

INTEGRATIVE EXPLORATIONS

Journal of Culture and Consciousness

The Journal of the Jean Gebser Society

January 1997/Volume 4 Number 1



An Introduction to the Philosophy of Jean Gebser

Sacred Dimensions of the Shaman's Web

Gebser's Archaic Consciousness and Wilber's Critique

Cave and Labyrinth

(Introduced and Translated by Georg Feuerstein)

On Living and Loving

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The Cosmic Form of Siva

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Advertising and the Philosophy of Jean Gebser

Algis Mickunas

Pat Arneson

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Integrative Explorations is the official journal of the Jean Gebser Society. The journal is edited in cooperation with Division of Liberal Arts—Communications Program, 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

We have finally completed a goal we have been working on since the inception of this journal. We have brought to publication an Algis Mickunas lecture introducing the work of Jean Gebser. This presentation was given as part of a year-long honors colloquium—"An Inquiry into the Human Spirit"—at the University of Rhode Island in 1978-1979. This lecture is one of the clearest and most interesting introductions to the work of Jean Gebser and we are pleased to finally bring it to our readers. We had hoped to have it ready for the first volume of the *Integrative Explorations Journal*, but Dr. Mickunas had lost half of the original document. Luckily, the organizers of the colloquium (Profs. Mike Purdy and Arthur Stein) had a transcription for the speech that we were able to work from. After many hours of editing (thanks to Algis Mickunas, Kevin Williams and Michael Purdy) we offer you this fascinating lecture.

In an article on the shaman's web, Pat Arneson explores Gebser's structures of consciousness as related to the "levels" of Native American shaman experience. This comparison raises some challenging questions about Gebser's structures and how they fit the Native American experience. I think most of us would describe the primary experience of Native American's as magical with mythical elements. And certainly the archaic is present. The mental structure is present from the Western influence. How the integral is expressed is most interesting. I leave each reader to judge for themselves the issues this raises. I think it challenges us to explore other mystic/shamanic traditions to compare how they might be described.

Another very interesting selection we are pleased to present for this journal issue is a dialogue between Georg Feuerstein and Ken Wilber. Apparently Wilber has had some differences with Gebser over Origin and its relationship to the structures of consciousness. Feuerstein reviews Wilber's arguments and—I think—very impartially puts the "problems" of understanding the Origin in "perspective." This piece has helped me rethink Gebser's idea of the Origin and I expect it will get your juices going too.

We have again brought forward translations of Jean Gebser's work that were originally published in the *Gebser Network Newsletter* to fill out this issue. It is difficult to find works of Jean Gebser in translation, other than *The Ever-Present Origin*. This time we are reprinting "Cave and Labyrinth" and "On Living and Loving", both introduced and translated by Georg Feuerstein. Enjoy. These are wonderful additions to our literature on Gebser and consciousness.

At the last minute we added three additional pieces, one descriptive of the cosmic role of Siva, a second talking about the complementary role of the sculptures at Mithuna in Indian experience, and finally, a piece using Gebser to talk about advetsing.

Announcement: The next **Jean Gebser Conference** will be held Oct. 30—Nov. 1, 1997, at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, founding home of the Gebser Society. Information and a call for papers will be included with this journal. The theme will be: **The Archeology of Consciousness: Communication and Culture**. For further information see separate conference announcement or contact the editor.

Also, see the last pages of this journal for several announcements of important work related to the purpose of the journal.

An Introduction to the Philosophy of Jean Gebser

Algis Mickunas
Ohio University

Preface: Algis Mickunas and Civilizational Consciousness.

Algis Mickunas is a “world philosopher,” whose approach draws upon the unique contributions of every culture. His work takes him into the religion, art, mythology, etc., of the various civilizations and hence the modes of consciousness that accompany them. He is a man who lives his “culture-free” philosophy, believing that experiencing ideas is equally as important as talking about them. Presently he is director of the Center for Jean Gebser Studies at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. He is co-author of *Exploring Phenomenology*, and translator (with Noel Barstad) of *The Ever-Present Origin* by Jean Gebser (1905–1973) who is considered by many to be one of the three major thinkers of our century along with Teilhard de Chardin and Martin Heidegger. The following presentation by Mickunas is primarily based on the work of Jean Gebser and gives a synopsis of the various consciousness strictures inherent in the experience of the different Civilizations. As Mickunas explains: “It is to be noted that Gebser is not intent on supplanting the theoretical work of others concerning civilization but on correlating various factors which were neglected by other researchers. One such area is the development of the structures of consciousness, awareness or perception in various civilizations across various historical periods. The term “consciousness” does not mean some inherent characteristic in human physiology, psychology or other such metaphysical notion or some universal mind developing itself through nature and history like Hegel; consciousness rather consists of concrete structures given in various modalities of expression, such as linguistic, religious, social, artistic, architectural etc.. If it is unexpressed, we have no basis to claim that it is present in some mysterious fashion. If it is expressed, then the expression must be taken for granted as a phenomenon and correlated to other expressions to note the structure to which they belong.

The Speech

Although there are explanatory theories of consciousness based on physiology, evolution, material causes and even extra-terrestrial interventions, Gebser points out that such explanations are speculative imputing to the expressions and civilizational phenomena factors which are not part of the phenomena. The only major theoretical conclusion that Gebser’s correlation of various civilizational phenomena has suggested is that consciousness structures do not develop linearly but undergo mutations. There are historical periods during which all civilizational components undergo structural transformations expressed through various symbolic means such as, basic shifts in linguistic metaphors, death and birth of divinities, aesthetic expressions, social organizations and even physiological emphases. At the same time, Gebser is against any speculative derivation of such transformations from one set of phenomena. Using modern theories of V. von Weizsaecker in psychosomatics, Gebser points out that neither of the two components are treated as causally prior or more fundamental. By analogy, no particular, expressed civilizational component ought to be treated as “the” cause of or prior to all other phenomena. We, by the statements of many scholars, live in an age of transition. We live in a period between two worlds, one dead and one trying to be born. To understand this transition we must understand where it is we’re coming from, and somehow where we are going. As background we need to consider the assumptions involved in the notion of consciousness. The first assumption is that the

world appears to us as it does not on the basis of “things as they are in themselves,” as Kant would say, but rather as they are given to our human experience, or consciousness. Once you begin to work in various civilizations you notice their modality of living, of doing art, of loving, of hating, of having gods and of parent-child relationships, and you discover that they have different patterns, but in such a way that those patterns are not localized in a particular time or in a particular area, but appear across entire humanity at different times and different places.

The Archaic Structure

Let me then introduce you to the first stage of discoverable human consciousness. Consciousness here, however, does not mean private consciousness but rather a structure in which a particular human being or a particular group of human beings, or in fact, a particular culture operates, understands itself and has a meaning. Going as far as we can go into the origins of human experience we discover the first pattern of consciousness called archaic. The pattern takes its name from the Greek word *arkhaios* (original structure, the first structure) with the implication that the structure is not the first in time. It may appear anywhere and indeed, it is still operative in our own lives.

The idea is that what we hold as consciousness structures are not developed through linear, historical or evolutionary process, but rather, are copresent in all our situations. That is, the very original structure from which consciousness evolved is still present although we didn't notice it. We have not thematized it, in fact, we have neglected it. The method that I going to work with, however, has yielded to many people fruits which were inaccessible before. For example Dr. Jores, a physiologist and psychiatrist has been working with the question of human growth in terms of age and what humans at a particular age do and what sort of functions they possess. Those functions he discovered are quite akin to what we call the archaic structure.

What constitutes archaic structure? First of all we have no direct evidence left from the archaic structure in any civilization. We can only infer, and the inferences came from later writings or sayings about earliest human beings. We find them specifically in Chinese culture such that for example, the Chinese sage Chuang Tzu states that the early men slept dreamlessly. That is, the early human beings slept without dreams. Note that they never said “primitive” people, they said early humans. What I'm pointing to is that none of the consciousness structures that I describe count as primitive. It is only in a particular civilization such as Western that we count others as primitive. Other civilizations do not consider the earliest stages as primitive.

Now what does “dreamless sleep” imply? According to Jean Gebser, whenever we find statements pointing to dreamless sleep we find also the lack of psyche, the lack of psychic consciousness. That is, what we call psyche, what we call the psychological human dimension is lacking there because dreams require psyche. So the first notion is that since there is no psyche, there are no specific differentiations and therefore the experience of the human being, that is consciousness, was totally identical with the whole. The second item suggestive of the archaic structure is the early Chinese chromatic symbolism where, for example, blue and green are non-differentiated. The common word *ch'ing* is used for the color of the sky and for the sprouting plant. This suggests the non-differentiation not only between chromatic aspects, but also between earth and sky. Such a non-differentiation is found in early Greek writings where it is said that “Not from me but from my mother comes the tale that earth and sky were once together.” Perhaps the archaic structure helps explain not only the above allusions to the non-differentiation of phenomena but also the controversial Platonic statement that “the soul came into being simultaneously with the sky.” The human being was totally immersed in the world unable to extricate himself or herself from that world. They were identical with that world. That is to say, there is a world of identity to begin with in the

archaic stage, and the science in various cultures points to this identity. If, for example, you talk about “preconscious life,” although that is a modern term, you can say that there is no differentiation in that preconscious life, between a human and his or her world. Although Gebser does not offer any further clues concerning the archaic structure, there are scholars who follow Gebser’s suggestions and attempt to show that without the archaic structure human life is impossible. Dr. Jores, a researcher in biology, mentioned earlier, suggests that the archaic structure is operative at the most fundamental level of human identity with the world:

Beyond consciousness of man there is in us a power of ordering. By this I understand the phenomena where sickness arises not only through external injury, infection or virus, but also through inner necessity. As an example I suggest some investigations reported by Puchta and myself, toward the end of the fifties, concerning the so called ‘retirement mortality.’ Statistically we could show the increased rate of mortality of people who retire. The investigations of the life conditions of these persons consistently revealed that death occurred when the person saw his life as no longer significant or fulfilled. The fact that when life has no content and death follows quite frequently within a year of retirement, indicates that there is a mechanism totally removed from our consciousness. These are signs for a deeply rooted knowledge, totally removed from our will and consciousness; a ‘knowledge’ which could very well be called archaic. This of course must not be identified with Freud’s unconscious.

The Magical Structure

Now the transition from the archaic, zero-dimensional structure to the magical structure is a mutation toward a one-dimensional unity whose symbol is the point. As such it is important for the understanding of the expressions and comportment of magical man and his civilization. The symbol of the point hints at the emergent centering in man leading toward the ego-logical consciousness, and it also expresses the spaceless and timeless one-dimensionality comprising the magical man’s world. This magical structure is a mode of consciousness that is more accessible to our own experience. It has nothing, however, to do with pulling rabbits out of hats. Magic here refers to man’s civilization, his web of relationships, and to the unity of experienced spatial and temporal events. This unity means that any event is unitary, is a space-time event, and that any event, entity, activity can be exchanged for any other. In this sense the soul is not yet inside but strewn among all events. This allows for an immediate effectivity of any action or event with any other and is the basis for the multitude of souls and the animistic direction of worship in magic structure, but in such a way that the relationship is not one of power but of making. This suggests the basic structure of magical man in the root word of magic. The word magic comes from the Indo-Germanic root *mag(h)*, and from it we get an entire syndrome of linguistic habits related to making power. In the German language *macht* is power, and coming from the same root are such words as “make,” “machine”, “mechanism”. Also “wanting”, *mochten* comes from the same root, so it’s a field of power-related words.

The interchangeability of points allows the magical man to perform magic and soothsaying, to implement totem and taboo. The making, the magic is related to the units which are vital for the continuation of life; this gives rise to the vital, vegetative consciousness with emergent instincts and drives. And at the same time if we see what the residue, the carry-over, from that magical dimension to the present is, we find it to be connected with the vital region, with the vital consciousness. As you know from reading history, philosophy and anthropology, the vital is the very nature of human life. In fact, we always find a peculiar tripartition, including the vital, the psychological, and the mental. That tripartition was described by Plato, assumed by Aristotle, and throughout our entire tradition we have thought of man as having three dimensions.

Hence, this division is not arbitrary, rather humanity contains the dimensions of experience which are vital, psychic and mental, and this vital dimension was once totally predominant.

Now what constitutes vitality? When we notice the kind of traces left by human beings of those periods, we find in carpet weavings for example, in Persia and so forth, that the human being is hardly visible. It is among reeds, among vegetation, the human being is totally immersed in the vital living process. It is throbbing with the vitality of vegetation. It is a vegetative life. At the same time this vegetative life confronts nature in a very peculiar way. Although it is immersed totally in the vegetation, the vegetative life, at the same time we find there is a movement or an attempt to extricate from that nature. And this is where that magical moment comes in, the *magh*, the power.

The vitality that one possesses has no spatial, temporal loci in magic consciousness but in its efforts it leads us to the first notion of space and time. In magical awareness where everything is vitally connected there is a peculiar kind of spatial-temporal structure, and that is known as puncti-formal structure whereby everything that is vitally important relates to everything else and is translatable in terms of everything else. This is exemplified in the hunt when an Aborigine early in the morning before sunrise, before the dawn, draws a sketch of an animal in the sand. When the first sun ray strikes that sketch it kills the animal, then the Aborigine shoots an arrow into the sketched animal. The attribution of "killing" to the sun shows the extent to which the vital consciousness is ascribed to external units and not to man alone. Later the Aborigine goes hunting, and in the evening performs the ritual of the hunt.

The temporal structure is such that the shooting of the arrow into that sketch, the sun striking that sketch, the shooting of the animal and the ritual are vitally identical, are translatable. In the ritual the hunter assumes the very form of the animal, the very vitality of the animal in order to conquer it. So vital events are so connected that they have no causal links but they have vital interchangeability. Some researchers show, for example, that the vital-animal sensibility is such that the animal does not have to be present to some event that is of vital interest to experience it. If any of you are farmers you know that if you take your cows into the barn and they are uneasy, you might discover that one was left out in the field and is giving birth to a calf. The ones inside do not see visually, they are not spatially present in the linear sense, yet they are vitally experiencing that event. There is a vital nexus which is not a causal nexus.

Another example is communication in the vital region. The modality of communicating in the vital region is not verbal. Whenever we find a head traced out on cave paintings, statuettes the head has no mouth. It's a peculiar thing. Scholars used to say, well they have no mouth because the artists of that day were deficient. But they had ears, they had eyes, they had noses, they had a whole body – didn't they notice it? They noticed it but it was irrelevant in that dimension of consciousness. What we paint is precisely the kind of consciousness we possess, so art is a good depiction. We find also, that those heads contained strange lines going up, and of course, the immediate scholarly statement was that these people didn't know how to paint hair. But the problem is they knew how to paint everything else.

Now if you take up the Jungian notion that there is a communication that is preconscious, this points to the possibility that the human range of sensibility may have been different for vital-magical man. They could have been able to perceive what we call auras. Nowadays Russians are photographing auras and saying "we discovered it first." In the Russian photography we find that every living organism produces an aura, produces radiation. It is possible that communication was done through simply the aura of radiation one possessed. In fact one did not have to say if something hurt – one could see it. I understand medicine is very interested in that because it is beginning to show that the kind of aura we have indicates areas of trouble in our physiology. So science,

pointing to this magical communication (or telepathy), suggests it was not verbal and may have been preconscious as Jung suggests.

Let me digress to discuss some religious views as to how this telepathic preconsciousness functions in modern miracles. In miraculous events I understand that the sick person is taken to a community where the people get together and pray. A way of understanding miracles suggests this: that the vital energy, the vital consciousness is not private—it radiates and in that radiation it pervades all bodies and all organisms and when that radiation is centered on a particular organism that is deficient it heals to that vitality. And indeed you notice when people go to perform the miracles they go to a particular church or a particular temple and they pray and they are close together. This is one indication that the miraculous works are through the vital consciousness, the vital region, which is not private. In fact when we look at the depictions (of group healing) we find statuettes in which the figurines have the predominance of the vital region, I mean they are very expansive and like mother earth itself, that vital area is predominant.

The Mythical Structure

From this unique one-dimensional consciousness which already has a rudimentary striving to deal with nature, a striving to counter nature, there emerges a movement which creates polarity, a movement toward the mythical or psychic structure. But that polar movement from the vital center is not yet directed towards something else. It is a movement that goes back to the center itself. This movement whenever it appears in conscious experience is immediately depicted within the presence of myth, with the presence of mouth, with the presence of psyche. All sorts of imagery emerge. That is to say that the implicit attempts of magical man to extricate himself from the vegetative, vital sphere and to orient himself, lead toward polarity and a resultant mutation to the psychic consciousness and a mythical civilization. Indeed, whenever there occurs a step, for example, from archaic to magical consciousness, that step is not an evolutionary process. It is a mutational process because it appears very rapidly. It appears as if this new stage emerged without any kind of causal predetermination. It did not.

There was a foreshadowing; the appearance is not, for example, based on our human physiological make-up or human material make-up, but is based on a consciousness transformation or mutation. When we look at all the signs across civilizations we find that prior to the appearance, for example, of physiological science of bodily shape as depicted differently, we already find that that structure of consciousness has been shifted, has been mutated. >From this prior event of a structuration of consciousness flows the restructuring of the entire physiology of the entire human posture.

Now, myth, psyche, mouth, speaking—all are connected but they are connected in a very peculiar way. The first rudimentary notion of this sort of polarity emerging, this movement toward mythical-psychic consciousness is breath, breathing. That is the emergence of psyche is also the emergence of the experience of one's rhythmic breathing. This appears in languages as remote as African and Indian and Greek and Judaic. For example, Brahman, which is what all Eastern thought wants to achieve is the very root of breath. Breath is Brahman, or the individuated Brahman which is Atman, which is also breath. We still have in Germanic the word *atem* which means to breathe. Breath is still present. In the Greek the notion of breath is *animus* which means wind. Wind and breath are connected. In fact we have from Latin the very notion of spirit, *spirae*, to breathe, to inspire, to expire. In Russian we find for example, their notion of soul which is the psychic dimension, the psychic consciousness *ducha* coming from the word *duchat* to breathe. So a first experience of the psychic dimension, that rhythmic process, that polar process is the experience of breath. There is a consciousness of breath but at the same time there is another development following that sort of rhythmic

process and that is the development of language. The very word myth comes from *mythos*, *mythonami*, “to speak”. But as the very root of myth is the Sanskrit *mu* from which you get also *mythos* and *mutus*, the speaker and the mute, the polarity is between speaking and being mute. That same polarity is required in any kind of psychic life. There is a depth maintained from which the speaking or the announcement emerges. So for example, in our language even today when we speak there is a silent background, a silent richness of speaking which we never announce.

This announcement in the psychic consciousness is audial or sound-like. It enters the audial dimension. The psychic consciousness then is always depicted by a sound aspect, and sound functions entirely differently than say, the vital region. What happens is that sound, the rhythmic process of sound, detaches itself from its origin and pervades everything. It catches up and homogenizes everything, moves all with its own rhythm. It is not yet a visual dimension. Nor is this audial, mythic consciousness private, belonging to a particular person. Like sound it pervades the whole context, not attaching itself to anything or any person. It is the audial which is the spoken, the mythical dimension, the psychic dimension. That is to say, for example, that sound instills fear. When you “look” for ghosts what do you do? You don’t look at ghosts—you hear them, creeping, creaking, and your hair stands on end, you walk around with goose-pimples. Vision does not do that for you. So the sound dimension connects with the psychic, speaking dimension, or mythical consciousness, and it moves in all directions and has a certain rhythmic configuration.

We find in researches when we begin to correlate languages, artistic expressions, poetry, social organizations, that they possess fundamentally and express, or symbolize fundamentally, a rhythmic circularity. So for example, anytime you read about myths you are sure to find water as symbolism, the turbulence of it, the ocean, the turbulent soul, the turbulent psyche. You will find also in the psychic consciousness a polarity between gods and demons, between male and female, the latter known as androgyny. If you look at early statuettes of kings you will find that the kings possess feminine characteristics. But the polarity was not two opposing forces—that is facing one another—they were complimentary. Androgyny is always complimentary. In fact there is an entire work now on the notion of polar complementarity in mythical researches which says that in all respects the better tool to use is not duality but polarity in understanding the times when psychic consciousness predominated or was in vogue. This means that what we call myth coming from *mythos*, which in English comes to mean “mouth” is not at all mystical or mysterious but is rather a particular dimension of human experience which encompasses the entire world.

If you go East all the way to New Delhi you find that their understanding of the whole universe is oceanic, that the universe is like an ocean, a rhythmic process, but in such a way that the rhythmic process is going nowhere. It has no direction or orientation, no linearity. That is when you use the metaphor for psyche or soul, the oceanic metaphor, you must notice also that in the ocean waves do not travel, although we in our visual thinking assume that waves travel. But waves do not travel, they simply go up and down, they bob. If you throw a stick on top of the waves, you find that the stick bobs up and down, one suppresses, one upsurges. There is no linearity and so the metaphor of psyche has a rhythmic notion of time. Whenever you find a rhythmic, circular notion of time you will find that the psychic consciousness is predominant. If you notice Eastern epistemological terms (theory of knowledge terms), they are sound terms, not visual terms. For example in a philosophy course some will say “I see” or “I perceive;” these are visual terms. But in the East, the terms for knowledge are connected with speaking, with the rhythmic breath process, with the Brahman. That is why the Yoga exercises are not exercises of vision but of breath, exercises of hearing attuned to a rhythmic world.

I had the chance to speak to some people in India when I was much younger and I found that the problem of progress in the East is not a problem of people being too dumb or uneducated to have progressed. The problem is that they do not have the understanding of succession in a linear fashion toward some aim. Indian workers arrive at work early in the morning and farm owners have to have someone there to pay them at eight o'clock the same morning because they have had enough for today. Today is all there is. That is, for example, in Hindi, there are only two words for time, one is *kal* and the other one is *aj*. *Kal* is today without any kind of succession, and *aj* is either yesterday or tomorrow. We have to make use of various prefixes in order to make yesterday or tomorrow comprehensible. Today is the upsurge of the wave, and if you have enough for today you do not have to worry about it anymore. You live for today, because there is no progress in time. Time is oceanic, rhythmic, having no direction, no orientation. The Indian lives, in short, a psychic life, an audial life, a life of imagery. Therefore, if we strip all else aside and uncover the absolute philosophical stance of Indian civilization we will get a fable. To give you one of the fables: have you heard of Maya? We wonder if Maya is illusion or if Maya is covering up some reality: how do we understand Maya? A Hindu will tell you how to know if it is illusion or reality.

Once a young man wanted to know what Maya was, so he went to the god Vishnu and said, "Vishnu, tell me what is Maya?" And Vishnu said, "Don't ask me. I can't tell you what Maya is." And the young man said, "If you don't tell me, I will cease believing in you." In that tradition, if humans cease believing in their gods, the gods vanish. So Vishnu said "okay, I will have to tell you what Maya is." He takes the young man for a walk and as they walk they come to the edge of a desert and Vishnu says; "You know, I am thirsty, I know that in the desert there is an oasis with a very beautiful house with a cool spring of water. Here is a cup. Go fetch me some water and I will tell you what Maya is." And so the young man takes off, he is exuberant, he is going to find out what Maya is. He gets there and indeed there is an oasis, and a very nice house. He knocks on the door and who do you think opens the door? A beautiful, magnetic-eyed girl, who says, "oh, stranger, please come in, refresh yourself. It's hot out there." Of course, he says, "I just want some water." She says, "fine, I'll give you water to refresh yourself before you go back."

But what happens, the parents show up. And what is the duty and task of parents? To make sure that the daughter finds a fine husband, who is a good worker, and that they live happily. Then the parents die, because their duty is to die after they find a husband. What else is there for them? There's nothing else in life. And so the parents say, "Welcome to our house. Won't you stay for a little refreshment, for some wine and figs and of course we have mutton." The young man succumbs to the dark, magnetic eyes looking at him. He stays for lunch and falls asleep woozy from the wine. The next day he awakes, the birds are singing and the young lady says, "What would you like for breakfast?" A week later there's a big wedding celebration.

The parents died as promised, left him everything and he is now a great success with many goats and sheep in his flock, and his sons and daughters are growing up. But as all things must come to an end, there comes vast monsoon floods and storms. Rivers flood over his glorious estate. His children are washed away. He sees the girl he married floating by. He can not save her, in fact he just manages to save himself. He is washed along and eventually finds himself on the shore by the tree where Vishnu sits and says, "Where have you been?" The young man says, "Well, let me tell you what happened to me." And he does, and Vishnu says, "That is Maya."

Now, decide, is that illusion? A Hindu will not tell you. They will give you a very fantastic story but will not tell you in terms of first principles or second principles or arguments what it is. It's a world of images, a world of pictoriality. At the same time we notice that this world of images is indeed polar. For example, in all cultures whenever

you find psyche or soul, you have a polarity between life and death. Both are always present, but they are not two opposites. They are polarities. Whenever you are born you are going to die. That is the very sign “Ti” which you will find in Egypt, in India, in China, in Greece. “Ti” stands for both deed and death. Deed and action, life and death are polar relationships you find manifested in Egypt where the life soul flies up, flies away, and the death soul remains.

All polar descriptions and depictions reveal the same thing. They have gods that reveal the world and they are gods of night, of circularity. For example, Kronos is the god of the nocturnal sky. And you find on the Greek statuettes left to us Kronos is always with a veil which is nocturnal, psychic consciousness—the dark, the mysterious. That is why it is mythical. It is not yet clear, distinct, separated out into a spatiality. It is a circular time, and all of nature is seen as circular moving in rhythmic process. This process dominates ages and centuries and in fact this process is still present in us, in our very psychic life, although it has been reduced to, for example, our internal constitution.

Nevertheless, our great theoreticians in psychiatry have noticed the polar functioning of the psyche, the soul. For example, Freud talked about the life and death forces. He thought everything psychic was striving for life and that modern theories such as Darwinism indicated the struggles of life to survive. Freud, therefore depicted the psychic forces as striving for survival. Then he noticed a strange phenomenon, the polarity of this striving, that is the death wish. He noticed young men dressed up in uniforms, wearing pea-shooters, marching off to die, singing, with their glorious girlfriends kissing them goodbye, waving and smiling. What’s going on? He’s going to die but they are kissing goodbye and smiling. This psychic polarity is still functional although in our interpretation we have reduced it to human internal constitution.

The Mental Structure

Now, as in all transformations or mutations, we also find in the mutation of consciousness from the mythical to the mental, extreme trauma. If you read Greek mythology you will find bewildering things happening. You will find that in Greek mythology there is the birth of a goddess, Athena. She was born from the head of a chief god, Zeus, not from the womb, not from the nocturnal mystery of mother. Every mythical psychic society is maternal, that is, the mother principle is the mythical principle. In fact the root “ma” from which we get “matter,” later in Western thought, is the psychic origin of all things.

At that time, there appeared, all of a sudden, plays and other writings about matricide, how the mother must die. There is also coming out of this period the Oedipus complex, which is the destruction of the mother oriented, psychic-mythical consciousness. Instead of polarity there is a mutation toward duality. Notice, when Athena was born, who was present at her birth? Who was Athena’s mother? Metis. What is the root of Metis? *Me*, which is the very root of mind. Who else was present at the birth? Prometheus, the basic root *me* is the basic root of Prometheus. There was Hermes, *me*, the basic root is present. With regards to language, officiators at the birth of Athena are all mentally stressed, no longer psychically stressed. When the blow to Zeus’ head occurred from which Athena sprang up, the circling of the entire sky, that is, the circular time consciousness was stopped. Helios himself stopped in the sky amazed at the event of Athena’s birth. What happened? Athena was born, the mythical circle was destroyed. The seas roared up and the mountains trembled. And who is Athena? What are her characteristics? She is no longer like the nocturnal kronos. She is the owl-eyed. She can see in the dark. She can see clearly. She is called Minerva, with the same root, *me* for mind. She directs the fury of Achilles. Who is Achilles? The great hero who is oriented in the fury. The very root *me* yields *metis*, *menes* which is fury, which is anger. There is angry orientation emerging in human experience. That orientation, that directedness is

based on the Sanskrit root *ra* from which you get *regius*, the ruler, that paternal, masculine dimension. The mental dimension is appearing in consciousness. That is, consciousness is mutating toward mind, from psychic to mental.

Now mental is purely diurnal, that is daylight consciousness, not nocturnal. What happens is that once the mutation takes place, you will notice in statues the emergence of a frontal lobe, total frontal orientation. The earlier Greek statues show, for example, the hair over the forehead and now the hair is swept back, the forehead protrudes full force and there is a stress on right. Direction, fury orientation, is right orientation. In fact, rightness is stressed to such an extent that the gods announce that one must not write from left to right. Homeric writing was not from left to right. It was bostropodantic as the ox plows, rhythmic in capitals without breaks in the words, and the breaks in the words were only transmitted through the master and the student who knew how to break the word audially. If that tradition hadn't survived we wouldn't know what Homer said.

All right, so the mythical circle is broken, the full force of the human face emerges, the frontal orientation emerges, the left which was always connected with the myth and the psyche, loses its power, and right emerges as the basic orientation. Everything must be done right. In fact, human rights come from that emergence of mental consciousness.

That consciousness, being diurnal, is also spatializing. That is, spatial consciousness appears immediately with Plato in high-low separation, hierarchy from high to low, and also in the horizontal development of everything from which we later get the notion of progress and the linearity of time. Time becomes linear. The entire consciousness, or awareness of time is now from left to right. Our scientists of today still talk about time moving from left to right. Why from left to right? Until very recently we beat our children because we did not want them to write with the left hand, left-handedness was bad. Left is the entire psychic, entire mythical, entire feminine dimension. Now when women are looking for liberation and blaming men for suppression it is not the case that the men are guilty. It is rather that the consciousness structure itself demands that women are seen as psychic, as turbulent, as uncontrollable while men are seen as mental, rational, and know the right thing to do. There are entire cultural consciousness dimensions which are attributed to women and men. That is, women are irrational, because they are maternal, left, psychic, and men are paternal, right, mental. The psychic is the very root of mother. It is not the root of mind and that is why mind appears when the maternal principle becomes matter.

Matter, then, is the very principle which was once psyche. The origin of everything now becomes matter which has to be ruled by mind, directed by mind, arranged by mind, scientized by mind. You know, mind over matter. We use our mental categories, mental capacities or mental theories to deal with matter. Matter now becomes simply an extension in space which has to be arranged according to human labor, human theories, and human manipulation. Hence, the technological world is also imminent in the transformation from psychic to mental consciousness. This consciousness finally emerged full-force in the Renaissance when space was totally perspectivized.

If you look at the shift from Medieval art to Renaissance art you will find a striving to paint perspectivity. Prior to that there was a background which was dark and mysterious. On it there was a polar principle, using the light, the Cross, the saint. But then there appears through various minor artists, I think from 1420 to about 1460, a tension of trying to depict three-dimensional perspectival space in art. This was stressed to such an extent that they called perspectivity the eighth art on which all science and all knowledge must be based. Look at what Leonardo daVinci was doing. He perfected perspectival painting. He was an engineer. He was a mechanic. He dealt with everything as purely spatial. The spatial-mental (mechanical, if you like) consciousness ruled the day. Now, please understand, no one in their clear mind or turbulent psyche

has ever seen perspectival space. No one. It is not given that way to vision. It is a consciousness structure which allows us to talk about perspectival space. Once we mutated from psychic to spatial consciousness, perspectival space became possible, not because we had seen it, but because the consciousness structure demanded that we interpret space as perspectival.

Strangely enough if you were to re-read some of the main news media journals of a few years ago, such as Time, you would find that scientists said, "We have discovered that human vision is perspectival." That had already been dropped like a hot potato immediately after the Renaissance. But now we say we have discovered it scientifically. We are catching up to the seventeenth century. Sometimes that happens to the best of us. We discover something that has been known and dropped as invalid already.

Now, what I have been pointing to all through this talk is that all the structures of consciousness that I have mentioned are neither material nor mental nor psychic, but are structures which assume a particular name on the basis of a symbolic predominance of a particular field of experience. That is, when you have a psychic, rhythmic consciousness, the field of experience that best symbolizes it is hearing, turbulence, the watery element. So what I mean, then, is that in the psychic dimension, for example, the psychic consciousness is not psychological. It is in its pure structure what some would want to call spiritual. It is creative, but not psychological. We give it a particular name that best fits one of our human functions. So, for example, when there is a mutation toward the mental consciousness we can best symbolize it by spatiality because spatiality and visuality best fits its requirements for symbolization. So we use visual and spatial metaphors, but they are just that, metaphors, signs, symbols of that consciousness. We cannot then derive three-dimensional spatial awareness from our vision. We have to have a consciousness structure which allows vision to pre-dominate and symbolize the case of the spatial consciousness structure.

When one consciousness predominates, however, we make mistakes in that consciousness structure, such as reducing music to phenomenon. The very word "phenomenon" means "appearance in light." It's a visual metaphor. When we write music we write music in notation from left to right and say that sounds follow one after the other like the notes on a scale, but sounds do not. If you pay careful attention to the audial dimension one sound has not yet been finished, that is, it is still vibrating, it is still booming when another sound appears and pervades the first sound. They are not in succession. That is, they are rhythmic, they are pervasive and they interplay—they are not linear. And yet we interpret by the force of the mental consciousness that everything must be in succession and therefore the very psychic dimension as symbolized by sound is interpreted as linear and successive. We also say "I now feel good," "I now feel bad," "I now feel something else;" we interpret psychic sounds as innumerable functions that we possess. But notice in the psychic consciousness when you scratch one you will find the other one, that is when you touch love, you touch hate. There is a polar movement. If you begin with one, you will end up in all of them. It is constant movement, constant movement to polarities. If you try to capture it spatially when actually it is a temporal, rhythmic process you miss the experience through your interpretation. And so our spatial metaphors do not fit our psychic consciousness either.

Integral Consciousness

The rule of the mental, and in fact it was the rule, ended quite recently, and as with all traditions it ended in the announcement of the destruction of its basic symbol. Remember what happened to psychic consciousness, matricide. Mother had to die. The mother earth, the mother of all gods and goddesses had to die. What happens in our nineteenth century, patricide. Have you heard of Hegel who said that "God is dead?" Have you heard of Nietzsche who said that "God is dead." The ultimate symbol and

expression of the mental consciousness was God, and with its end, with its self-transformation there occurs, I mean culturally speaking, the death of that symbol. Nietzsche was not as arbitrary as some people think because he decided to say that God was dead. Nor was Tillich arbitrary when he decided to say that the old God is no longer valid, that it was merely an idol we worshipped. This reveals a transformation in our total awareness. The spatial metaphor dealt with the symbols of the highest and the lowest and God was the high principle. Notice the use of spatial metaphors to account for it. That metaphor is gone, that sort of symbolism is gone. This notion of mental consciousness is also sometimes known as three-dimensional consciousness. Magic is one dimensional, the psychic is two-dimensional-polar, whereby one has no spatial depth, mental is three-dimensional and now we are emerging with a consciousness dimension which some people want to call fourth dimensional.

In the twentieth century what emerges, of course, is time. The age of anxiety is an age of time. We are emerging with the awareness of time as we once were aware of space in our mental consciousness. Now we have time consciousness, but it is no longer the linear time consciousness and that fact is discoverable in every science, in every artistic production. For example, if you look at Picasso, what do you find? He developed through the magical African art, through the classical, through his own psychological problems and finally emerged with temporic art. Watch Picasso's works carefully and you will find that they present you with the fourth dimension, with time which is not linear. Examine his rooftop landscape, what do you find? You find that the shadows at first seem to be simply strokes and you say, my goodness, what's the matter with the guy, what kind of rooftops are they? But Picasso does the following: when the sun is cast in the morning, he paints the casting of that sun across the roof, when the sun moves up, he paints that movement, the entire day is no longer in succession but is experienced as a presence which is in the painting.

If you notice the difference between the Renaissance for example, and Picasso's paintings, you will find that in Renaissance art you could read the point in time of the painting even if the artist took three years. The shadow cast was precise. You could say that the painting was depicting 12:05 in 1719 on July the third. With Picasso the shadows are cast in such a way as to show that there is no succession of time, it is four dimensional, also known as integral. It does not deal with things as spatially segregated, atomized, or fragmented, but rather as integral. Everything is seen integrally and that, as Goethe says, requires transparent or diaphanous consciousness.

To give you a bit of background, whenever a particular consciousness structure comes to self-destruction and is moving toward mutation you will find one good sign, quantification. For example, when mythical-psychic consciousness was exhausting itself it began to proliferate and fragment itself: gods, goddesses, myth after myth quantitatively. A good sign in our still-prevalent mental consciousness is a movement toward fragmentation, separation of everything from everything else. There has been specialization to such an extent that as Nietzsche says we have specialists on the left brain of a leech. That is, all they know, that is all they want to know and they are specialists; they have perspectively focused on one little thing and nothing else. This fragmentation is a sign that the predominant consciousness structure is coming to an end by fragmenting itself.

At the same time, and correlatively with that falling apart, there appears another consciousness structure which is different in its dimensions. The consciousness structure now is appearing as integral, *aperspectival*, *atemporal*. Why this alpha prefix? It is not *alpha negativum*, but *alpha primativum*., that is *privatio* from Latin meaning "to free." We are freed from spatiality in our consciousness. We are also freed from linear temporality which means that we are neither rhythmic, psychic, nor mental-linear, but integral. We can observe this in the attempts to paint or present integrally an entire

human being such as Picasso's painting of a man. You know at times we think it strange the way Picasso painted. What he did was frontally present the back side of the person, the side of the person and the front of the person. What Picasso is doing is saying that in order to experience we must have a transparent consciousness whereby the integral "something" appears in full force aperspectivally. You do not have to look at the person from perspective to perspective and then somehow in mysterious memory add the perspectives, gluing the person together from the various spatial perspectives. Picasso wanted to present the whole thing from front, from back, from side, at the same time without any requirement of perspectivity. So these paintings could be called aperspectival and hence be considered transparent or diaphanous.

As some of the theologians in the twentieth century say, we are perhaps witnessing an epiphany of spirituality and no longer the proofs of a spiritual being. We tried to prove the existence of a spiritual being because spirit is material or substantive. What we are witnessing in the twentieth century is a consciousness which is transparent, and that transparency spells the epiphany of spirituality. This is an entirely different dimension of consciousness. So when you look for example at the sciences, it is quite strange to find that basic sciences such as physics, and biology with scientists such as Fortman and Von Monakow have already dropped the causal-linear metaphor. The humanities in a strange way are trying to catch up to where science was—the humanities are trying to catch up to seventeenth century. They say, let's explain human beings in behavioral, causal terms, then we will know what a human being is like. It is amazing that scientists are leery about talking about causality—that is, the basic, material scientist. And yet humanities are in a way trying to become material, causal, which does not fit the world understanding of contemporary time.

It is hardly necessary that in the philosophic thought of the Twentieth Century, from Whitehead through Husserl and Merleau-Ponty there is a preoccupation with the question of time as intense as the preoccupation with space was during the Renaissance. Every attempt to think fundamentally in the Twentieth Century encounters the question of time. Hence the consciousness of our epoch is no longer zero-dimensional, one-dimensional, two-dimensional or three-dimensional but four-dimensional. To understand diaphany and hence the fourth dimension, the spirituality of it if you like, requires an understanding of consciousness at a level where time is constituted. Now, metaphorically speaking, that which constitutes time cannot itself be temporal. For example, if we were to take ourselves strictly materially, as some seventeenth century scientists would have us do, we would be locked into the present. But the notion of transcendence of the present, the notion of openness to the future and past, as going beyond the present requirements either of mental life or psychic life, is the dimension which constitutes openness of time itself in such a way that openness cannot be located in linear time. For example, in our consciousness now, we can talk about yesterday, a hundred years from yesterday, and about tomorrow in such a way that the ranging of our consciousness is not located in any linear process. We can start with ten years from now and trace it to us or a hundred years before now and trace it back to us or we can trace ourselves from tomorrow or ten years from tomorrow back to what we intend to do. All of that ranging requires a consciousness which is no longer temporally located, nor is it spatially located.

Another factor of temporal consciousness is that in the understanding of what we call the "characteristics of the world" in our direct experience we have to begin to respect the notion that what we call the characteristics of things are not just that, that they are also traces of time, traces of space, correlative to the traces of consciousness. That is when you say, for example, that this groove in something was left by a stone ten years ago, that groove is also a trace of time and your tracing it through ten years is the trace of consciousness. Consciousness is the very time tracing itself but in such a way that it is

not located anywhere in time. It is free from time, free from current, momentary locations.

If you read twentieth century phenomenon in biology, you will read that we are emerging with a notion of time which curves back upon itself. This curving back upon itself requires a sense of time which is simply symbolic of the consciousness which can turn back upon itself. For example, when we in our still meager way talk about projection of our tomorrow, that is psychic talk. That is, psyche projects itself in its polarity but the four dimensional consciousness does not project anything. In fact, it comes from its own future. It is open to that future, and that future coming, so to speak, as open, is the very consciousness which is the never exhaustive coming of the future as well as the ranging across past. What we call time turning back upon itself as Chardin would say is the radial energy curving back upon itself and revealing that the entire evolution is simply a metaphor for consciousness which is open on our side and on the metaphorical side as time is open from the future. Hence, we have, as Goethe once suggested, a consciousness which is "world open," and we call that world without opposite, in which the world of dualism breaks down.

So to summarize, what I have simply said is that in a peculiar way there appear in particular historical periods, traumatic times which are suggestive that human consciousness develops non-linearly, develops mutationally in such a way that the previous conditions, causal or otherwise, cannot explain the mutation. That is where we begin to talk about the transitional periods wherein the origin of everything appears in its creative force. That is, the transformations of consciousness are not explicable in terms of what has gone before, and that what Goethe called the origin itself transfigures consciousness, and in those transitional periods we can see the functioning of the origin in its creative force. Thus, the entire archeological process shows that the presence of the ultimate origin is not extra-worldly, but functions in its creative process here and now.

Sacred Dimensions of the Shaman's Web

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Abstract

Shamanism is a global spiritual tradition which recognizes the existence of various dimensions of reality. This paper explores the dimensions of consciousness which are the shaman's web. Shamans generally conceive the universe to be comprised of three levels or worlds (underworld, earth, and sky) with sublevels (e.g., lower world) connected by a central axis. This paper relates shamanic cosmology with Gebser's (1949/1985) structures of consciousness. The underworld is roughly corresponded with archaic structure, the lower world with magical structure, the middle world with mental structure, and the upper world with integral structure. For each level, Gebser's discussion of space and time, degree of consciousness, and expression of realization and thought are considered. In addition, the level of consciousness, nature of self, and mode of communication as identified by Native Americans is examined. Although Gebser's mythic structure of consciousness is not present in a delineation of the shamanic universe, discussion exhibits how mythic consciousness is clearly present in the process of shamanic journey. Recorded shamanic experiences are included throughout the paper to illustrate the dimensions of consciousness in shamanic cosmology.

Sacred Dimensions of the Shaman's Web¹

People living in contemporary society, influenced by materialistic science and monotheistic religion, have been conditioned to accept the world as three-dimensional. Their experience of reality is guided by the five physical senses, by what can be "proven" through observation, and by what can be concluded through logical thought processes. Shamanism is a global spiritual tradition which recognizes various dimensions of reality.

One consistency across shamanic cultures is a remembrance of the "World Myth," which recalls similar themes from "disparate locales, races, and cultures" (Houston, 1987, p. ix) about a "split" in global consciousness. Westcott (1982) noted this worldwide narrative pattern portrays an archaic sequence of worlds markedly different from those revealed by historians. Most versions of the world myth recall the earliest generally remembered stage of human life as a "golden age of light, abundance, harmony, and tenderness, with perpetual summer" (Houston, 1987, p. ix). A huge, seemingly stationary object of light occupied the sky, honored and adored by humans. The planet was connected with the ball of light "by means of a ladder, tree, mountain, staircase, pillar, pole, or rope, thought to be the *axis mundi*, the center of the world" (Houston, 1987, pp. ix). Angels or special divine beings and humans were able to maintain familiar relations by descending and ascending this central axis.

Most narratives then recount the catastrophic end of the golden age, involving the "disappearance of the great luminary, a worldwide flood or fire, violent earth tremors, boiling seas, deafening sounds, and prolonged darkness, followed by a series of protracted periods of quiescence between disasters, constituting a succession of world ages" (Houston, 1987, p. x). Each world age became more harsh and less supportive of harmonious living. Concurrently, the various levels of "self" disappeared and natural communication across dimensions was lost. Deep communication took extraordinary efforts and was radically interrupted for all persons except those "willing to do the enormous physical, spiritual, and psychological work of preparing themselves to break through the veils in body, mind, and spirit which were laid down so far in the past," such as mystics and shamans (Houston, 1987, p. xi).

¹ Words in italics refer to the chart on the last page of this article.

Within this paper, I explore the dimensions of consciousness which are the shaman's web. Gebser's (1949/1985) discussion of space and time, degree of consciousness, and expression of realization and thought are considered for each dimension of shamanic consciousness. In addition, I examine the level of consciousness, nature of self, and mode of communication in each of the four shamanic worlds recognized by Native Americans. Although Gebser's mythic structure of consciousness is not present in the shamanic universe, discussion exhibits how mythic consciousness is clearly present in the process of shamanic journey. Recorded shamanic experiences are included throughout the paper to illustrate the dimensions of consciousness in shamanic cosmology.

Shamanic Cosmology

Most cultures around the world had a shaman, "a specialist in communication with the spirit realm" (St. Pierre & Long Soldier, 1995, p. 17). Common to shamans everywhere is the belief that an ordered spirit world exists, that all in creation, including man, have a soul that lives after death, and that communication with these spirits—plant, animal, and human—provides important information to the living. All shamans believe that through drugs, specialized ritual, self-denial, or a combination of these a sacred altar can be created, a mysterious place and time in which direct communication with the spirit realm can be accomplished. (St. Pierre & Long Soldier, 1995, p. 17)

This sacred altar or central axis to the universe (*axis mundi*) is where the various dimensions of reality unite to access the power of creation.

Sharon (1978) identified the central concept of shamanism to be power, which is "the notion that underlying all the visible forms in the world, animate and inanimate, there exists a vital essence from which they emerge and by which they are nurtured" (p. 49). Although unseen, power is present everywhere. Power is not connected with any individual spirit. The shaman's world is totally alive—wholly personal and perceptual, everything is capable of being known and used. The shaman brings into "the profane world the transformational powers of sacred time and space" (Houston, 1987, p. vii).

For the shaman, "space is not a transparent 'nothing.' Space is 'something' holding qualities in the same way as a physical substance. Space exists around, between, and *within* things [inner space]" (Meadows, 1991, p. 1). In the shamanic realm of the "non-ordinary," time is not what it seems. Time is not constant, but "elastic," and can be stretched or contracted. The shaman's ability for crossing the continuum of states of consciousness enables him or her to bridge ordinary reality and transpersonal realms of experience. Therefore, various modes of "language" make communication possible with the energy-patterns of other life forms ("intelligences" or "spirits") and between different levels of existence in the universe (Meadows, 1991).

In general, shamans conceive the universe to be three levels (underworld, earth, and sky) with sublevels (e.g., lower world) connected by a central axis. Other-worlds are not separated by distance or time, but by vibrational wavelength or intention. Each world interpenetrates and surrounds the physical and material realm, and occupies a different "dimension" of the same "space" (Meadows, 1991). The following discussion relates shamanic cosmology with Gebser's (1949/1985) dimensions of consciousness. The underworld is roughly corresponded with archaic structure, the lower world with magical structure, the middle world with mental structure, and the upper world with integral structure (see Table 1).

The Under World/Archaic Structure

Under world intelligence in some ways parallels Gebser's (1949/1985) archaic structure of consciousness. Archaic structure is "the structure closest to and presumably originally identical with origin" (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 43). However, only in a

terminological sense is “origin” considered the “first” structure to emerge from the initial unity of consciousness. Archaic structure is *prespatial* and *pretemporal*. Even though the soul may have further existed, it had not yet attained consciousness.

Shamans note the under world is the realm of the *unconscious* mind. The unconscious mind operates unceasingly. From the moment of conception, the unconscious mind builds, maintains, and repairs the physical body “according to instructions contained within the genetic code, and later with those passed down from the subconscious” (Meadows, 1991, p. 33). Paralleling shamanic discussion, Gebser (1949/1985) noted aspects of the world are realized in unconscious spirit. Gebser identified *deep sleep* as a degree of consciousness in the under world, in view of its function in the awakening process.

The shamanic *body* self resides in the under world. Body self is the biological intelligence of the body and acts as the body's caretaker, protector, and defender. Body self has an animalistic nature and therefore acts on instincts and impulses. The body is primarily concerned with physical survival (Meadows, 1991).

Communication in the under world takes place through *electro-chemical impulses*. Language in this realm is impulsive, chemical, and electrical (Meadows, 1991). Gebser (1985/1949) identified *presentiment* as the expression of realization and thought in the archaic structure. Presentiment indicates a connection with the past and an incorporation of the future. The soul is dormant, “a time of complete nondifferentiation of man and the universe” (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 43), but is concerned with survival and movement toward awareness. Because originary thought has no form, it cannot be realized through expression.

Stalking Wolf (Apache) alluded to the archaic structure of consciousness:

What is understood first is the pure self—the self outside what you have been taught to think and believe, the self free of all restrictions, that deep inner self that is at the apex of all reality, and that self that is always trying to realize itself. (Brown, 1988, p. 127)

Brown (1988) discussed his personal learning process:

Once we became proficient in the fusion of self, we began to penetrate the primal world within ourselves. We have within us a primitive self—a self that could be called upon for insight, or for power in a time of need. This is a basic self that all beings carry within; a primal self closest in kind to the spirit-that-moves-all-things. We learned that the only thing standing in the way of this inner primal self was logical thinking and the restrictions of the society we lived in. (p. 52)

An oral teaching among shamans of northern traditions recognizes an instinctive and automatic intelligence which controls and maintains the physical body, and which is responsible for bodily protection and survival. This intelligence operates at deep levels of unconscious activity, and is compared to an animal spirit because instinctive actions guide this world (Meadows, 1991). Along the *axis mundi*, the level above the under world is the lower world.

The Lower World/Magical Structure

Shamans recognize darkness in the lower world. This level is indicated by Cosmic Ice, a “solidification” of dark energy. The lower world is the place of the non-ordinary reality of subconscious existence—the site of formation, gestation, and causations. The lower world holds two realms: the place of potentials and the place of causations.

Closest to the under world is the “place of potentials,” where formation and gestation occur. This is the realm of inertia—the place of potential. This place is sometimes referred to as *Hel*, a Germanic word meaning “covering,” because it covers the deepest areas of the unconscious (Meadows, 1991). (The place of potential holds none of the associations attributed to the fiery “Hell” of later religious myths.) Joe Green (Pavlotso) referred to what might be recognized as the place of potential in the “second night”:

There are two nights. The second one comes behind the night that everybody sees. This second night is under the darkness. It tells the shaman where the pain is and what caused the sickness. When the second night comes it makes the shaman feel that he is a doctor. The power is in him to doctor. Only shamans can see this second night. The people can only see the darkness. They cannot see the night under it. (Halifax, 1979, p. 103)

The place of potential might be considered a “pre-magical” structure. Although Gebser’s (1949/1985) discussion of consciousness did not identify this structure, he noted it could be useful to include additional structures “such as a ‘post-archaic’ and a ‘pre-magical’ structure” (p. 45).

Above the place of potential is a “subterranean realm,” or place of causations. “Place of causations” is a realm of subconscious activity, where shapes are formed from thought patterns (Meadows, 1991). Brown (1988) recounted Stalking Wolf’s (Apache) experience:

Surreal images rushed to fill the void. Events and teachings, symbols and signs, ran by him at high speed, flooding his mind with a swirling mass of unconnected knowledge. He remembered long and short journeys of the imagination, he saw and spoke with spirit entities of animal, plant, rock, wind, and water. He heard the voices of many spirit people, and the symphony of the earth, that low vibration of all things. He remembered knowing all things and then nothing. (p. 20)

The place of causations in the lower world may be associated with Gebser’s magical state of consciousness.

Gebser (1949/1985) represented humans in the magical dimension by the one-dimensional point. “The point suggests the initial emergent centering in man and expresses the spaceless and timeless one-dimensionality of magic man’s world” (p. 46). Because of this *spaceless-timeless* unity, every “point” (whether it be a thing, an event, or an action) can be interchanged with another “point,” independent of time, space, and rational causal connection. Brown (1988) shared,

One must abandon logical thinking and learn to deal in the abstract, learn to accept that each moment is an eternity and that each entity becomes, at once, a physical and spiritual teacher. It is here that I start with the faith, openness, and curiosity of a child, that magical time of life when anything and everything was possible, where reality and fantasy mix, and where dream and flesh are fused into the eternity of mind. (pp. 3-4)

Any point can substitute completely for another point in the spaceless, timeless lower world.

The lower world is the realm of the *subconscious* mind. The subconscious mind appears to act on instructions given by the conscious mind. “These are the firm beliefs, attitudes and habits formed through early conditioning and by the environment, fears, phobias and complexes” (Meadows, 1991, p. 33). Subconscious mind stores these along with a record of conscious occurrences in its memory bank.

Gebser (1949/1985) noted the magic structure releases humans from their identity with “origin.” That magical release begins the first process of consciousness, which is completely like *sleep*. In the magical structure, persons can understand the world in its sleep-like outlines. Persons do not yet recognize the world as a whole, but only the details which reach this sleep-like state in which a part stands for the whole. Magical reality is “a world of pure but meaningful accident; a world in which all things and persons are interrelated, but the not-yet-centered Ego is dispersed over the world of phenomena” (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 46).

Leonard Crow Dog (Sioux) offered his experience:

I saw wheels before my eyes forming up into one fiery hoop and then separating again into bright, many-colored circles, dancing before my eyes and again contracting into one big circle, a circle with a mouth and two eyes. Suddenly, I heard a voice. It seemed to come from within the bundle that was me, a voice from the dark. It was hard to tell exactly where it came from. It was not a human voice; it sounded like a bird speaking like a man. My hackles rose; the tiny hairs on my back stood up. My flesh crawled; I had goose pimples. I tried to understand the voice, grasping the sacred pipe hard enough to break it.

'Remember the hoop,' said the voice that was not like a human's. 'This night we will teach you.' And I heard many feet walking around in my small vision pit. (Halifax, 1979, p. 84)

In this structure, consciousness was not yet *in man or woman*, but still resting *in the world*.

In the lower world the *hidden* self resides. Hidden self is subconscious, so its actions are "beneath the surface." Beliefs and attitudes impose upon the hidden self "for it is a 'servant' self which responds to what it regards as 'authority'" (Meadows, 1991, p. 34). Hidden self "learns physical skills through repetition and the voice of authority for it has a trusting nature and an inherent willingness to obey" (Meadows, 1991, p. 34). Hidden self also feels emotion which is "a flow of energy stimulated by thought which, when experienced, can lead to action" (Meadows, 1991, p. 34). Communication in this dimension occurs through *imagery, symbols, and feelings*. Brown (1988) recalled,

I sometimes awoke with the punctuation of each dream, and the sounds of the night hammered home all that I had dreamed. It was at these times of semiconsciousness that the grand lessons and connections to life flooded me, filling me with their magic. (p. 136)

Expression of realization and thought in the lower world occurs in vital experience.

A context of relationships is established in *vital experience*. In the magical dimension, humans immediately place any occurrence, event, or object that for him or her has the nature of a vital experience into a unifying context. Establishing a context of relationships by experience is pre-rational and pre-causal. Vital experience elicits "a still sleep-like consciousness of being interwoven with events and is recognizable by its associative, analogizing, and sympathetic treatment of things that cannot be considered 'thinking'" (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 251). Halifax (1979) listened to Brooke Medicine Eagle (Nez Perce and Sioux):

I'm just lying here very peacefully. And beside me there comes a woman older than me, but not really an old woman. She's dressed very simply, buckskin. . . . And she stands beside me and begins to talk to me. As she talks to me, her words come, but not in my ears; I don't really hear her say anything. It's as though she's feeding something in at my naval, and it comes through me, and I can interpret part of it in words but not all of it, like she's giving me something through my stomach and letting it come up. (p. 88)

In the magical dimension, humans seek to be free from the transcendent power of nature—the "soul strives to materialize . . . [and] become increasingly conscious of itself" (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 46). Impulse and instinct develop a vital consciousness which enables man or woman to cope with the earth and the world as a group-ego. In shamanic cosmology, the level above the lower world is the middle world.

The Middle World/Mental Structure

The middle world is the realm of material and environmental *space*, a world of physical appearances. *Time* divides the dark from the light and introduces directionality into experience. Gebser (1949/1985) identified the triangle as the three-dimensional structure which presents the three-phase (past, present, future) nature of time. "The dimension of the future necessarily lends a forward thrust to spatiality, giving both space and time the semblance of direction" (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 178).

The *conscious* mind which we use constantly during our normal everyday activities, exists in the middle world. Conscious mind is the mind of "self" which humans present to the world. Conscious mind is what we "reason" with to arrive at conclusions before engaging in action (Meadows, 1991). Brown (1988) noted people "accept nothing that cannot be explained in modern tactile terms. Yet they accept the theory of the atom, even though atoms have never been seen, because they can be proven by inference, reproducible results, and data" (p. 2). Humans use conscious mind to interpret and make sense of the impressions we receive from the external environment.

In the mental structure, consciousness is *wakefulness*. Emergence of consciousness involves "awakening-to-self." Acts of consciousness depend on waking, mental

consciousness (Gebser, 1949/1985). The *human self* resides in the middle world. Human self expresses itself through personality. Human self focuses on “making choices and decisions in practical, everyday living. It exercises reasoning ability and analyses, categorizes, makes judgments and comparisons, and forms beliefs and opinions” (Meadows, 1991, p. 34). Communication takes place in this realm through *words* and *speech*. Words express the energy of our thoughts and ideas. Through the use of words we can convey our ideas to others.

Gebser (1949/1985) noted the mental structure for expressing thought is *representation*. This conceptual form of realization, appropriate to the mental structure, is a “form of thinking.” Mental consciousness manifests itself in discursive thought using symbols. Communication through the use of symbols reduces experience to allegory, then to mere formula. “In its extreme form of exaggerated abstractness, [the symbol] is ultimately void of any relation to life and becomes autonomous; empty of content and no longer a sign but only a mental denotation, its effect is predominantly destructive” (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 88). Brown (1988) reinforced this idea: “existence, for the most part, has become a rather two-dimensional affair; events deemed important unfold only within physical and intellectually logical parameters, leaving little or no room for belief in the spiritual” (p. 1). The upper world, which houses the spiritual dimension, lies above the middle world.

The Upper World/Integral Structure

In the upper world reside powers of knowledge, enlightenment and creativity. The upper world is lighted by Cosmic Fire, light at its maximum vibration. This world is the abode of “gods” or more highly evolved beings. The upper world is comprised of two levels: the mind realm and the spiritual or heavenly realm.

Closest to the middle world is the “place of enlightenment” which is “the realm of the Mind, the Abode of Thought and the fertile birthplace of Ideas” (Meadows, 1991, p. 28). At the top of the vertical column is a “heavenly” realm (sometimes called Asgard) where celestial beings existed. This is also a place of non-ordinary reality. The heavenly realm is a place of great beauty and noble ideas (Meadows, 1991).

Stalking Wolf (Apache) recognized these two levels to be spirit world and Creator:

‘There is a separate spiritual reality,’ he said, ‘of things of the unseen and eternal. There is a world of spirit that dwells just outside the Creator. The spirit world exists next to our own, and their wisdom transcends all barriers. They can teach us things we could not know through our physical senses or logical mind. They protect us, guide us, and teach us to heal others. They are a link to the past, and all the possible futures. To them, to their world, all is known, and now they communicate with you in your dreams and Visions.’ (Brown, 1988, p. 200)

Although Gebser’s (1949/1985) discussion did not identify this structure, he did recognize a spiritual emphasis in the integral dimension.

Gebser (1949/1985) defined integration to mean full, complete, and realized wholeness. “The concretion of everything that has unfolded in time and coalesced in a spatial array is the integral attempt to reconstitute the ‘magnitude’ of man from his constituent aspects, so that he can consciously integrate himself into the whole” (p. 99). The integral is “a *space-and-time free* aperspectival world where the free (or freed) consciousness has at its disposal all latent as well as actual forms of space and time, without having either to deny them or to be fully subject to them” (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 117). Steiger (1975) shared the words of Dallas Chief Eagle (Sioux):

I am descended from Crazy Horse on my mother’s side. Crazy Horse was a mystic. He had the ability to go to another level of intelligence, another level of energy. . . . My grandfather had the ability to leave his shadow. Yes, that is what I said. The Sun could be out bright, and he would just walk away from his shadow. Yes, that is illogical. Levitation

is illogical. Reading peoples' thoughts is illogical. Many things that our people take for granted are considered illogical by the dominant society. (p. 195)

Brown (1988) also alluded to the time-free aspect of the integral dimension: "I began developing time warps, where I would have no recollection of walking down trails until I would arrive at camp" (p. 217). Integration is an intensification of consciousness, irreducible to any qualitative valuation or quantitative devaluation.

The *superconscious* mind resides in the upper world. Superconscious mind is the highest aspect of the total mind, with superior mental powers. Superconscious mind is the source of all knowledge any person might ever want or need. This mind is the source of inspiration and creativity (Meadows, 1991).

In the integral dimension, the "itself" pervades or "shines through" everything in diaphanous spirituality. In its originary presence, integral consciousness becomes *transparent*. The presence of origin, which "corresponds" to integral consciousness, becomes diaphanously visible in and through human awareness.

Stalking Wolf (Apache) taught Brown (1988) to:

Fuse the body, mind, emotion and spirit together as one, and to not regard them as separate, unrelated aspects of the self. At its finest this synchronicity affords the seeker ultimate control of the self and allows optimum performance as a way of life. Once the fusion of self occurs, fusion of the self with the natural world soon follows, which in turn leads to the fusion of self to the worlds of the spirit, of the unseen and eternal. (p. 45)

Brown (1988) discussed Stalking Wolf's (Apache) ability to transcend consciousness:

The confluence of physical sensing and spiritual awareness was eventually so complete that when asked how he knew that something was moving in the distance, he was often at a loss to explain. Complete awareness became for him a state of being. This keen awareness, surely and inexorable, began to break down the distraction between the inner and outer dimensions, creating a oneness of the self, where nothing happened that he could not feel. (p. 17)

Halifax (1979) recognized "nature, culture, and supernature merge into the field of transcendent consciousness" (p. 16).

The *high self* resides in the upper world. High self is the most highly evolved aspect of the total being, and emphasizes eternal values. High self "is sometimes called the Soul or the Spirit, although the Soul might best be regarded as the Light of the individual entity, and the Spirit as the Life" (Meadows, 1991, p. 34). High self over-views one's life with the ability to see into the temporal past, immediate future, and present. Brown (1988) addressed Stalking Wolf's (Apache) abilities:

He could read beyond the physical landscapes into the past or future and communicate with the spirits of nature in a real way. . . . We instinctively knew that there was a grander scheme of things, a force, a time, and a space beyond anything we could yet comprehend. (p. 107)

Grandfather [Stalking Wolf] had an uncanny ability to know of things long before they occurred, for he lived the duality constantly and religiously. He was always connected to things outside the realms of senses, always listening to the distant voices, and always fused to the greater consciousness. He seemed to be a direct link to the 'force,' the spirit-that-moves-in-all-things, and was 'one' with all things, flesh and spirit. (p. 211)

In the upper world, thought patterns that are forming in the present, and from earlier actions become manifest.

To communicate, the high self employs *imagery* [which, for Gebser, would indicate mythical consciousness], *intuitive promptings*, and *flashes of inspiration*. Brown (1988) explained:

Communicating with our instinct, in a real way, was the beginning. This communication with our inner selves would eventually lead to the communication with the world beyond the self and finally to the spirit-that-moves-in-all-things. (p. 54)

[Stalking Wolf] spoke of spiritual things, leading us to a greater understanding of the world beyond senses, a world only the soul and the heart can reach. I could tell it was

hard, very hard, for him to put into common words that which is beyond all symbols and beyond even the most vivid imagination. (p. 174)

The language of superconscious mind is *telepathic* [which, for Gebser, would indicate magic consciousness]. Several shamans offered their experience:

Dallas Chief Eagle (Sioux) shared, 'I have seen a wise man drink a tea for three days and be able to read my thought as specifically as I read a book. I have tried to jumble my thoughts and confuse him when he does this, but I have never succeeded in distracting him from accuracy.' (Steiger, 1975, p. 125)

[Brown (1988) recounted] It wasn't odd for us to tap into the same thought, since we spent so much time together, and practiced, frequently, a form of telepathy that Grandfather [Stalking Wolf] had taught us. (p. 120)

[Thunder Cloud (Winnebago) recalled] While there [on shamanic journey] I thought I would like to come to the earth again so the old man whom I was staying said to me, 'My son, did you not speak about wanting to go to the earth again?' (Halifax, 1979, p. 176)

Communication in the integral dimension enables the shaman to access "the Creator."

Diaphanous spirituality, "that which shines through," is not a form of symbolism or methodology, "it is neither psychic nor mental, nor does it bear the stamp of magic" (Gebser, 1985/1949, p. 135). Rather, becoming co-visible in and through humans, all previous spatio-temporal unfoldings are integrated and made meaningful. Integration requires *verition*, not simply thinking or contemplation, which includes perception as well as imparting verity or truth. Discussing a sweat lodge experience, one doorway to the integral, Brown (1988) stated:

I knew that I should never trust what I see, or sense, for what must be trusted is what I understand as reality. I understood that I was not alone in there, regardless of the nothingness of it all. (p. 155)

Only through "reciprocal perception and impartation of truth by man and the world can the world become transparent for us" (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 261).

Through an awareness of these other-worlds or realms of consciousness, the shaman is able to journey—to explore the Cosmos itself and to pass from one level of reality to another. He or she is also able to have greater command of his or her own personal life in the "middle world" of physical existence (Meadows, 1991). The shamanic journey parallels Gebser's mythic dimension of consciousness.

The Mythic Structure of Shamanic Journey

Although Gebser's (1949/1985) *mythic* structure of consciousness does not parallel a dimension of shamanic cosmology, mythic structure is clearly present in the process of shamanic journey. Shamanic journey is a technique of experiencing various worlds or dimensions of consciousness (inner space) that lie beyond the five physical senses. King (1988) noted "shifting mind-sets" or moving between worlds is a subtle and delicate process. One must change what one is "looking for" and then *change the assumptions* associated with that intent. One's *perception* is voluntarily changed, which alters one's experience. "That which cannot normally be seen and heard because of the limitation of the physical senses, can actually be perceived through 'inner' senses that have been activated" (Meadows, 1991, p. 84).

The mythical structure of expressive thought is *undergone experience*. In undergone experience, the world and the soul move toward the "threshold" of mental consciousness.

Halifax (1979) discussed "nierika,"

a cosmic portway or interface between so-called ordinary and nonordinary realities. It is a passageway and at the same time a barrier between worlds. It is the threshold through which one passes on the voyage to the world of death and visions. (p. 1)

Nierika is a doorway in our minds that usually remains hidden until the time of death.

All shamans recognize that the soul has multiple aspects and that spiritual journey, in which the earthly body is left behind, is possible. St. Pierre and Long Soldier (1995) stated "the shaman must be familiar with the often treacherous journey to the world of spirits and be skilled at interpreting their messengers" (p. 24). Brown (1988) explained:

Physical skills of awareness and survival . . . these skills were a doorway to the grander things of the spirit. Without these skills, the journey toward spirituality would be frustrating, incomplete, mediocre at best. No one could pass through the doorways of spirit or understand those realms without absolute awareness on all levels. How could anyone be aware of all the complexities of the spiritual realms if he was not first aware of the physical realms. The one had to precede the other. (p. 33)

Stalking Wolf (Apache) discussed moving through the doorway:

The sweatlodge speaks to all people in the language of their own beliefs, and it thus becomes a universal truth. So then, use the lodge as a tool, a doorway for physical and spiritual renewal and cleansing, a pathway to expansion, and a vehicle to the worlds of the unseen and eternal. In the lodge, you will find purity from all outside distractions. Without the distractions of man, you will touch the Great Mystery. (Brown, p. 157)

Gebser (1949/1985) expressed, "Truly 'undergone' experience is always irrational; the soul teaches us what our understanding cannot grasp or estimate" (p. 251). In the shaman's journey, he or she enters a shamanic state of consciousness (SSC).

In SSC, there is no such thing as a symbol, only *the thing itself*. Ritual and symbol become (*are*) what the shaman says they represent. Halifax (1979) explained the drum *is* the horse:

The moral and finite dimensions of existence are transcended by the shaman's rebirth from bones. The vehicle of ascension to the sky realm of the sun, to the territory of illumination, can be the drum. The Yakut says, 'The drum is our horse'. The pulse of the drum frequently carries the shaman from the underworld, through the roots of the World Tree, up to the body of the tree that transects the middle world or earthly plane, and finally to the glorious summit of the Sacred Tree whose crown embraces the shining heavens. (p. 15)

Lame Deer (Sioux) expressed the pipe is alive in ceremony:

For us Indians there is just the pipe, the earth we sit on and the open sky. The spirit is everywhere. . . . That smoke from the peace pipe, it goes straight up to the spirit world. But this is a two-way thing. Power flows down to us through that smoke, through the pipe stem. You feel that power as you hold your pipe; it moves from the pipe right into your body. It makes your hair stand up. That pipe is not just a thing; it is alive. Smoking this pipe would make me feel good and help me to get rid of my fears. (Halifax, 1979, p. 72)

In shamanic journey, "psyche and cosmos gain access to each other" (Houston, 1987, p. viii).

A shaman does not use critical powers activated by consciousness and causality, time, and space when he or she journeys. The shaman's purpose in journeying is to interact consciously with guardian powers (power animals) or spirits in other worlds (Doore, 1987). Several shamans shared their experiences:

Grandfather [Stalking Wolf] had told me that the veil would unlock the secrets of the universe. In the veil there was no time, place, or space, only the purity of all things. I remember once having trouble with the use of a particular hunting weapon and how it was used. I asked Grandfather to show me how it worked, but he simply said, 'If you want to know how a skill was used, go and watch the ancient ones use it, then you will know firsthand.' (Brown, 1988, p. 117)

[Lame Deer (Sioux) recalled:] Slowly I perceived that a voice was trying to tell me something. It was a bird cry, but I tell you, I began to understand some of it. That happens sometimes. I know a lady who had a butterfly sitting on her shoulder. that butterfly told her things. This made her become a great medicine woman. (Halifax, 1979, p. 74)

[Dick Mahwee (Pavotso) explained:] Eagle and owl do not give a shaman power. They are just messengers that bring instructions from the spirit of the night. Some doctors have

water-babies for their messengers. . . . When the shaman is treating a patient he calls for the water-babies and they bring him instructions from the spirit. (Halifax, 1979, p. 182)

After “acquiring” a power animal during shamanic journey, the shaman may engage in a “power dance” to bring this energy to the surface.

In a power dance the shaman senses the energy-force of the spirit, accessed in non-ordinary reality and seeks “to flow and move with it and become one with it in ordinary reality. The power dance is an expression in ordinary consciousness of the existence of a source of power that lies in an altered state of consciousness” (Meadows, 1991, p. 126).

The shaman’s spirit ascends, breaking the plane of death, soaring to a timeless [time-free] place. The windlike rhythms of the drum and the dance and the pitch of the song transport the ecstatic’s spirit to realms far beyond the ordinary, a messenger in flight across the perilous threshold of the two-light world, where the illumination of the dream world of night and the light of the day’s sun transect and fuse into the field of twilight, where transcendent vision is awakened. The wizard’s soul is transformed into a bird, the wings and body of the spirit-bird and the shaman’s soul are one body, and the distinction between the shaman and the animal ally dissolves. (Halifax, 1979, p. 16)

An Indian said, ‘If a man is to do something more than human he must have more than human power.’ Song was essential to the putting forth of this ‘more than human power,’ and was used in connection with some prescribed action. (Densmore, 1936, p. 63)

The dancer borders between worlds in a “twilight” condition where the two dimensions meet.

Shamans understand that real and unreal are differences of degree, rather than different kinds of experience (Schmidt, 1987). There is no distinction between body, mind, and spirit. Body is mind, and mind is spirit. Shamans need not physically move from one plane to the other, because they are already the same (Achterberg, 1987). Two shamans shared their insight:

[DeWayne Wynn (Cherokee):] For me, the Spirit is part of life. It is part of my heritage. It is a natural thing. [During Native American Church ceremonies] I seem to be somewhere else. I can close my eyes and be in another time. It is a beautiful, relaxed sensation that I get. (Steiger, 1975, pp. 22-23)

[Thunder Cloud (Winnebago) recognized]: The land of the spirits is an excellent place and the people have the best of times. If you desire to go anywhere all that you have to do is wish yourself there and you reach it. (Halifax, 1979, p. 176)

One may journey “through” space and time in the mythic structure.

In the mythical structure, time is *temporicity*, not mental time. Halifax (1979) offered the experience of Prem Das (Huichol):

I had been ‘traveling’ all day; it was just then getting dark. Whether I had been out all day or for weeks or years, it would have been the same day. The power that took me to the sun realm had returned me to the same day, month, year, and location that I left. I do not know how my descent occurred because I do not remember returning from that first journey. (p. 240)

Time becomes an awareness of natural cosmic periodicity symbolized by the circle. “In the natural, temporal rhythm of the circle we again encounter the affinity of time with the soul” (Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 66).

In a sense, myths are the collective *dreams* of the nations formed into words. Neihardt (1961) shared the words of Black Elk (Oglala Sioux):

Then I was standing on the highest mountain of them all, and round about beneath me was the whole hoop of the world and while I stood there I saw more than I can tell and I understood more than I saw, for I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of things in the spirit, and the shape of all shapes as they must live together like one being. And I saw that the sacred hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, wide as daylight and as starlight, and in the center grew one mighty flowering tree to shelter all children of one mother and one father. And I saw it was holy. (pp. 42-43)

Visions or dreams remain unconscious processes until they are expressed. Expression of dreams is an indication only of their latent possibility for consciousness, not of consciousness itself. Every emergence of consciousness presupposes the externalization of something that presses, or is pressed, toward awareness. Mythic expression is the shaman's way of sharing the journey in a way the community can understand and use for their benefit (Achterberg, 1987). Shamans are co-present reminders that every action has a spiritual dimension, and every spiritual action is revealed in the physical world.

Summary

Shamanism is a disciplined way of gaining knowledge, assistance, and power from non-ordinary sources. This paper examined dimensions which comprise the global consciousness present in shamanism. Gebser's (1949/1985) structures of consciousness assist in understanding the other-worlds present to the shaman. This paper examined emphases of space and time, level of consciousness, degree of consciousness, nature of self, mode of communication, and expression of realization and thought for each level which comprises the shamanic universe. Gebser's mythic structure of consciousness parallels the process of shamanic journey. Each discussion of consciousness offered insight about dimensions from which shamans seek support and guidance.

Shamanic Cosmology

	<i>Under World (Archaic)</i>	<i>Lower World (Magic)</i>	<i>Middle World (Mental)</i>	<i>Upper World (Integral)</i>
(Space and Time Emphasis)	(Prespatial, Pretemporal)	(Spaceless, Timeless)	(Spatial, Abstractly Temporal)	(Space-free, Time-free)
Level of Consciousness	Unconscious	Subconscious	Conscious	Superconscious
(Degree of Consciousness)	(Deep Sleep)	(Sleep)	(Wakefulness)	(Transparency)
Nature of Self	Body	Hidden	Human	High
Mode of Communication	Electro-chemical Impulses	Imagery, Symbols, and Feelings	Words and Speech	Imagery, Intuitive Promptings, Flashes of Inspiration, Telepathic
(Expression of Realization and Thought)	(Presentiment)	(Vital Experience)	(Representation, Conception, ideation)	(Verition)

Note: Information represented in parentheses is drawn from Gebser's (1949/1985) discussion of structures of consciousness. Information not represented in parentheses is drawn from readings on Native American shamanic cosmology.

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Gebser's Archaic Consciousness and Wilber's Critique

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As part of his comprehensive phenomenology of consciousness, Jean Gebser undertook in *The Ever-Present Origin* the difficult and to some extent daring task of delineating the character of the archaic structure of consciousness. Among other things, he made the controversial statement that this particular cognitive modality is "closest to and presumably originally identical with origin" (1985). In my book *Structures of Consciousness*, I addressed the fundamental problem inherent in Gebser's statement as follows:

The most primitive structure of consciousness (both in the sense of being the earliest and the least articulated (is what Gebser calls the archaic modality of consciousness. It is, as he somewhat enigmatically remarks, "closest to and presumably originally identical with Origin." From the viewpoint of contemporary positivistic science, which purports to deal with "hard" facts, Gebser appears to indulge here in metaphysical wordplay. At best, science concerns itself with beginnings, but the question of Origin (Ursprung) is hardly permissible outside theology. Even for the sympathetic reader, who is able to suspend any scientific (or, rather, scientific) bias that he or she may have, Gebser's statement is not immediately transparent (1987).

I then went on to discuss the nature of evidence and Gebser's idiosyncratic and boldly innovative use of it. In this connection, I cited Ken Wilber's book *Up From Eden*, which is a panoramic treatment of human evolution from the perspective of transpersonal spectrum theory (1981). In particular, I took Wilber to task for accusing Gebser of failing to differentiate between "pre-subject/object" and "trans-subject/object," that is, of committing what in transpersonal theory is called a "pre/trans fallacy." This stands for a confusion between prepersonal and transpersonal levels of experience. Then I went on to say:

It [the archaic consciousness] is closest to the ever-present Origin solely in terms of the simplicity of its internal configuration. Only from the perspective of the mental-rational consciousness (which operates with a linear time concept) does Origin appear to be also the beginning of the whole evolutionary progression so that the archaic consciousness would be closest to the Origin in a temporal sense as well.

But close does not mean identical. For, as Gebser insists, the Origin is not defined by any of the structures of consciousness. It is atemporal and aspatial. Therefore Gebser's remark that the archaic consciousness may "originally" have been identical with Origin could be true of it only in its potential mode, prior to its appearance in space-time. And in that case Gebser's statement necessarily holds true also of all the other structures of consciousness in potentia. What this brings home to us is the fact that Origin is not the temporal beginning of anything but the ever-present backdrop of all developmental happenings. As will be appreciated, Gebser's observation has something of the quality of a Zen koan (Feuerstein, 58-59).

Both Gebser's controversial statement and my somewhat lukewarm vindication of it have recently provoked Wilber's friendly but nonetheless face-on counter criticism. In his mammoth work *Sex, Ecology, and Spirituality*, which is the first volume of a projected trilogy, Wilber reiterates his earlier rejection of the Gebserian claim that the archaic structure is closest to the ever-present Origin, arguing correctly that "Origin is neither simple nor complex, but acategorical" (1995, 762) For Wilber, the archaic structure is closest not to Origin but to the great apes and hominids. He further humorously observes that by the criterion of simplicity, worms are even closer to Origin. And these, one might add, are structurally and historically preceded by rocks and the primordial soup from which our universe is said to have emerged.

Picking up on my own critique of the Gebserian position, Wilber rightly argues that "since each structure is in potentia identically close to Origin, the only other measure is

actually (or self-actualizingly) close to Origin, and by that only acceptable measure, the archaic is, of course, the farthest from Origin" (762). Wilber sums up his criticism by saying that Gebser's position is not paradoxical, as I proposed by way of an accommodating explanation, but "pretty clearly has something of the quality of a complete confusion, and a pre/trans confusion at that" (762). Wilber's blunt criticism deserves to be considered in some depth.

There undoubtedly is a problem here, but what exactly is it? As I pointed out in my book, there are two ways of interpreting Gebser's controversial statement. We can understand it either as an evolutionary/chronological allusion or as a phenomenological/structural reference. Turning to the first interpretation, we must immediately note that Gebser himself carefully distinguished between the universe's temporal beginning (*Anfang*) and Origin. The first sentence of his preface to *The Ever-Present Origin* reads: "Origin is always present. It is not a beginning, because every beginning is time-bound" (xix).

There could be no clearer enunciation of the nature of Origin as atemporal. In what sense, then, could the archaic structure of consciousness be said to be closest to Origin? After all, it is a configuration that, from an objective perspective, occurs in space and time, even though its internal configuration is prespatial and pretemporal. Did Gebser confuse Origin with beginning? I think not. Gebser understood each structure as an emergent configuration (one structure emerging or evolving out of structurally simpler and chronologically earlier structures, with Origin as a constant and continuous backdrop of this developmental process. Ultimately, all structures arise out of Origin in which they coinhere. However, glancing into the past, Gebser discerned a distinct series of structural constellations that gave human consciousness its particular shape at any given time in history. Approaching this problem from the mental-rational consciousness, this process must have had a beginning, which Gebser identified as the archaic structure of consciousness. Since it did not emerge from any identifiable earlier structure, he concluded that we must regard it as being in close proximity to the atemporal Origin itself.

Here we must pause to briefly consider a point that has some bearing on the present discussion. In elaborating on his preference for the term "structure" over "level," Gebser made a very curious observation. He noted that, unlike the word "level," which entails a strong spatial reference, "structure" suggests something that is not merely spatial but spatiotemporal and that could even be aspatial and atemporal. Here Gebser looks at the term "structure" with an integral sensitivity as breaking the linear, dualistic mold of the mental-rational consciousness. But this particular statement says nothing about each phenomenological structure, which, as Gebser noted, may be aspatial/atemporal (integral), spatial/temporal (mental-rational), prespatial/pretemporal (mythic), unspatial/untemporal (magic), and devoid of spatiality and temporality altogether (archaic). In characterizing the archaic structure as "zero-dimensional," "prior to space," and "prior to time," Gebser clearly distinguished it from the other structures of consciousness, notably the integral structure in which the mental-rational limitations relative to space/time are transcended but which is not merely pretemporal or prespatial. This in itself shows that Gebser did not in principle confuse the integral with the archaic, as Wilber claims. But did he contradict the fundamental orientation of his work when discussing the structural "proximity" of the archaic consciousness to Origin? How should we understand his claim? Clearly, when we look at the archaic consciousness from a historical (mental-rational) perspective, we can say, as outlined above, that in its emergence it preceded the other structures. Since, according to the Gebserian model, all emergent structures continue to coexist, however, we must not equate this with a strictly linear model of evolution. Gebser explicitly rejected such an interpretation.

The term "proximity" entails a spatial metaphor that needs to be translated into structural terms. Thus, as Gebser noted, by comparison with the other structures of consciousness, the archaic consciousness has the greatest degree of latency and the least amount of transparency. This latency resembles or reflects the potentiality of Origin itself. More specifically, the archaic consciousness mirrors what Gebser called Origin's "structure of simultaneity" (Zugleich-Struktur). In Origin all possibilities coexist in flawless synchrony. More than any of the other structures, the archaic consciousness is informed or defined by this simultaneity of originary possibilities. This is evident, for instance, from a type of dream that Gebser called "nuclear dream" (Kerntraum), in which dream events do not follow a linear order but, upon reconstruction, appear to have occurred simultaneously. The problem with having the archaic structure (or indeed, any other structure) evolve out of Origin is the same problem that has kept countless generations of Indic metaphysicians occupied: How can the Absolute become finite? Or: How can the transcendental Consciousness become the separative insular ego-consciousness of the ordinary human being? All kinds of answers have been proposed, none of which, however, can be deemed entirely satisfactory to the rational mind. Hence, also Wilber's difficulty with Gebser's assertion that the archaic structure in some fashion is in close proximity to Origin.

I will next turn to the second way in which we can interpret Gebser's statement. From a phenomenological viewpoint, few would probably deny that the archaic structure is structurally less complex than the other structures delineated by Gebser. In fact, this argument is fundamental to Gebser's phenomenology, which evinces augmented dimensionality for each successive (though after emergence continuously copresent) structure of consciousness. Here we must ask: What does Gebser say about a possible phenomenology of Origin? As far as I can tell, nothing. He does, however, make statements about Origin that can be approached phenomenologically. The opening sentence of his preface represents such a statement: "Origin is always present" (xxvii).

He makes it further clear that by "present" he does not mean merely the present moment but the eternal present. He also speaks of the actualization of Origin, implying that we as conscious beings can assume a particular relationship to Origin by which Origin becomes visible in the manifest structures of consciousness. Put differently, Origin comes to our consciousness through the process of evolution that, by way of mutation, leads to ever greater integration. Another significant statement by Gebser is that the future is latent in the present and hence capable of coming to consciousness. All these statements directly or indirectly relate to the nature of Origin. They reveal Origin in its effectivity on an experiencing consciousness. Gebser's various statements imply a phenomenology of what we might call Origin-as-perceived (from an epistemological perspective) or Origin-in-action (from an ontological perspective). Strictly speaking, however, they do not say anything about Origin-in-itself. Interestingly, Gebser also calls Origin the "Itself" (*Sich*), which is an exact equivalent of the Sanskrit notion of *atman*, though Gebser generally (but not dogmatically) shied away from making this correlation because of the idealizing metaphysics surrounding the *atman* concept. The notion of the *Sich*, though formulated in order to explain the relationship between Origin and the core of consciousness, suggests that Origin is without referent and hence not phenomenologically graspable.

Is, then, Wilber's critique to the point? Does the assimilation of the archaic structure to Origin represent a pre/trans fallacy? It is so only if we assume, as does Wilber, that the subsequent structures, which show a greater intensity of conscious awareness, are in some way superior to the archaic consciousness. Wilber looks at the great apes or the lowly slugs assuming that because they have a lower degree of conscious awareness they are further removed from Origin than, for instance, the mental structure of consciousness. Thus, like Gebser, he too succumbs to a distance (spatial) scale, which is the kind of quantification to which the mental-rational consciousness is prone. In fact,

he seemingly inverts Gebser's interpretation of the archaic consciousness. Indeed, on the surface, Wilber's argument makes sense, given Gebser's notion of consciousness mutations in which Origin becomes increasingly transparent to the experiencing consciousness. Yet, Gebser does not only regard the evolution of consciousness as mysteriously triggered by Origin but also argues that the ever-present Origin is part of the very fabric of material existence as well. What this means is that Origin is present and presently effective whether we are aware of this fact or not (an explanation that Wilber appears to endorse).

We are thus free to look at a particular configuration or modality of consciousness not only in its conscious responsiveness to Origin but in its responsiveness to phenomena altogether. Here Gebser rightly, I think, characterized the archaic consciousness as a structure that is cognitively far simpler than, say, the mental consciousness. This comparative simplicity could now be interpreted in three ways. First, it could be said to represent a greater opacity (unconsciousness) relative to Origin (which is Wilber's evolutionary point of view and which Gebser also expressed). Second, it could be said to represent a pattern of higher responsiveness to Origin (which is the Garden-of-Eden view of certain primitivists who want to turn the clock back). Third, which seems to be Gebser's stance, the archaic consciousness can be looked at from a mental-rational perspective or linear viewpoint (which yields the kind of explanation proffered by Wilber) or from a systatic perception (which reveals the zero-dimensionality of the archaic consciousness).

According to Gebser, the archaic consciousness is an identity consciousness, and he described its character, nature, and possibility as *ganzheitlich* (holistic), because in its sleeplike quality the archaic consciousness is not yet disrupted by either pointlike magical union, mythical polarity, or mental-rational duality. The incumbent of the archaic consciousness is still very much a part of Nature, without interference from an experiential center such as the ego. In this regard, the incumbent's life is lived out in paradise, albeit an unconscious paradise. It is from this systatic view that the archaic consciousness (uncomplicated by conscious individuation) can be said to approximate (or imitate) the wholeness of Origin. Gebser's use of the term "integral" or "holistic" in connection with the archaic consciousness is most unfortunate because it is bound to lead to confusion over the nature of the integral consciousness. If both are integral (*ganzheitlich*), how must we envision their difference? Wilber's position is that precisely because the archaic consciousness lacks self-transparency it is farthest removed from Origin. As he sees it, what he calls transrational modes of consciousness are closest to Origin insofar as they are self-actualizing in regard to Origin. In other words, they have greater transparency and therefore do not obscure Origin to the same degree that other, less self-actualizing structures of consciousness do. Of course this is exactly what Gebser claims as well.

The problem, then, appears to be partly one of semantics (springing from Gebser's particular methodology) but largely one of linguistics. In regard to the former, we can observe that Gebser's systasis (or multidimensional, multistructural approach) permits us to look at the archaic consciousness from the kind of broad-based phenomenology that seems implicit in his statement that the archaic consciousness is closest to Origin. On the surface, this seems to be a statement leaning heavily on the linear time concept of the mental-rational structure of consciousness. But when we dig deeper, it appears to relate more to Gebser's model of dimensionalities than to history or evolution.

At any rate, Gebser was quite clear that we achieve nothing by returning to the archaic consciousness and that, rather, the task confronting us is to actualize the integral consciousness. For this reason, even if we were to accept Wilber's dismissal of this particular Gebserian formulation as an instance of a pre/trans fallacy, this would not in any significant way change the Gebserian framework. However, in the absence of

stringent reasons for rejecting it, I think that Gebser's statement about the proximity of the archaic structure to Origin still holds a certain appeal, even though the statement may lead to confusion apart from the specific context of Gebserian systasis. Although I believe that Wilber's criticisms do not apply to the substance of Gebser's thought but at best to his linguistic expression, they have been helpful in bringing out further nuances of Gebser's thinking and his systatic-phenomenological methodology. This methodology, which is unattainable for the archaic consciousness or even the mental-rational consciousness, is crucial to the integral consciousness.

Where Gebser and Wilber seem to differ in fundamental and very important ways is in their respective appraisal of what the integral consciousness is capable of accomplishing. Gebser believes that the integral consciousness discloses the whole (das Ganze) whereas Wilber is content with saying that it merely discloses wholeness. This fundamental difference was articulated by Wilber himself. He rightly, in my view, points out that evolution may not be over with the emergence of the integral structure and that it in all probability is "merely a phase in an ever-greater unfolding" (1995, 761). Gebser of course would argue against Wilber's evolutionary scheme of unending linear development, saying that it is a mental-rational projection. The merit of Gebser's scheme lies in that he does not view the integral consciousness as an evolutionary inevitability but something that each individual must realize through personal effort, that is, the difficult work of self-transformation. On the other hand, Gebser's scheme, which ends with the integral consciousness, leaves one with an uneasy sense of closure. By contrast, the open-endedness of Wilber's evolutionary perspective holds a certain appeal, because it does not seek to outguess the mysterious unfolding of Origin. But this theme deserves separate consideration.

In conclusion, we must note that Gebser's cultural philosophy is more sophisticated than Wilber assumes and at the same time perhaps not always as precise in its formulations as one might wish. Gebser was a man of letters, not a scientist or even academic philosopher. This, I suggest, was both his strength and his weakness as an innovative thinker and writer.

POSTSCRIPT

In response to the above article, Ken Wilber proffered a number of additional comments in a letter addressed to me and dated October 1, 1995. With his permission, I am excerpting from his observations as follows (my own commentary is set in italics):

[. . .] I think you will understand that, on balance, I am not persuaded on [your essay's] one major point [. . .] You are fair to both parties, and it advances the dialogue considerably. You wonder if the essay is a useful consideration, and I say Yes, very much. I think everybody on both sides of this issue needs to hear exactly the points you raise [. . .] "Origin is always present." Absolutely. You cannot be closer or further from Origin ontologically, you can only be "closer" or "further" epistemologically, in the sense of realizing ever-presence. The archaic did not epistemically realize Origin, so it was not closer; it did not developmentally self-actualize Origin, so it was not closer.

By both those scales, it was further. Moreover, neither of those scales has to be interpreted linearly; even development is a circular unfolding/enfolding, and archaic is still further [. . .]

Here Wilber accepts the metaphor of distance introduced by Gebser. However, as in his book, he reverses Gebser's interpretation of the archaic consciousness and argues that it is at a great distance (epistemically and developmentally) from Origin, stating:

To say that the archaic's "sleeplike quality" is "not yet disrupted" by magic, mythic, mental is likewise the old retro-Romantic ploy; my dog's awareness is not disrupted by magic or mythic or mental either. So my dog must therefore live in unconscious

paradise, unconscious heaven. But actually, you see, both my dog and the archaic live in unconscious hell; that is, they are both fully immersed in *samsara* but don't have the power to recognize that burning fact. The archaic is not a presence of integral actuality, but rather a double lack: it is a lower level of integration and a lower level of awareness [. . .]

Gebser would of course agree with Wilber on this last point. As for the archaic consciousness being paradisiacal, Gebser used this description in his book On Trial (p. 15) emphasizing that it is merely an analogy. Moreover, Gebser would not describe it as "unconscious hell" either. If we want to exercise greater descriptive constraint, we would have to say that neither "paradise" nor "hell" are appropriate labels. If "paradise" is a mental-rational projection, so is "hell." For this reason I cannot accept Wilber's statement that "The archaic is the nightmare that history will overcome."

For Wilber, the archaic structure as a historical phase rather than as a psychological constituent is "self-preservationist (egocentric in fact)," and he sees this "lack of tolerance" and "lack of compassion" as a "nightmare." Strictly speaking, according to Gebser's phenomenology, there is no ego proper at the archaic level of development, but this may be quibbling over words. Incidentally, Gebser also ascribes instinct to the magical rather than the archaic consciousness, and this is worthy of a more detailed consideration than can be given here. At any rate, Wilber agrees that the archaic structure, as all other structures, is present even in the most evolved human being. Our challenge is to learn to integrate the archaic structure consciously with the other psychic structures.

Wilber made the following further observation:

Part of Gebser's real problem here is that because he believes that the archaic has no precedent, he catastrophically unplugs it from evolutionary unfolding; this forces him to plop it down "close to Origin," whereas actually it is only close to his own misunderstanding.

From a truly systatic or multistructural perception, the archaic is simply the dimensional transition to hominid forms of structuration, a structure that is unfolded/enfolded in all ensuing mutations of consciousness. Gebser's strange privileging of this transition is partly a logical game (he linearly pushes dimensionalities backwards, and soon arrives at zero dimensionality—there is nowhere else to go, so the archaic looms up in dimensionality as a foundation—square zero, so to speak—which being allegedly "simple" and "holistic" and "integral," must lie, not next to apes, but next to Origin, simply because he has no place else to plunk it down [. . .]

I must agree with Wilber that there is no convincing reason (other than the kind of evolutionary logic employed by Gebser in his reconstruction of earlier structures of consciousness) for assuming that it all began with the archaic consciousness, as outlined by him. Wilber raises a very important point here, which parallels his argument about the supposed or implicit finality of the integral consciousness within Gebser's framework. Clearly, in light of Wilber's thoughtful critique, students of Gebser's work must consider to what degree the Gebserian evolutionary model is an application of his systatic-phenomenological methodology or is merely representative of logical idealization. Gebser himself appears to have been somewhat uneasy about the apparent self-containedness of his delineated structures, because he allowed for the fact that, in evolutionary actuality, there may have been in-between structures bridging the gulf between the four principal consciousness modalities. But once we admit this possibility, then his dimensional framework is called into question. Furthermore, his assertion that each structure represents a sudden mutation or saltation could be weakened by admitting the existence of in-between structures. This might not be a loss, however, because it would oblige researchers to consider more vigorously the possible mechanism or mechanisms by which consciousness mutates. Even if we assume, as did Gebser, an originary impulse behind the evolution of consciousness, such an assumption does not constitute an actual explanation of how mutational processes unfold on the

level of psyche and culture. This whole discussion brings home the point that in order to do justice to Gebser's work, we must continually rethink it.

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CAVE AND LABYRINTH

Jean Gebser (1956)

In speaking of cave and labyrinth we should understand that at least the cave is a primal phenomenon. It is that fact that fulfills a primal yearning of the human being, namely the yearning for sheltered security (Geborgenheit). The modern interest in everything that has to do with the cave and its fascination and enchantment, is quite understandable in our world that offers so little security to the individual. And those who feel secure in themselves are few. Hence the majority must search for security somewhere. And here the image of the cave affords an optimal place of refuge. But that has its dangers, and not only because the mysterious can switch into the uncanny. In that case the cave or hollow is turned into hell—the close relationship between these two words is not accidental. Rather it has its dangers insofar as this form of chimerical security entails a renunciation of consciousness. The absence of light in the cave's darkness is at the same time the absence of the light, or clear consciousness and time, that comes about by means of the alteration of day and night that does not occur. To go back to the cave, even only in thought, is regression from life into the state of being unborn, into unconsciousness or timelessness—that is to say, into a condition that appears to be secure only because it removes us from the demands of being born, of consciousness, and of time. That condition is at once the secret, for we no longer know what and who we were when we were unborn. The speliologists all search for that secret which, from our perspective, seems to lie behind us and that is yet eternal. Each of those researchers gives that search a different name and pretext. Some seek the cave bear, others geological strata of Mother Earth, yet others search for treasure; the most genuine among them, search for old places of worship, such as those that were discovered in the Albigensian caves of the Pyrenees some years ago. However, those caves which served as places of worship have a different significance from the actual primal cave, whether it be cave or womb. For, in the case of caves that served as the location of cults, particularly such recent cults as those of the medieval gnostic Albigensians, the darkness and unconsciousness of the cave sanctuary were lit up by burning candles. Yet, in the final analysis, such cults remain maternal cults. For the cave is a maternal, matriarchal aspect of the world. It is nocturnal, that is, night reigns in it. It is not by chance that three world-renowned crypts harbor a black Maria: the cathedral of Chartres, the church on Montserrat and the one in Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer in the Camargue of Southern France in which the gypsies worship Sarah, the black Madonna. She is the counter-image, the night side of the heavenly Maria, who lives opposite the dark Madonna in the golden aureole of glory and transfiguration. Just as we return every night to sleep and thus into a condition that is removed from time and consciousness, so is in every human being the yearning for the secure enclosure of the protective cave alive. That yearning is a primal phenomenon, which corresponds to the primal fact of the maternal aspect of the cave. But he who truly seeks to realize that yearning is, because he was born, lost to life—just like the Indian saints who withdraw into the Himalayan caves or like the Buddha who withdrew into the cave. That is the Eastern way of renunciation, of world relinquishment, the most consistent form of the attempt to deny life and to commune with the deepest secret of our origin. By contrast, the labyrinth, whose primal form is the spiral, indicates a different, more wakeful aspect of the world. If the cave represents security, peace, and absence of danger, then the labyrinth is an expression of seeking, movement, and danger. When Rainer Maria Rilke in his poem "An den Engel" (To the Angel) writes:??

It is our lot not to know the way out from the erroneous zone within, then he betrays his being magically spellbound by to the cave and mother world which he, a man, rediscovers within himself, in the "erroneous zone within" (drinnen irrlichen Bezirk). He who thinks thus has forgotten that he was born; or he wants to forget this fact. Quite

different the person who has walked through the labyrinth and returns safely into daylight. Remember the Ariadne mythologeme. Ariadne, the princess of Crete, gave Theseus, who was to be sacrificed to the Minotaur of the labyrinth, a thread that made it possible for him to find his way back after killing the Minotaur. That thread is also a symbol of consciousness, an expression for the fact that that which connects Theseus to the world of day, namely consciousness, is not lost to him in the nocturnal world of the labyrinth. We all know the paths on which we have gone astray that have yet been decisive for our destiny and development, which indicates that they have led us to conscious formation. The mazes, which are recent manifestations of the original labyrinth, with which the image of dying and rebirth is connected, have not completely come to rest in human beings. The maze, the labyrinth, is so to speak the counter-image of the primal yearning for the cave; it is the image of that other primal yearning for greater awareness, and it is always an expression of the possibility of advancing, but not the return into unconsciousness and timelessness. For if the cave is dark, then the labyrinth is dimly lit. If the cave is an expression of remoteness from consciousness, of unconsciousness, then the labyrinth is a way, if still a confused way, into consciousness. We must tread that way always anew and fight off that other yearning that wants to pull us back and down into an unconsciousness that we can never again realize. Let us be satisfied with sleep. Let us try again and again to tread the way of increasing wakefulness, even when the lost secret beggones us and despite the occasional feeling of insecurity in the world.

Certainly, it is difficult. However, unless we want to deny and abandon ourselves, that way is the only way for us Europeans. Some may tread it thanks to their faith in God, others because they know themselves in harmony with the world, though not with that confused, hasty world of our days but with the powers that sustain our world and numerous others. Then we may perhaps also discover the lost secret, though not where we were searching for it. For the secret does not only dwell in the dark, but everywhere, and hence also in extreme clarity. Regarded from a cultural and historical view, cave and labyrinth remain for us Westerners of vital and psychic significance because they correspond to primal facts of the world and to our primal yearnings. But let us not forget that Christ arose from the tomb, from the cave, into heaven. Let us not forget that this resurrection from the cave exists, even though the cave guards its hidden secret. The greater secret, however, which makes the cave's secret transparent, is the manifest secret of transfiguration. I would like to thank Professor Noel Barstad, University of Ohio, Athens, for his valuable comments on this translation, which allowed me to improve it. The German original is found in Jean Gebser, *Gesamtausgabe*, Volume 6 (Schaffhausen, Switzerland: Novalis Verlag, 1977), pp. 298-301. c 1991 Georg Feuerstein Translated from the German by Georg Feuerstein, Ph.D.

GEBSER'S THOUGHTS ON LOVE

Georg Feuerstein

Director, Yoga Research Center

A Gebser "fan," Jim Hill, who owns a bookstore/cafe in Carefree, Arizona (of all places), recently called me up to ask me on behalf of his little Gebser study group what Gebser's thoughts were on love. Apparently they had combed through *The Ever-Present Origin* and failed to find any meaningful references to the concept of love. They were all puzzled and not a little agitated. I reassured him that Gebser had said quite a bit on love, but that his emphasis was mostly on transparency, as in Zen.

After the phone call, I went straight to the Gebser publications on my shelves, to check for myself. Although my initial response had been correct, I felt I should "vindicate" Gebser a little more, and so sat down and translated a few bits and pieces from hitherto untranslated materials, including most of a book fragment on love. The following is the response I sent to the study group in Arizona.

Dear Gebser Friends: As I confirmed to Jim Hill over the phone today, it is indeed true that the concept of love is not prominent in Gebser's work, though he does appear to make more use of it in his later writings. There are, I suspect, several reasons for this. First, Gebser was facing an intellectual environment that was relatively hostile to his phenomenology of consciousness, and so he was understandably keen not to invite further prejudice by using terms that could possibly be interpreted as unphilosophical, uncritical, irrational, or whatever. (See also the last excerpt below, which contains a possible explanation for Gebser's omission.)

Second, the thrust of all of Gebser's work is on promoting clarity of understanding, transparency of awareness. This lucidity of being can be seen as standing in contrast to love as commonly understood, namely as an emotional, irrational force – rather than the effective presence of the arational.

A third element is Gebser's personal history, which was marked by a quite traumatic childhood: his mother was apparently a beautiful but excessively narcissistic woman who withheld her motherly love from him, which caused him tremendous pain and sorrow. She also appears to have driven his father to commit suicide.

Given this background, we can perhaps appreciate why Gebser was reluctant to use the fashionable word "love." He did, however, say a lot about primal trust, which didn't have the same (painful) undertones for him. As you know, (Gebser spent a good many years in Spain, and he felt a deep resonance with the Spanish character, which is known for its great capacity for sorrow.

I am bringing these biographical details to your attention, because we must not idealize or, worse, idolize Gebser. He was not a Buddha – and even then idolization would be out of place. Rather, Gebser was a man who has had a harder life than most people, and whose suffering was likely doubled by his extreme sensitivity. Yet, he won through to a new self-understanding and a new relationship to life, and in this he can be a guiding light to us. Glancing through various of Gebser's works, I have found the following statements that might be useful in your consideration of how he looked at love. "The three preconditions for winning the Integral Consciousness: (1) Recognition of the new style of thought that has been possible since 1900/27 and which permits such hitherto impossible criteria as polarity, noncausality and acausality, dematerialization; (2) Recognition of the diverse structures of consciousness, which can also lead to individual self-knowledge, at the beginning of a thorough working on oneself: preconditions for 3 are: ego-freedom, sovereignty, genuine love relationship, genuine thou-relationship, tolerance. (3) Silence, meditation, surrender to the Origin (i.e., genuine self-resignation (*Uberantwortung*))." [From Gebser's diaries, dated 1970-71, as reproduced in vol. VII of the Collected Works, p. 327. I have followed his curious syntax.] The apersonal can be

perceived only by an apersonal, ego-free person. This is, by the way, not only Indian or East-Asian but also Christian wisdom: It is a universal basic human condition and necessity. He who resonates with it experiences a strengthening of his ability to love, and to love comprehensively, which is more than ever necessary in today's endangered world" [*Der Unsichtbare Ursprung*, p. 104]. "Loving is intensified living." (*Lieben is gesteigertes Leben*) [Op. cit., p. 307 – an entry from 1955].

This is also a section heading of a book, entitled "On Living and Loving," which remained a fragment, unfortunately. The German text is rather poetic and involved and doesn't lend itself readily to translation into English. I quote some of the relevant passages:

ON LIVING AND LOVING

"Life poses no questions: It is there, pulsing in everything, and when we question it, it has no answer, unless we were to sense, experience, and recognize certain connections that first of all concern our own existence in itself and secondly our existence in relation to the world, the environment, and other human beings, as well as in relation to some invisible More that stands within and above all these.

It appears that there is something that stands above life itself, because life originates from it and because it flows through life preserving it. That is loving. Even our way to love. Notice that I say "loving," not "love." Why? Perhaps because I shun big words, since they have become overripe, overly heavy, and overly burdened by everything that has been projected into them, and are in the process of splitting apart as a result of the diverse interpretations and classifications, which they have had to endure as concepts or principles. I prefer to speak of simple loving, as it occurs, or does not occur, in us and through us in daily life. However, loving is not without question, at least not in its ordinary, daily form. (There are supposed to be people who have succeeded in living a life of loving beyond question, but only a few will find the renunciation and maturity necessary for such a life.)

As we have seen, love itself is beyond question, because it is pure answer, namely the answer to "love," to that kind of loving whose questioning is born by life. But let us not move too far away from the perimeter of daily experience. Let us consider what happens to lovers, the loving that gains form in lovers. Lovers are always questioning. But notice how careful we must be, because this statement is not universally valid; it springs from masculine, not generically human thought. It is probably conditionally valid for the lover, but even then we must be cautious not to generalize.

However, what is not a generalization but an elevation or, better, an enhancement is that intensification that the word *Leben* [life] acquires when we say *lieben* [loving]. By a single change of vowels, mere life is as it were transmuted into something more inward. Loving introduces into the expansive fullness of relationship of life and of the animate world those happy, painful, tensional as well as balancing impulses that are not only life-preserving but also life-enhancing and that—when we consider it deeply—point beyond life.

Before we can talk about what it is that in our loving points beyond life, especially our individual lives, we must speak about how loving points to life. The form in which a person loves and is capable of loving determines his life. In other words, it determines his reality, notably his effect on the world and the effect of the world on him. Certain circumstances allow us to speak, by and large, of three essential forms of loving, that is, of three clearly distinguishable basic attitudes of the I to the Thou, and thus of the I to the world and within the world. When I speak of three forms of loving, you need not fear that I want to superimpose a sophisticated schema on this foundational aspect of life. I am trying to be simple and to listen to speech, to what we all say. It seems to me to

be significant that we avail ourselves of rather different circumscriptions when we speak of loving. We say: *Ich bin verliebt*. [I am in love.] But we also say: *Ich habe dich lieb* [I feel love for you], which is something quite different. And, finally, we also say: *Ich liebe dich* [I love you.] Perhaps, in addition, the divine within us recognizes the longing to simply be love or, at least, to 'be within love.' However, today even the slightest demand on us by the divine is apparently felt to be a challenge that is difficult to meet. Let us stay with "being in love." What happens when a person falls in love? Suddenly life answers him, and the answer is predominantly vital and possibly connected with the kind of cruel nonparticipation, noncommittal playfulness that is also an aspect of life. When young people fall in love, they experience this as being pulled into a vortex or, else, into play. And is it any different when we older people fall in love? Everyone will know this best for himself. To fall in love does not yet amount to loving; but loving can be in that person and can be awakened by his having fallen in love. But how often does this transformation occur? Intoxication is no guarantee. Somewhat more reliable is *Liebhaben* [lit. "having love" for another person]. But it harbors a danger, which is expressed in the word *have*, which always indicates possession. Where this possessiveness becomes too pronounced, it threatens one's reverence for the Thou, endangers the humanness of every genuine relationship, and embroils us in dependencies, which make maturation impossible. The possessive person is not always guilty. Besides, who dares speak of guilt? True guilt begins only when we are aware of it and refuse to do anything to dissolve it.

The rest is destiny or fate or hollowness, or whatever you may want to call it. Often, a person is so enslaved to his lover that this enslavement forces the partner to denigrate loving to possessing. The *Horige* [enslaved individual] treats his or her partner as nothing but a *erhorende* lover. [The word-play here is not easily reproduced in English. The word *horen* means "to hear," and this meaning is present in the words *Horige* and *erhorend*. The *erhorende* person is at the receiving end of the emotional enslavement.] There are many kinds of *Liebhabers* [lovers who "have" love]—lovers of art, of antiquities, of horses—but to become a lover of human beings is inhuman.

Things are different, of course, when there are two people who have love for each other, who possess each other in a giving way—for, in them can be prepared genuine loving, which so many talk about without knowing what it means. All love for another human being must be learned. And all love must be accomplished and demonstrated anew with every day.

Let us never forget: Love is always something that points beyond the human being, even beyond—and that is tragic enough—the loved person. Wherever love binds more than releases, we begin to betray the divine. And wherever we equate love with the divine, we begin to betray the loved person; or, if it is not a betrayal, then it is an unreasonable demand. I know, this formulation can be contradicted. But in proposing it I remember the fact that there has been an epoch—which is coming to an end only in our generation—when husband and wife were called *Gatte* and *Gattin*. Did people actually know what they were saying? Anyway, only a race that had removed itself from the divine and emphasized the earthly-human, could have chosen those words. For, the word *Gatte* [husband] is derived from the word *Gott* [god], and *Gattin* from *Gottin* [goddess]. Only when we succeed to affirm another human being in all the forms of love and to live this threefold love in everyday life, do we abide in love—in its binding aspect, its unconditionality, and its fullness and freedom. What lovers do really know what happens when they love? Very much happens. Indeed, decisive things happen. Not only in the lover, not only in the loved person. The fullness or poverty of true love, lived in the world, determines the face of the world.

But what does true love mean? Suppose that it is characterized by genuine devotion. What then? Genuine devotion is at least temporary liberation from the I. But in order to

free oneself from the I, we must first of all have arrived at the I. The painful way of I-formation, which can temporarily lead to rigorous egotism, is inevitable. I have known relationships between people that have lasted for years only to fall apart, whether visibly or not. Why? Because one partner had failed to find his I—whether he was prevented from doing so by the other partner, or whether he had found it but failed to overcome it, either because the partner was left behind or because the one or the other was unable to accomplish the jump into freedom. [Collected Works, vol. VI, pp. 376ff.]

Finally, let's not forget that we grow through contrast and dialogue. As Gebser put it: "The books we owe the most are those that are opposed to our own opinions." [Op. cit., p. 292—an entry from 1941-44] I wish everyone a truly enlivening new year in which the wonderful mystery of ego-free loving will reveal itself more and more.

Warm regards, Georg Feuerstein.

THE COSMIC FORM OF SIVA

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The west reads the images in Indian art as countless presentations communicating different aspects of the one, the divine. These multiple images are deemed to be illusory manifestations (*maya*) of a single ultimate reality. The notion is that truth lies beyond the world of appearances. The forms in Indian visual vocabulary are seen, in essence, as various appearances of a complete whole, which is omniscient, omnipotent, and transcendental. Traditionally the patterning of images in Indian art is couched in a language of myths and symbols. This paper will place emphasis on the cosmic form of Siva expressed in the myth of the cosmos as a dance of Siva. The distinctive characteristics of the visual vocabulary the sculptor has used are ways of compacting the cosmic dynamics revealed in the images of Siva's dancing. The hand gestures, the body movement, are an expressive language imbued with meaning and aesthetic emotion (*rasa*). The mudras, as sacred language and stories, express myths that are narrated to create transparent awareness of the essence of Siva as the cosmos in dynamic rhythms and formation and transformation, birth and death.

The cosmic form of Siva—a living god—transcends all categories. He is existence—with all its paradoxes. Beyond existence, he is the indefinable absolute. Thus speaks the Western interpretation. Yet in its aesthetic appearances, Siva is an all pervasive presence that, even in its move to become distant, continues to be the symbol of the Indian understanding of the cosmic dynamics.

"Bhairava is the form of Siva in which the god—in his passion play (*lila*)—overcame sin, suffering, time, death, thereby attaining release. Siva speaks of himself as the god who sets everything in motion and is always dancing, absorbed in yoga, enjoying supreme bliss. His dance is a form of his being."¹

Lord of the dance (Natraja or Lalitha) Siva's dance takes two forms: the gentle erotic dance (*lasya*) associated with the creation of the world, and violent dangerous dance (*tandava*) associated with the destruction of the world. Both are said to have originated in the pine forest. The north and south Indian variants of the myth are significantly different. According to the former myth, a group of sages were living in the forest with their wives; to demonstrate to them they had not yet subdued their lust and anger, Siva came to the forest in the form of a handsome beggar, stark naked and with an erect phallus. He danced with the sage's wives and excited them; blind with rage, the sages cursed Siva to be castrated. Like a bolt of lightning, his phallus fell to the ground, plunging the universe into darkness. The sages then realized who he was, and begged him to forgive them. He did so on one condition that they worship his phallus (*linga*) forever. (Figure 1). This myth appears relatively late in the sanskrit texts and is the source of classical traditions that regard Siva's dance as an act of cosmic creation. In the south the myth varies; the castration is omitted from the myth. Siva danced with the sage's wives and the sages threw weapons at him but, oblivious to their efforts, he continued to dance. Then they sent a tiger; he flayed it and wrapped it around his shoulders like a shawl and continued to dance. And then they conjured up fire, but he

¹Taken from "Isvaragita" (Song of the lord), of the Kurma Purana, 2.4.33, ed. Anand Swarup Gupta (Varanasi, 1971).

made it a halo and continued to dance. They sent a demon but he trampled it under his feet and continued to dance. This is the other dance, the destructive dance *tandava*, developing out of the thwarted erotic dance at the beginning of the myth. The two are closely related; these two dances are merely two aspects of a single dance, for he destroys in order to create, tearing down in order to build again.

This dance of the king of dancers is called Anandatandava, the fierce dance of bliss. It is distinguished from the other modes of Siva's dance: the *lasya*. Siva usually dances in the evening twilight; he dances to the music of the gods, he dances on the battlefield, cremation ground, dances for

Parvati, or with goddess Kali. His elation has all the rhythms of the cosmos. They flow from him, king of dancers. As Nataraja, Siva dances the cosmos into and out of existence, from the first vibration that the movement of the drum in his right hand sends out into space to the last flicker of the flame that he holds in his left hand. Such is the span of his raised upper hands into which his dancing limbs send the freedom that his grace assures throughout the cosmos. From head to foot, the figure in its torsion, a fulguration of movement, strikes the ground and rises as the axis of the image within its enclosing arch of flames above the prostrate demon of ignorance, forgetful of all that had happened in the beginning.



Figure 1 Shivalingam

The myth of Rudra Siva is the myth of god as consciousness. Its contents are absolute whence the seed of creation was spilled on earth. The myth continues the narrative with Rudra's birth from the seed of Prajapati, Lord of generation. As he was born, the new god was invested in the domain of the cosmos. The cosmos, according to the Saiva tradition, consists of eight components; the five elements are space, air, fire, water, and earth and also the hot sun and the cool moon, which are measures of time. The eighth in the *ogdoad* as the initiated Brahmin, that is man in his consciousness. Siva astamurti (of eight forms) dwells in each of these domains; man in his physical being partakes of the seven domains. As such Siva dwells in his body. Over and above, Siva dwells in man's consciousness, aware of Siva's reality, in and beyond manifestation (Kramrisch, *Manifestations* 23).

Nataraja, God of the dance, is the grandest symbol created portraying the birth, the evolution, the death, and re-birth of the human soul. He is the living being, who, shedding his *avidya* or ignorance, re-absorbed the universe into the supreme harmony of his wisdom. Siva as the cosmic dancer, represents both creation and destruction. The image of Nataraja depicts the eternal wisdom transmitted through the dance.

Dancing is an ancient form of magic. The dancer becomes amplified into a being endowed with supra-normal powers. His personality is transformed. Like yoga, the

dance induces trance, ecstasy, the experience of the all, the realization of one's own secret nature, and finally one's mergence into the cosmic rhythm. The dance is an act of creation. Siva is the cosmic dancer; in his dancing manifestation (*nirtyamurthi*) he embodies and simultaneously gives manifestation to his own eternal energy. The forces gathered and projected in his frantic, ever enduring gyrations, are the powers of the evolution, maintenance, and dissolution of the world. Nature and all its creatures are the animations of his eternal dance. Siva's dance is the dance of the cosmos, the rhythm of the movement of the sun and the moon, of the earth and the wind. All pulsate in his body, and man, the microcosm, who shares in and is conscious of them—is also Siva's body, the total creation. Siva is *astamurthi* the eightfold presence that formed the cosmic *ogdoad* comprising the five elements, the luminaries and the initiated human being. Siva's supreme state of being in manifestation is the dance: he is the Natesa, Lord of dancers.



Figure 2 Shjva Natraja

energies. Out of it unfolds all the other elements, air, fire, water and earth. Together the sound and ether signify the truth, as a pregnant moment of creation, the productive energy of the absolute, in its pristine, cosmogenetic strength. The opposite hand, the upper left, with a half-moon mudra denotes *ardhachandhra mudra*, visible on its palm is a tongue of flame, the symbol of destruction, the burning away of all evil. Fire is the element of destruction of the world. At the close of Kali Yuga, fire will annihilate the body of creation, to be itself then quenched by the ocean of the void. As Zimmer would suggest, here then is the balance of the hands, and is illustrated in a counterpoise of creation and destruction in the play of the cosmic dance. As the ruthlessness of opposites, the transcendental shows through the mask of the enigmatic Master: ceaselessness of production against an insatiate appetite of extermination—sound against flame.

The lower right hand held in a gesture of tender solicitude in front of the body, is the hand of protection, the promise of salvation. This gesture is called the "do not fear"

As narrated by Zimmer, Siva Natraja is represented in this beautiful bronze sculpture, dated 10th century. (Figure 2) The details of this figure are to be read, according to the Hindu tradition, in terms of a complex pictorial allegory. The upper right arm carries a little drum, shaped like an hour glass for beating of the rhythm. This connotes sound or (*nada*), the first element in the universe from which flowed all language, music and literature. It is the vehicle of speech, the conveyor of revelation, tradition, incantation, magic and the all-truth. According to Zimmer, in India sound is further associated with Ether, the first of the five elements. Ether is the primary and the most subtly pervasive manifestation of the pulsating

gesture (*abhaya-mudra*), bestowing protection and peace. And the remaining left hand lifted across the chest, points downwards to the uplifted foot. This hand indicates the way to enlightenment, as it points to the foot, lifted and released as the other foot stamps out (*avidya*) ignorance, shown as the dwarf 'Muyalakan.' This foot signifies Release and is the refuge and salvation of the devotee. It is to be worshipped for the attainment of the union with the all. The hand pointing to it is held in a pose imitative of the outstretched trunk or hand of the elephant (*gaja hasta mudra*), reminding us of Ganesha, Siva's son, the remover of obstacles. The divinity is represented as dancing on the prostrate body of a dwarfish demon, 'Muyalakan.' This is 'Apasmara Purusha,' the man or demon (*purusa*) called forgetfulness, or heedlessness (*apasmara*). It is symbolic of life's blindness, man's ignorance. Conquest of the demon lies in the attainment of the true wisdom. Therein is the release from the bondage of limitation of a self. The ring of flames and light (*prabha-mandala*) issues from and encompasses this figure. This is said to signify the vital processes of universe and its creatures, where nature's dance is animated by the cosmic dancing of Siva. Simultaneously it is said to signify the energy of wisdom, the transcendental light of knowledge of truth, dancing forth from the personification of All. Siva's body portrays the vaulting expanses with "lalita" or charm, embodied with rhythmic movements forming the S curves in the dancing postures. It is not an accident that the dancing Siva, Natraja, represents the apotheosis of the spiritual, artistic faith and the striving of the people. This image is the supreme symbol of all aspects of life as the dance itself represents the synthesis of all aspects of creative activity.

Another allegorical meaning assigned to the halo of flames is that of the holy syllable *aum* or *om*. this mystical utterance stemming from the sacred language of vedic praise and incantation, is understood as an expression and affirmation of the totality of creation. The transcendental essence of divine reality—Brahman is experienced as Atman, the Self. *aum*, together with its surrounding silence, is a sound symbol of the whole consciousness—existence, and the same time willing affirmation. The origin of the ring of flames is also known as the destructive aspect of Siva Rudra; but Siva's destruction is finally identical with Release.

Siva as the cosmic dancer is the embodiment and manifestation of eternal energy in its five activities (*panca kriya*): 1) Creation (*sristi*), the pouring forth or unfolding, 2) Maintenance (*sthiti*), the duration, 3) Destruction (*samhara*), the taking back or reabsorption, 4) Concealment (*tiro-bhava*), the veiling of the true being behind the masks and the garbs of apparitions, aloofness, display of *maya*, and 5) Favor (*anugraha*) acceptance of the devotee, acknowledgement of the pious endeavor of the yogi, bestowal of peace through a revelatory manifestation. Siva displays them simultaneously in sequence symbolized in the positions of his hands and feet. The upper three hands being creation, maintenance, and destruction, the foot planted in forgetfulness is concealment, and the foot uplifted, favoring the elephant hand, indicates the linkage of the three to the two, and promises peace to the soul that experiences all relationships. All five activities are made manifest simultaneously with the pulse of every moment, and in the creation of temporal sequence (Zimmer 154).

Siva Trinity of Elephanta with two expressive profiles, represent the polarity of the creative force. (Figure 3, Siva Trinity, Sadashiva—Eternal Siva, central panel from Elephanta cave temple.) This main icon of Siva with three heads has been called by many names. Collectively the faces are regarded as five emanations from the formless, unmanifested Para-Brahma, the Supreme Principle. Texts of medieval iconography identify the five emanations to represent the five elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth). Stella Kramrisch has identified the three heads as (*Aghora*) fierce, (*Tatpuruṣha*) transcendent, (*Vamadeva*) graceful. The central head at the same time signifies the quiescence of the all. This statue has been referred to as Mahesha, Mahadeva, Trimurti and Sadashiva (Eternal Siva). The indestructible self and the mortal being are in essence the same. This can be read even in the figure of Nataraja, where the incessant, triumphant motion of the swaying of the limbs is in significant contrast to the balance of the head. Siva is Kala, the black one, Time. He is also Mahakala, the great time, eternity. He is the Lord of the dancers, he is Time itself (*Kala*), and he dances as the god who has overcome Time (*Mahakala*). He dances as Natesa, floating in a state of bliss that seems to permeate the entire body.



Figure 3 Sadashiva—Eternal Shiva

As Nataraja, king of dancers, his gestures, wild and full of grace, precipitate the cosmic illusion; his flying arms and legs and the swaying of the torso produce the continuous creation-destruction of the universe, death exactly balancing birth, annihilation the end of every coming forth. The image is a form of an integrated whole. In this sculpture the entirety of this cosmic dance is miraculously rendered. The orchestration of the symbolic whole, the Eternal Siva is depicted. The cyclic rhythm, flowing on in the unstable, irreversible round of Mahayugas, or great Eons, is marked by the beating and stamping of the heels. But the face remains meanwhile in sovereign calm. In the sovereign silence the enigmatic mask of Siva the eternal essence remains unaffected by the tremendous display of his own energy, the effulgence, the flow and the changes of time. The form has an inward smile filled with bliss of self absorption. A tension exists between the marvel of the dance and the serene tranquillity of this expressively inexpressive countenance, the tension, that is to say of eternity and time, the paradox—the silent, mutual, confutation—of the Absolute and the Phenomenal, the Self immortal and the perishable Psyche, Brahman—Atman and Maya. This figure presents the dual form, the Absolute and the Maya.

Siva's tresses are long and matted, partly streaming and partly stacked up in a knot like a pyramid. This hair of the model yogi of the gods, supra normal life energy, amounting

to the power of magic, resides in such wildness of hair untouched by scissors. The fragrance luster, the flow of hair, suggests beauty and eternal feminine charm. Siva's tresses represent symbolic figures, the diminutive figure of goddess Ganges, and the flowers of datura from which the intoxicating drink is prepared, a skull symbolic of death, a crescent moon symbolic of growing, new born baby. He is personified as Yamantaka, he who conquers and exterminates Yama the god of death. Thus Siva is portrayed as Mahakala, great time, eternity, the swallower of time, that represent cycles of ages. He is also the promise of life, birth, death. He is an archetypal ascetic and a archetypal dancer. On one hand he is total tranquillity, inward calm, absorbed, and on the other hand he is total activity, life's energy, kamic, playful. These aspects are manifestations of an absolutely non-dual, ultimate Reality.

The Rasas can also be seen in this representation of Siva's form, they are the heroic (*vira*), the wild (*raudra*), the charming, erotic (*shringara*), the loathsome, disgust (*bhibhatsa*). He enacts all possible aspects of life, his dance is a marvelous blending of polarities. The Rasas provide an underlying unity to the form and dance. The dance like life itself is a mixture of terrific, auspicious, a juxtaposition and unification of destruction, death, birth, vital triumph, the volcanic bursting forth of the lavas of life. This great image form of Siva, the cosmic dance, comprises totality of all aspects of life, the good, the evil, beauty, horror, joy and agony. It represents life itself, the phenomenal life. This cosmic form of dance, "*ananda tandavam*" is final achievement by which He, the Yogi of Yogis, Siva, brings body and soul together, heaven and earth together, thereby bringing the world to salvation and blessing it with Liberation or *Moksha*.

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Kama in Excess

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"A Man possesses nothing certainly save a brief loan of his own body," wrote James B Cabell (1919), "and yet the body of man is capable of much curious pleasure."

In Indian art, in essence, the universe in all of its abundance and multiplicity of life and form, finds in and behind the complex whole an omniscient, omnipotent, and transcendental presence. It permeates forms and is itself, in the last analyses, without form (*arupa*). The evolutionary pattern of the aesthetic in India, is traditionally couched in a language of myths and symbols.

This paper will place emphasis on Mithuna sculptures which explore the impulses – the excessive impulses of our eroticism – in novel ways and in remote places. The craving and longing in kama, the dismembered and the voluptuous eye, the attuned ear, are designed to seek the kamik excesses, overflows that threaten all limits without becoming infinite. The erotic-sensuous passion, desperate and desirous, animates every human posture carved in stone, with the longing for the beyond that does not want to get to the beyond. This longing attempts to transcribe the dialectic of sensuous excess into form and limit. At the same time, the form is overflowed by this very sensuality that creates a tension between desire and desperate efforts to limit it. These Mithuna sculptures are made of the artifices of love, the pure effulgence of the rapturous, as the very essence of unrestricted kama. The paper will analyze the erotica (the Indian Kamik) which persists in these sculptures, portraying the topographically intimate, paradoxical realm of artistic creations. What is pertinent to the analysis is the continuous tension between the erotic excesses that intimate desire, and the efforts to close it towards the transcendent as the all unifying one. Yet precisely at this closure, the one is also regarded as formless and hence yields to excess depicted in erotic passion.

The formless urge, codified into the ritual of romantic love, has contributed perhaps more than any other capacity to the enjoyment of life. In *maya*, as the immediacy of the enveloping sensuality, that is to say in a world in which the play, the *lila*, was such that both men, women and the dreams equally could be represented clothed or unclothed in a variety of poses and positions without any implications of domination or submission. It is a world of total and so to speak, playful equality – a world of all-pervasive cosmic and kamik sensuality that exceeds any boundary without going beyond the world.

Art is so persuasive that it can penetrate all barriers of communication, especially the world of kamik excesses, depicted in sensuous, solicitous corporeities that are sexed but not biological or reproductive. The nonreproductive energies of eroticism are not destined for the production of pleasure for the individual, but are cosmic in their nature. There are excesses even in reproductive sexuality; the libido is the name Freud, Nietzsche, and currently Lacan, in Western thought, have given us to cover the excess in the artifices of life.

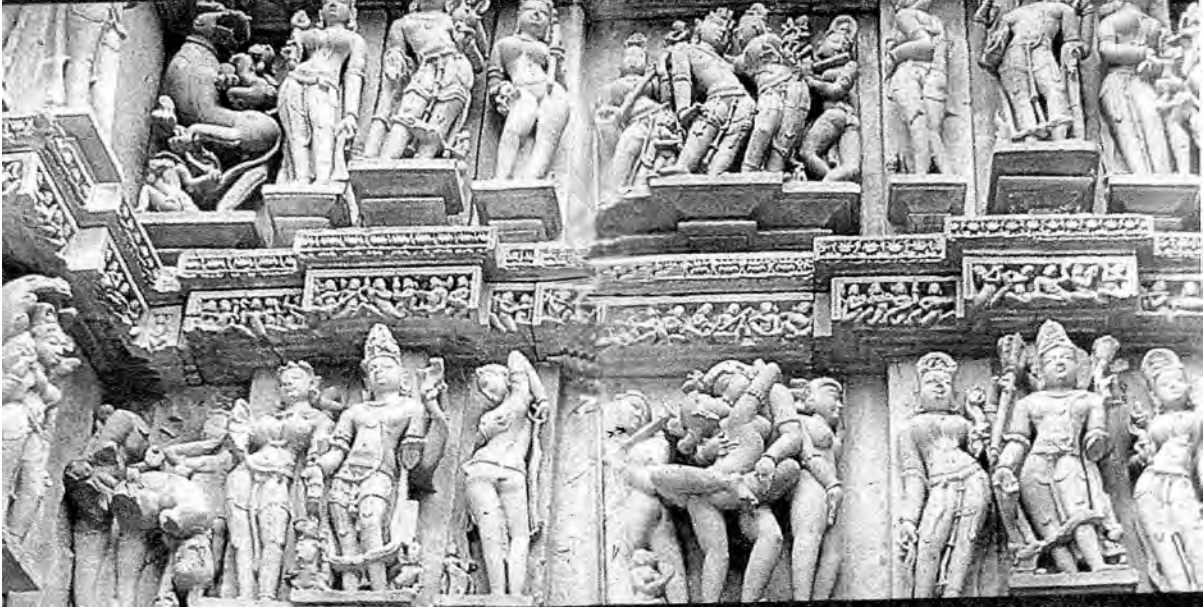


Figure 5 Mithuna Sculptures

In the West intellect is the source of life and in the East Kama is the nexus of all existing events. Through Kama the intellect gets enraptured with the world and the impassioned intellect gives stability to the cosmic kama. Thus it is a wedding of intellect to love which one sees in these Mithuna sculptures.

These Mithuna sculptures portray the craving and longing in kama, with human delight, a charm, a power and beauty of its own, and they are chosen to adorn the sacred sites. (Figures 4 & 5). The sculptural panel which adorns these Mithuna sculptures are from Khajuraho, central India, 11th century AD) They celebrate life in totality from carnal to sublime. The sculptures portray the self satiated with physical desires. The carvings reveal the physical union between man and woman symbolizing Shiva and Shakti, Purush and Prakriti, as the source of all life and creation. In this union the duality is lost, the soul rises above the carnal to meet the eternal.

Summarizing what the Mithunas mean, represent are: 1) The Mithunas are symbols of shakti, (power) – both sexes as mutually inspired – representing the "oneness" the unification of the cosmos, the all encompassing and mutually pervasive play of Kama, of eros. This cosmic unification is expressed in the magic syllable "aum". 2) They are representations of supreme bliss – an attempt in earthly terms to convey the meaning of cosmic rapture. 3) The Mithunas are temptations to lewd thoughts, put there expressively to be overcome by the devout, not to become "pure" but to reveal the excessive, overabundant kamic life in all things. 4) The Mithunas were intended as a protection against the "evil eye", lightning, etc. They also attract the grosser mind to come to the temple even if it is to examine initially the limiting, individuating, pleasure. 5) They were for the sexual education of the young and ignorant in the illustrated Kama Sutra. They depicted straightforward representations of ritualistic orgies or yogic postures (Leeson 31 - 34).



Figure 4 Mithuna detail

But in the background, the cosmic "kamic glue" of all events was co-present.

1) This "cosmic glue," this attraction of all to all, this "Oneness," is a multiple oneness that reveals the cosmic desire of kamic attraction for kamic attraction. These statues do not depict bodies wanting bodies, but kamic passion inspired by kamic passion. *Desire wanting to be desired by desire.* This is the moment of desperation. This aspect is supported in the ancient Indian scriptures: "The matrix of all forms born from all wombs is nature Prakriti. I the Father, giver of the seed" (Bhagavadgita, xiv, 4.). Here, even the power of creation desires to be desired, to be received in his linga play with the desiring yoni.

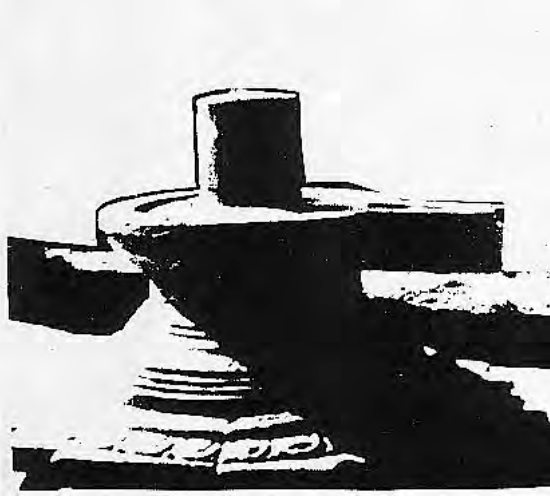


Figure 6 Lingam & Yoni

represents Karma." (*Vatula Shudda Agma*) (Figure 6, The Lingam and Yoni), Lingam is the phallic symbol and yoni symbolizes the female genitalia, portrays the union, Prakurti – nature + Purusa – human, Divine + natural.

"The union of the sexes is equivalent to the mystic syllable "aum." When the two sexes come together, each fulfills the desire for the other" (Chhand Up. I,I, 6.).

The ideas connected with sex symbolism in Indian art and ritual are generally misinterpreted by those who take them out of the Indian social life and context. In the *Upanishads* the sexual relationship is described as one of the means of apprehending the cosmic nature of the kamic and playful connection of all in all. The human soul and all the divinities, the devas, are equally employed to depict this excessive kamic play that allows them to be desired and desirous of all creatures and events. The conception of kamic connections is depicted in the union of male and female which is the cosmic principle – Purusa and Sakti. "In these sculptures, (Figure 7), their embraces have been interpreted as typifying the idea of *moksha* or the union with the divine, the achievement of that primordial unity broken at the time Purusa divided himself to create the

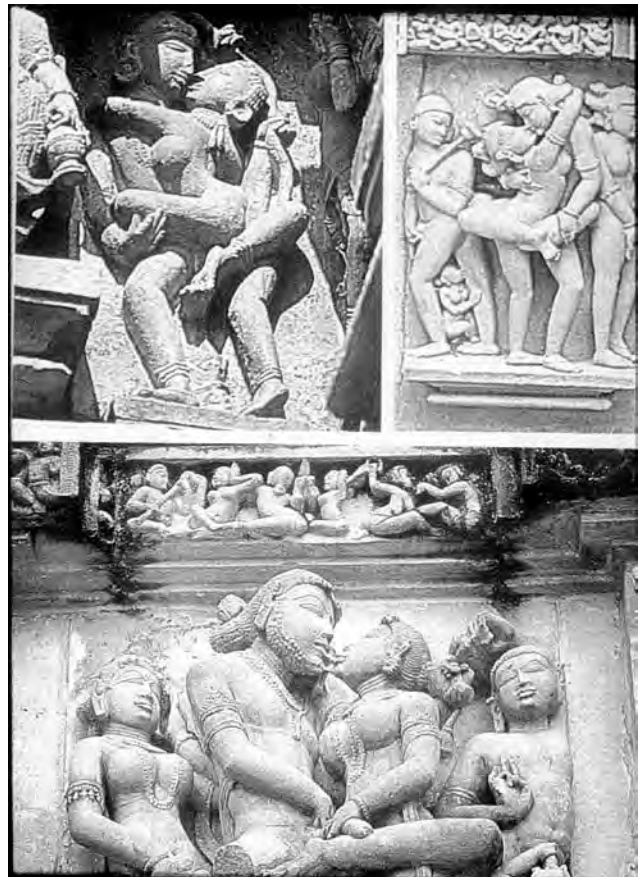


Figure 7 Union through embrace

world (Rowland 162)." In the kamic nexus, the Mithuna is often depicted with the

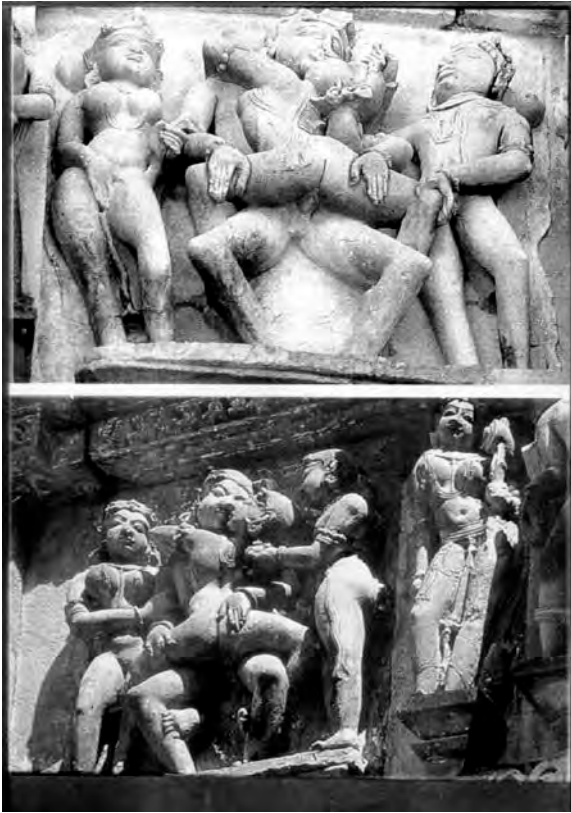


Figure 8 Embracing figures

lingam and the yoni: the union of the two gives a direct representation of the creation of the world. This two-fold emblem express the resolving of the many into a symbol of the connection of all things in their ardor for each other – each burning in the *agni* of passion. The joining of the lingam and the yoni, the primordial axis, shows that the Absolute is deployed in multiple forms but is again resolved into all unabashedly desiring all. Thus symbolically regarded as oneness with the highest and the lowest figures, with the sublime and the lewd.

2) Bliss – "In the embrace of his beloved a man forgets his singular self and immerses in the winds of the whole world." After all, one prays without clothing so that the cosmic wind may caress him without barriers. "In the very same way, he who embraces the self knows neither within nor without." (*Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad*).

In Indian art the idea of eternal bliss is portrayed symbolically as the act of love which is chosen to represent that ultimate state where the individual and the universal are no longer separate. It represents more directly the moment when the self (*atman*) becomes merged through Release with the supreme impersonal cosmic play. This is seen in these Mithuna sculptures in the copulating figures. (Figure 8), portrays the couple holding in a close sexual embrace. The sexual congress shows the male supporting his disrobed partner who is astride him, she is clutching a lock of his hair. Emotional intensity is marked on their faces, the union is an act of dedication, love, desire. "For the ancient Hindus the characteristic genius for elaborating the highest sanction is accepted in the anthropomorphic view of desiring divinities, in which not only is the human sexual pleasure exalted as the joy nearest to the divine but the divine is equally realized in being desired by the human" (Anand 18). Thus, everything in life can become divine, every action becomes some concrete expression of a cosmic kamic law, a deeper connection to which even divine beings are subjected in their supreme bliss. Therein lies the superabundant joy. In these sculptures, the carnal visage is divined, is caressed, the density invites us to catch on to a line of poise in the curved, exciting posture. It intuits an invisible dynamic axis showing in the visible forms the pliability of all forms to become erotically engaged with all forms across the universe. This agility, freedom, grace, sovereignty of the forms captivates and communicates within us its delight. The Hindu physiology in general prizes its suppleness, the ability to twist, to arch, to contract innumerable extra human postures, and the confrontation is repeatedly depicted with the vyalas – leonine figures with the heads of tigers, elephants,

lingam and the yoni: the union of the two gives a direct representation of the creation of the world. This two-fold emblem express the resolving of the many into a symbol of the connection of all things in their ardor for each other – each burning in the *agni* of passion. The joining of the lingam and the yoni, the primordial axis, shows that the Absolute is deployed in multiple forms but is again resolved into all unabashedly desiring all. Thus symbolically regarded as oneness with the highest and the lowest figures, with the sublime and the lewd.

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In Indian art the idea of eternal bliss is portrayed symbolically as the act of love

bulls – that alternate with the figures of gods, lovers. (Figure 9) These beautiful copulations do not personalize for example 'power' and the woman's 'grace.' The carnal yearning embraces the movements of carnal desire depicting the universe eroticized.

The erotic gaze shifts by its own intensity from form to form, the orgasmic body holds in an aesthetic display, which is just not a lusty appreciation of the spectacle, but a presence in the inner axes of these male and female bodies of the very play of kamic. The caresses fondling in these Mithuna figures picturize the orgasmic intensity to the point of carnal intercourse. This work, portrays the culmination of human form in a single spatial configuration expressing subtly the dynamic axis or nexus of force cosmic forces.



Figure 9 Play of kamic

The vocabulary in these sculptures shows a delirious literalness. The conflation of the

making [the maker] and the made is so central in work, where the poses are in an unsettling astute dialogue. The visual acumen embodies the form as formless excess (*arupa*). One sees the compositional tour de force of *Kama kalapam*, the sexual art. Also, this mutually attractive beauty, leading to despair, is, at the same time, the overflowing of the form by the very sensuality that these works create. They create a tension between desire and desperate efforts to limit it, in the artist's auto-erotics.

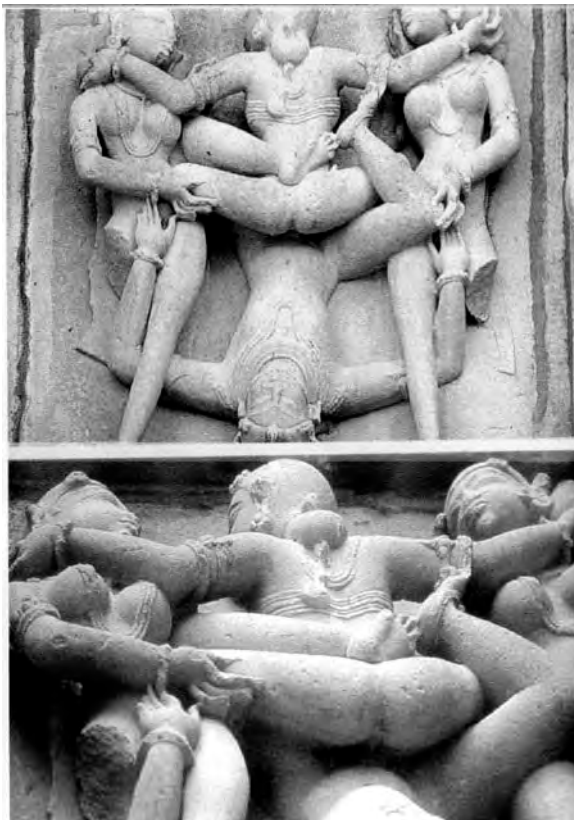


Figure 10 Yogic postures

These sculptures portray the animated space, holding itinerant or sedentary figures obliquely surrendering, which unfurls its floral coverlet like a maternal sheet. The pictorial space enveloping nudity moves to the shudder of love which is majestic, repellent and tender. These works, despite their sedate qualities, while deemed fetishistic, are host to orgiastic activity. Their masquerade is quietly aesthetic with an

ethereal euphoria. The forms are collateral of subliminal connotations in their stilled physicality and expressive intimation of aggressive sexually charged genesis. The Mithuna figures grip and entwine in every imaginable erotic posture. (Figure 10) portrays the acrobatic sexual, yoga posture – man stands on his head with his interlocked legs supporting his squatting female partner. Female attendants on either side participate in the art by supporting the couple. The stone becomes a lexicon illustrating the whole art of love.

The panels represent a pavilion drenched with a subtext of provocative sexual gestural field. The landscape denoted with couples luxuriously copulate; male figures sport invitingly and the female nudes lounge seductively. The whole scenario is focused on sensual pleasure and provocative play. The pedestal pictorializes the excessive erotica of a participatory ecstasy.

Some figures portray the sexualized reconciling desire. The expressions configure an implication of a larger whole. These forms target the potential of passion, the hidden vulnerability in them. They explore the attitude of these figures bringing them into spotlight on the pictorial space. These sculptures reflect the relationship one has to the world and in turn to bodies, to one's own body. The gaze of excessive erotica persists in all. The sculptors here in these sculptures have topographically portrayed them intimately – paradoxically to a realm of cosmic, artistic reality.

These erotic representations interpret the kama which are unveiled from the hidden core of these artists imaginations, which are sublimated in this visual vocabulary. This pure effulgence of the rapturous, the unrestricted kama, is the very essence of the Indian Kamic.

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Advertising and the Philosophy of Jean Gebser

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Preface

This paper is derived from a talk entitled *Mind, Myth and Magic: A Gebserian Critique of Advertising* which I gave at the 1996 meeting of the Jean Gebser Society in Pittsburgh, PA. The paper was conceived at the close of the 1995 meeting when a colleague asked if I was able to use Gebser's thought in the undergraduate classroom. I currently teach media studies, and I do teach Gebser in my Communication: Advertising and Imagery class. This paper is meant to outline my use of Gebser's thought in the classroom for the critical analysis of advertising. Because of the nature of this journal, I have presupposed that the reader has at least a moderate familiarity with Gebser's work. (See the Mickunas article earlier in this journal for an introduction to Gebser's work.) I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Algis Mickunas and Elizabeth Lozano with whom I have spent many hours discussing Gebser's work.

Advertising and the Philosophy of Jean Gebser

As it is said so often and in so many ways, advertising permeates the contemporary mediascape. Advertising sells us products, services and ideas. Ads differentiate the competition, forge corporate identities, urge product use, expand product distribution, communicate product information, increase brand preference and buyer loyalty. Ads promote social behaviors, such as the use of condoms and anxiety over bad-breath. They also raise awareness of problems associated with drug abuse and sexually transmitted diseases. Ads create and perpetuate a cycle of conspicuous consumption and waste; they attempt to create desires in us that did not previously exist; they attempt to sell us things we do not need. It has even been argued that advertising fulfills socio-cultural functions once met by art and religion (Dyer, 1982; Berger, 1972). Even at a cursory glance we can see that advertisements do not simply sell goods, services and ideas; they communicate values which are tied to economics and politics. You might say that advertisements sell ourselves to us.

The purpose of this paper is to consider advertising in light of the philosophy of Jean Gebser. It is my contention that Gebser's study of the emergence, history and variations of human consciousness reveals a path not taken toward understanding the rhetoric of advertising. More importantly, Gebser's work solves some of the problems that contemporary critics have had when attempting to analyze, decode or understand advertisements. Put in a few words, advertising appeals to magical, mythical and mental consciousness, and provides us with a sign that the mental-rational awareness characteristic of our epoch appears to be giving way to integral consciousness. The explication and implication(s) of these claims will be the focus of this paper. By explicating the correlations between advertising expressivity and Gebser's theories, this critique will also lend itself to the general understanding of what is very broadly being called "media (or visual) literacy."

Advertising and Mental–Conceptual Consciousness

When asked today what something “really” is, the answer is generally given in scientific terms, most often in the terms of physics and physiology. For example, recently on NPR’s Morning Edition, the question, “why is the sky blue?” was posed to Joel Achenback, writer of the popular *Why Things Are* books. The answer, if I can recall correctly the radio broadcast, had to do with the density of the atmosphere, the scattering of short wavelength components of visible sunlight by air molecules, the curvature of the atmosphere and the absorption and reflection of specific light waves. In other words, to answer the question “why,” an appeal to physics and cyanometry (the study and measurement of the relative blueness of the sky) was made.

However, as I look out my window while typing these lines I cannot help but notice that the sky is not blue, but rather a milky and mottled gray. The idea that the sky is blue is an abstraction; it is a theoretical vision complementary to but removed from concrete experience. To say “the sky is blue” (as Nietzsche would suggest) is less a statement of fact than an interpretation¹.

Interpretations, it should be noted, are made on the basis of (often unexplicated) assumptions. The statement, “the sky is blue,” assumes at least several important things. First, we are looking at the sky during the day; the night sky is not blue. Second, we are looking at the sky when it is clear; a clouded sky may be bluish, but is not simply blue. Third, we are looking at the sky; the sky can be experienced by senses other than vision and can be referred to in acts of communication such as writing (i.e., the “blue” sky can be signified in black and white). These assumptions are significant because they position our awareness; they define a way of conceiving the sky as opposed to describing an experience of the sky. The statement deals with the sky as an object and not with the sky as phenomenon. Thus, to say “the sky is blue” is to favor a form of thought, or to assume a structure of awareness, and to reveal a particular consciousness of the world. Jean Gebser calls that particular structuring of consciousness the “mental structure.”

The mental structure of consciousness is rational, conceptual, discursive, and historical. According to Gebser (1991), the mental structuring of consciousness emerged as dominant in Western thought around 1250 AD, although adumbrations can be found in the classical Greek theory of knowledge, the Hebrew doctrine of salvation and Roman legal and political theory (p. 74). But the defining sign of the mutation occurred scarcely 500 years ago, during the Renaissance, with the invention of perspective and the dawning awareness of three-dimensional space.

Perspective, as has been noted by many scholars, is itself an awareness of the world. The word perspective, deriving from the Latin term *perspectiva* means “seeing through” or “seeing clearly,” and the intentionality expressed in perspectival painting is a seeing through of space (Gebser, 1991, p. 19; Merleau-Ponty, 1964). More precisely, perspectival painting expresses the emergence of an awareness of space that locates the seeing eye, the object seen, and the distance between them (Panofski, in Gebser, 1991, p.

¹ While it may be argued that the statement, “the sky is blue,” is an oversimplification of the scientific perspective (and, indeed it is), I am interested here in concrete statements – things that people will say – and with how those expressions (even if considered popular as opposed to scientific) will be explained within a specific discourse.

19). By expressing space in a way that locates subject, object and distance across a two-dimensional plane, perspectival painting illuminates a perception of space and subject-object relations (Gebser, 1991, p. 18). Like other forms of expression, however, perspective is an optional way of seeing the world, a way of making sense sensible, a relationship between body and world; it is not a copy, representation or reproduction of the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1964; Berger, 1972).

Perspectival thought, however, has several important implications. First, the awareness of perspectivity makes possible technical drafting as well as what we call “realism” in painting, and is thus a necessary condition for the development of modern, techno-science as well as perspectival art. The use of technical drafting, as a rhetorical device and as a sign of mental-rational consciousness, is common in advertising: Dodge/Chrysler use technical language, blue-prints, and three-dimensional graphs in their ads for the Minivan and Avenger. The “You can’t buy a more impressive car for less,” ad for the Toyota Corolla also uses the spatializing, linearity of technical drafting and printed text. 3M plastics and Aldus PageMaker desktop publishing software also make use of a similar style and rhetoric in their ads. A television ad for the Pontiac Grand Am also uses the blue-print motif (here in 3-D computer graphics), and makes grandiose claims to technical expertise: The car features a “drive train built to Aerospace standards.”

When we find signs of the propensity to measure and spatialize, symbolized in the ads above by the blue-prints, we are within the mental structure. Such rhetoric is not reserved for cars, however. Even an ad for Clarion “Maximum Effects” mascara, which pictures a tape measure under a woman’s eye with the caption “get maximum effects: Measurably longer, measurably thicker lashes,” appeals to mental-rational consciousness.

Second, note that perspective meant “seeing clearly,” and the blue sky, in the example above, is the “clear” sky. Indeed, mental-rational consciousness strives for clarity, even at the expense of conceiving of things in an ideal state—a blue sky. The “real,” for mental consciousness, is actually the ideal, the abstract and the conceptual.

Consider the ads for Claritin, a medicine for relief from allergy symptoms. Claritin, as the name implies, makes the connection between clarity of thought, clarity of breath and Claritin medicine. “Calritin,” the ads states, “provides clear benefits,” “clear relief.” “Clarity,” Gebser notes, is where there is no further search.” Indeed, the ad would have us believe precisely that. There are several pictures used in the Claritin ads. One features a sun in the form of a Claritin pill (symbolizing the dawn) rising up above a green field (symbolizing pollen) into a blue sky with fluffy clouds (symbolizing both clarity of sky and potential rain/allergic reaction). The picture alludes to the dawn, the coming of daylight, the awakening of mental consciousness. Another picture features a woman’s face with clear, pronounced forehead—also a symbol of the awakening of mental-rational thought. Adding to the appeal to mental-conceptual consciousness is the inclusion of a large amount of printed text, much of it in highly technical language and in very small print. The fine print is a technical, rational explanation of what the product is (chemically) and what it will do to you (biologically). The ads strives to signify the clear, the ideal, the conceptual.

Third, perspectival seeing demands a certain relationship between three things – a seeing subject, an object seen, and the space in-between them. Perspectival thought is ego-thought; the world seen by an eye that is an I. This I/eye is directed at an object – it sees something from a (singular) position (in time and space). Moreover, it sees this something as separate from itself, as distant. The subject is separate from the object which it (the subject) apprehends and contemplates.

The ego can be signified in ads in several ways. Ads often use people who are recognized as individuals. Macintosh PowerBook and Power Macintosh ads feature celebrities and stars, such as Todd Rundgren, Frances Lear, Tama Janowitz and others, who are known for their innovated and individualistic work. The ego is signified in all pictures and photographs that deploy the signs of the specific moment as seen from a specific point of view. And, ads appeal directly to the ego via language that uses the term “I” to refer to the a product or reader, as in Bell Telephone’s “I” plan.

Fourth, when considering perspective, it is important to note that the space in-between the subject and object is measurable. The object is, then, apprehended rationally. Rationality is directed, discursive thought. The word rationality is derived from the Latin word ratio which means “to reckon” and “to calculate” in the sense of “to think” and “understand” or “to reason” (Gebser, 1991, p. 74). Rational thought is directed and measured. It is by definition the ability to weigh and measure thought, to be clear and direct in one’s thinking. In turn, to be irrational is to lack reason and mental clarity. It is also important to note that the terms rational and irrational both describe types of numbers – measures (as I have described above when considering the common use of technical drafting and blue-prints).

Fifth, mental-rational, perspectival thought also posits in this subject-object-space trinity a specific relationship between “man” and nature. The use of the term man, while politically incorrect, is quite appropriate for this discussion. According to Gebser, the term mental derives from a word-field that opens from the Sanskrit root, ma, from which we derive the Greek word *menis*, also meaning wrath and courage; *menos*, meaning resolve, anger, courage, and power; *mens*, in Latin, meaning intent, anger, thinking, thought, understanding, deliberation, disposition, mentality, imagination; and, “man,” in the sense that “man is the measure of all things” (as in Protagoras). All of these ideas are bound, as well, in the expression “man,” although they are rendered mute in the scientific, mental-rational description of man for which man is seen biologically. Nature is “out there,” it is objective stuff to be used and defined by man because nature is without mind and is therefore dumb – a play of objects and forces.

Take for example an advertisement for Dodge/Chrysler minivans that ran as a pull-out on the back of the cover of Newsweek, October 11, 1993. As you open the magazine the back of the cover has printed in a large white capital letters, “for every car company striving to build the world’s safest minivan, we have four words of advice.” To read the four words you must pull open the special insert. The text continues from the previous page, and reads, “gentlemen, start your [photo] copiers.” The letters are legible (i.e., clear). The words form a directed thought – an appeal to a measurable goal (to build the “safest”). The text thus begins to address an implied reader. While the “real” reader may be anyone who comes across this ad, the reader is addresses as if “he” were an executive at another, less proficient, car company. Of course, few readers will hold such jobs, and the ad is more likely targeting the middle class family market. Moreover, the

verbal appeal interpellates the reader as masculine (although the reader may be male or female) both by the use of the term “gentlemen” and by the use of the phrase, “start your copiers,” appropriated obliquely from auto racing (a sport of power, speed and danger; all traditionally coded as masculine; all signs of the masculine bias in mental-rational consciousness).

The printed text is also paternalistic; it speaks down to the implied reader, and it appears as a taunt, an office room “mine is bigger than yours,” or a challenge, “I bet you can’t. . .”. This appeal offers up an air of the board room, of professional challenge and technical ability. It asks us to (rationally) consider if we or our present mode of transportation “measures up.”

Moreover, a good father (remember that the rhetoric interpellates the reader from a male subject position) provides for the safety of “his” family; it is the “right,” rational thing to do: Gebser notes that “‘right’ does not simply mean ‘to the right’ or ‘the right side’ but also ‘correct’ and ‘direct,’ in the sense of leading toward a goal. . . . The right side represents the masculine as well as the wakeful principle – is the emphasis on the paternal aspect inherent in every legislation and act of judgment” (p. 79). The appeals to the codes of masculinity, to directional and rational thought, and to linearity and measurement, are all signs of mental-rational consciousness that are found in many ads.

Another common method of appealing to mental-rational consciousness is using the rhetoric of the supreme achievement of mental-rational consciousness – science. For example, an ad for the Glaxo Institute for Digestive Health opens with the statement, “it’s only heartburn, I should learn to live with it.....right?” Below the caption is the picture of a man with grayish hair, a blue-gray sweater over collared shirt; his face is concerned, his brow furled; he appears to be in his fifties or early sixties. It appears that he is the one posing the question above the picture. This arrangement personalizes the ad, as it appeals to an ego (see above). Below the picture is a red box with a survey. The survey itself is a rhetorical device. It appeals to scientific measurement, statistics and other values of mental-rational thought. It is interesting to note that the seven questions on the survey all require either yes or no answers. This requirement, to answer yes or no, splits the possible polar opposition into duality.

“Duality,” Gebser notes, is the splitting and tearing apart of [mythical] polarity” (p. 86). The reader respondent must choose one or the other; that is, make a rational, measured selection. The “heartburn sufferer” is then referred to the medical expertise of a doctor, the highly educated, rational expert. Indeed, if one suffers from dis-ease, one best seek expert advice (in the mental structure). And such advice is derived mathematically, statistically, rationally.

Using similar appeals to science are ads for Habitrol anti-smoking patches, the Sensonic toothbrush by Teledyne Water Pik, which claims that the toothbrush is “now available in sonic technology” (will scientific wonders never cease?), and Memorex audio tape made with MRX2 oxide, a trademark pseudo-element, or, as the case may be, just a fancy name for rust. Such claims are also made for health and beauty products such as an ad for Jergen’s Skin Care Bars that features the tag: “Jergen’s, science you can touch.” Pervonia Botanica uses scientific rhetoric to advertise “skin care for him;” the ad features a picture of a man and large clear letters stating “nature and science.”

The appeal to the rational nature of science is pushed to the limit in an ad for Ergogenic and Metabolic Consulting Services (E=MCs). This ad opens with the statement: “you’d be surprised what science can uncover...” The ad goes on to discuss its program, “backed by decades of research and based on state-of-the-art laboratory analyses of your blood using precision technology” (a small picture of the gears of a watch are inserted here). The program is called ION (Individualized Optimal Nutrition), and it is for blood analysis. What is striking is less the claims, which nevertheless bring to mind the quackery of early twentieth century advertisers of snake oil and electric belts, but the large image on the right. Just below the words, “you’d be surprised what science can uncover...” is a picture of a woman who on one hand looks and acts like a scientist: She wears black horn rimmed glasses and a white scientist’s lab jacket; she is inspecting a beaker of green liquid. On the other hand, she does not look or act like a scientist because she is pulling open her lab coat to expose her lace bikini underwear! Yes, now we know what science can uncover – it is her nearly naked body. The blatant sexual sell is tempered (although not much) by a scientific and rational rhetoric. This is not to suggest that the ad or product is scientific, but that it draws upon the rhetoric of science to appeal to mental-rational consciousness.

The above are just an outline of the ways that advertising can draw on and appeal to mental-rational consciousness. Mental-rational consciousness is perspectival, spatial, and conceptual; it favors duality, rationality, causality and masculinity. Signs of mental-conceptual consciousness include ego positioning, measurement, individuality, spatialization and appeals to science. We, as readers, are interpellated by a structuring of consciousness that we already understand (even if tacitly), and thus the ads that deploy these signs make sense, even when their claims are extraordinary or even downright comical.

However, Gebser points out that while mental-rational consciousness is the presupposed basis of our lives, and while we are expected, as professional critics and lay persons, to criticize advertisements through rational analysis, mental-rational consciousness is only one consciousness structure, and, I might add, it is not the dominant structure of advertising. There is no evidence suggesting that it is a better or more accurate descriptor of the world than any other – it is simply a variation of consciousness. Thus, we will now turn our attention to the mythical structure of consciousness, and to what Gebser’s thoughts about myth can teach us about understanding advertisements.

Mythical-Imagistic Consciousness

A prevalent criticism of contemporary advertising hinges on the observation that contemporary ads rely more and more on imagery and less and less on rational statements (see Postman 1985; Ewen 1988; Jhally 1987; Berger 1972). The import of this critique is that mental-rational thought, so clearly manifest in literate, print-based communication, is threatened by the irrationality of imagery. This argument is tied to notions (dating back at least to McLuhan) that culture at large is shifting from logical, print-based communication to the predominately visual and imagistic communication of electronic media.

Postman (1985) suggests that spoken and written statements encourage scrutiny and rational contemplation, and that they engage the subject in rational argumentation and

logical debate. He suggests further that imagery simply appeals to consciousness. Rhetorically speaking, Postman continues, images are faster than arguments; judgment becomes based on look (is it appealing or not?) and not on logic (does it make sense?), on aesthetics (does it catch my eye?) and not on rational argumentation (given this, then what?). Postman suggests that imagery engages the subject in depth, imagery, style, attitude and affective association. That is, images engage the subject in phenomena which, according to Postman, logical criteria do not apply.

The conclusion reached by these and other critics (who argue from within the mental-rational structure) is that our cultural sense of meaning and discourse, our ideas of history, democracy and citizenship, and our notions of beauty and truth are at stake (Moyers, citation in Collins, 1989, p. 2). According to these critics, the contemporary citizen is less a critic and more a consumer, is less a political participant and more an audience waiting to be amused (Postman, 1985).

A reading of Gebser would suggest, however, that the use of imagery in advertising is not a sign of an epistemic shift from rationality to imagery, because imagery would be recalling a (ever-present but often tacit) mythic consciousness. "The mythical structure," Gebser notes, "is distinct from. . . [other structures] in that it bears the stamp of the imagination (*imago*, Latin "image")." "The mythical structure. . . has an imaginary consciousness [emphasis mine], reflected in the imagistic nature of myth and responsive to the soul and sky of the ancient cosmos" (p. 67). Gebser's studies in mythic consciousness provide us with a way to understand the imagistic nature of contemporary advertising.

The idea that advertisements function mythically, however, is not new. Leymore (in Dyer, 1982) notes that, "to the constant nagging dilemmas of the human condition, advertising gives simple solutions. . . [it] simultaneously provokes anxiety and resolves it" (p. 2). Advertisements present stories (i.e., they are a form of utterance) that resolve cultural contradictions and provide clues for living well in a complex and often confusing society (Dyer, 1982).

Apprehended in its own terms, myth is not a false story about the past, but a system of communication, a type of speech, a mode of signification, or way of understanding the world. For Gebser, myth is a structure of consciousness that emerged as dominant in Western history around the second millennium BC, and is still manifest today, although it is often obscured by the mental-conceptual bias of our time.

The relationships between myth and "speech," "polarity" (i.e., problem-solution) and "clues for living" (noted in the Leymore and Dyer citations above), are significant. The word "myth" comes from (Greek) *mythos* meaning "speech," "word," and "report," and *mythonami* meaning "to speak." The root of "myth," however, is the Sanskrit *mu* from which we get the polar oppositions of *mythos* and *mutus* – the speaker and the mute.

Polarity, Gebser notes, is required in any kind of psychic life; polarity emerges with the human awareness of temporality and the rhythmical movement of nature – day and night; and with the latter emerges psyche. From the ambivalent root (*mu*) a depth of silence is announced from which "speaking" or "word" emerges. As Mickunas has noted, there is a silent background in our language even today when we speak, a silent richness of speaking which we never announce: This silence recalls the mythic dimension of consciousness.

The problem–solution formula is a much used technique in advertising. Advertisers advertise products which claim to solve a problem, and in many cases create the problem that must be solved. This creation of a problem forms a silence from which the solution can speak. Zest soap announces that “soap leaves a film you can feel on your skin;” Zest brand soap can alleviate that problem. Likewise, a Jergens soap ad proclaims that “itchy dry skin is out.” And, Loreal skin creme notes you can “replenish what’s lost by day and wake to revitalized skin by morning.” One might argue that all dandruff shampoo ads and feminine hygiene products are examples of creating a problem which can be solved by the use of a product. The duality of the mental–rational structure, discussed above, is here giving way to a polarity – a play of oppositions where one does not choose between but recognizes both.

In creating problems that “must” be solved, and can be solved by using the product, ads sell us more than products, services and ideas: They sell us a way of life. “Myths,” says Gebser, “are the collective dreams” of a people (p. 68). Myths tell us stories about ourselves; they expose the underlying desires and values of our culture. “The moral imperative of acquisitiveness in contemporary advanced capitalistic societies is manifested in such strongly held values as private property, security, competitiveness, and achievement (often [as Alexis de Toqueville pointed out] at the expense of others). This imperative is evident in children’s pecuniary enculturation – teaching them how to grow up to be good consumers” (Himmelstein, 1984, p. 40). By telling us stories, provoking and resolving contradictions, kindling desire and forging dreams, ads function much like myths.

An ad campaign that has been running successfully for many years, and which draws widely on a mythic appeal are the Marlboro cigarette ads. Consider the Marlboro man. We generally find him pictured against the background of nature. He is symbolically defined by nature: He is wild, free, unrestrained by society, and yet he is transcendent of nature. He is, after all, civilized; he is a tamer and controller of nature. The Marlboro Man rides on the polar opposition of nature–culture (so widely discussed by Levi–Strauss and other cultural anthropologists and semioticians).

Gebser notes that “pictorial representations of man’s emergent awareness of his enmeshment in nature (which express this by the very fact of depicting it) are . . . illustrative of man’s further step out of this enmeshment into the reality of mythical consciousness” (p. 63). The Marlboro ads are effective, in part, precisely because they call the reader out of the mental–rational present and into the dream–image of myth.

Specifically, the Marlboro ads draw on the myths of masculine transcendence, manifest destiny, and the frontier as they recoup the past. This past, however, is not a “real” past (a past of a historical being; that would be the perview of mental–rational consciousness). These are images of a mythical past; a silence that speaks. “Only when the unspoken communicates its silent message,” Gebser notes, “does the spoken word convey the depth and polarity that constitute the tension of real life” (p. 68). It is at this mythic level of communication, the speaking silence, that we encounter (using the terms suggested by Postman, above) the depth (of silence), imagery (of the frontier), style (of the cowboy), attitude (of masculine transcendence) and affective association (of manifest destiny) that fly in the face of rationality. Indeed, the Marlboro Man is more mythically poetic than rationally prosaic.

Mythic, dream imagery are present as well in the Schick Tracer FX razor ads in which a woman shaves, "you're the sensitive type? I like that." The image of the "sensitive guy," who is visually silent (i.e., not shown in the ad) is a common theme. He appears as well in Liz Claiborne ads. The "sensitive guy" image can be seen along side its polar opposite, the "manly-man," as in the Brute cologne ad, "Men are Back," which features the image of a young boxer. Mythic imagery also provides the rhetorical force for many ads which feature African American men; indeed, a quick glance through men's magazines reveals black men often pictured either as musicians (usually jazz musicians) or sportsmen. The Virginia Slims, You've Come a Long way Baby, ads forge a polar image of women in a mythical then and now. Stolichnaya has drawn on Soviet imagery in Capitalistic clothes to sell vodka: An ad, Freedom of Vodka, playing on the capitalistic rhetoric of "freedom of choice," pictures the V.I Mukhina's eighty foot high statue, "Worker and Kohkhoz Woman," that stands in Moscow, but instead of hammer and scythe the figures hold flowers and are separated by a bottle of vodka (a metaphor, perhaps, for an escalating divorce rate and its cause?). These images, as implied above, do not function logically or rationally but rather by metaphor and association; in semiotic terms they play more on the vertical, paradigmatic axis of language than the horizontal, synchronic axis. These ads not only tell stories that create and resolve conflict, and forge and foster images, but they work to instill us with the desire to become that image.

The presence of desire in advertising reveals another level of mythic consciousness – the erotic. Eros is, on the one hand, a transitional figure between the mythic-imaginable and mental-rational structures. Eros, as we generally take it to mean today (within the mental structure), is the directed arrow of desire. On the other hand, Campbell (1988) points out that Eros was both the youngest and the oldest of the gods (p. 152). This polarity reveals a mythic dimension of eros. Such an eros would be desire, but not necessarily directed desire. Taken mythically, eros is not a negative desire, that is a directed desire or desire as a need to fill a lack or void (a desire for something) as in Plato and Freud, but a positive desire, an enveloping sensuality and eroticism that floats cultural practices; that reveals the depth of the utterance, the silence with which the utterance speaks.

Perhaps most pervasive, or at least the most discussed and criticized (largely due to the influence and theoretical import of feminism) is imagery of women in ads. Such imagery creates and fosters a mythos of feminine beauty. Indeed, the feminine speaks through silence to such a degree that many ads simply picture a woman and the name of the product or brand, or (as in truck magazines) simply place a woman on their product.

Beauty in ads, however, is reserved for a certain color, shape, size, posture, comportment. Thus, it is not beauty per se that is of interest but a certain variation of theme of beauty. The feminine is, first, the polar opposition of the masculine. The feminine is "soft" (as in ads for Nivea skin care products), and sometimes "strong and soft" (as in ads for Finesse hair spray), "pure" (as in ads for Neutrogena), "simple" (as in Calvin Klein ads), "passionate" (as in ads for Jovan White Musk), "mysterious" (as in the Cover Girl Incognito ads). Several ads incorporate an entire word field that signifies "woman." For example, in an ad for Vanilla Musk perfume by Coty a nude woman,

with her back to the viewer, is surrounded by the words, “natural, sensual, innocent, passionate, romantic and mysterious.”

Thus, we can begin to see that ads may function mythically on at least two levels. They may call upon a mythic consciousness (i.e., ads can communicate on a level that is not mental-rational but that is mythical-imagistic), and they may refer to specific myths (e.g., the myth of feminine beauty, masculine transcendence, mythos of origin, creativity, progress and so on). An implication of recognizing the interconnection of myth and imagery is that ads that rely on imagery can indeed be “read.” Thus, while the critics mentioned above are correct when they assert that imagery is not logical, that it is irrational; they are incorrect in their consideration of imagery as deficient in relation to rationality.

Although it is one of the hardest ideas in Gebser to grasp, a major contribution of Gebser’s thought are his attempts to think mythically even while writing a book (a mental-rational endeavor). Gebser is careful throughout his work to caution us as to the pitfalls of such interpretive work. We must be wary, he notes, of reading one structure in the terms of another.

Mythical-imagistic consciousness is dream-like speaking; it favors polarity, undergone experience and imagery. As was the case when considering mental-rational consciousness, we, as cultural participants, are interpellated by a structuring of consciousness that we already understand; even if tacitly, and thus the ads make sense, even when we cannot put our finger (i.e., point to) why they work. If we can grasp the mythic dimension of advertising imagery we do not have to fall prey to its rhetoric. We will be able to see the dream laid out before us, and gain an ability to ask if these are the dreams we want.

Magical-Emotional Consciousness

Living today, in the twilight of the mental-rational structure, we will find that magic is, in official discourse, completely set aside as irrational. This is, from a mental perspective, correct. And yet, we see in tabloid journals, television talk shows, and in popular news magazines like *Newsweek* and *Time* a preponderance of stories regarding the magical, the mystical and the mysterious—the power of prayer to heal, for example. The interest in such things can be seen as a sign of the ever-presence of a magical structure of consciousness.

It has, in fact, been argued that advertising functions magically (Williams, in During, 1993). Raymond Williams calls advertising “a highly organized and professional system of magical inducements and satisfactions functionally very similar to magical systems in [other] societies but rather strangely co-existent with highly developed scientific technology” (Williams, in Dyer, 1982, p. 185). Inglis (in Dyer, 1982) calls advertisers modern Shaman whose “anonymous vantage in society permits him [sic] to articulate a novel magic which offers to meet the familiar pains of a particular society and history, to soften or sharpen ambition, bitterness, solitude, lust, failure and rapacity” (p. 2). Williams and Ingles are both correct, and their statements are in harmony with Gebser’s explication of magic consciousness.

It is hard, however, to specify a set of dates for a magic “epoch.” We find traces of magic consciousness from the earliest recorded human expressions (cave paintings) through

contemporary culture. Magic consciousness is, in Gebser's terms, a transition from the sleep-like quality and harmony with nature of the archaic structure (a discussion of which is beyond the scope of this paper) to the dawning of awareness: It is sleep-like in quality, but in it arises the adumbration of waking – the germ of need (and turning a want into a need is a basic tenant of advertising). For magic consciousness, the human is no longer in the world, the human begins to have a world; we see in the magic structure the emergence of self consciousness.

As with mental and mythical consciousness, there is a word-field which provides us with clues concerning the structure of magic consciousness. We derive the term magic from the Indo-European root *mag(h)*, from which we get "make," "mechanism," "machine" and "might" (Gebser, 1991, p. 46). Indeed, "make," as in the power to "make," is a key to understanding the magic structure and its manifestations in advertising: Medicine makes pain go away; a certain shampoo alleviates dandruff; the car makes you sexy.

Take for example the Smirnoff Vodka ad, "Pure Party." The ad pictures a well-to-do urban apartment. There is a picture window revealing a cityscape complete with skyscrapers. The room is furnished with a mahogany table and chairs. A bowl of fruit sits on the table. A vase with arranged flowers sits on the windowsill. There is a chandelier hanging from the ceiling and a portrait of a woman hanging on the wall. In the center of the picture (running vertically) is a large bottle of Smirnoff vodka; its size is disproportionate to the domestic scene.

What I find remarkable in this ad is what happens to the urban domestic scene inside the bottle – within the presence of the vodka. The vodka is a magic agent with the ability to transform. In the presence of the liquor, a yellow table cloth and brightly colored plastic party-ware appear on the table, where none had been before. The wooden bowl of fruit is transformed into a crystal punch bowl. The flower arrangement and the chandelier become bunches of multicolored balloons.

Most significant, in my opinion, is the transformation of the woman in the painting. Outside the bottle, the painting's frame is lavishly detailed – baroque. The woman is brunette, and her hair is tied neatly behind her head. She is without facial makeup. Her expression is demure; her right hand is reservedly crossed in front of her blouse. Her blouse is loose, slightly wrinkled and tied at the elbow. She wears a large dark sash around her waist.

In the presence of the vodka, however, she is completely transformed. Her hair is now blonde; it hangs loose and falls about her shoulders. She is now smiling. She is wearing mascara; she has full red lips. Her left hand is upturned and holds a large drink with lemon wedge (presumably a vodka and tonic). She also appears to have had a bust lift; her breasts are much more full and upturned. The sash is reduced to a thin belt of some sort, and she appears, in general, to have lost some weight. The vodka acts as a magic agent of transformation of the woman's image. She is transformed from ordinary into ideal (within current cultural parameters).

This power to make and transform is a rhetorical device employed often in ads for liquor. Bacardi rum has followed the Smirnoff ads with the "just ad Bacardi" campaign. These ads picture some relatively dry and flat image that is transformed into a hot, wet, exciting space populated with people when and where rum is poured onto the image.

For example, a map of the U.S., becomes a tropical paradise; a winter wilderness becomes a party of sail-boarders; a black-tie formal becomes red-hot disco. The liquor makes the transformation possible.

This appeal to the power to make is also found in ads, such as Natural Touch Soft Contact Lenses that can make your eyes more beautiful and breathtaking, to shoes (such as Nike's) that can make you run faster, become more healthy or relieve stress, to ads for Jockey underwear that makes you perform better (in sports, the ad suggests), to hair coloring, such as Miss Clairol that makes not only your hair but you younger. There are many more examples. Actually, most ads make an appeal to magic consciousness. That is, the product is positioned as a magical element, and you (by consuming the product) become the product and take on its power.

The signs of magic consciousness thus appear at the level of vitality; they are floated by vitality and emotionality; they are totemic: The car bears the power of the car; you purchase the car and you get the status of the car. This is contemporary totemism.

Gebser also notes a correlation between the words "make," "magic" and "machine." This clue helps to explain Williams' observation that the magic systems in tribal societies and in Western machines are indeed connected. The machine is itself magic in its ability to make: The car makes you go faster.

Following from the recognition of an interconnection of magic and making, Gebser notes five "characteristics" of magic consciousness—egolessness, a point-like unity with the world, spacelessness and timelessness, merging with nature, and the reaction to such a merging.

Magic consciousness is a collective consciousness, all members of a community are linked together; it is egoless. This "interconnection between all things" provides a necessary "pathway" for magic to travel and work. Instead of the individual (a mental-rational concept), we have at this level of understanding a group ego or collective: The shamans power is manifest because all share in it; all must believe in it, or it will not work. Our notions of mass (e.g., mass communications, mass audiences), and collective consciousness refer back to magic consciousness.

Ads appeal to this egolessness by providing us with things (totems) that will make us fit in, belong, smell proper, be seen in the right clothes. They sell us notions of belonging, even while provoking a deficient notion of individuality. We can all be individuals in our Nike shoes! We have the freedom to choose between fast food restaurants (which all sell hamburgers and French fries).

This collective (mass) consciousness is expressed "in the visible interchangeability of the real and the symbolic" (Gebser, 1991, p. 48). This is to say that, for magic consciousness, there is a point-like unitary world. Here Gebser provides us with a clue (complementary to the critique provided by Feminism) as to why we see such a proliferation of fragmented body parts in ads—eyes, legs, butts, lips, etc.. "The magic world is. . . a world of *pars pro toto*, in which the part can and does stand for the whole" (Gebser, 1991, p. 46). The lips, the fingers, the hands, the eyes, the face are the whole: The right eye liner makes "you," that is, all of you, beautiful. Impact makeup transforms not only your lips or eyes but your self and soul. Note as well that ads do not inspire you; they do not suggest you work hard to become beautiful, they try to connect you—immediately. You use the product (the magical agent) and you become beautiful. You

wear Madonna brand clothes and you get the power of Madonna; a self transformation takes place. There is no distance or separation between the product and its symbolization. Where we had identity in the mental structure, and polarity in the mythic, we have unity in the magic structure.

Magic works irrespective of time and place – it is Spaceless and Timeless. (I wish to recall here the current discussion of prayer where healings are performed irrespective of the location or time of the prayer). Indeed, spacelessness and timelessness are conditions of point to point unity. Gebser notes, “all magic, even today, occurs in the natural-vital, egoless, spaceless and timeless sphere. This requires – as far as present-day man is concerned – a sacrifice of consciousness; it occurs in the state of trance, or when consciousness dissolves as a result of mass reactions, slogans, or “isms.” If we are not aware of this sphere in ourselves, it remains an entry for all kinds of magic influences. It does not matter whether such magic influences emanate knowingly from people or unknowingly from things which, in this sphere, have a vital magic knowledge of their own, or are linked with such vital knowledge” (p. 49).

Not only do Gebser’s comments describe the trance-like experience of television viewing in general, and the vacant gaze (when not critically attuned) into the ad in particular, he notes that we are susceptible to magic precisely because the presupposition of rationality obscures it and allows it to pass unacknowledged.

To induce a trance-like state, the form magic takes does not want to be complex but simple, repetitive, lulling: Incantation is a pervasive device of advertising magic: Ray Charles chants “uh, huh,” and “it’s the right one baby,” in Pepsi commercials; people repeat jingles of all kinds; we get jingles “stuck in our heads;” Even presidential candidate George Bush turned to magical rhetoric and incantation by repeating “don’t worry be happy,” during his successful bid for office.

The “receiver” of an ad (if this term can be used at all) is expected to be moved by the ad without asking why: “Why ask why?” chants the Budweiser commercials. “Why” is, of course, a rational question. Magic, on the other hand, wants us to be in its audial depth, surrounded and enveloped in the spell. To see this, as Gebser notes, requires a suspension of our rational selves. If we are unaware of magic’s presence, we are open to all sorts of magic influences (and today’s spell casters want you to consume for their financial benefit, not your spiritual well-being).

Where for mental consciousness there is a separation of the human from nature, and in mythic consciousness there is a polar relationship, in magic consciousness there is an audial enmeshment in nature. As sounds surround and engulf all within them, so magic consciousness is enveloped in nature without distance or disconnection. There is a merging with nature, and a reaction to that merging. According to Gebser, magic consciousness produced the earliest attempts to control nature in the ritual of cave painting and the hunt (for examples). Magic provides the necessary power to rule rather than to be ruled. Magic provides the power to make manifest. In this conquest to understand and conquer nature, the human with magical consciousness becomes the maker.

Magical consciousness is vital, emotional and audial; it is timeless and spaceless; it favors unity, and a point to point interconnection of all things, and an enmeshment with nature. “In the final analysis,” Gebser (1991) says, “our machines and technology,

[our advertising, and] even our present-day power politics arise from our magic roots: Nature and the surroundings must be ruled so that man is not ruled by them.... Every individual who fails to realize that he must rule himself falls victim to that drive" (p. 51).

Thus, as cultural participants, we are as before interpellated by a structuring of consciousness that we already understand, although this is one that we tend to disregard altogether. Thus ads are able to make sense, and work on us even when their claims are extraordinary and even unbelievable. As in myth, by circumventing the presuppositions of mental-rational consciousness, while expecting us to believe the presuppositions of mental-rational consciousness, magic is given a way, an opening to work on us precisely because we don't expect it.

Integral Consciousness & Diaphaneity

A guiding thesis of Gebser's *The Ever Present Origin* is that mental-rational consciousness is giving way to a structure of consciousness that he calls "integral." Changes in the structuring of consciousness take place, Gebser notes, when the prevailing consciousness structure proves to be no longer adequate for mastering the world (p. 294), and many have proclaimed that we are living in a time of radical change. Much of *The Ever Present Origin* is dedicated to examining this change; to reading the signs that suggest that the three-dimensional, perspectival world of mental-rational consciousness is giving way to a four-dimensional, aperspectival world of integral consciousness. Gebser asserts that we need a "new form of description and statement" to deal with this change. Such a statement cannot be a mental concept, a mythical image or a magical postulate; a unification of relationships, a theory of correspondence or relativation, or a dualistic or causal dependency would already have been achieved by magical, mythical and mental consciousness. The new form, Gebser suggests, would be one of integration. Where the mode of verition and communication for magic consciousness is vital-emotional, for mythic consciousness is imagistic, and for mental-rational consciousness is rational-conceptual, the mode of verition and communication for integral consciousness would be diaphanous, systatic, or in another word, transparent.

By diaphaneity or transparency Gebser does not mean that truth is simply laid bare for all to see, or that communication or understanding are devoid of mediation. He means, in part, that we will be able to see one structure of consciousness through another. This thesis has tremendous importance for understanding the rhetoric of advertising, and, in turn, implies that advertising is itself a sign of the emergence of integral consciousness – by the very fact that ads deploy signs of magic, mythic and mental consciousness.

Recall the ad for the Dodge/Chrysler minivan that was discussed under the subject of mental-conceptual consciousness. The first page of the ad has a black background. It is dark space, symbolic of night and sleep, the purview of magic consciousness, that is punctuated with the large white letters. The letters are legible (i.e., clear); they are literally a white light emerging from the blackness. The words form a directed thought – an appeal to a measurable goal (to build the "safest"). This minivan, the ad suggests, is safe, useful, and functional (and although the connection here is speculative [and speculation is itself a sign of mental-rational consciousness], functionalism is a

highly successful paradigm within the mental-rational structure). A problem was perceived, a solution was found; a mythical polarity was created.

Also, while I discussed the use of printed text and numerical symbols in the Dodge ad as an appeal to rationality, the use of print here also, and at the same time, forms an image of quality. Print can be used to signify literacy, education, rationality, science, and so on. In fact, one does not have to read the print in order to understand the image it forges.

Moreover, one of the paragraphs of the printed text in the minivan ad reads: "NEW 3.8-LITER HIGH-TORQUE V-6. This is available in our expanded length mini-vans. And it means more power for passing. More power for merging. More power to take quick, evasive action in tight spots. Bottom line: more power to stay out of trouble." The appeal to power is an appeal to magic—a technical, machine-making that gives "you" the power of the engine. Thus, while the appeal to technical ability, which uses numbers to measure the engine's performance is one hand mental-rational, it is also, and simultaneously, mythical and magical.

Likewise, the Claritin ad discussed above also uses a large amount of printed text, much of it in highly technical language and in very small print. The print is there more to be seen than to be read. Indeed, the printed text is so small and full of jargon that it is difficult (or boring) to read. Also feeding the mythic dimension of this ad is the appeal to the tides of breathing, which Gebser relates to soul and mythic consciousness. Moreover, Claritin, as the name implies, makes a connection between clarity of thought (mental-rational), clarity of breath (mythical-imagistic) and Claritin medicine (magical-postulate). The image is further complemented by the magic basis of all drugs. With the drug there is no need to change diet, exercise patterns or lifestyle in general; simply take the pill and be remade, cured, fixed. Drugs are truly magical agents.

The becoming of magic, the ability to become something else through rituals (which are the enactment of myth) such as shaving reveal a mythic dimension to the "sensitive guy" razor ad. And, in the Glaxo ad for heartburn treatment, there is the picture of the man, and the appeal to ego (discussed above). It is both he and "me" (i.e., the reader) who has heartburn. This pictured ego can be via magic "your" ego, as any point may be substituted for any other. The ability to read yourself into an ad is a powerful magic aspect of most advertising.

Likewise, when considering the ads that I discussed as mythical, the Marlboro man, for example, is not simply a mythical image. The use of "man" and masculinity is an appeal to the patriarchal bias of mental-rational thought (whose highest sign was God, the Father). Moreover, the cigarette is itself a magic element; it gives you the power of the cowboy, the spirit of the Wild West.

Likewise, the force of eros is strong in advertising not just because sex sells, but because the erotic component of the utterance works at the levels of mental-rational consciousness and mythical-imagistic consciousness simultaneously. For mental consciousness, eroticism is directed, there is a lack to be filled—"I want my MTV." For mythical consciousness, eroticism floats all advertising—the subject of the ad enters a mythical spatial-temporality, a dream-world of imagery and sensuality; a (pointless) desire for desire's sake (i.e., a desire that is not going anywhere but is pervasive)—as in Calvin Klein's ads for One, Obsession and Calvin Klein jeans.

Finally, in the Smirnoff ad, the apartment pictured has a vantage point looking down on the city; it is, perhaps, a penthouse. In any case, it is an appeal to the high mindedness of the mental rational structure. Note as well the mythic polar opposition of the woman's image when in and not in the presence of the vodka. The vodka acts as a magic agent of transformation of the woman's mythic image.

By relying on magic postulation and mythical images, as well mental concepts, advertising, knowingly or not, can undercut the rational bias of today, and may in fact be another sign that mental rational consciousness is giving way to integral consciousness.

It is important to point out that when considering the transparency of consciousness structures, they are found not in separate ads, but ads in general that deploy signs of several consciousness structures that can be read through each other simultaneously. In these ads, no one structure is read first. Indeed, my choice in writing about one ad as mental-rational, before finally revealing the other layers of the onion, was itself a rhetorical device necessitated by the linear and logical form of the essay. In experience, magic, myth and mental consciousness will not follow linearly, one after another, but will be present diaphanously – one through the other.

An awareness of integral-diaphanous consciousness provides us with a way to be able to read and make sense of ads, not by rationalizing or criticizing their meaning (although this is an important step in learning how to not be taken in by magical and mythical claims), but by seeing simultaneously the structures of consciousness that ads rely upon. This is important because we are today inundated by advertising, and advertising, as noted in the introduction, is not limited to selling products, but sells us our political leaders as well as "our" values and beliefs. An understanding of how consciousness is expressed in ads is then a form of criticism that is useful for the professional and consumer alike.

Moreover, I have hoped to show that when we want to understand the consciousness of our time we can turn to advertisements just as we can turn to mathematics, physics, biology, psychology, philosophy, legal doctrine, political speech, sociology, economics, music, architecture, music and literature (as Gebser has done). Each of these domains has provided signs of the emergence of an integral consciousness, although it remains, to a great degree, unexplicated and misunderstood. As Dyer (1982) has noted, advertising is the official state-art, or perhaps the state of art of post-industrial societies. Advertising is, as well, an access to understanding human consciousness, its history and its variations.

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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 *Verfall and Teilhabe* (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.

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- *Trigant Burrow: Toward Social Sanity and Human Survival*, edited by Alfreda S. Galt (\$25.00)
- *Burrow's Preconscious Foundations of Human Experience* (\$25.00)
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Book Announcement

Postmodernism and Race, Edited by Eric Mark Kramer

This collection brings together a dozen academics from diverse racial, ethnic, and gender perspectives to explore race in a postmodern way. The collection seeks to achieve three tasks: To present a uniquely "kynical" approach to truth-saying presented by modernists and "sophisticated" so-called postmodernists (with their faith in lingualism); to explore what modernism is in the context of race; and to investigate the concept of race in an aperspectival way, including a language-gaming of racism. The obsession with racial measurement and its correlation with measures of intelligence is

explored, as is the mythology of racial homogeneity in Japan. Also examined are the discursive nature of racial reality and power, and racial identity in Africa.

All those concerned with issues of race and/or postmodern civilization, as well as those interested in operational definition, scalar phenomena, relativism, and postmodern views of truth, justice, and power, will find this a provocative collection.

Contents: *The Spider of Truth* by Eric Mark Kramer; *The Importance of Social Imagery for Race Relations* by John Murphy; *A Brief Archeology of Intelligence* by Eric Mark Kramer and Lonnie Johnson, Jr.; *Dialogue and Race* by Algis Mickunas; *Symbolic Violence and Race* by Karen A. Callaghan; *What is a "Japanese"? Culture, Diversity, and Community Control, Base Communities and Democracy* by Woo Sik Chung and John T. Pardeck; *Racist Ontology, Inferiorization, and Assimilation* by Jung Min Choi; *Analyzing Racial Ideology: Post-1980 America* by George Wilson and Jomills Braddock; *Neoconservatism and Freedom in Postmodern North American Culture* by Norman N. Morra; Selected Bibliography; Name Index; Subject Index.

Eric Mark Kramer is Assistant Professor of Communication at the University of Oklahoma. Among his earlier publications is *Consciousness and Culture: An Introduction to the Thought of Jean Gebser* (Greenwood, 1992).