the disruptive energies do not maintain a permanent position – and this in contrast to the medieval and early modern European traditions. In Indian mythologies, these energies flow one into the others. For example, the energies of a demon can appear at times as good and at other times as evil.<sup>3</sup> In Indian literature of spiritual direction the energies can appear either as leading to transcendence or to decadence.

A civilizational consciousness may contain a plethora of relationships among the most diverse dynamisms. These relationships require structures which either separate or unify the dynamisms. The caste structure of Hinduism is a permanent structure which separates between the pure dynamism leading to transcendence and the disruptive and decadent dynamisms. In the catholic tradition the main structure of the law is located between two streams: the first is the transcending stream of love, of *caritas*, regarded as lower than the law. In later Renaissance, everything flows through and is controlled by a second stream, a permanence, whether interpreted as an atomistic matter, spatio-temporal structure or as reason.

The expressions of the consciousness of permanence, or the standing, are also of various kinds. For our presentation we shall select only those which are the most fundamental: (1) a container which stabilizes and directs the streaming. The container can become an iron cage for the streams or can turn out to be an empty frame of an energyless mechanism; (2) permanence can be regarded as a mediating structure of energies. In this case, the mediated energies are regarded as too powerful, protean, too dangerous or too dumb to communicate without this mediation; (3) permanence can appear as a kernel, as a stable axis toward which the streams flow and in which they are separated, and finally (4) a momentary structure which is both established and dissolved by the conjunction of energies. This permanence can be called Gnostic, dramaturgic, Confucianistic and Buddhistic. Although the first two are partially found in Hinduism, they belong mainly to the West, while the last two are preeminently Confucianistic and Buddhistic.

What has been said does not mean that consciousness of permanence and streaming appears in every culture one dimensionally. The correlations between permanence and streaming intersect and permeate one another, not only in the cultural domain but also in theories about cultures. Freudian and Jungian psychologies can be offered as good examples of such theories. The consideration of Freudian psychology reveals a gradation of the permanent and the dynamic components. The primordial dynamism, the originary energy (ID) is related to nature. Subsequently this primordial dynamism is divided into two antagonistic powers, Eros and Thanatos which became correlated to Ego and Super-Ego. The Ego is regarded as a permanent structure of communication while the Super-Ego becomes the cultural dimension of ordaining rules. This interpretation includes the three Western conceptions of permanence; the ordaining structure of the Hebraic-Christian divinity, the tension between the two streams (*Caritas* and *Cupidas*) and the Ego which became preeminent in the 18th century.

It would be redundant to adduce other theories stemming from other disciplines. One thing is clear: there is no culture, no theory about culture, no mythology, theology or an explanation of history without the consciousness of the permanent and the streaming. Thus even the Gebserian structures of consciousness, in the totality of their complexity, are excellent demonstrations of the indicated expressions of permanence and flux of conscious experience. Thus in the magical structure, the animistic and vital energies converge into permanent and equivalently exchangeable "puncti-forms." Each of these "puncti-forms" can assume the powers of any other.<sup>4</sup> In the mythological structure, the permanent circling of the energetically-psychically laden polar images signify a different correlation between permanence and streaming. This eternal cycle reappeared in Nietzsche's mythologeme of the eternal recurrence of the same. What must be understood is that in this structure there are no permanent poles; they are established originally in a flux, and in this establishment the polar images return to and pervade one another in an eternal cycle.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, the Chinese Tai Chi must be understood as follows. The light and the dark sides are characterized as a movement of one into the other. The dark point in the light side reveals the movement of light into darkness, and conversely, the light point in the dark side signifies the movement of darkness into light in an eternal circling of mutual interaction. It must be stressed that for Gebser the mythical consciousness does not manifest permanent polarities. The poles appear only in the cyclic movement which constantly shifts the polarities. But the movement is ordered by the permanence of the cycles.

Thus it is necessary to avoid a common error. When we think of the recurrence of the mutually changing images as a circle, we should not regard the manifesting polarities as successive appearances. On a cycle, the movement toward the future, turns back upon itself and includes the past. In this sense a movement toward the expected love is also a streaming toward the "previous" hate. Conversely, a movement on a cycle toward the "past" confronts itself as its own "future." Thus the eternal cycle comprises a permanence which has no direction either toward the future or toward the past.

The mutation toward the mental structure transforms at the same time the consciousness of what is permanent and what is streaming. Although the mental structure incorporates in itself diverse permanent and flowing expressions, we would like to suggest only the fundamental expressions. The mental structure includes a consciousness of direction and limit. Direction is understood as a condition of a temporal succession, while the limit is a condition of opposition. It is irrelevant whether the opposition is understood as subject-object, divinity-world, reason-matter, or as an exclusion of and separation of material things from one another. The limitation, which comprises as well the condition for the three dimensional spatiality, does not permit mutual influxes from one opposing component into another. The directed temporal flow is interpreted teleologically. Here *telos* is an expression of directed flow. In this sense the Aristotelian "unmoved-mover" and the Christian divinity are permanent signs of oriented flux. Without saying too much more, it would be appropriate to point out that direction and limitation comprise the conditions for the most varied phenomena. They underlie the consciousness of the atomistic matter as well as the highest conceptions of formal logic which comprise a system of signs next to and succeeding one another. All of these presuppose the directed flow and the permanent limitations.

### **The Signs of Consciousness**

The cultural expressions delimited so far, and the consciousness structures traced out by Gebser will be explicated as signs of the first domain of consciousness. As already noted, the cultural expressions and Gebser's researches into consciousness, are founded on two unavoidable experiences: the streaming–flux and the permanent–static. It appears then that there is no consciousness without something permanent and in flux. Each consciousness must include both components.

The brief sketch of the cultural expressions and of the Gebserian consciousness structures point to the activities of consciousness without which the cultural expressions would remain meaningless. These expressions present the partial and momentary signs which reveal how consciousness signifies itself both through permanence and flux. This means that consciousness symbolizes itself through cultural and natural means. The culturally discovered expressions and the perceived things and processes of nature present the immediate activities of consciousness. When I perceive a stone as permanent through the numerous and changing appearances, the stone can function not only as an expression of the permanent component of consciousness, but also as a secondary symbol of permanent life, the background permanence of the lawfulness of all changing appearances and even the permanence of a divinity. In turn, when I discover a cultural expression of a permanent divinity, the divinity can function as an expression of the permanent component of consciousness. Both, the stone and the divinity, count as expressions of the permanent side of consciousness. Regardless of the strata, the expressions signify the permanence of consciousness.

The same can be said of flux. A river, which expresses the flow of consciousness, at another strata can be regarded as a symbol of the flux of life, the unavoidable passing of all things and the flow of time. When I learn from a culture about a dynamic figure of a divinity, such as Shiva, I discover this divinity as an expression of the flux of consciousness. These expressions constitute themselves as signs of the streaming side of consciousness. Their meaning and sense consists of their sign–function. As Gebser has taught us, the most diverse cultural and natural phenomena reveal the structures of consciousness. But this revelation points to what we called the primordial proto–symbols of consciousness. The proto–symbols, consisting of flux and permanence, are not identical with the expressions which we have surveyed. Our subsequent task is directed to the elicitation of the activities of consciousness which constitutes these proto–symbols. But it must be stressed that although unavoidable, this consciousness is not yet the ultimate one. What we have noticed so far reveals that cultures and their diverse expressions manifest the proto–symbols of consciousness. We have not yet interrogated how permanence and streaming constitute themselves in consciousness.

### **Permanence and Flux**

What is in question is this constitution. There are various avenues to this constitutive consciousness, but for our purposes we shall take something which is well known in our culture. As Gebser has shown, our modern culture has revealed an Egoconsciousness. It is assumed that the diverse components and activities of our consciousness flow from and point to an Ego. It should be remarked that even in this case the various activities and functions, the diverse psychic dynamisms, in brief, the flux, are correlated to a permanent



Ego. Yet we must ask how are we conscious of the permanence, of the identity of the Ego. How does this permanence and identity of the ego arise for consciousness? These questions already point to a consciousness which can no longer be an Ego. It is a consciousness, or as Gebser says, a Self, for whom the Ego is something experienced.

The Ego is in a remarkable position. In order to become aware of itself, the Ego finds itself at a distance from itself, finds itself as something which constantly flows away. When the Ego observes itself, it finds an Ego which, in its identity flows away in a stream. This means that the Ego which flows away cannot be identical with the Self for which the Ego appears as something flowing away. The Ego is already something other than the Self which surveys the distancing Ego. In this sense the Self cannot be regarded as an Ego, cannot reveal itself as an identity and permanence of an Ego. If the Self attempts to experience itself as an Ego, it discovers that the Ego is always something other than the Self. This is the first sign which Gebser distinguishes between the Self and the Ego. The Ego appears only as one sign, as one expression of permanence in the stream in which it flows away. In this sense the Self, for which the Ego appears, can never and nowhere be grasped as a permanent identity. In the primordial sense whatever is permanent, an identity, is for the Self experienced as something which flows away in a stream. The Self cannot be identified with the flowing away, since it is aware of the flux and of the Ego which flows away. Thus a Self manifests itself which is neither a permanent Ego nor a flux. The Self constitutes a background consciousness for which the Ego and the flux, the permanence and the streaming come together to appearance. The attempt to capture the Self as an Ego reveals the Self as something which is already conscious of permanence and flux. This means that flux and permanence point at once to a Self. In this sense they do not function as components, but as proto-symbols of a conscious Self in which both are constituted primordially.

How are we to understand the Ego which is something other and at the same time something that points to the not yet named Self? Without doubt, the Self must constitute the stream and the Ego as something permanent in the stream as the proto-symbols of the Self. In this sense the Ego which points to the Self must be understood as one act, as an identifiable activity of the Self. This means that the Ego is a primordial indication of the activity of the Self; but it is an activity which flows away in a stream that is also constituted by the Self. By indicating the Self, the Ego reveals that its origin is something more than the Ego itself. The conscious Self establishes not only the Ego but also the stream in which the Ego flows away. Thus the permanent Ego and the stream are two immediate symbols of the Self. But in this sense the symbols are not equal to what they symbolize. Although both point to the Self, they reveal that the Self is something more and entirely other than the two symbols.

What has been here haltingly extricated must now be circumscribed. After all, this extrication is important not only for what Gebser called the integral, transparent and atemporal consciousness, but also for the way this consciousness maintains and reveals the divine. This Self, this background consciousness, which according to Ludwig Landgrebe, has not yet been named,<sup>6</sup> is indicated by the Ego as an identifiable act and by the stream in which the Ego flows away. Through the experience of the Ego as an identifiable act of the Self, the Self acquires a sense of otherness, but in such a way that the otherness of the Ego is primordially and at the same time an indication of any possible Self. This means

that the Self recognizes in the Ego not only its own act, as already something other from itself, but also the otherness of all possible other Selves. The meaning of another Self is already given in the symbol of the Ego. Through the Ego, the primordial consciousness constitutes a symbol, which can be a symbol for all other Selves. This means that the Self recognizes the Ego as an act of a Self and also as something already different from the Self. This difference is also a primordial sign which allows the conscious Self to differentiate among various Selves.

The Self, the constantly escaping, uncaptured consciousness, appears in the correlation of the proto-symbols of permanence and flux. At the same time, the tracing of these symbols, in our case of the Ego and the stream in which the Ego flows away, reveals that the correlation of these symbols cannot be achieved either by the flux or by the Ego. Only the Self can establish their differentiation and at the same time their correlation. This indication allows us now to shift to the primordial activity of the Self. When we take the Ego as a sign of the Self, we discover that in its flowing away the Ego has a place, a location in the stream. This place which is marked by the Ego, is at the same time a place of the Self in its modality of something that has been, as something that sinks away toward the past. Yet this sinking away toward the past also points to the future, the coming. In this sense the conscious Self must establish the primordial temporal differentiations in which the Ego marks the shifts from temporal to temporal phases.

The shifting of the temporal phases constitutes all at once the stream and the differentiations of the temporal locations for the manifestation of the identity of the Ego. Now we are in a position to trace what Gebser had called the integral consciousness. The constitution of the temporal phases of the stream indicated above cannot be located in an assumed and pre-given time. As already noted, the Self is the ground for the differentiation and correlation between the streaming and the permanence. Yet the same kind of differentiation and correlation must be taken for granted between the passing and the coming phases. In this sense the Self cannot be located in any temporal phase or place. But why not? First of all, any identifiable, any permanent location, is always found in the stream of passing away, and this location can only be grasped in its differentiation from and correlation to other locations. Secondly, the surveyal, the consciousness of the differentiation and correlation of temporal locations is an activity which cannot assume an identical or permanent location.

This result points to the following: the temporal dimensions of the present, the now, the future and the past, comprising the basis for the directedness of the mental-rational consciousness is no longer adequate for the understanding of the Self. The Self is no longer oriented but must be understood as correlating and differentiating co-presence. This means that the correlating and differentiating consciousness is what primordially establishes the differentiation and the mutual pointing to each other of the temporal dimensions. But the mutual pointing does not occur for this consciousness in a simplistic process. It must be already clear that the conscious Self is precisely something which constitutes the differentiation and correlation of temporal locations as a condition for any permanence and identity. Let us look closer at this remarkable phenomenon.

In order to become aware of the present as such, the past and the future must also be co-given. But how? The present must point of necessity to the past and the future. But it must point to the other temporal phases not as something which are similar to it, but as

something different from it. The meaning of one of these temporal dimensions points to the presence of the meaning of the other temporal dimensions. In this sense all three dimensions must be "present" in their meaning. But this presence is not a simple one. We should recall that Gebser speaks of a transparency of consciousness. Thus let us reflect upon what has been shown. The meaning of the present, the now points not only to the presence of the future and past, but also to their difference from one another and from the present. This can only mean that future and past are given transparently through the present. Although in the mental consciousness the future is not yet, in the integral consciousness the future, in its pointing to and differentiation from the present and past, is already present. This means that a consciousness of any of the temporal dimensions calls for the presence of all temporal dimensions. Thus the present has no meaning without pointing to and being transparent with the future and the past. But the transparency of the present not only points to the necessary presence of the future and the past, but also to their difference. This means that the integral consciousness bears in itself the presence of the differentiated time dimensions. In their differentiated presence the temporal dimensions are transparent one through the other.

If this is the case then, on the basis of this stratum of consciousness, then precisely on the basis of the explicated consciousness of integrating temporality, each phenomenon must be transparent. For example, a conscious hearing of a "high" tone calls for a conscious presence of a "low" tone. This means that in order to hear the "higher" tone as higher in the present, the consciousness of the "lower" tone, in their differentiation, must also be present. In their mutual pointing to one another, they must be given in their co-present transparency through, and their differentiation from one another. In this sense the phenomena are transparent, differentiated and integrated all at once. These phenomena do not appear "one after the other" but one through the other in their integrating wholeness.

We should recall Gebser's investigations of consciousness which is manifesting itself in our century. By correlating the most diverse expressions, Gebser reveals that the contemporary integral consciousness is no longer directed toward the future. The future is already present in the now. Indeed, the present is given transparently with the presence of the future as well as the past. The wholeness of the temporal dimensions is present. But it must be stressed that this wholeness is not a sterile and an undifferentiated structure. It is "systatic," i.e., it appears as integrating of the differentiated and mutually integrated components.<sup>7</sup> What Gebser means is the following: the integral consciousness is not a sterile gazing or a pure immersion, but an event of transparent differentiation and integration. Before we turn to this event itself, we must avoid the psychologization of this consciousness.

Today the most preeminent are the Freudian and the associative psychologies. Association means that a psychic event is associated with another psychic event—points to and is related to the other event. This pointing is understood as a temporal succession of similar psychic events. But the integral consciousness reveals that something does not point to something similar, but to something that is integrated as different. In its differentiated and mutual pointing, consciousness maintains the components of the whole in their mutual transparency. This means that association not only presupposes this integral consciousness of temporality, but also that the associated psychic states are not given "one after the other"; in their differentiated presence they are given transparently one through the other.

Any direction or succession of psychic states presupposes their mutually differentiated and integrated presence. The same is true of Freudian psychology. For example, *Eros* and *Thanatos* are mutually transparent, one through the other, in their differentiated integration.

### **The Integral Consciousness**

Now it is possible to explicate this consciousness in its uniqueness. It cannot be in time; after all, each temporal location is both differentiated from other temporal locations and simultaneously integrated by this consciousness. As Gebser says, it must be "atemporal." This should not mean that it is "eternal." Eternity already presupposes this consciousness. In order to be conscious of eternity as such, the latter must be differentiated from temporality. The permanence and staticity of eternity and the flux of temporality, in their differentiation, point to and are transparent one through the other. Thus the integral consciousness cannot be either a permanent eternity or a streaming temporality. It must be an event which is transparent through all which are integrated in their differentiation. As had been already shown, the stream, the changing, and the permanence are the proto-symbols of this consciousness. But the experience of permanence must now reveal its difference from the flux. In their differentiation they are given transparently one through the other. But the consciousness which differentiates them and relates them to one another in mutual transparency, must be different from them. This means that permanence and flux as proto-symbols of the integral consciousness must point to this consciousness which differentiates and integrates them transparently as something different from them.

Neither standing nor streaming, neither temporal nor eternal, this consciousness while creating their differentiated and transparent integration, becomes aware of its own Self transparently as different from and through what it creates. In this sense the permanence and flux, the standing and the streaming, regardless of how they are expressed in the most diverse cultures, are the proto-symbols of the integral consciousness. These symbols, while related to and seen through one another, trace the presence of the primordial consciousness which constitutes their differentiated integration. These mutually transparent, integrated and differentiated symbols, comprising the foundations of most diverse cultural expressions, are transparent with a consciousness which is different from them. Although it cannot be found anywhere or at any time, this consciousness is present everywhere and at all times. By constituting its own proto-symbols, it becomes transparently aware of itself as their differentiating integration. This consciousness, which is the Self, which we ourselves are, is too immediate to be grasped by us directly. Thus it must be traced through its proto-symbols. At the same time, these proto-symbols can be shown through the various cultural expressions.

Regardless of the strata, the world is experienced through the variously designed expressions of permanence and flux. Each culture signifies this experience differently. A divinity may be permanent, while the world may be regarded as a changing appearance of the divinity. The substance is permanent and is given through changing appearances. In order to rule over the fleeting phenomena, reason, either as an objective Logos or as a subjective capacity, becomes permanent. The cycle becomes permanent in order to enable the dynamism of the polarizing psychic powers and images, leading to mythological consciousness. The puncti-formal identities become permanent in order to center the flow

of the vital powers. All these cultural expressions are secondary indications of the permanent and the streaming, the standing and the flux, and are indications of a consciousness which constitutes itself as permanence–flux. But as Gebser has shown, our century traces another, a background consciousness for which permanence and flux appear as originary symbols. These symbols, capable of including the entire world, its eternity and its passing, its divinities and demons, turn out to be the protosymbols of a consciousness which is different from them. While transparent through its proto–symbols, this consciousness is neither avoidable nor can we stem behind it: It is that which each one of us is, the Self.

### **The Tracing of the Divine**

With the breakdown of the mental world, with the announcement of the death of God, the question must be asked how can we experience the divine which is no longer accessible mentally. Gebser has indicated that in our times the divine can no longer be proven, but must be brought transparently to awareness. A proof is subsumed under the expressions of directed and limited mental consciousness. The integral is an indication of a differently manifesting consciousness and a new access must be opened to the divine. We must now dare to trace this access. Although the strata which we have penetrated to reach the integral consciousness may appear to be difficult, in comparison to the following undertaking they will appear as something effortless.

The mental consciousness takes divinity to be the *telos* of history. This *telos* is something in the future. Since the integral consciousness is the condition for the presence of the future as something which in its difference is integrated in the present, this consciousness must experience the divine no longer as something which is in a not–yet–present future. This means that this consciousness is not something toward which one must orient oneself. For the understanding of any direction the future, as well as the past, must be already present. Thus the divinity can no longer be understood in a traditional sense as a *telos*, as a horizontal direction of history. Since the experience of the teleological history and resultantly of others as teleologically oriented Selves in history, belong to the mental consciousness, it would be fruitful at first to regard history and the others as historical from the vantage point of the Self of integral consciousness.

It was shown that the Self, in order to experience itself, constitutes itself as an identical Ego flowing away in a stream. This Ego appears as something different, as another, but in this difference it also appears as a sign of the Self. In this case the Ego becomes a sign of any Self. At the same time, in the flowing away of the Ego, the Self experiences the Ego as temporally removed. In this sense the Ego is a sign of others as temporal and historical. This flowing away of the Ego constitutes not only the sign of the other Selves, but also the others as temporally and historically others. This experience is the origin of the others as historical Selves. In this sense the Self is experienced in correlation to temporally and historically different Selves. In brief, the Self is found to be in a historical horizon of "We." Through the sign of the Ego, the Self can sway between its own and other consciousness. Most fundamentally the Self appears as an inter–consciousness, as a differentiated and transparent relationship between the "We." This "We" constitutes a horizon of history; it is a horizon which enables the extension of the experiences of the Self through the "We." This

horizon is an open extension of the Self through the other Selves, thus revealing the possibility for the experience of the entire world through all Selves.

Thus it appears that the given presence of the notion of the "We" includes the horizon and open history of the Self. It is a notion which at base includes the experience of the world in all of its possibilities. Those Selves which were before me, and those which will come after me are present to the conscious Self as an extension, as a horizon of the possible experiences of the Self. This consciousness, already and always constituted by the Self, bears not only the sign of the other Selves within itself, but also enables the consciousness of the historical and open humanity, a humanity which is a historical community and not a collectivity. Originally, the Self recognizes itself as such in its differentiation from others, and thus basically the Self is conscious of itself as communal. But this means that the community is both present and a horizon. Yet it must be emphasized that this horizon is not yet the future or past of history, but rather a "We" consciousness from which the directions and repetitions of history emerge. Before raising the question of the historical past, we already have the presence of the others. For example, when we observe the ruins of some cultural monument, we assume silently that this monument was built by others. Moreover, the ruins as such are transparent with the wholeness of the monument in the previously depicted way. Thus we are already in a present horizon which is transparent with the other Selves and only this presence allows us to ask a subsequent question of historical "when." In this sense the other Selves are not present as objects, but as a background community which mutually symbolizes the world; through this symbolization the community becomes transparent to itself. Thus any cultural creation can become an expression of the consciousness which constitutes this creation. Each expression, found in historical cultures points back to this consciousness.

This understanding leads to the experience of *telos* which is always there for the Self as a horizon. The horizon, which includes the "We," reveals that the experiences of everyone given through their transparent differentiation is an integral understanding. The integration of the experiences of all Selves, although as a matter of fact not possessed completely by any Self, is always tacitly presupposed by any Self. The Self is clearly conscious of the necessity of the differentiated integration of the consciousness of all Selves, and yet the Self knows that this integration cannot be accomplished by any one. After all, the horizon of the Self and of the others can never be closed. Thus the experience of the necessary integration is a *telos* which is present, even if this presence cannot be established fully either by the Self or other Selves. While the horizon can never be limited, this openness is led necessarily by the *telos* of integratability. It appears then that the integration of the open horizon, an integration which is always and necessarily presupposed, cannot be reached by the activity of the Self and other Selves. This assumed, although unattainable integration is the presence of the *telos*.

Seen from the integral consciousness, the *telos* may be regarded as a "pre-form" of integration of the experiential horizons of the Self and the "We." This means that while no particular Self, and indeed no community are in a position to accomplish a complete integration, nonetheless they have a conscious presupposition of a presence of a "pre-form" of complete integration.

This "pre-form" is always evident, although unreachable. In this sense, the conscious Self is cognizant of the necessary integratability of all horizons and understands that its own

horizons are integrated with those of others. Although always remote, this "pre-form" is present intimately to the conscious Self. Since the integral consciousness is a never localizable event of differentiating integration, it must always maintain in its background the "preform" of integration of the differentiated wholeness. This "pre-form" can only be revealed by the integral consciousness. The "activity" of this consciousness traces a differentiating integration which can never be exhausted. Yet precisely this tracing is already transparent with the pre-given "pre-form" of integrality. In this case, the integral consciousness is a cipher of the endless integral consciousness of wholeness which is unreachable by the integral conscious Self. Our integral conscious Self is a cipher which points to something which is an already presumed integrating without a *telos*. In this context the Self can no longer function as a cipher of the difference between itself and the integral consciousness of wholeness which functions as a "pre-form" of this wholeness, but rather here the activity of the Self is a direct appearance of the "pre-form." This means that the Self is a transparent manifestation of the "pre-form" of integral consciousness of wholeness. At the strata of our integral consciousness, which as was shown is a nonlocalizable event of transparency, there also appears the always and everywhere present co-activity of an integrating consciousness of wholeness. The latter could be called "divine."

### **Postscript**

We have traced a consciousness which cannot be equated with any of the traditional consciousness structures. For example, it is not the eastern sterile immersion into the unity of the one, since such an immersion does not permit any transparency. Rather, the integral consciousness bears within itself all of the "previous structures." The latter, of course, are not something past. As was shown, they are differentiated and integrated transparently by the Self. In this sense the origin, which is always present, cannot be a pure unity. It may be that various mystical expressions of diverse cultures regard the origin as unity, yet the unity presents only one, the permanent component of the origin. One thing must be obvious. The task of deciphering of the always present origin does not allow us to sink into a comfortable contemplation without the preliminary tracing of the cultural phenomena and their integration as signs of the origin. We already know that the path to the integral consciousness is not easily traversed. And thus we must also understand that the path through the integral consciousness to the origin and its transparency is still more difficult.

## Die Welt in neuer Sicht: Reflections on Gebser's Language and Vision

Georg Feuerstein

In 1943, Verlag Oprecht in Zurich published Gebser's *Abendländische Wandlung* (Occidental Transformation). The book offered a first clarifying overview of the revolutionary developments in physics, biology, and psychology (including parapsychology) since the turn of the century. Gebser's declared purpose was to highlight the relevance of these developments to our everyday life. He spoke of an enhancement of our awareness and an ability to live and experience deeply and argued that the striking new developments in the sciences were manifestations of a novel level of consciousness (*Bewusstseinslage*).

Gebser proposed that we thoroughly understand and translate these developments into the practical context of daily living, as they can help us realize the new consciousness. He explained that the transcendence of the primacy of the intellect demanded by the new consciousness was not tantamount to a regression into the world of magic and myth. Rather, he insisted, it represented a breakthrough to the level of the spiritual (*das Geistige*), which must not be confused with the spirit (*der Geist*) typically conceived as opposite to body and psyche. The attainment of the spiritual, he observed, "could in a surprising way be an approximation to the Ground of Being (*Seinsgrund*)" (Gebser, 1943, 169). These words were written before Gebser had elaborated his model of the structures of consciousness, but they clearly foreshadow it.

The great success of *Abendländische Wandlung* (Occidental Transformation) encouraged Gebser to organize two conferences in 1957 and 1958. They were held in Munich by the Freunde der Residenz in conjunction with the Schweizer Verein München. The invited presenters at the first conference consisted of Walther Gerlach, a professor of experimental physics; the well-known Swiss zoologist Adolf Portmann; Gustav Richard Heyer, a neurologist and psychotherapist; Jean Rudolf von Salis, a renowned professor of history; and Wolfhart F. Bürgi, a law professor. At the second conference, presentations were made by architect Tino Walz, writer Werner Weber, and the two theologians Heinrich Kahlefeld and Otto Wolff (a noted Aurobindo expert). Walter Riezler, a professor of music, had also been invited but was unable to attend because of illness.

At the conclusion of the first conference, Gebser gave a talk in which he summarized the preceding presentations and his own take on what was happening in the world. He began by explaining the title of the conference, *Die Welt in neuer Sicht*. His remarks are still helpful in providing entry into his thinking and especially his epistemology. Hence I propose to briefly review and comment on his main points. This will afford us an interesting look at Gebser's use of language and how he struggled in conceptualizing some very difficult issues, which are fundamental to his approach.

First of all, how should we translate *Die Welt in neuer Sicht*? "The world in a new . . . what"? The German word *Sicht* can have several connotations, especially "sight," "vision," and "view." None of these English equivalents quite convey the meaning of the German original as employed by Gebser. The word *Sicht* appears as the stem of numerous other words in the German language, which is well known for making full use of affixes that modify the meaning of the stem: *Sichtbarkeit* (visibility), *sichtlich* (visible, evident), *Absicht* (intention, purpose), *Ansicht* (opinion, outlook), *Aussicht* (prospect), and *Aussichtslosigkeit* (hopelessness), *Besichtigung* (sight-seeing, examination), *Durchsicht* (inspection),



*Durchsichtigkeit* (transparency), *Einsicht* (insight), *ersichtlich* (clear, obvious), *Gesicht* (face, look), *Übersicht* (overview), and *Vorsicht* (circumspection).

In the title of the two conferences, *Sicht* has all kinds of overtones that become clear only when one understands Gebser's position. These overtones stem from some of the above-mentioned derivatives. Thus *Sicht*, as intended by Gebser, conveys the new outlook (*Ansicht*) as well as the new prospect (*Aussicht*), and, as I will show, also the idea of transparency (*Durchsichtigkeit*). If we need to settle on any one term in English, the fairly neutral term "outlook" might do. Thus we may translate the title of the conferences as "A new outlook upon the world." If we dare depart from a more literal translation, the title "The world in a new light" suggests itself.

Why not "The world from a new point of view"? Or "A new vision of the world"? Because Gebser uses the German equivalents of the words "view" and "vision" in a specific sense that is associated with his model of the structures of consciousness. Both terms are more specifically related to the mythical structure of consciousness, which emphasizes inner vision or imagery. When vision becomes conceptual sighting or viewing, we are dealing with perspectival vision, which pertains to the mental-rational structure of consciousness. Gebser is very clear that the cognitive capacity of the new consciousness is not defined by either inner vision or objective, rational viewing as conceptualization. Rather, it is more usefully explained in terms of insight. When addressing the dangers of the new outlook and how we might overcome them, Gebser pondered the following question in his concluding speech on the occasion of the 1957 conference:

What does the new outlook consist in? To answer this question we must first clarify the meaning or sense of what is called *Sicht* here and also what the slightly ominous word "new" means.

A *Sicht* of the world is neither a worldview (*Weltanschauung*) nor a picture of the world (*Weltbild*). As the choice of word betrays, it is not an irrational psychically accentuated picture of the world that we can view but the attempt to achieve insight (*Einsicht*) into ourselves and into the coherences of the world. In regard to consciousness, *Sicht* represents a decisive step beyond a mere picture of the world and beyond the opposites portrayed in a picture. *Sicht* has the disadvantage of being less vivid but the advantage of having a stronger spiritual emphasis. Every *Sicht* is in this sense a spiritual project (*Entwurf*) whose validity can be determined only in the future. If a project is true, then it voices the always latently present future, which ever codetermines our life and thought. Thus it is obvious that those bold enough to sketch the new *Sicht* or project participate in the insight that not only the past but also the future codetermines the present. Those lacking this insight will, when the new *Sicht* is confirmed, simply say that those who have projected it were lucky (Gebser, 1957, 110).

Gebser went on to observe that a person's *Sicht* may well be merely a personal and therefore not necessarily universally valid insight. Whether a *Sicht* is personally derived or represents an irruption (*Einbruch*) of the future into the consciousness of the individual can, he suggested, be determined by comparative cultural phenomenology. In other words, a personal *Sicht* can be corroborated by a careful analysis—the kind Gebser undertook—of the cultural situation, using the circumspect approach of phenomenology (which is based on the suspension of personal biases and judgments).

Reflecting on the adjective "new" in association with *Sicht*, Gebser emphasized that the object of this new insight is in reality very ancient. As he remarked:

"New" in this context has nothing to do with any mania for innovation but with the fact that our participation in the whole of the world (Weltganzes) receives a new kind of illumination, and that this intensified conscious participation as such represents a novelty for humanity—a novelty only in the sense, however, that a capacity hitherto lying dormant in us and in the world has become conscious (Gebser, 1957, 111).

That is to say, as Gebser further stated, the new *Sicht* has always been present but only today have we reached the level or degree of insight necessary to perceive it. This seems a somewhat mystical explanation—the kind we find scattered throughout Gebser's works and that have been puzzling to those approaching Gebser from a predominantly rationalistic perspective: *Either* we perceive something anew *or* the perception is age-old.

Gebser struggled hard to overcome such dualistic formulations in his writings and lectures. But dualism is ingrained in our linguistic habits, and therefore Gebser's struggle against the grain at times resulted in awkward and even seemingly pretentious expressions. He was well aware of this fact and periodically mused about it.

In his concluding talk in May of 1957, Gebser contrasted the new *WeltSicht* (outlook on the world) with the *Weltvorstellung* (world conception) of the nineteenth century. The latter, he pointed out, was based in what we might call the rhetoric of dualistic contrast. This oppositional thinking was shattered, in Gebser's view, by the irruption of time into the rigidified and fixed systems of thought produced by that dualistic orientation. As he put it:

This static way of consideration was replaced by a better, dynamic—functional—approach. In place of the static, mutually exclusive systems and spatially fixed mechanical processes came functional, mutually corresponding structures and space-free and nondeterministic relations (Gebser, 1957, 113–114).

It is not clear to me why Gebser should have picked the word *Sicht* to characterize the new consciousness when this term is so strongly associated with sight as the emphasized perceptual tool of the mental-rational structure of consciousness with its penchant for perspectival thinking. In addition, it also has the disadvantage of being associated with "view" and "vision," which have strong mythical connotations in the orbit of Gebserian understanding, since *imago*/imagination is the accentuated cognitive form of the mythical structure of consciousness.

Gebser spoke of the new outlook as open (*offen*). He also emphasized that this open outlook lacks all intention or purpose (*AbSicht*), that it has no linear conclusion that could be called a goal in the dualistic thinking of the former mentality (a word he actually used on occasion).

In his opening talk at the second conference, held in May of 1958, Gebser again asked the question: What is the new outlook? He referred to that outlook as an answer rather than a result. More specifically, he regarded it as "the answer of our epoch to circumstances that had been awaiting us or that we have encountered" (Gebser, 1958, 7). Again he spoke at some length of the transcendence of dualism and of time (in the sense of clock time). The emergent perception of the world he characterized as a "world without opposites" (*Welt ohne Gegenüber*). This world without starkly demarcated vis-à-vis, Gebser observed, "is not a world of nothingness, voidness, contentlessness, holdlessness, relationlessness," but

"a world of transparency (*Durchsichtigkeit*), which without distortion and limit makes the whole in its transparency perceptible to the spiritual eye" (Gebser, 1958, 17).

Although the rationalist who is suspicious of metaphoric language may puzzle over the meaning of the phrase "spiritual eye," this is a significant statement. It clearly prepared the path for the in-depth consideration of the second part of Gebser's magnum opus, *The Ever-Present Origin*, in which he discusses the "Manifestations of the Aperspectival World." He understood this as an attempt at the concretion of the spiritual. Again and again, we encounter in Gebser's works the expression "the spiritual" (*das Geistige*), which he carefully distinguished from the spirit (*der Geist*). As I explained elsewhere, the spiritual is unquestionably a core theme for Gebser and to understand his work as a whole we must understand this particular notion<sup>1</sup>. But this lies outside the compass of this brief discussion.

However, what remains to be considered here, at least in brief, is Gebser's understanding of insight as a principal factor or agent of the new *Sicht*. To begin with, we must note that Gebser does not seem to have been aware of the philosophical and psychological discussion surrounding this important cognitive function. He therefore used "insight" uncritically and colloquially. The word served him as a convenient synonym for what he later called *Wahren* or *Wahrung*. Noel Barstad translated both these terms as verition or waring, which "encompasses the 'sense' of perceiving as well as imparting verity or truth (Gebser, 1985, 261).

Gebser was very clear that this *Wahren* should not be confused with intuition (Gebser, 1985, 268). Rather he understood it as an integral process or an integral state of the Itself (*das Sich*), which is the apersonal core of the human personality, the originary presence itself. Intuition is indeed a concept beset with difficulties, and Gebser was probably wise to avoid it in characterizing the integral cognitive function of verition. But insight, too, is not without its semantic problems.

Insight—"that mystery of mysteries" (Hofstadter 585)—is a form of understanding. It is sudden understanding *in depth*. It can manifest at the end of a protracted effort to solve a problem by trial and error, or it can flash forth at the end of a perhaps shorter cognitive process of leaping intuitively from understanding to understanding. But we need not presume the presence of a specific problem for insight to occur. Insight can also be based on a generalized motivation to relate to existing conditions intelligently.

As Robert Thomson explained, the term "insight" can be applied in two distinct senses: (1) as a description of a behavioral pattern observed in problem-solving situations, and (2) as a label for a postulated psychological process controlling behavior (38). The former sense has been employed particularly in the study of the process of scientific discovery. The latter sense is of greater interest in the present context, though I would like to leave it open whether insight controls behavior or merely influences it.

According to Gestalt psychologists, insight is a sudden reorganization of the cognitive field. But, as Thomson pointed out, this tells us next to nothing about the nature of this switch.

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<sup>1</sup> See G. Feuerstein, *Structures of Consciousness: The Genius of Jean Gebser--An Introduction and Critique* (Lower Lake, CA: Integral Publishing, 1987). This book has been out of print for some time. The author plans to extensively revise and enlarge it prior to republication.

Perhaps insight is an irreducible psychological event, as Gestalt psychology assumes. But even if we were able to qualify it further, we would sooner or later end up with an irreducible conceptual residuum.

Be that as it may, insight can occur at various levels of concreteness or abstraction, as shown by Bernard J. F. Lonergan. He compared the human mind to a "universal machine tool that erects all kinds of factories, keeps adjusting and improving them, and eventually scraps them in favour of radically new designs" (406). He regarded every insight as an *a priori*, with insight building upon insight to form ever more comprehensive understandings. This succession of insights is, according to him, self-correcting and self-adjusting.

How should we understand the integral insight spoken of by Gebser? It is evidently *a priori* but it also appears to be in some sense ultimate, for it discloses not merely the connectivity of a limited context (such as a mathematical problem) but reveals the total structure of existence—the spiritual—in an act of diaphanous cognition. Gebser was adamant that this cognition must not be mistaken for a mystical experience. Rather he understood it as an arational or transrational (but not irrational!) noetic act of great immediacy and power of self-evidence. This whole issue in Gebser's methodology patently calls for a detailed examination.

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## DEMOCRACY, SPIRITUALITY AND TRANSFORMATIVE POSSIBILITIES<sup>2</sup>

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### Overview

In the West in general and the United States in particular there is need for discussion of how we can learn to live together more harmoniously, and how the potential inherent in the democratic ideal can be more fully realized in practice. This article posits that it will take a major breakthrough at the level of the human spirit before people are able and willing to relate in ways conducive to the well-being of all.

In the 20th century humankind has attained a capability of altering global processes and destroying our life-support system. Negative impacts of human civilization on our planet such as CO<sup>2</sup> production, ozone layer depletion, and the degradation of ecosystems can no longer be ignored. In addition, existing political systems have often proved inadequate to insure peaceful conflict resolution and social equity. Thoughtful people from many backgrounds have suggested ways to attain a more inclusive, and sustainable society. Unfortunately, intellectual articulation of our goals and even of the methods to attain them is not enough to bring about substantive change. What is required additionally is a change of heart, a re-visioning of our values. By what process can this "change of heart" leading to the ability to recognize and incorporate new behaviors and paradigms take place?

This approach focuses on a new concept, spiritual democracy, which plays a central part in this process. Global change begins with personal transformation, that which we most value in our lives. What we value for individual happiness must be expanded to include the welfare of all. This transformation of the human heart has been experienced and spoken of in many of the world's religious and spiritual traditions and it is generally attributed to an experience of universal affinity that is discovered by "turning within." The process by which a person recognizes and accepts spiritual values and then transfers these values into action throughout human organizational systems (families, communities, nations, and the community of nations) leads to the development of spiritual democracy. The potential to develop spiritual democracy has been facilitated by the great increase in information flow throughout the world in recent decades. Thus, for the first time the means to personally recognize the unity of humankind is more available globally. It is only through a process of personal and societal transformation based on values which promote fairness, inclusiveness, and sustainability that we can insure our common future in the coming millennium.

People working in many disciplines are coming forward with ideas for building a more just and sustainable world. Unfortunately, intellectual knowledge of our goals or even of the

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<sup>1</sup>. Some of the ideas in this article appeared in earlier form in Arthur Stein and Daniel Campbell "Personal Transformation, Spiritual Democracy and Global Change," in *General Systems: Approaches to Alternative Economics and Values*, 1992. Proceedings of the 36th Annual Conference of the International society for the Systems Sciences, II, 818-828.

methods to attain them is not enough to bring about substantive change. What is needed, additionally, is a willingness to examine and reflect upon our core values.

This prescription may sound simplistic, but it is a basic conclusion I have drawn after forty years of study, teaching and doing research in the humanities, social sciences and peace studies, combined with my broader life experience outside of academe.

### **The Spiritual Dimension of Democracy**

By what process can this "change of heart" leading to the ability to recognize and incorporate new behaviors and paradigms take place? Global change for a viable 21st century begins with personal transformation, and the transformation of individuals is predicated on a fundamental shift in that which we value in our lives. Our personal happiness and satisfaction must be linked to tolerance of and fairness in dealing with others. In addition, the things we value for individual happiness need to be expanded to include the welfare of all systems that support the well-being of others as well as our own.

What do we mean by spiritual democracy (which in today's context might be seen as a bit of an oxymoron)? We can explore the meaning of this idea by examining the two components of the phrase. Democracy, literally meaning rule by the people, originated in Athens over two thousand years ago. Yet a third of the people that lived in this Greek city state were slaves. The American constitution of 1789 took a major step in developing this idea—nonetheless the right to vote in the newly formed United States was limited to white, male landowners. Much of America's socio-political history in the subsequent two centuries has evolved around the struggles to fulfill the inclusive, more egalitarian ideals inherent in the idea of democracy. Now, at the close of the 20th century, the world has seen the ascendancy of liberal democracies in Europe, North America, and Japan that support the universal franchise of men and women. Virtually every other country, with few exceptions, now pay at least lip service to the democratic ideal. Amid the turmoil of the post-Cold War politics, the ideas of self-determination and the empowerment of people to control the decisions that affect their daily lives are sweeping the globe.

On the other hand, humanity's concern with spiritual matters is rooted in religious and ethical thought and experience that go back to the dawn of history. [I will focus here on the teachers and teachings traditionally associated with religious thought. There are, of course, spiritual dimensions to many other metaphysical schools of thought and to cultural expression.] The great world religions are institutions which have codified, maintained, and disseminated the teachings and insights of great spiritual innovators such as Lao Tse, Moses, the Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, Nanak, Baha'ullah, and others. Each of these individual human beings had their own experience of spiritual awakening, and each expressed their insights through words and actions which embodied wisdom and truth. It is the desire of later generations to recall and exalt these great souls and their teachings that has led to the codification of organized religions.

Over the years the insights of these spiritual teachers have often been lost, distorted, or politicized and great wrongs have been committed in the name of religious zeal, and throughout the centuries the inner experiences of which they spoke have been misunderstood even by their followers. Rarely were they understood by the broad mass of their followers, let alone by the world at large. For example, the Society of Friends is only

300 years removed from its origin; yet relatively few modern Friends would say that they have personally experienced "the still, silent voice within" spoken of by George Fox, its founder.

In today's global village, the greatly increased flow of communications are giving us more access to various cultures, past and present. The widespread availability of this information opens the way for a broad new integration of human knowledge and experience drawing from all traditions, East, West, North, and South. Not only the "great world religions" and philosophies, but the historic legacies of the indigenous peoples of Asia, Africa, the Americas and Australasia can be explored and drawn upon. The teachings of all human civilization are now much more available. What is needed are fresh perspectives that will enable us to cut through the dogmas, orthodoxies, and superstitions—the accumulated baggage of the centuries—to reach the core spiritual values. In the future all who are interested, rich and poor alike, must have more equal access to the spiritual legacies of humankind, to the teachers and methodologies that help open the inner realms of self understanding. The far reaches of "inner space," waiting to be explored, hold the equivalent to the knowledge of outer space now being discovered by science<sup>3</sup>.

Spirituality involves a process of "tapping within" toward an understanding of oneself in relationship to the whole creation. The great spiritual teachers of all traditions have experienced that "all humanity is the same beneath the skin." This is the basis for true human unity. From this common vantage point the principles of political, social, and economic organization that could produce a sustainable and equitable "world order" can be recognized.

For example, if a person understands and experiences within themselves what is known in Sanskrit as *ahimsa* (or nonviolence) then that person will learn to see and feel the same spirit within every other person. Mohandas Gandhi once pointed out that the Hindu greeting *namaste* means "the same light I experience in myself I recognize and greet in you." When we see this for ourselves, might we not be inclined to treat our families, neighbors, and indeed all human beings with friendship and respect. We could never consciously seek to do them harm. And when this same light is seen in all creation how will we not be able to treat Mother Earth more gently and share the gift of her resources more equitably with others.

### **The Search for Shared Values and A Common Ethic**

In recent years the world's peoples, in general, and religious communities in particular have been increasingly challenged by the questions: "Can we find enough shared values and common ethos to learn to live together peacefully? And what are our responsibilities to our fellow humans and other life forms on our planetary home?"

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<sup>3</sup> Among those who have sought to bridge the gap between science and spirituality is the English physicist David Bohm. He has developed a holographic model to help visualize his idea of an "implicate order" which links and enfolds all of reality. Bohm submits that ultimately each person is connected to the totality of the life force in the universe. D. Bohm, 1980, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

One contemporary effort which has focused on these broad human goals was a recent world conference on religion. The Parliament of the World's Religions, held in Chicago in August, 1993, was probably the largest and most inclusive gathering of world religious and spiritual leaders, lay people, and scholars in history. Christians, Moslems, Jews, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Taoists, Jains, Hindus, Native Americans and other indigenous peoples, and practically every other tradition met for eight days and shared ideas and fellowship. They sought to identify the shared values, or commonly understood truths, that are at the core of their own faith, while respecting the wide diversity of human spiritual experience.

Things had come a long way since the first Parliament of religions in Chicago a century earlier in 1893. While pathbreaking for its day, bringing leaders of several Asian religions to the Americas for the first time, the delegates were mainly from mainstream Christian backgrounds. One young speaker from India, Swami Vivekenanda, who enchanted the audience with both his charm and candor, denounced sectarianism which "has filled the earth with violence and drenched it often. . .with human blood," and prophetically called for "an end to all fanaticism done in the name of religion."

American Indians were not invited to participate in 1893, for the culturally Eurocentric organizers did not recognize the native American peoples as having legitimate religious traditions. Not only did the American Indians and other indigenous peoples participate in 1993 but they played a major role in the conference, on many levels.

It was encouraging to see representatives of various faith getting to know each others' traditions better and listening to others' concerns. Yet much growth and reconciliation needs yet to occur for the organized religions which have given much of value to human civilization are still the source of much intolerance and discord in today's world. In fact, in many of the dozens of major conflicts around the globe, from Northern Ireland to the former Yugoslavia to the Indian subcontinent and elsewhere throughout the planet, ethnic and religious groups often add fuel to the fires of misunderstanding and hatred.

I'd like to call attention here to two important aspects of the Parliament of Religions which received little media coverage. The first was the active participation of the futurist-oriented Council for the 21st Century, which focused on the linkages between religion in its broader sense and the economic, social, and ecological issues confronting humanity. In a document prepared by the Council, "Global 2000 Revisited: The Critical Issues for the 21st Century," Dr. Gerald Barney challenged the religious leaders to respond creatively to the crises and new opportunities facing the planet.

Thirteen years earlier, Barney had directed the compilation of the Global 2000 Report upon the request of then President Jimmy Carter. At that time, he did not see the religious communities as an important factor in peacebuilding. But by 1993, Barney had reason to shift his viewpoint dramatically and had become convinced that global peacebuilding would be virtually impossible without the active participation and cooperation of religious and spiritual formations. By themselves political leaders will find it very difficult to successfully develop the vision to inspire and lead their constituencies to move forward into the next century.



Another significant aspect of the Conference was the presentation of a draft "Declaration of a Global Ethic" to the Conference<sup>4</sup>. The nine page document was approved in principle by several hundred prominent participants in the Parliament's Assembly of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, with the understanding that more work would be done to further develop it in the future. The Global Ethics, the first draft of which was contributed by the eminent German reformist theologian, Dr. Hans Kung, provides a declaration of responsibility for the religious leaders to work cooperatively for interfaith understanding, for just and peaceful resolution of conflicts throughout the world, and for the healing of Mother Earth.

Significantly, the Global Ethic provides a touchstone of accountability, declaring that "Any form of aggression or hatred in the name of god or religion is soundly condemned." All of the great religious scriptures decry the practice of murder, regardless of how it may be rationalized. The Global Ethic's denunciation of genocide and ethnic cleansing, for example, is directly applicable to the Bosnian tragedy. As the Da'lai Lama of Tibet put it, the Declaration can provide a focal point where world religious and spiritual communities and concerned individuals everywhere, can find a united voice to help prevent future Bosnias.

On the last evening of the Parliament, an Afro-American woman of the Baha'i faith read the Preamble to the Global Ethic to the assemblage, "We make a commitment to respect life and dignity, individuality and diversity, so that every person is treated humanely, without exception. . . . We consider humankind our family. We commit ourselves to a culture of non-violence, mutual respect, justice and peace." Each person on earth, whether of a religious inclination or not, is invited to join in the commitment to nurturing these basic ethical values.

The Global Ethic was further discussed by a commission at the World Conference of Religion and Peace meeting in Italy in November, 1994<sup>5</sup>. Delegates from several European countries noted that the Global Ethics document submitted in Chicago had drawn very heavily from religious scriptures, while scarcely making mention of the secular humanist contributions to the historic development of ethical standards. It was agreed that further refinement of the Ethic should give more acknowledgment to humanist contributions, and should seek more to find the shared common ground between religiously and secularly-based principles of human conduct.

The quest for a shared global ethos would assuredly be of great interest to Jean Gebser were he living today, for his work on the "evolutionary stages" of human consciousness and on world philosophy were pioneering contributions to this endeavor. Indeed, development of an integral consciousness by a substantial portion of humankind is most probably a co-requisite for any Global Ethic to be manifested in praxis.

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<sup>4</sup> Hans Kung, et al., *A Global Ethic*, presented to the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions, 9 pp.

<sup>5</sup> I was fortunate to have participated in the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions (Chicago), the World Fellowship of Religions Conference (Delhi, India) and the World Conference on Religion and Peace (Italy) during a 14-month period in 1993-94, where there was much discussion on the Global Ethic.

Gebser also had a keen understanding of the necessity to nurture a "world philosophy" which recognized the wisdom and contributions of all the world's cultures, not only those of the Western philosophic traditions. An emerging "world philosophy" will tap into the metaphysical, cultural, and esoteric heritages of the non-Western peoples, and will provide a substantial base for global peacebuilding in years to come<sup>6</sup>.

### **Personal Transformation**

In the transformative process, whether it be on an individual or collective level, cognitive knowledge alone will not suffice. A change in our ways of seeing and being in the world is necessary to support the "quantum leap" to a fuller sense of connectedness. It is this movement toward a new relationship with ourselves and nature that I am calling "a change of heart." How can a widespread realization of the unity of humanity and nature take place on a global scale? First, it will require that many individuals undergo the process of personal transformation in their own lives. For a new state of being to come into existence globally it literally must be lived into being in the lives of millions of men and women<sup>7</sup>.

In 1776 Thomas Paine wrote: "We have the power to begin the world anew." We still have this power today, but the problems facing the world today 200 years after the American and French Revolutions are far more complex than gaining political independence or dismantling a traditional class structure. Today we are engaged in a struggle for the survival of humanity that cannot be won with bullets or barricades. It requires a different sort of revolution, one that involves a quickening of the evolutionary process. Re-revolution in the literal sense of a complete turning around so that we look inward as well as outward is necessary not only for the survival of human civilization as we know it, but for the development of a truly humane society. In this revolutionary process, looking first inward and then outward, spiritual values based upon our essential unity are first recognized, next internalized, and then put into practice. From this process comes a revision of values, a deepening of insight, a willingness to listen empathetically and act in the best interest of the whole. Together these result in establishing a new relationship between the individual, humanity, and nature. Such an unprecedented turning by a substantial portion of humanity would indeed be revolutionary.

### **Inner Knowledge and Selfless Service**

The process of personal transformation can come about in two ways: 1) from a direct sense of connectedness initiated by turning within and 2) through selfless service to man and nature. In reality, these two paths, knowledge and service become one, for the meaning and purpose of knowledge is linked to service.

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<sup>6</sup> My views on how Gebser might perceive an emergent global ethic are extrapolated from his writing and from interpretive articles by such scholars as Algis Michunas, Georg Feuerstein, Eric Kramer and Michael Purdy.

<sup>7</sup> Some of those who have contributed to the author's understanding of transformational change are Thich Nat Hanh, Ken Wilbur, Baal Shem Tov, M. Scott Peck, Robert Muller, Elise Boulding, Huston Smith, Hazrat Inayat Khan, David Spangler, Renee Weber, Jean Gebser, Vadav Havel, Mother Teresa, Sant Rajinder Singh, Jacob Needleman, and *A Course in Miracles*.

The path of knowledge begins with a journey inward where domains of knowledge, outer/exoteric, and inner/esoteric are differentiated. Exoteric knowledge is based on information available in the world around us which we obtain through the rational mind and the senses. Esoteric knowledge is based upon direct knowing and often cannot be fully expressed by words alone. As such it is akin to scientific intuition which does not depend on logical analysis and is often manifested in visual images or symbols and only secondarily expressed in language. Many Eastern traditions refer to such knowledge of the inner self, born of mystic revelation and leading to that which has been called self-knowledge and God-realization. As the ancient Indian scriptures put it "When a man has that (knowledge), nothing else in the world remains to be known<sup>8</sup>."

Self-knowledge gained through the process of inner exploration is a natural process that all humans undergo to some extent; however, many of us find little of it in our lives. Each of us learns it according to our own readiness and the good fortune that brings us into contact with others that have accumulated more of it than we have. Some of the ways that people find an opening to their inner selves are through music, art, dance, experiencing places of natural beauty and/or solitude, meditation, contemplation, prayer, serving others, and in loving relationships. As with science and the arts inner knowledge is most efficiently learned from a competent teacher. For example, everyone has an inherent ability to draw and use language, however, very few great artists and poets have been self-taught. The availability and public acceptance of competent teachers of the methods to gain inner knowledge are perhaps the most important factors in accelerating this process for the rest of humanity. Each person's individual life journey is unique, and those who feel they have found a fruitful path for their own spiritual growth should avoid the mistaken assumption that such a practice is the appropriate way for everyone else.

The path of service is a path of action and the more freely our services are given the deeper our understanding becomes. The full flowering of service is seen in those whose actions benefit the plant and animal passengers on spaceship earth as well as humanity. When service is performed for the welfare of others, without thought of personal gain, we begin to become aware of the unity of life and the universal affinity behind creation. A sustainable future for planet earth and an equitable sharing of her resources are predicated on service beyond the realm of narrow self interest. To attain these goals, such service should be performed by all human, social, economic, and political entities including individuals, families, communities, corporations, and nations.

### **Changing the World – Knowledge Into Action**

How does personal transformation acting within the framework of spiritual democracy facilitate global change in system structure and function? By definition this transformation is an inner revolution, a complete turning around based on changing our own consciousness first and not on trying to convert others. The transformed individual teaches others not by precept but by setting an example in daily living. Those who have experienced this process of metanoia naturally begin to identify with the needs of others and seek to bring about

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<sup>8</sup> S. Prabhavananda and C. Isherwood (trans.), 1951, *Bhagavad-Gita*, New York: Mentor, p. 70.

their well-being. Global change begins with increased service to humanity and nature by the individuals so transformed.

Individual transformations grow into changes in larger scale organizations in several ways:

- When we become more familiar with the nature of inner reality we are more likely to support institutions that emphasize personal initiative, cooperation, and inclusiveness, which in turn will lay the groundwork for a more egalitarian, non-sexist, racially harmonious society.
- Each person can contribute to living a new world order into existence by changing their individual behavior. Consuming less and sharing the surplus is an empowering individual strategy which can promote equity and a right sharing of world resources. Reducing inputs to industrial processes as a means of reducing wastes and increasing efficiency by recycling and conservation efforts are the equivalent of this tragedy for larger scale units such as communities and corporations<sup>9</sup>.
- Finally, individuals can use systems thinking in deciding between alternative behaviors. The phrase "Think globally, act locally" encapsulates this strategy for change. Given accurate information to make a choice, we all can act in ways that are gentler to the earth and kinder to our fellow creatures.

### **Our Common Future**

In the interdependent world in which we live, virtually all people have a stake in achieving social equity, political inclusiveness and environmental sustainability. Getting in touch with our inner selves will quicken the evolutionary process moving us toward a sense of global community, and help to heal the rift between "haves and have nots." In this light Sant Darshan Singh of India wrote "We are witnessing the dawn of a spiritual revolution<sup>10</sup>." This revolution is not just for one religion or country but is a general phenomena in the evolution of humanity toward a "higher level" of consciousness. It is a necessary condition for our growth as individuals and for our survival as a species. Proceeding at varying speeds and in different cultural milieus throughout the world, this process cannot be accomplished or stopped by any individual person, religious group, or nation. Change is most likely to occur most rapidly in places where the people of democratic states have tapped into and chosen to act according to their highest inner values. It is fueled by the information revolution and catalyzed by leaders, teachers, and ordinary people who speak with authority, i.e. from personal experience, to the truth of our condition in the post-modern world.

The scope and complexity of world problems often seems so overwhelming; it is easy to forget that significant positive change is possible. However, the seeds of peaceful change have been sown and are being sown today within individuals, groups, and nations throughout the world<sup>11</sup>. Democracy is the fertile ground and spiritual insight the life giving

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<sup>9</sup> E.P. Odum, 1989, *Ecology and Our Endangered Life-Support Systems*, Sunderland, MA: Sinauer.

<sup>10</sup> Darshan Singh, 1982, *Spiritual Awakening*, Bowling Green, VA: Sawan Kirpal Publications, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Arthur Stein, 1985, *Seeds of the Seventies*, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England. For a comprehensive new book linking politics and spirituality see Corinne McLaughlin and Gordon Davidson, *Spiritual Politics: Changing the World From the Inside Out*, NY: Ballantine Books, 1994.

water that will support their growth and maturation. Each person's participation, wherever he or she may be, has significance in helping humankind to live in harmony with our planet and ourselves.

## Cultural Philosophy as Method and Venture<sup>12</sup>

by Jean Gebser

Translated by Georg Feuerstein

Our world is threatened by a crisis whose extent appears to escape those who have the power to make great decisions for good or evil. The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything—except our way of thinking. Thus we slide toward an unparalleled catastrophe. We need an essentially different way of thinking if humanity wants to survive.

—Albert Einstein

What is cultural philosophy? It is a scientific attempt peculiar to our epoch to appraise the multitude of cultural endeavors, that is to say, to uncover meaningful connections between them. Or, to formulate it more cautiously, it should and could be the now necessary attempt at an overview of the origin, present position, and trend of our cultural endeavors. In contrast to a mere worldview, which is ultimately always vague and emotionally charged, it could proceed from concrete facts rather than simply from idealizing postulates and identify the fundamental flux of our culture, also in its relationship to earlier or contemporaneous cultures. It could contribute to lifting the feeling of isolation that is prevalent today not only in individual scientific disciplines but in the general public.

Does there not exist today a need for such a cultural–philosophical effort? Not only the phenomenon of "general studies" points to this need but also the fact that only for the past few decades has there been talk of cultural–philosophical endeavors. As far as we have been able to determine, the term "cultural philosophy" made its appearance in the years after so-called World War I. It was for the first time used by Fritz Medicus in his Zurich lectures and, simultaneously, by Theodor Litt in his book *Individuum und Gemeinschaft, Grundlegung der Kulturphilosophie* (Individual and Society, Foundations of Cultural Philosophy), published in 1919.

However, for the initial work of a cultural–philosophical nature we may look to Jacob Burckhardt's *Weltgeschichtliche Betrachtungen* (Thoughts on World History)—consisting of lectures given during the winter months of 1868/69 and 1870/71 but published only in 1905. Burckhardt's universal approach—showing a rare world–openness and distancing from mere systems—gives his work a meaning and effective significance for today's humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*) that is perhaps comparable with that other accomplishment publicized in the same year—Einstein's first theory of relativity—which furnished the natural sciences with a new direction. There are three elements in Burckhardt's approach that permit us to risk such a comparison. He has outlined them himself in the introduction to his lectures. "History," he wrote, "and the historical consideration of the world and of time is beginning to penetrate our entire education. It is a high, if late, cultural stage that looks objectively at the past and thus at a large part of the present and that acknowledges relative justification and necessity in matters that were met with partisanship in previous centuries, and that recognizes even decline and

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<sup>12</sup> This essay first appeared in German under the title "Kulturphilosophie als Methode und Wagnis" in *Zeitwende/Die neue Furche*, vo. 27, no. 12 (Hamburg, 1956), pp. 813-820.

barbarism as stages of historical development. It was not contemporary philosophy that ushered in this advance but the witnessing of world events, particularly the French Revolution, and, earlier, the work of thoughtful men who did not belong to any one system, notably Herder." Regarding culture—which Burckhardt juxtaposed as a third potency to the twin potencies of state and religion—he observed that it is "the sum of those developments of the spirit that occur spontaneously." The three elements, which may be regarded as fundamental to cultural philosophy, are, firstly, the consciousness intensification typified by Burckhardt's approach, which grants relative justification (*Berechtigung*) to cultures that can be grasped historically; secondly, his remark about freedom from systems, which prepared the ground for "open thought"; and, thirdly, the recognition of the spontaneous character of the spiritual development of culture.

Proceeding from the art–historical and cultural–historical disciplines, Burckhardt was able to achieve universal validity in the consideration of cultural connections. The same was not the case in the same measure with other cultural–philosophical efforts. It is probably no accident that it was primarily thinkers bound to specific cults and religions who also could claim to be recognized as cultural philosophers. On the side of the Protestants—with a partial emphasis on sociology—we have Troeltsch, Max Weber, and Albert Schweitzer; on the side of the Catholics we have Christopher Dawson in England, Jacques Maritain in France, and Romano Guardini and A. Dempf in Germany. On the side of the orthodox Church we have Berdyayev, while Judaism is represented by Martin Buber. Coming from pedagogy, we must mention Eduard Spranger. More for their man–of–the–world attitude, we must name the Baltic Hermann Count Keyserling and the Spaniard José Ortega y Gasset. More comprehensive than the individuals named after Jacob Burckhardt were Spengler, Huizinga, Radhakrishnan, and Toynbee (whose work can be interpreted from a cultural–philosophical viewpoint). We will say more of these men.

Some names will undoubtedly be missed among those mentioned above. It is customary to elevate the legitimacy of a scientific discipline by tracing its beginnings back to the beginnings of our occidental culture. This also would be possible for cultural philosophy, for ever since Plato and Aristotle every philosophy necessarily also reflects on the cultural activity of humanity. On the other side, thinkers such as Laotse, Confucius, Cicero, Plutarch, Giambattista Vico, and Erasmus were cultural philosophers insofar as they summed up their respective culture. But here we are primarily interested in the following question: What is cultural philosophy today, or rather, what should it be? Given this, the question posed at the beginning—What is cultural philosophy?—has been rendered more difficult by the addition of the qualifying word "today." This must not scare us. On the contrary, this qualifier suggests to us a consideration that is revealing for us moderns. We can exemplify it by reference to Oswald Spengler: He is only conditionally relevant for us, for his cultural morphology is too dependent on his era with its biologicistic–vitalistic orientation. Arnold J. Toynbee's endeavor to go beyond Spengler in his *Study of History* by pitting his more productive overlap theory against Spengler's biologicistic evaluation of cultures is still not satisfactory from a cultural–philosophical perspective. The basis of this theory is, like Spengler's, too narrow. This becomes obvious when we refer to Huizinga for comparison. (By the way, Toynbee was obliged to admit at the plenary session of the "Comité International des Sciences Historiques in Paris in 1950 that his work is not so much historiography as a sociology of cultures.) Already in his *Homo Ludens, Im Schatten*

*von Morgen* (In Tomorrow's Shadow), and in his last volume of essays, Huizinga extended his basis beyond pure history and sociology to include ethnology and psychology. By comparison, S. Radhakrishnan's work *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*—based on lectures given at Oxford toward the late 1930s—remains stuck in comparative exposition of the history of religion and philosophy, although it has merit.

What I wish to express by the above reservations is this: Spengler, during the period from 1914 to 1918, and Huizinga and Radhakrishnan, until the outbreak of World War II, could still try to create a cultural philosophy that would be binding for us by taking into account only the humanities, emphasizing the history of culture and religion, or—as does Toynbee today—even the sociology of culture. But today any cultural–philosophical endeavor that is based merely on the humanities can no longer claim general validity. Rather it is now incumbent on the researcher in the humanities to also take cognizance of the findings of the natural sciences and psychology. Above all, he must assimilate their knowledge and take it into account. For in today's total scientific context, the new physics and depth psychology, not least also the analytical psychology of C. G. Jung, which has had a structural impact on numerous cultural provinces, have a decisive position.

Whether we researchers in the humanities like to accept it or not, the statement expressed by J. R. von Salis in his *Rencontres Internationales de Genève* (International Meetings in Geneva) is correct, namely that the nineteenth century was still a predominantly literary era whereas our own is characterized by the achievements of the natural sciences, technology, and depth psychology. Today no cultural philosophy is possible without knowledge of these disciplines or at least their methods and research findings. Ever since the unfortunate split of the sciences into natural sciences and humanities, provoked by Rickert and Dilthey at the turn of the century and as a result of which the humanities placed themselves in sterile haughtiness above the natural sciences, there has been a shift in favor of the natural sciences precisely because of the achievements of physics and technology, as well as depth psychology. Today cultural philosophy is dependent on the natural sciences. At the same time, it could conceivably be destined to reunite our fragmented scientific world. The empirical sciences cannot give the individual researcher moral fulfillment because they are bound to matter—and such fulfillment is surely a precondition for all somewhat meaningful work and for every somewhat meaningful life. The empirical sciences could find an anchorage in the humanities, while they in turn—as the example of depth psychology (S. Freud, C. G. Jung, G. R. Heyer, L. Szondi) shows—could be concretized through the assimilation of the research findings of the natural sciences. Cultural philosophy today should be the attempt to appraise the symptomatic facts of the various scientific disciplines, the arts, and everyday life in such a way that the unity of our culture is made visible and meaningful.

This definition also determines the place of cultural philosophy, which is neither above mathematics as the foundational discipline of the natural sciences nor above philosophy as the foundational discipline of the humanities. Cultural philosophy is between the natural sciences and the humanities; at best it is the connecting link between them, and at worst it is a hybrid. Which position it has is dependent on its representatives. But in contrast to the system-bound disciplines of the two main branches of science it is an *open* science; it is not so much a discipline or specialized science (*Fachwissenschaft*) as, if this expression be permitted, a science of specializations (*Fächerwissenschaft*).



Until Galilei, the quest of the sciences was "Why?" Since Galilei, as Alois Riehl pointed out in 1904 in his *Philosophie der Gegenwart* (Contemporary Philosophy), the natural sciences have been concerned with "How?" while the humanities continued to pursue the "Why?" The question of cultural philosophy is perhaps that of "By what?" For, if the humanities are more directed toward *being* and the natural sciences toward *having*, then cultural philosophy is perhaps concerned with the whole of the world. It should be the attempt to provide a meaning-giving account of all our cultural efforts and thus to serve as a connecting link between the natural sciences and the humanities, which is made possible by its openness toward all cultural manifestations. Therefore cultural philosophy demands the three Burckhardtian components mentioned above: acknowledgment of the spontaneity of the spirit, open thought instead of closed systems, and the intensification of consciousness through awareness of contexts.

What is the possible *method* of cultural philosophy? If the methods of the natural sciences and humanities are preeminently inductive and deductive, we can perhaps dare to characterize the method of cultural philosophy as reductive. However, cultural philosophy cannot achieve its task by means of reductive procedures alone. It must be preceded by phenomenological, comparative, and coordinating work. What does this mean? It sounds complicated but is only the logical adaptation of cultural philosophy to its specific task. This task consists in comprehending the results of the various natural sciences and humanistic disciplines. It considers these results as cultural phenomena and in this preparatory phase is in a certain sense cultural phenomenology. The next step is to attempt to compare the individual phenomena so that—in a third step, which is most difficult and ungrateful because it is evaluating—it can coordinate these phenomena to bring out their common denominator. Finally, this permits reduction to that which underlies the coordinated phenomena. This reduction is the attempt to reduce the most diverse but thematically related phenomena to the elements of their fundamental structure. Here the elements of the fundamental structure are those that constitute the universe and the human being at the deepest level and thus point beyond universe and human being. For only that which points beyond us is generally binding for us, grants true ethos, morality, and responsibility through awareness of the *religio*, the re-connection to the spiritual background of the world. This may sound rather demanding. But what is meant by "demand" (*Anspruch*)? It means not only to make a demand but also to respond to and satisfy it as someone who is spoken to (*Angesprochener*). We should remember that we are also an instrument, implying that a demand is made on us, for every instrument serves a purpose. Whether and to what degree we can meet this demand, never mind satisfy it, we are not to judge. Our task is merely to accept this demand and endeavor to respond to it appropriately. Cultural philosophy attempts to make a modest contribution to this task. In the word "culture" is contained the word "cult," which is not without obligations for us. For "cult," which was used synonymously with "culture" for a long time, means "service." Hence mentioning service above was not accidental. But these are generic statements. Let us return to the question of method and try to describe it with the help of an example.

Each culture and each epoch has its own preoccupations corresponding to its particular degree or structure of consciousness; at least on the surface, each views and evaluates, as well as reacts to the world differently. Asia views and feels destiny and freedom, and We

and the I, differently from the Occident; its way of looking at time is also distinct from ours. Since destiny and freedom, We-ness and I-ness, depend largely on the cognition of time, it is not idle to ask what time actually is. He who regards destiny as inescapable and as an external numinously charged power has a different relationship to life, death, and love (that is, to the I-Thou-relationship or I-We-relationship) than he who, accepting destiny, liberates himself from its blind influence; rather, for him time becomes an available, life- and culture-shaping magnitude. Anthropologically speaking, we need to know: Am I time? Do I have time? Or does time have me? These questions also are relevant to cultural philosophy.

For instance, how can cultural philosophy get compellingly to the bottom of time, which is a fundamental phenomenon of culture? It must take cognizance of the time conception in the various cultures and cultural spheres. The time conception of physics is different from that of biology or psychology. From the point of view of physics, time is a measurable quantity; biologically speaking, it is less linear and more rhythmic; viewed psychologically, it is, as is borne out by dreams, partly process and partly timelessness; from a national economic perspective, it is labor; it appears irrelevant to a painter; for a poet it can be the spontaneity of the spiritual; for a philosopher it is either ideal form (Kant) or *durée*, duration (Bergson), or a precondition—as temporal constitution—of the constitution of every spatial thing (Husserl).

How does cultural philosophy respond to such a multidimensional phenomenon? First, it takes cognizance of those values and interpretations as manifestations, that is, regards them phenomenologically. Then it compares the various definitions of time, taking into account the respective methods by which those definitions were arrived at. This comparison next makes a clean coordination of phenomena possible. This is followed by a reduction of the various time phenomena to their common foundation—a reduction that shows time in its innermost character to be a world constituent, possibly the creative principle itself. What does such an interpretation, which can conceivably be a real discovery, mean? It means, for instance, that the physicist can become aware of the deeper connectedness of his time conception, which is his daily tool, to the world as a whole; that he realizes the deep necessity and also the relativity of his time conception; and that his knowledge does not remain the kind of knowledge that merely creates knowledge but that also can be lived.

Thus the reductive method of cultural philosophy begins with a phenomenological process and proceeds to comparison and coordination, which enable the reductive process.

The daring venture of cultural philosophy consists in the attempt to master three great difficulties: many-sidedness, the current rapidly changing knowledge base, and the identification of the great ideas.

The many-sidedness, multiplicity, even disparateness of the phenomena that cultural philosophy must confront is terrifying; to assimilate them all is scarcely possible for a single person. The findings of the natural sciences, humanities, the arts, and so on are of varying value; some are empirical, others are theoretically based; some are crystal clear, others hampered by irrationalism; and many specialists are at first shocked when they encounter their own research findings in an unfamiliar context. But however different and differently assimilated the manifold results may be, they always represent knowledge

whose coordination and reduction can be beneficial for the knowledge of our culture. That such a venture is feasible is demonstrated by the work of C. G. Jung. He, a physician, opened up areas of our culture that no other psychologist before him would have dared to consider: mythology, ethnology, history of religion, Indology, Sinology, gnostic studies, patristic studies, alchemy, and physics. As far as the orientation toward multiplicity is concerned, it can be served by conversations with eminent representatives of the individual disciplines, as a basis for subsequent practical collaboration in the sense of an *universitas litterarum*.

The rapid growth of knowledge—that very strange relationship today between the flux of time and fast-growing knowledge—is a hindrance only when the cultural-philosophical gaze is not penetrating enough, when our thinking is not sufficiently open, and when our conceptual approach is not adequately comprehensive and foresightful.

We now come to the last difficulty. The sound idea—or to express a seemingly paradoxical fact paradoxically: knowledge *prior* to proof—that is to say, invention, which is also necessary for the cultural philosopher, removes from his work, his discipline of specialties, the ominous suspicion that he merely exploits the findings of other disciplines and that his achievement is only secondhand. His work consists in striving toward knowledge that integrates the many individual understandings. Albert Einstein wrote in his contribution to the jubilee edition of *Hochschulzeitung* (Zurich), his last published work: "Invention is not a product of logical thought, although the final result is bound by the structure of logic." If this statement holds true for natural science, it undoubtedly—to express it carefully—holds no less true for the humanities. We cannot do without invention, inspiration, the great idea. For the physicist there is the possibility to give his findings a logical structure, whereas the researcher in the humanities must in every case be content with the evidence itself.

Apart from the aforementioned difficulties, which, at best, may be overcome, cultural philosophy is a daring venture because every endeavor regarding the spiritual is a daring venture. It would not be such a venture if we knew what the spiritual ultimately is. We may have beliefs about this, but we cannot know. Perhaps the unplumbable sorrow that can be called a basic component of creaturehood and therefore also of the human being is rooted in this fact. However, only a person who has learned to smile can know of it. To smile means to be conscious and thus to have distance from that primal sorrow. Smiling is a reflection of the spiritual, the great riddle of the human face. Let us recall, to mention only one example, the enigmatic but relaxed smile (a smile in which the enigma appears released) of the angel in the cathedral of Reims. He who takes upon himself the daring venture of the spiritual should first learn that smile. Yet it cannot be learned. It is a gift. He who smiles in this manner participates in the enigma of existence. He remains silent. But, perhaps to create a counterbalance, we must speak.

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**INTRODUCTION TO TWO ESSAYS BY JEAN GEBSER**

**Utrecht Conference on Parapsychology in 1953**

Noel Barstad

Ohio University

In 1953 and 1954, Jean Gebser was invited to participate in two "International Conferences of Parapsychological Studies" held under the auspices of the Parapsychology Foundation of New York. President of the foundation at that time was the celebrated medium Eileen Garrett. The first conference was held from July 30 to August 5, 1953, in Utrecht, the Netherlands, where a parapsychology institute had recently been established at the University. The second conference took place from April 20 to 26, 1954 at St-Paul-de-Vence in Southern France and was specifically devoted to "Philosophy and Parapsychology," a focus that had been suggested at the Utrecht conference by Jean Gebser who, together with Gabriel Marcel (Paris) and Professor H.H. Price (Oxford), was responsible for the program. Among the participants were the physicist Pascual Jordan (Hamburg) and Aldous Huxley. Jean Gebser's paper for the Utrecht conference was published in a drastically abbreviated and inadequately translated form under the title: "The Conscious and the Unconscious: a Misleading Dilemma" in the conference proceedings (N.Y.: Parapsychology Foundation, 1954). The complete version printed below has been newly translated on the basis of a copy of the official conference summary and the French version published in the *Revue Metapsychique*, No. 29-30, Paris, Mai-Aout and appears here with its correct title: "The Conscious and the Unconscious: a Misleading Choice."

Gebser's presentation at St-Paul-de-Vence was a part of the conference session devoted to "Psyche and Matter: the Validity of the Dualistic Hypothesis" and is here given its correct title that, for unknown reasons, was changed to "Mind and Matter..." in the abridged version later printed in the *Proceedings of Four Conferences on Parapsychology*, N.Y.: Parapsychology Foundation, 1957. As in the case of "The Conscious and the Unconscious" all of the extant versions of "Psyche and Matter" contain errors of various kinds (such as "Schrodinger's and de Broglie's world-mechanics," that came about through a misprint in the German original: *Weltenmechanik* instead of *Wellenmechanik* = wave mechanics). It is presented here in a corrected and unabridged version on the basis of the original German text in Gebser's literary estate that also restores the many references to the relevance of his arguments to parapsychology, all but one of which were removed in the published version of the *Proceedings*. As with all of Gebser's writings, the importance of these two brief essays goes beyond the subject matter at hand.

## THE CONSCIOUS AND THE UNCONSCIOUS: A MISLEADING CHOICE

Jean Gebser (Switzerland)

Among the dominant conceptions in psychology today is the dualistic assumption of a "conscious" as opposed to an "unconscious." As parapsychology has inherited this terminology, we must ask ourselves if it is accurate, since our terminology determines to a certain extent the direction of our thought and may lead us to erroneous ideas and misleading conclusions. We must examine the legitimacy of using the terms "conscious" and "unconscious"; and in so doing, we will discover that we are dealing with a misleading dichotomy, and that the juxtaposition of these terms leads to a falsification of reality.

I need not remind you here of the history of the term "unconscious." It first appeared in scholastic philosophy and later had an important role in the philosophy of Leibniz and his successors. Ever since Freud, the "unconscious" has had a dominant place in the terminology of psychology. In my "Contribution to the History of the Awakening of Consciousness" [*The Ever-Present Origin*], I have attempted to establish that both in human history and in our individual lives we must admit the existence of differing degrees or structures of awareness. I have had to repudiate the terminology of the 19th century that assumed that there was a brightness of consciousness on the one hand, and the darkness of the unconscious on the other. Such a dualistic approach, painting in black and white, seems to us very primitive. It is based on the habit of materialistic natural scientists of forming dichotomies out of simple concepts that are then elevated to the status of axioms of principles, such as "body and soul," "organic and inorganic." Such conceptual pairs have been demonstrated to be unreal alternatives—or, to use the term of sociologist Walther Tritesch, "false" alternatives.

It is not a matter of mental thought processes being of a conscious nature, whereas psychic experiences and vital manifestations are of an unconscious nature. The differences between them are to be found in the differing degrees or intensity of awareness. I have sought, therefore, to identify the various degrees or structures of consciousness, of which the following three are the most important:

- 1) *The magic structure of consciousness.* It corresponds to deep sleep, does not know of time and space, and has its domain in a one-dimensional world. It is vegetative, instinctual, and vitalistic in nature.
- 2) *The mythical structure of consciousness.* It corresponds to dream states, knows time but not space, and inhabits a two-dimensional world. It is psychic in nature.
- 3) *The mental structure of consciousness.* It corresponds to wakefulness, to life in time and space in a three-dimensional world. It is essentially rational in nature.

We should add that the magic structure was preceded by an archaic structure of zero dimensions, antecedent as it were to any awareness of time and space. And in our times the mental structure seems to be in the process of being superseded by a new structure of consciousness comprising a world of four dimensions.

Parapsychology deals with phenomena that are not merely a part of a vast "unconscious," but are instead specifically linked partly to the archaic and partly to the magic and mythical structures of consciousness. We must realize, for example, that phenomena that originate in the magic structure actually occur in a world lacking the categories of time and

space, and their existence is not associated with temporal and spatial factors. This may seem inconceivable to those who cannot detach themselves from the world of causality and who cannot accept the pre-causal or ante-causal relationships described in Jung's study of synchronicity. The phenomena belonging to the magic universe are, in essence, not merely a-causal, "free from the causal nexus," but ante-causal. Their relationship to each other could best be described as "living connections."

The alternative "animism-spiritualism" is another instance of a misleading conceptual pair, like the dichotomies "the here-and-now-the hereafter," or "life and death." Life and death are not two contrasting phenomena, because for the individual they are permanently present as a single indissoluble whole.

It is of decisive importance that we know and are able to distinguish with precision in our research the different realms of reality to which the phenomena under investigation belong; and not as we customarily regard them, but rather according to their inherent nature. Once the differentiation of the structures of consciousness is established phenomenologically, we shall be able to grasp the inner reality of the phenomena. The "black and white" approach, the formula "conscious versus the unconscious" overlook the distinctions between consciousness in its wakeful state as distinguished from dreams, from deep sleep, and so on. The undifferentiated approach leads the researcher from false alternatives and dichotomies to false conclusions; the attempt to use the strong light of our diurnal consciousness to explore the "unconscious" is comparable to employing a blowtorch to investigate the structure of a snowflake.

It is the nature of magic phenomena to be secret, occult, and hidden. Any attempt to "clarify" them is an attempt that will destroy them. Every effort to penetrate into the world of the magic structure by means inappropriate to this structure will only lead to confusing results and misinterpretations. We can reduce somewhat the degree of falsification if we admit in our research Heisenberg's law of indeterminacy. This means that in every experiment in which we employ methods connected with the factor of space, while dealing with a world in which time and space do not exist, we will produce results that are approximate and imprecise.

In our investigations of parapsychological phenomena we must strive to take into account the structure of the particular domain to which they belong. Only then will we be able to approach reality and obtain results superior to those obtained by using the misleading "conscious vs. the unconscious" hypothesis.

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**PSYCHE AND MATTER: THE VALIDITY OF THE DUALISTIC HYPOTHESIS**

Jean Gebser

When dealing with the problematic pairing of the terms "psyche" and "matter" it is useful to begin by emphasizing again the degree to which the old dualistic hypothesis has lost its validity. In psychosomatic medicine, for instance, it has been abandoned completely. At the Utrecht conference I noted that we should be speaking of the various degrees or intensities of consciousness rather than of the false alternative of the "conscious" as opposed to an "unconscious." The same is true of the juxtaposition of "psyche" and "matter," both in psychosomatics and in philosophy itself; Professor Price's remarks on this subject were so trenchant that I do not need to elaborate further.

I would prefer instead to address an issue that we might define as the structural change in our perception of reality—a change evident everywhere today. It can be characterized in three words: the overcoming of dualism. This fact, it seems to me, is of particular value for parapsychological research, especially as the abandonment of the dualistic hypothesis is evident not only in the natural sciences, but in the prevailing attitudes of today as well.

In the natural sciences, Einstein has done away with the former dualism of energy versus mass/matter, just as psychosomatic medicine has eliminated the former antithesis of body and soul. The dualistic distinction between "organic" and "inorganic" is largely irrelevant for quantum biology; and the validity of the dichotomy of "subject" and "object" has been questioned by existential philosophy, as well as by Gabriel Marcel in his remarks at this conference, and also by the conclusions drawn by Arthur March and Heisenberg from their observations of atomic processes. Planck's quantum theory, Schrodinger's and de Broglie's wave mechanics, Bohr's principle of complementarity, and Heisenberg's principle of indeterminacy all have implications that do not correspond to the dualistic attitude. These examples will not be explored further here because of space limitations, since we wish to avoid a popularizing treatment of these discoveries that would merely manipulate clichés lacking the requisite terminological precision.

In summary, let us simply note as a fact that the dualistic principle has to a great extent lost its validity. The supersession of dualism in the natural sciences has had far-reaching consequences, most evident in the altered relationship to the phenomenon of time, notably in a structurally novel valuation of "time." Indeed, it would seem that the question or problem of time is preeminent; and this relates to the abandonment of the dualistic principle because certain aspects of chronological time have been traditionally viewed as antitheses: for example, past and future, in which the past denotes events that have already occurred, the future events that have not yet taken place.

What is, then, the new and novel conception of what has been traditionally called "time"? Time, for traditional dualistic thinking, was a chronologically ordered progression; for the new attitude—itself an outgrowth of the change in the structure of our thinking—time is an integral realization. Stated more precisely: time is not only a sequence of past, present, and future, i.e., divided time, but also the interplay of the three aspects that make up the essence of the pre-existing whole. (To preclude any misunderstanding, we would caution that the work "pre-existing" in this context should not be given a deterministic or fatalistic sense, just as the term "the whole" must not be understood as postulating a form of neo-monism or holism. "Pre-existing" refers to the "pre-existent" design of life: the given

structure that always includes potentialities and consequently an element of indeterminacy.)

Because we have been dealing the past two days with the question of "pre-cognition"—a question closely related to our conception or estimation of time—and will be addressing tomorrow the question of "survival" after death—again a problem of time—my remarks can perhaps serve as a bridge between these two discussions.

My assertion that "time" is no longer regarded as a sequence, but as a pre-existent whole is corroborated by numerous instances both in the natural sciences and in statements by the outstanding poets of our time—the seismographs of our age. This seems to me to be portentous. And what is of particular significance for parapsychological research is the fact that the structure of the present-day "spirit of the times" is very accommodating to discussions of parapsychology. I am using the term "spirit of the times" in Schelling's sense as the basic mood or current of an entire era.

My assertion that time is today no longer exclusively regarded as a sequence of events or a dualistic antithesis of past and future, but as the "pre-existent whole" is borne out by several quotations. First, there is the familiar quotation by Eddington: "Events do not happen; they are just there, and we come across them. The 'formality of taking place' is merely the indication that the observer has on his voyage of exploration passed into the absolute future of the event in question; and it has no important significance."

At first glance there is something incomprehensible, even frightening about this statement for the traditional manner of thinking. We do not need to take into account here that Eddington's statement is a consequence of Einstein's conception of a four-dimensional space-time continuum (that Heisenberg and others corroborated by their discoveries of the spatio-temporal structure of sub-atomic processes). If we restate Eddington's remark in every-day language it simply means that the future is always present.

At very nearly the same time that Eddington made his statement (1923/24), a famous German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, expressed the very same thought in his own way: "Wishes are the memories coming from our future." Mme. Lou Albert-Lasard, who first made this statement of Rilke's known, remarks that Rilke intended this to mean "that to a certain extent the future is already contained in the past, and what we call the future is as effective as what we call the past. Both, united together in us, form the complete present."

A first indication—that we must include here—of the fact that the future could be a co-creator of the present can be found in the writings of Nietzsche. Several years after Nietzsche, there is a verse of Stephane Mallarme: "The star ripens from the morrow." And shortly before the turn of the century, analytical psychology discovers the possible presence of the future in the occurrence of dreams.

Despite the surprising similarity of the statements by Eddington and Rilke, the similarity could be merely coincidental. Even the anticipatory statements by Nietzsche, Mallarme and C.G. Jung could be just another coincidence. But then why do two of the greatest poets of our times, the Spanish poet Jorge Guillen and T.S. Eliot, each in his own way, express around 1939, the same thought? Guillen, doubtless the most significant Spanish poet of our century, writes: "*Donde estan, cuando ocurren? No hay historia. / Hubo un ardo que eseste ardor. Un dai/Solo, profundizado en la memoria, / A su eterno presente se confia,*" the sense of which is: "The events—where are they, when do they take place? There is no



so-called history. There was a glowing, and this is still glowing. A single day, deeply engraved in our recollection, entrusts itself to the eternal present." And T.S. Eliot writes; "The things that are going to happen have already happened."

Professor Jordan has mentioned an observation of Heisenberg's that, to my mind, takes on an additional contour with respect to Eliot's remark. In the context of observations of the behavior of mesons, Heisenberg stated:

In very minute space-time regions, i.e., in those on the order of magnitude of elemental particles, space and time are strangely obliterated in such a way that we can no longer even correctly define the terms 'earlier' or 'later' in such minute units of time. Of course in the world of macrophenomena nothing in the space-time structure would be altered; but we must reckon with the possibility that experiments with events in extremely minute space-time realms will show that certain processes appear to take place contrary to the temporal sequence required by the laws of causality.

This observation of Heisenberg's was made in 1952 during a lecture series on "The New Perception of the World" at the Institute of Commercial and Social Sciences in St. Gallen, Switzerland that was devoted to my thesis of the "aperspectival world." In a subsequent discussion with Heisenberg it was noted that his statement must be understood as a recognition of a spatio-temporal structure in which time has not yet unfolded or "fanned out"—comparable to that one-dimensional structure of which I spoke in the first part of *The Ever-Present Origin*. We are dealing here with a time that could be defined as the "germ of time," whose particular energy and behavior is revealed by the observation of mesons. For this reason it is important to emphasize that in the remarks of both Heisenberg and T.S. Eliot the accent is on the non-definability of "earlier" or "later."

All of the statements cited here are indications of our altered relationship to time. This relationship has found a valid expression in Aldous Huxley's novel *Time Must Have a Stop*. The final pages of his book, devoted to "mnemosyne" and the "present," are an unequivocal indication that the time that "must have a stop" is chronological time. In other words, we must stop regarding time as being only chronological and instead familiarize ourselves with the way time has been understood and expressed in the statements of Nietzsche, Mallarme, Jung, Eddington, Rilke, Eliot, Guillen, Heisenberg, and Aldous Huxley, among others. The agreement between statements about time that resulted from scientific discoveries, and those that occurred spontaneously and authentically to poets, can be considered a further corroboration of this new relationship of our day to time.

With the altered relationship to time a basic structural transformation of our thinking has become a reality. The extent of this structural transformation will be evident if we carry our deliberations on the new attitude to their next logical conclusion: wherever "time" is no longer considered as a sequence, but as a pre-existing whole, the great fears, anxieties, despair, and nihilism of our era will no longer be a problem. Life is then no longer a "being unto death" (Heidegger) or a mere passage toward a nihilistic future. We are then no longer condemned to "annihilating nothingness" (Heidegger), but instead begin to share in the wealth of meaningfulness and certainty—definite new forms of security and freedom from fear and anxiety. And it is precisely this wealth of meaningfulness that could become evident through parapsychological investigations and research.

Anyone able to regard his or her own life and existence as an integral whole within the context of the whole, like the physicists, psychologists, and poets mentioned above, anyone

able, as they were, to accept the future as the present, is accepting his or her own destiny. And acceptance of one's destiny means freedom. And this freedom, once gained, has a remarkable corollary: that our freedom to affirm our destiny can be transformed to a great extent into a freedom from our destiny. (And it should be evident that in this transformation the potentiality for shaping ourselves is not excluded, but underscored, and that full acceptance of our responsibilities is required.)

It may perhaps be noted in passing that the new attitude towards time is not foreign to Christian belief. Until now it has been, of course, an article of faith, since God knows neither past nor future, but is ever-present. I believe it to be a notable achievement of our age that it has been able to transform an article of faith into verified knowledge. And it is perhaps of significance for parapsychological studies that the consciousness of our age is abandoning the dualistic mode of thought and laying the foundations of a new relationship to the question of time.

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