

INTEGRATIVE EXPLORATIONS

Journal of Culture and Consciousness

February 1993/Volume 1 Number 1
The Journal of the Jean Gebser Society



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

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

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EDITOR'S WORD

Integrative Explorations Journal is the result of thirteen years of publication as the Gebser Network Newsletter. 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 has continued to publish 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 offered by Ohio University Press. This work is very accessible and eminently readable. Some of the authors represented in this first issue of Integrative Explorations have published 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, 1987). 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 \$2.50.)

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COSMOS AND ATEMPORALITY

Algis Mickunas

Ohio University

INTRODUCTION

The venture that demands to be undertaken requires not only a shift of awareness toward integrality, but equally a cognizance of a specific, even if not explicitly articulated, problematic of the *cosmos* in the context of the mental-rational tradition. The Gebserian explication of diverse modes of awareness has offered clues suggesting the impossibility by the mental awareness to be able to think the world, although he also demonstrated that such modes of awareness are not *of things*, but specific articulations of space-time, even if the latter are radically distinct one from the others. Using Gebser's ways of explicating the complex and diverse phenomena as indices of structures of awareness, it should be possible to bring to the fore the clues to the ever-present cosmic awareness. One specific issue calls for immediate attention: the reappearance of mental-rational mode of awareness even among the efforts to overcome its limitations. Thus, various current "deconstructions" of modernity (deficient rationality) maintain that the modern perspective is one among many possible perspectives. Yet the metaphoric extension of *perspectivity* to be an all-encompassing theory is, as a matter of course, a final articulation and affirmation of modernity and indeed an unquestioned acceptance of the deficient mode of mental-rational awareness. In turn, there are various sciences attempting to devise means to measure the vastness of the universe, and even the possibility of peering into the beginning of time, and thus opening the door to speculative mysticism. We do not challenge scientific claims—the latter may be true in the context of mental awareness—rather the task of articulating cosmic awareness appears within the very mental-rational consciousness parameters, whether the latter are in the efficient, qualitative, or in the deficient, quantitative mode. Yet the parameters appear on the ground of tacitly present awareness which makes the parameters recognizable, and comprises the necessary background allowing the parameters to appear as a foreground. Thus, the mental-rational awareness intimates more than it can contain without being in a position to encompass the more. The *more*, we contend, is the *cosmos*. The tracing of the latter through the mental-rational awareness requires a careful exposition of the fundamentals of such awareness.

THE ONTO-METAPHYSICS OF REASON

At one level, Gebser's work has suggested that consciousness structures are coextensive with specific space-time morphologies, not as variations of, or deviations from, an identical and forever valid space-time structure, but as diverse modes of awareness. The only space-time structure that is available to a specific culture is its space-time consciousness. The latter is the basic context within whose parameters all events—including the humans—are articulated. In this sense, one specific space-time structure, the objective, is available, and completely tied to the specific mode of awareness—the mental-rational. The parameters of this space-time consciousness have framed Western metaphysics and ontology, i.e. the symbolic designs of ultimate reality and of the composition of nature, and indeed set a stage for various theologies of teleological and eschatological types.

Because of such parameters metaphysical-ontological thinking became, not only available, but also a hindrance to the understanding of the world. Indeed, the very language of this way of thinking comprises an over-determination in favor of specific prejudgments, above all in favor of *thing* and *Being-In-The-World*. This is not to say that the mental-rational awareness rejected the world; to the contrary, all efforts in the construction of metaphysics and ontology were and continue to be founded on the tacit rejection and thus continuous presence of the world. Yet this

presence, in its mental interpretation, led to the reification and finally to the *deworliding* of the cosmos. Again, this is not to imply that this process was initiated by some malign genius; rather, given the mental-rational consciousness, the *deworliding* of all events, including the human, could hardly be avoided. This simply suggests that in this consciousness space-time-movement, as cosmic dimensions, play no essential role in the understanding of objects and subjects. Lending preeminence to the permanence of substantial things and their relationships, traditional thinking covers over the questions of the cosmos. Attributing preeminence to things—and by extension to Being—and in modernity to reified reality and the metaphysics of logic allows the presumption that as things and material objects, so can the worldly dimensions of space-time-movement be regarded as "objects," although inessential among other objects. If things are constantly *in* time, *in* space, and *in* motion, then this very *in-herence* does not make an essential difference to the things that are *in*. Although modern reification of nature led to the positing of atomic and subatomic building blocks, the latter are equally *in* space-time-movement. This form of reification was one of the reasons for the appearance of *mind* as a counterpart to matter.

This onto-metaphysical thinking extends all the way to the constitution of *laws* of things *in* space-time-movement; yet the laws ought to be *indifferent* with respect to space-time-motion, i.e. they are changeless since they regulate the motions and location of things. In brief, while the ontological composition of things is substantial and permanent *in* space-time-motion, the metaphysical givenness of laws is regarded as transcending the vicissitudes of *being in*. Indeed, the metaphysical articulations may extend to encompass space-time-movement to the extent that these two are subject to transcendent laws, i.e. laws of space, time, and movement. Although such laws seem to cover over the presence of the world, they are, nonetheless, completely bound to the sense of the world *in* which the laws of time, space, motion determine the directions, locations, and speeds of things *in* the world. This would then suggest that what comprises the mental and rational space-time consciousness is equally a tacit presence of the world. How one mode of awareness becomes a tracing of another mode, i.e. how a mental-rational awareness shifts to a trace of integral, atemporal world awareness, is yet to be deciphered.

Granting that a mental-rational consciousness lends priority to stable substances and transcending metaphysical compositions, the question must still be asked concerning the origin of this *stasis* and its duration. It is possible to suggest that a linear time allows a reading of events as given at a temporal point, such that the *now point* remains forever constant. The *now point* never changes and is the condition for the direct presence of all things. All that is must be given *now*. The latter assumes an inordinate preeminence of staticity such that all ontological conceptions signify the permanence of things and the latter point to their substantiality and duration in the continuous *now*. Thus, the consciousness of *the given* assumes a stability insofar as the consciousness is *present* to the things at *present*. The present of the *now* is deemed not only changeless, but eternally present, and in this sense provides the metaphysical hinge for the various contentions against motion as either inessential or nonexistent. This is to say, the metaphysical arguments of the Zenonian type, leading to their expansion in Platonisms and mathematicizations of all phenomena, are pegged on the argument of the eternal givenness of the *present*, i.e. *always there*.

The puncti-formity of *now* constitutes as well the flattening of time to a line such that the present *now*, instead of revealing the world time, covers its depth. This leads to remarkable and complicated phenomena. Since the *now* is deemed as always *present*, it not only guarantees the permanence of *thing*, but can also lend an appearance of priority to things over time and allow that time will be measured by the criteria of things. This would lead to the conclusion that since the thing is *now* and not yesterday, therefore yesterday is *no longer*. In this sense the thing not only over-determines the modality of the givenness of time (the past and the future), but also creates an appearance that just as things past and future are equally given as *no longer and not yet*. Of course, the priority of the *now* is the condition for this syndrome.

Some efforts to extricate the world from the impalement on the *now* reverse the order of temporal phases and propose that the projections of the future possibilities are prior to the *now* and the things in the *now*. According to Heidegger, Sartre, and others, such projections allow us to transgress the present and thus to avoid reducing consciousness to a *present thing*. What is of note is that the projections are equally expectations of . . . something. The future comprises possibilities of the appearance of objects or Being. This means that the projections of future possibilities are directed either toward fulfillment or disappointment of such possibilities by *things*. The future can be a project simply because the things that supposedly shall fill the expected possibilities are not yet there. A reified thinking dominates the effort to avoid reification. Possibilities are none other than reversed actualities. Indeed, the projections can be regarded as stretches of time: some are longer, others are shorter *in time*. This is to say, the future consists of empty stretches and possibilities can be projected as diverse distances *in* the future horizon. But the latter is regarded as a possibility of temporal continuation and thus a world horizon. This fails to realize that the *cosmos*, in which the future horizon appears, is already presupposed.

The priority of the *now* and the *thing* that allows the appearance of the world as spacio-temporal does not even exist. The future is not yet and the past is no longer, and hence the dimensions of the world do not exist. Yet even the *now* embodies a paradox: since it is not a stretch but a point between past and future, it cannot exist; it is nothing. We are facing a curiosity: the past, the present and the future are nothing. Hence what are we talking about when we speak of time? How can one measure and have stretches and continuities of nothing? It is the case that when we speak of such stretches we use a spatial metaphor in such a way that given spatial distances we can measure them; but how can one measure what is either no longer or not yet. We may be able to measure spatial distances to the extent that we may presume *returning* to the same place—even if this returning is problematic—but how can we return to the no longer? This paradox is the catalyst for the search of a *locus* where time can be measured. After all, measuring assumes that what we measure must be. Even if the no longer and not yet were to be regarded as not something that is not, but as something that is empty, i.e. empty time and empty space, we would be at a quandary to speak of directions in such an empty container. Indeed, emptiness discards the very understanding of world and returns us back to the nothingness of this world. All this leads to the efforts, as already mentioned, to locate time.

In one instance there are various metaphysical efforts to locate and guarantee the world in and by some ultimate *Being*. Since things and their continuity are deployed in spacio-temporal sequence of movements and locations, this very continuity must be guaranteed by some metaphysical powers that are deemed to be the glue of the succession. This is to say, since the *now* point has no extension, then there appears an abyss between the *now* and the next moment. If the continuity is threatened by fragmentation, then one introduces something transcendent to fill the gap left by the metaphysical and ontological, i.e. rational rejection of the *cosmos*. This is not only the constitution of the Cartesian problematic of rational time, but also leads to Leibnizian monadology and theodicy, and above all to Whitehead's efforts to save metaphysics without giving up the *now* point. For Whitehead, the entire problematic of metaphysics was its impalement of all reality on the *now* point, allowing for no possibility of shifting from the *now* and yet maintaining a continuity. Yet his efforts did not lead to worldly awareness, but to a reshuffling of the metaphysics of Being. He had to locate past and future *in* something. Thus, the shift from future to present and from the present to the past is a shift from the primordial nature of Being to the actual nature of Being. Here we find the limits of the thinking of Things and Being. Cosmic time is possible solely by its being inherent in the ultimate Being. In this sense, the cosmic domain of space-time-movement depend on Being. The latter, we suggest, is a way for mental-rational consciousness to deal with the inevitable question of *cosmos*. Being is regarded as the connection and continuation of things. The latter are tied to the ultimate Being that guarantees

their transition from the past to the future. Yet in this sense, the world is excluded from awareness. Although such metaphysics avoids the pure linearity of temporal phases by locating them in an eternal being, the latter, as eternal, does not allow us to understand the various modalities of experiencing time. Eternity excludes such questions. What is suggested here is that for Gebser the integral and atemporal awareness (*Wahrnehmung*) is neither eternal nor a mental-rational sequence, and not even a mythological or magical structure, but precludes such dualities, polarities and puncti-formal identities. To say that it is eternal, is to say that it is opposed to temporal and thus to return to mental-rational mode of awareness. Such an awareness is not only dualistic, but in its deficient, quantitative mode, it establishes a metaphysical way of treating all phenomena on the background of *eternity*. This is to say, mathematical definitions are not atemporal, but eternal, and are in no position to deal with cosmos that involves time. It is clear that regardless of how many mathematical points one may add, one will not derive extension or duration from them. Thus, mathematical measure of time is completely impossible. We shall return to this discussion shortly.

The glue of Being excludes the understanding of world. Thus, one seeks other options—beginning with Augustine—to extricate the problematics of the cosmos from the onto-metaphysical context of *being in* and *being*. One major option is the way through the *psyche*. Although the latter is mythologically laden, it assumes mental rational status in the context of temporal constitution of linear past-present-future. Here, the world dimensions of time, and its tripartite division, depend on the experience of the subject. Strictly speaking, there is no experience of the cosmic phenomena; rather, the very experience comprises these phenomena. The recollection and expectation are not *of* something, but are the very temporal extensions wherein things appear as past or as still-to-come. In brief, these extensions serve as a framework for the loci of things. The emphasis is on the thing, since the latter marks the very spot that, in turn, can be measured. This primacy is expressed by Augustine, who points out that neither past nor future exist if no things are recollected or expected. In turn, if the recollected or expected things are not given as *real*, then the temporal phases cannot be real either. This would shift us back to the previous problematics of the non-existence of the world. Moreover, the efforts to locate time experience in the *psyche*, even in the most rarefied sense of a pure form of one event after another event, or a succession, would fail in the effort to grasp tri-partitional time. A succession does not show traces from past to present, and from present to future. But even taking for granted that such a succession of events or things were to intimate, in some mysterious way, past-present-future, the recollected image and the expected image have no indices of coming either from the past or the future. An image of a friend who is not with me, whether recollected or expected, does not trace any difference in itself. And since it is the image that we have to mark the points of time in order for time to appear as either past or future, then the very marking already assumes such temporal orientations instead of being their source.

The problematic can assume other variations. If time is *in* the mind, or *in* the *psyche*, then the problem of its measure is merely postponed but not resolved, and for the following reasons: First, *psyche* is not given as something extended and offers no possible means of being extended into the past. Second, if all that is must exist *now*, then *psyche* is equally *now*, and hence does not offer any intimation of time. Third, since all the images and acts inhering in the *psyche* are also now, then they too cannot offer any measure of time and cannot designate time awareness; they do not, purely by themselves, have an intimation of time, and above all cosmic time. In this sense the latter cannot be grasped from the side of the *psyche* in its rational mode. Moreover, rationally speaking, the *psyche* is also *in* time, and thus reverts us back to the problem of *being in*. The initial question of Augustine *ubi tempus* remains tied to indecipherable riddles.

If we return to the most fundamental expression of the *being in*, we discover a more fascinating paradox: the world is regarded as the biggest among all big things and it too is developing and unfolding in space-time-movement. Thus it is thought that the world began sometime in the past

with some sort of a Big Bang, and from then it unfolded in all directions and up to the present and shall continue to unfold into the future. This image suggests that the world is in motion in some space and time; yet such an image presupposes a time and space different from the world. How could this be if apart from the cosmos there is no space and time and thus the cosmos could not be *in* any space-time-movement. In this sense, the cosmic space-time-movement cannot be equatable with any awareness of development, directionality, or cyclicity of repetition. All directions, developments, and repetitions are *in the world*, but the cosmos is not one of the events *in*. Cosmos cannot, thus, move from a particular time point to another time point, or from a particular place to still another place. Yet it is equally important to note that when one speaks of things and events, temporal durations and directions as being *in*, the latter does not imply that the cosmos is a container, a box wherein all events have their residence—as bees in a beehive. It is equally important to note that the cosmos is not some finite or an infinite expanse, or a region apart from events which could be discovered by sending an expedition. We can send an expedition to discover events that are not yet known and remote, but no expedition, as an event, can discover cosmos. The latter cannot be discovered somewhere and sometime. All this suggests that the cosmos cannot be grasped within the context of mental and rational consciousness and its two possibilities: spacio-temporal events as measured in the psyche from its positionality in the present, and the metaphysical concept of Being designed to provide the glue of, and a transition of events from, one point to the next.

THE DIFFERENCE AND THE FIELD

Mental-rational consciousness fails insofar as it is in no position to lend us any understanding of the cosmos. Such an understanding swings dualistically, and as we know from Gebser's work integral awareness both surpasses and subtends dualisms. But this also means that one cannot presume that the integral lends priority to a fixed unity in opposition to multiplicity, or some form of spirituality in contrast to materiality. Indeed, they are not abolished; rather their meaning subtends their entitative divisions and spacio-temporal locations. Thus the spirit is seen as *outside* of space-time, while the body is *in* space-time. As a way of avoiding such dualisms, Gebser traces an awareness that is neither temporal nor eternal; it is integral. In order to articulate the integral, it is best to begin with an event called *perception*, or what Gebser calls *Wahrnehmung*—truth taking. It is of note that this term surpasses the duality between rational and empirical modes of awareness, and may offer more appropriate clues to cosmic consciousness. We must be reminded of the shift in terminology; we are no longer talking of consciousness of the world, but cosmic consciousness; the former still contains residua of dualism, while the latter is a way of avoiding it.

Perception avoids the positional metaphors without falling prey to rigid oneness. If that is the case, then a careful step-by-step investigation of this awareness requires not multiple parts, but a process of differentiation. The latter was already traceable in our discussion of the things *in*, and the pervasive cosmic awareness. Despite sophisticated analyses, the rational consciousness could not access such an awareness. Since Gebser suggests that integral consciousness is perception, then it would be appropriate to initiate the investigations of the cosmic from the constitution of perceptual awareness that pervades both, the metaphysics of empiricism and rationalism.

Each perceptual event transgresses the puncti-formal now, the presumptive present by pointing beyond itself to an aura of other perceptions that are neither past nor future, but comprise a self-differentiating field. The latter cannot be delimited, since any attempt to posit a limit is equally a perception that signifies more than itself. In this sense, the perceptual field cannot be located, although everything that is localizable from here to there, from now to then, comprise perceptual phases of the field. This intimates that the distinction between space and time becomes redundant. From here to there is from now to then. While the events of the field may trace various directions, the field does not suggest directions. The field phenomenon is not a container or an enclosure

against which the self-differentiating events would strive. The events are equally field phenomena. This is to say, every perception surpasses its own parameters to the extent that by signifying other perceptions announce their own differentiation from and dependence upon one another. In this sense, there are no singular perceptual moments which do not demand synchronically other moments that are different, such that there is a mutual significative differentiation. Thus the field is traversed by mutually differentiating phenomena which, in their constant transgression articulate the alocalizable field. To say it in other words, the perceptual field is articulating itself by way of the differentiating perceptual phenomena. What ought to be emphasized is the dissolution of the rational and empirical epistemologies wherein the perceptual phenomena and the field would be deemed as appearances to someone distinct from these phenomena.

This awareness also reconfigures the presumed presence of things *in* something. The very awareness of a *thing* breaks up into a field of differential depths and horizons, such that the sides point to other sides in their co-presence and one through the other, into overlapping perspectives constituted by movement that both transcends the momentary and resonates with all that is to come and has been. At this level there is no subject-object, no spirit-body division. The phenomena cease to be material without becoming mental; they are, according to Gebser, meaning that is the consciousness of integrating transparency. Simply stated, transparency is not an ability to be a Lynx who can see through things, but the emergence of the signitive awareness. The latter permits the poly-critical differentiae or continuous differential of integrating and opening. Thus, the integral time awareness is not a balling together of all events into one and squeezing them till they yield eternity, but the copresence of temporal articulation of past-present-future such that neither one means anything without the others, and that they do not point to their unity, but to their co-present difference and thus their mutual visibility one through the other. Although we use the term "visibility," any other term may do, such as audiality, tactility and even sensuality. The signitive phenomena appear one through the other in mutual copresence such that tactility is resonated through audiality, the latter shakes up visibility, and so on. Thus, two points can be adduced. First, there cannot be awareness of visibility without it being resonated through its difference from, and yet copresence with audiality, tactility, and basically kinaesthetic constitution. Second, perceptual dimensions can trace any signification that crisscrosses the field. The hand, the eye, the pivoting, and the audial attending, are coextensive with and trace the signitive events both horizontally-laterally, and vertically—in depth.

These modes of signitive articulation of a field comprise a reconfiguration of awareness away from temporal succession and eternal repetition to the awareness of every signitive event as a deformation of signitive formation, and thus a trace of the copresence of the deformations *in depth*. To speak in human terms, a smile is a deformation and a trace of a frown whose mutual differences comprise their copresence and appearance one through the other—both laterally and vertically. To make the obvious thematic, in this awareness there is no appearance of pre-given spacio-temporal loci, and no container *in* which such awareness and events would take place. The formation, and the tracing of copresence of deformational differences constitute an upsurge of spacio-temporalizing prior to locations and positionalities. To speak with Gebser, we come to the *origination* and not to the readily made movement *in* space-time. Here *field awareness* lends itself to spacio-temporalizing movement that precludes any notion of a fixed unity or identity, but rather swings as forming deformation from the vertical horizons of the field. Thus the formation cannot be impaled on the now point, since it traces and is transparent through the deformation. In this sense the forming-deforming spacio-temporalizing upsurge is atemporal. Any attempt to grasp a formation, such as the present, shifts to the deformation of the past and a tracing preformation of the so called future so that what appears is a self-*atemporalizing* and self-*aspatializing* field.

As already noted, the field does not indicate any boundary, since the latter pretends to maintain an inner-outer duality. The field is traceable as a play of signitive events, and in turn it is a trace of *cosmic* awareness. Every shift of signitive events of a field, is also a non-predictable shift of the field. In this it is possible to espy the cosmic time as the shift of *presence* in a way that the signitive events do not vanish *into* the past but rather transform the depths of fields. The *shift of presence*, traced by the field with its signitive transformations of forming and deforming events, is atemporalizing and aspatializing play that can be designated as a *cosmic difference*. This suggests that cosmos is not identical with the sum of things; that it is not a synthetic unity of all things and their relationships, possessing specific characteristics of this synthesis. The latter case would presume substantiation and a subject-predicate logic that takes for granted its positionality of *being in* and thus its incapacity to exhibit a worldly consciousness. In turn, the very awareness of the cosmic difference implicates an awareness both of the things *in*, and the cosmos. At this juncture consciousness must transgress the totality of all things and the very being of things in order to differentiate them from the world. The cosmic awareness, or as some traditional notions would have it, the human *world openness*, appears by virtue of the cosmic difference.

At this juncture a remarkable coincidence between the cosmic and the human begins to emerge. While the perspectival givenness of things, and indeed a multitude of *world views* are bound to the metaphor of *being in*, and thus to spacio-temporal positionality, the world openness is alocal and atemporal. One does not have a direction from here to then or from now to there, but provides a region of all possible orientations prior to the differentiation between past-present-future or from here to there. This is the event of the difference that maintains this openness and sets up the field of differentiations. The latter is possible because the open awareness is constantly maintained so that the field cannot exhibit any boundaries or locations. Indeed, it allows the notion of the *more* in awareness than the presently given field is able to grant. What is now obvious, requires extreme care, since the most obvious is usually the most difficult to articulate. To say that the cosmos *grants* the openness for the *more* of the field, is also to say that there is a radical indistinction between the subject and the object. After all, the open consciousness is not related to objects, and its openness does not confront the open cosmos as an object; rather, the open cosmos is what grants the human openness and in such a way that such a mutual openness is what allows consciousness to be open to things and objects as intersections of differential field significations. Indeed, as Gebser shows, even the humanities, such as social and political sciences, are no longer regarded within the closure of medieval and aristocratic systems, but are open both statistically and with respect to activities (sometimes regarded under the rubric of *free choice*). What is at issue for us is to show that integral consciousness is cosmic consciousness without any reifications and mythical deployment of psychic images or spiritual entities.

TRACING THE COSMIC OPENNESS

First, we shall consider the ways that some twentieth century thinkers have traced the cosmos. By tracing we do not want to say that they were positionally aware of the cosmic. After all, one cannot take a position to cosmos, as if it were an object *of* consciousness. Here, the prepositional thinking becomes redundant. It is equally redundant to speak of world in rational terms of *transcendence* and of consciousness as an effort to reach some domain *beyond*. The world is not beyond, and in turn there is nothing beyond the world. All such claims are within the context of rational positionality. Indeed, to think cosmically is both, to think arationally and atemporally. All theo-metaphysics are equally traces of the world articulated from the consciousness of *limits* and of rational positionality of *being in*.

Traces are not traces of, do not point to some domain beyond themselves, are not signs containing signifiers and signifieds; they are phenomena, and the world is the phenomenality of such

phenomena. Let us exemplify the ways of the traces by a couple of major theoretical types of field awareness: the transcendental and the hermeneutical (historically effective consciousness). The transcendental is the more difficult to articulate, yet it also comprises an obvious trace of the cosmic. If we place ourselves at a level of awareness of time constitution we discover a self-temporalizing event that is a simultaneous protention-retention wherein the present appears irrevocably as open, and in a way that the protentional-retentional phases have no demarcations, and indeed do not suggest directionality; the latter would call for positions which, at this level, have not yet appeared. The self-temporalization is a condition for any positionality, and thus it is atemporal. The latter, as noted, is open without any demarcations, and in this atemporal openness it is a trace of the cosmic openness. The latter is equally atemporal apositionality. What allows the self-temporalizing awareness its atemporality as open, is its transparency with the atemporal openness of cosmos. This is to say the self-temporalizing event is nothing else than the awareness that traces the openness of the cosmos. We are not contending that cosmic awareness is prior to, and somehow founds all other modes of awareness; rather, it is the most immediate and pervasive presence in all modes of awareness.

The hermeneutical, the historically affective consciousness, may also be regarded as an awareness that traces the cosmic. As is well known, the historical type of hermeneutics shows that any awareness merges with the horizons of historical preunderstanding such that the latter surpasses one's present and subtends the assumption of linearity. The language we speak, the customs we inhabit, the heroes we emulate are not our past, but also our future. We find our way and indeed are an aspect of this entire preunderstanding and its open horizons of interpretation. Our singular awareness is not *in* a hermeneutical context, but appears as a trace and a manifestation of that context such that our shifts in awareness are equally the shifts of the historical and interpretive horizons, and conversely, the shift of the latter is the shift in our awareness. In this sense, the prejudgment of objectivity and subjectivity must be surrendered. One cannot posit the historically effective consciousness as an object of investigation; the very investigation will shift the horizons of such consciousness. Indeed, every positionality, perspective, and every effort to establish the present, or an identity, will be transgressed by the open horizons of such consciousness.

The historically effective consciousness, in turn, cannot delimit its own parameters and must comprise a trace of an open cosmos. In order to be such a trace it too exhibits its atemporal and apositional consciousness. Indeed, it abolishes the rational mode of history as oriented, developing, or evolving. This also includes the manifestation of the limits of teleological and eschatological rationalizations of human life—inclusive even of Marxian theology. Literally speaking, to think integrally is to think purposelessly. I am cognizant of the Gebserian emphasis on our contemporary need to take up the integral awareness, but such a taking up is not a purpose to be achieved in a linear history, in some future; rather it is a call to live an awareness that is present without being locked into the *now*.

Although it may seem that we have reached the traces of the cosmic and of our openness, as apositional, and thus atemporal and alocal, we have also mentioned that another aspect of cosmos is movement. As we know, rational mode of awareness calls for a movement from here to there, from now to then and thus presumes that a thing is moving *in* space and time and is *in* motion. Not to speak of the simplistic logical dilemmas of defining motion in this context, the impossibility of articulating cosmic motion in the sense of the world being *in* motion from here to there or from now to then, is quite apparent. This was implicit in the above discussion of the cosmos as beginning in a point of time and a location in space and then unfolding toward the present and the future. In addition, we cannot allude to the rhythmic–cyclical motion of the mythological awareness: everything moves *in* cycles. Regardless of the mode of awareness, it simultaneously assumes the immediacy of the world, and deflects itself metaphorically from cosmic awareness. Yet what we have reached are phenomena that defy positionality, and hence rational and even mythical awareness of space–time, and show up as apositional, and in turn as

traces of the cosmic consciousness. Yet as traces, that are completely transparent with the cosmic, they ought to yield the cosmic consciousness in its movement that is equally apositional and indeed adirectional. This is to say, we cannot be satisfied with the possibility of some suggestions that atemporality shows up if one can demonstrate that at the micro level time might be reversed. This is still directionality and presumes the already discredited *being in* metaphor.

What is to be traced across the phenomena made transparent as cosmic traces is the cosmic movement. The latter is not in or out of anything. Literally speaking, the world is going nowhere. But this is not to say that its movement is eternal. The latter is no movement and besides, it only lends itself to comprehension in a dualism between eternity and time. Thus we must revert back to the phenomena already available and trace them as clues to the cosmic movement. Although varieties of metaphors offer themselves as clues, from dancing to play—currently very much in vogue to explicate Gebserian thinking—they may be misleading as clues to the cosmic adirectionality and arrhythmia. In other words, the metaphors of dance are appropriate if they can exhibit the cosmic phenomena and not lead to speculative claims requiring mystical insights. No doubt, Gebser's thought would lend itself to such an explication without mystifying self destruction. This is to say, it is inappropriate to think with Gebser in terms of a return to an archaic consciousness of nondifferentiated oneness. The latter would be read—willy nilly—as rational effort to find a unity of a dark night in which all cows are black. After all, at the end of the modern tradition, Hegel has shown that an absolute and undifferentiated consciousness is for us impossible. ★

TOWARD A DESCRIPTION OF INTEGRAL ATONALITY*

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INTRODUCTION

In his monumental work *Ursprung und Gegenwart (The Ever-Present Origin)*, Jean Gebser announces the emergence of the integral world and suggests that the shift from tonal to atonal music is one manifestation of this emerging consciousness-structure. My purpose here is to clarify how atonality points to, and makes concretely present, the integral structure.¹ Since, as Gebser himself points out, "something new can only be discovered if one is aware of the old,"² such clarification also demands a brief description of the ways in which tonal music manifests what Gebser has termed the mental structure. I shall then attempt to show how atonality becomes the "self-concretization of time."³ Finally, I shall raise a terminological question: should atonality be called "music," or do the implications of the term "music" suggest that a new name might be found for atonality?

The problem of atonality may be introduced with a comparison between two compositions written around 1908. The first of these, Schönberg's 2nd String Quartet, op. 10, opens in the key of F-sharp minor, although frequent modulations to other keys continually threaten the security of the tonal center. In the second movement of this work, Schönberg introduces the well-known melody "Ach, du lieber Augustin . . . alles ist weg," as if to forewarn the listener that something is indeed "gone," "lost," "used up." The tune itself, initially heard in the second violin, is compressed in time, then fragmented into motivic shapes that gradually lose their connection with a tonal center and finally disintegrate (see measures 164-86). A soprano joins the quartet in the third movement, a setting of Stefan George's "Litanei" (from *Der siebente Ring*, 1907); the "longing" inscribed in the poem finds musical expression in chromatic figures that continually shift from one tonal frame of reference to another, although the key signature of E-flat minor is indicated throughout. But in the fourth movement, Schönberg dispenses with a key signature altogether. This movement--generally cited as the first piece of atonal music--is a setting of another poem from *Der siebente Ring*, "Entrückung" ("Release"). The atonal setting brings to life such lines as "Ich fühle luft von anderem planeten" ("I feel an air from other planets") and "Ich löse mich in tönen, kreisend, webend" ("I dissolve into tones, circling, wreathing").⁴

Yet the final sonority of the piece is a tonic chord (F-sharp major). The fourth movement did indeed open with an inspiration, with a breath from an entirely new realm of possibility, and did accomplish a temporary release from tonality. But the closing chord reveals an unwillingness to emigrate to the new world where tones dissolve and interweave. A similar ambivalence presides over all of Schönberg's work: although he rejected the diatonic scale and the functional harmonic relationships characteristic of tonality, substituting the tone row and the intervallic transformations of dodecaphonic music, he retained the forms and expressive devices of tonal music. Henri Pousseur writes:

Schönberg's music, because of its transitional position in musical history, is the perfect model of a semantically ambiguous, uncertain, partly contradictory structure. With or without wishing to, Schönberg calls unceasingly on traditional organising energies, constantly refers back to the types of meaning that he wished to abolish, and these relationships are forever coming between the hearer

and the structures the composer originally aimed at. . . . For Schönberg never found a way to overcome the dichotomy of the principles of classical theory, which had been only partly liquidated, and his new concepts of order . . . ; the solution was reserved for Webern, who realised the need for a radically new rule of law--for the exclusion of everything that could have prevented his making real the project of integral non- tonality.⁵

Schönberg's inaugural move toward the atonal domain may be contrasted with a second music example from the same period: Webern's song "Eingang" ("Entrance"), op. 4, no. 1. Here too the text is from Stefan George's *Der siebente Ring*. However, this song actually enters the new region, a world free not only from traditional harmony, but also from traditional concepts of rhythmic organization, texture, and form. The poem opens with a farewell to fixed forms ("Welt der gestalten lang lebewohl!.."). As Pousseur points out, "the perceptual type to which this music appeals is no longer the understanding of an abstract form, heard 'through' the material and standing in transcendent relationship to its actual incarnation" ⁶ And yet the absence of an abstract form does not automatically lead to some sort of total chaos, which would stand in opposition to "form" in the same way that the irrational opposes the rational. The music does have "a logic within its own strangeness, a perceptible coherence."⁷ This arational coherence is expressed in the line "Ahnendes schweigen bannt die hier wohnen..." ("Expectant silence transfixes those who dwell here").

The word "silence" demands some clarification, for it is rich in ambiguity. One interpretation of the "expectant silence" in George's poem might identify it with the spellbinding silence of magic and ritual. Were we to assume a mythic rather than a magic context, "silence" might hint at an ineffable mystery, poised in polar tension with its veiled voicing in myth. For the quantitatively-oriented mental-rational consciousness, "silence" might simply refer to some measurable absence of sound. But there is another way to understand silence: as a tacit or taken- for-granted background, or even as the latency of a background context that cannot be exhausted by any single event or inscription.⁸

Silence in this sense names a network of mutually implicative tacit structures, an open field with its own logic. A particular work coheres and is coherent--it hangs together, makes sense--because it participates in the network of possibilities tacitly assumed as a frame of reference. Any expression within this silent background already evokes a particular constellation of possibilities and implications, tensing the silent field in a particular way; the silence itself is expectant, and those who dwell here are swung into its play. Subjective events, such as a psychological state of expectation in a listener, do not by themselves account for the way music hangs together, but rather require a context: namely, the latency and cohesion of a silent background. And a "silent background" cannot be reduced to a musical "vocabulary" or equated with a certain set of conventions.⁹ The tacit organizational principles ruling a given piece of music point beyond themselves to the silent background of a particular world and consciousness- structure. This thesis may be illustrated by a discussion of the silent background supporting tonal music, exemplified here by homophonic music of the Classic period in Western Europe (e.g., Mozart, Haydn, early Beethoven). It will then be possible to show how atonality involves not merely the rejection of a tonal center, but the mutation of an entire silent background.

THE SILENT BACKGROUND OF TONALITY

The elements characterizing the silent background of tonality include (1) tones (or notes) and chords; (2) functional harmony; (3) melody; (4) metric rhythm; and (5) formal structure. These all point to a specific space-time configuration: the mental world and consciousness-structure as

described by Gebser. They all involve spatial metaphors, the most predominant expression of which is the music staff (see figure 1).



Here time is represented as a sequence of "longer" or "shorter" durations, which the eye follows from left to right along a horizontal axis, while "higher" and "lower" pitches are displayed along the vertical axis.¹⁰ The rational, spatial ordering principle symbolized by the written notation may be described more precisely as a hierarchic principle and a linear, directional, telic principle; both are at work in each of the elements listed.¹¹

(1) Tones and chords manifest the hierarchic principle in that (a) they are ranked above mere noise and/or "natural" sounds and (b) they are defined by their relation to a "higher" principle, i.e., number, or, more specifically, numerical ratio. The whole number ratios that Pythagoras found to underlie the agreeable combinations of sounds he is said to have heard coming from the blacksmith's hammers have been invoked ever since to justify whatever the current musical practice considers to be consonant or "pleasing" intervals. Furthermore, even single notes or tones can be shown to have a more regular vibratory pattern than do "mere noises." That human delight in music is "really" based on the capacity of soul, mind, or brain to comprehend ratio and proportion, rather than on the concrete experience of the sensuous beauty of sound, is a thesis whose history I cannot pause to trace here.¹² But in all its versions it establishes a hierarchy whereby experienced sound is subsumed under a more abstract principle: earthly music, it is held, depends on the cosmic harmony of which it is but an echo; the expedient tuning of our instruments mimics the higher law of number; subjective delight in sound is but the phenomenal effect of real causes, whose privileged objective status is guaranteed by their measurability.

Tones and chords also exhibit telic structure: they can point beyond themselves, demanding a resolution, as in the ascending scale do-re-mi-fa-sol-la-ti . . . which "wants" to return to "do," the tonic pitch. But tones and chords, which are events at the now moment, can point beyond themselves to a future resolution only because they silently presuppose a context of relationships such as that provided by functional harmony.

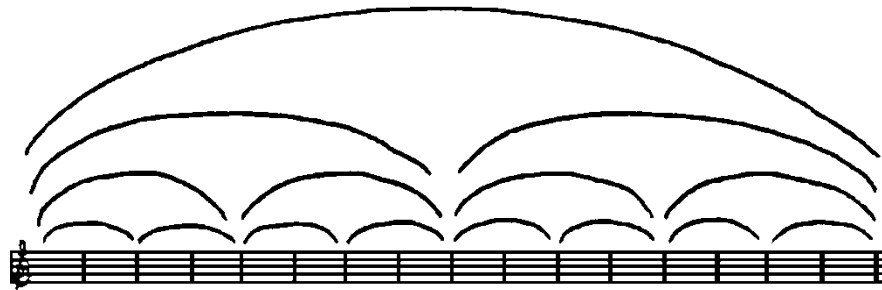
(2) Functional harmony displays hierarchic organization in that the key of the piece, or the tonal center of a region in a piece, functions as the tacit standard adjudicating the value and energy of each chord or note. For example, the note F-sharp by itself might signify nothing. But in the key of G major, its proximity to G, the keynote, earns it the name of "leading tone" and the function of pointing so compellingly to this keynote that it appears in almost every cadence to the tonic. In the key of F-sharp major, however, F-sharp no longer has the feeling of striving beyond itself to a tonic, but is itself the "home base" toward which the other notes gravitate. Hence the tonic note or chord holds a silent power over the region it governs: whether or not it is actually sounding, the tonic determines the meaning of each sonority according to its distance from the home key. In addition, the tonic functions as a goal. Endless variations on the linear, telic pattern of expectation--delay--fulfillment are possible, since they are played out against the backdrop of an eventual return to the tonic. This "drive toward cadence" supplies the harmonic implications by which a given note or chord can point beyond itself to a resolution. "The music was, thanks to this faculty for embracing the immediate future, able to negotiate points, as it were, and even fork off into several parallel lines of events, but the formal course of the music was limited to a single

direction of movement in time."¹³ Thus the formal structure of a tonal composition unfolds through a series of digressions from the tonic region. As Webern wrote, "It was so pleasant to fly ever further into the remotest tonal regions, and then to slip back again into the warm nest, the original key!"¹⁴ But these expressive flights require the linear, telic expectation and hierarchic pitch organization comprising the silent background of tonality.

(3) Melody is so often defined as a "succession of notes" that its linearity seems self-evident. But this linearity requires a hierarchic principle in order to keep from disintegrating into an indifferent succession of isolated events. The "higher law" that persists from moment to moment is provided by "the melody" itself insofar as it is a non-temporal shape subsuming the individual, passing notes. In homophonic music, the presence of a "melodic line" suggests another manifestation of hierarchic structure: the melody is primary and the accompaniment must play a subordinate role. It is significant that when Schönberg abandoned functional harmony, with its power to organize sound across time by means of harmonic implications, he also found that melody became problematic. Special notation (the symbols for the *Hauptstimme* and the *Nebenstimme*) was necessary to distinguish the more important lines from other successions of pitches--otherwise the musicians would not be able to tell who should sing out with "the melody" and who should retire into the accompanimental role.

(4) Metric rhythm consists of (a) the rational division of time into a linear succession of identical pulses and (b) the imposition of a higher order--the musical measure, containing a definite number of beats--on these pulses. The meter of the piece sets up a recurring pattern that establishes a series of "time-frames" prevailing over the unidirectional flow of uniform pulses. Basic metric patterns, such as march time, waltz time, etc., generate a series of downbeats followed by unstressed or less prominent beats (e.g., $\underline{1}$ 2 3, $\underline{1}$ 2 3, etc.); these patterns provide a tacit frame of reference for syncopation and other rhythmic effects. But the measure dictates the limits of possible variation. For example, in 4/4 time, each and every measure must contain the equivalent of four beats, given that the quarter note stands for one beat, and all rhythmic figures must conform to this law. The basic beat itself may change during a piece--e.g., the composer may vary time signature or tempo indications--or the music may tug and pull against it in *accelerando*, *ritardando*, and *rubato* passages, but these deviations from a regular pulse nevertheless require the assumption of such a pulse as the silent background against which differences may be profiled. The uniformity of the underlying pulse is a necessity in tonal music, for it ensures that all simultaneous parts will dovetail in the correct harmonic relationship. (The development of metric notation coincides with the emergence of polyphonic compositions in which each voice had not only to follow internal laws of melodic progression and voice leading, but also to arrive at consonant sonorities at crucial structural moments. Thus metric notation becomes a means of implementing the hierarchic pitch organization of functional harmony.)

Finally, just as the sequence of pulses predominates over the undivided flow of time and the metric pattern over the uniform succession of pulses, so also may periodic phrases establish higher levels of temporal organization. Here the hierarchic ordering of linear time may be accomplished by an ever more comprehensive pyramid of theses and antitheses. In a typical symmetrical structure, the lowest level might consist of eight two-bar phrases (see figure 2).



ARCHITECTONIC LEVELS OF PERIODIC PHRASES

Figure 2.

The first phrase poses a musical "question" to which the second phrase responds; this pair is answered in its turn by a second question-answer pair. On yet another level, these four phrases act as a thesis, preparing the way for an eight-bar antithesis with the same internal structure. On the highest level the synthesis of these two eight-bar phrases--a sixteen-bar melody--is repeated to balance the initial statement and to create a temporal structure that can arch over thirty-two measures, supported by the logic of its own internal articulations. These architectonic levels function along with the ideality of "the melody" on the one hand and the telic system of harmonic implications on the other to ensure that the flow of notes in linear time is dominated by "an abstract form, heard 'through' the material and standing in transcendent relationship to its actual incarnation" (to recapitulate the description by Pousseur cited earlier).

(5) Thus the creation of formal structure, the establishment of a single order across time, stands out as the primary achievement of tonal music. A piece exhibiting ABA form, for example, literally "saves" time, redeeming the individual, passing notes by subsuming them under a higher principle expressed as a spatial metaphor that can be comprehended in a glance. The return of the "A" section in ABA form, and the return to the tonic in the final cadence, symbolizes an entire cultural move: the rational deployment of spatialized time in such a way as to compensate, if only briefly, for the poignant ephemerality of each unique movement.

Tonal music, then, involves more than a certain conventional way of organizing pitch relationships (i.e., around a tonic or keynote and in terms of functional harmony); it manifests a characteristic attitude toward a spatialized time, an attitude summarized in the phrase "hierarchic ordering of linearity." This suggests that the shift from tonality to atonality cannot be adequately described in terms of a change in the way pitches are manipulated, e.g., according to the intervals of a tone-row rather than along the gravitational lines of a tonal region. There is rather a mutation of the silent background of music itself, and all the elements shift toward a "style" of silence that is the very play of time itself.¹⁵ I shall now begin to describe these elements, pointing out some general tendencies within 20th century atonality rather than interpreting the works or procedures of a single school or composer.¹⁶ My aim is not to compile an exhaustive catalogue of isolated features, but rather to attempt a provisional map of a cohesive world whose "expectant silence" welcomes all who dare to enter it.

THE SILENT BACKGROUND OF ATONALITY

The elements at work in the silent background of atonality include (1) an open acoustic field; (2) "diaphoneity"; (3) arhythmic and aperiodic styles of self-temporalization; (4) "the emerging"; (5) integral texture; and (6) atonal structuration as play of latency. Each of these suggests that atonality announces a self-concretization of time rather than a preoccupation with such spatial metaphors as linear, telic directionality and vertically arrayed hierarchy. Thus the following

descriptions may serve to show how atonality manifests the integral world--for, as Gebser emphasizes, the irruption of time as an intensive, integrating power (which is qualitatively different from the concept of time as an extended sequence of abstractly spatialized "moments") is a crucial clue to this consciousness- structure.

(1) The open acoustic field in which atonality plays is a continuum rather than a series of discrete notes. The familiar equal-tempered scale of the piano keyboard, which rationally divides the octave into a succession of identical intervals, is replaced by an open field that includes not only the notes "in the cracks" of the piano keyboard, but also noises as well as musical tones. The use of an unbroken pitch continuum is usually associated with the post-World War II development of magnetic tape and electronically generated sounds. However, it is prefigured in the appearance of the Theremin and the Ondes Martenot in the 1920's, as well as in the prominent use of glissandi in such works as the Bartók 3rd String Quartet (1927). And the acceptance of noises within the musical texture has a precedent in Futurism, though it is usually dated from John Cage's invention of the prepared piano (1938) or Pierre Schaeffer's initial work with *musique concrète* (1948).¹⁷ The acoustic field opened by such ventures not only affords a greater range of sound possibilities, but also renders irrelevant the rational distinction between "musical" and "non-musical" sound.

Moreover, composition with electronically generated sound requires that the composer's choices among the possibilities of this open acoustic field be specified quite precisely, since there is no performer or interpreter to supply the shadings and nuances usually taken for granted in the realization of an instrumental or vocal score. This situation led Stockhausen to describe composition as the ordering of "a *single, unified musical time*" rather than as the manipulation of separate properties of sound, since "all differences of acoustic perception can be traced to differences in the temporal structure of sound waves."¹⁸ Thus nearly all compositional parameters may be expressed as functions of time, and such traditional organizational elements as pitch and rhythm--prominently represented in conventional notation--no longer predominate over other factors (amplitude, timbre, attack and decay, etc.). However, the turn away from pitch (high, low, consonant, dissonant, etc.) as the primary element of compositional order is not confined to electronic music; Schönberg's notion of *Klangfarbenmelodie*, as expressed in his *Harmonielehre* or as exemplified in his *Orchestra Piece*, op. 16, no. 3 (1909), may also be mentioned. Further examples in which other time- concretizing elements of the acoustic field displace pitch relationships as the primary means of organization might include works by Ligeti, Stockhausen, and Xenakis in which the compositional design is woven of various textures (i.e., is ordered in terms of "global, statistical features").¹⁹ In addition, John Cage's use of duration as an important structural principle further documents the shift away from the primacy of pitch. Cage maintains that since duration is the only parameter common to both sound and silence, it is--or should be--the most important compositional principle. Furthermore, his discovery and acceptance of the "silence" that is actually the ambient environmental sound interpenetrating the "composed" parts of the work not only confirms the entry of the whole acoustic field into the domain of "music," but also illustrates a new kind of transparency in musical texture. Cage himself points out that one can now "hear through" music in the same way one can "see through" certain works of sculpture or architecture.²⁰

(2) This element of atonality may be termed "diaphoneity," or diaphonous texture,²¹ and is manifested in at least two ways: transparency and permeability. Transparency in 20th century music is usually associated with the "pointillism" of some of Webern's works, or indeed, with any piece in which the notes are sparse and the pauses palpable. However, transparency is more than a preponderance of rests: it is also, and more fundamentally, an expression of intensive time. In his lectures, Webern describes how the 20th century "return to counterpoint," to polyphony, does not drive out the homophonic tendency to present one main musical idea (e.g., the melody, to which the accompaniment is subordinate), but rather results in "the interpenetration of these two

means of presentation."²² Thus two or more contrapuntal lines may be given equal weight and importance, yet instead of presenting two or more musical ideas (e.g., fugue subject and countersubject), they present the same idea "from differing points of view" simultaneously. In this connection it may be recalled that Schönberg once compared the four forms of the tone row (the original sequence of intervals, the retrograde, the inversion, and the retrograde inversion) to "one and the same hat being viewed from four different angles."²³ Since the various forms of the row may be simultaneously present in a polyphonic texture, the net result would be comparable to an aperspectival painting by Braque or Picasso. And if a "musical idea" is understood as a particular style of concretizing time in sound, then the various versions of the row diaphonously sounding through other versions in a work such as Webern's *Concerto*, op. 24, constitute the transparent depth of intensive (rather than extended) time. The "pointillistic" texture, in which the entrance of each polyphonic voice is a distinct event not "covered" by other voices, may serve as a prime example of a transparency allowing the play of such aperspectival time to be clearly heard.

But diaphonous texture is also expressed in *permeability*, Ligeti's term for a situation in which "structures of different textures can run concurrently, penetrate each other and even merge into one another completely."²⁴ Charles Ives' *Fourth of July* (1913) provides an excellent example of permeability. Here a multitude of tunes and tones mingle in a musical portrait of the holiday, complete with bands, parades, fireworks, and crowds simultaneously jostling one another in the bystander's bemused ear. The resulting texture is characterized by great density and intensity. However, the intensity is not simply a matter of loudness. It is rather another example of intensive time--i.e., the integration of simultaneous layers composed of various styles of self-temporalization that "thicken" as well as concretize time, even in cases where the orchestra is actually making a decrescendo while piling up strata of textures and structures. Here and in many other atonal works "the effect of overall textures is felt at every moment In them, time is manifest. This . . . means that it is time itself that guides itself within the elements. 'The loom of time'; that would indeed be the perfect matrix for composition."²⁵

(3) The "loom of time" weaves a new context for the rhythmic element. "Rhythm" has heretofore meant the hypnotic recurrence of ostinato figures in the music of magic consciousness,²⁶ the cycles of the breath's ebb and flow in the melodies of mythic consciousness, and the patterns possible within the rational "time-frame" of the musical measure. Atonal music does not necessarily reject rhythm in these senses, although some composers have found alternatives to traditional metric notation. But the focus has shifted from the manipulation of rhythmic patterns within the frame of a measure to the concretization of time as a particular energy shape. Here the work of Rudolf Laban might be mentioned.²⁷ His research in qualitative movement description illustrates the possibility of perceiving time as "sustained" (leisurely, lingering) and "sudden" (urgent, quick) rather than measuring it in terms of the "long" or "short" distance traveled by the hands of a clock or using the quantitative device of a metronome to categorize a "slow" or "fast" tempo. Other aspects of movement, such as the qualitative articulation of space, weight, and flow, merge with the specifically temporal aspect in a "time shape" with its own style of dynamic self-temporalization. This descriptive context may be applied not only to a movement phrase, but also to a musical phrase; the kinaesthetic style of a musical gesture, the way its energy moves through certain sonorities and arrives at others, is the style of its self-temporalization, its way of concretizing time. With this kind of time-understanding, a shared pulse becomes optional, and arhythmic figures intertwine in a "freely hovering" texture where "one can scarcely even catch a final glimpse of a disappearing periodicity."²⁸ One of the most impressive examples of arhythmic and aperiodic texture is Witold Lutoslawski's *String Quartet* (1964):

Only a few passages of the work are written in score form--most of it takes the form of completely independent instrumental parts, since the playing of the four parts is not intended to be synchronized . . . The composer has written as follows about the intentional fluctuations of ensemble to which this freedom gives rise: "The point at issue is not a matter of differences between one performance and another, nor is it a question of surprise; I did not intend, either, to free myself of part of my responsibility for the work by transferring it to the players. The purpose of my endeavors was solely a particular result in actual sound. This result--especially as regards rhythm and expression--could not be attained in any other way."²⁹

Lutoslawski's remarks may be taken as confirmation that a "freely hovering," arhythmic network of sound is an element of atonality even when the composer retains his or her traditional control over the sound and structure of a piece of music.

(4) But some composers, notably John Cage, have relinquished this responsibility, allowing the play of environmental sounds to intersect whatever rhythms and energy shapes comprise "the music" per se. This shift not only diaphonously admits the arhythmic acoustic field into the work, but also alters the notion of "melody." The melody is no longer a particular tune chosen or crafted by the composer and supported by a harmonic accompaniment, nor an abstract means of binding the individual, passing sounds into a transcendent, non-temporal form, but a contingent and local experience. In the global situation of ambient sound, some sounds may emerge more clearly than others and some may simply remain in the background. But whatever sounds do emerge for a given listener at a given performance *are* the "melody" of the piece; or, better yet, "the emerging" takes the place of "the melody." And this is true regardless of the origin of these emerging sounds. In tonal works, "the music" is clearly demarcated from such extraneous sounds as coughs in the audience or traffic noises outside the concert hall. In some atonal works, however, "the emerging" aperspectively surrounds the listeners; any audible sound may enter the piece, whether this sound emerges from an instrument played on a stage, from a heating system deep within the building, from an airplane miles overhead, or from within a listener's own body.

The composer who accepts this situation is operating in the realm of indeterminacy; what is created is not so much a "piece of music" as it is an "occasion for experience." Hence the piece is not an object "in" time, but a "time-object," i.e., a self-temporalizing shape. Of the time-object, Cage writes: "This object, exceedingly complex due to the absence of a score, a fixed relation of the parts, is analogous to a futurist or cubist painting, perhaps, or to a moving picture where flicker makes seeing the object difficult."³⁰ Thus indeterminacy does not assume a pre-given "form," to be made present by certain constellations of sounds and no others, but allows those sounds to emerge that are "timing" themselves--i.e., that are sounding at all, for, as mentioned above, nearly all of the "properties" of sound may be expressed as functions or "overtones" of time. The work becomes the self-concretization of time as it emerges in sound.

Of course, not all composers have given up *writing music*, i.e., specifying the sounds that are to emerge in preference to other sounds, ambient noises, etc. But "the emerging" still appears as a shifting figure-ground relation such that dense layers of sound can act as a "silence" out of which one voice may emerge, yet this voice may then itself become "silent" as another intersects it and begins to predominate. What is heard might be described as an iridescent play of change going nowhere and/or somewhere. This sort of "emerging" texture may be found in some of the works of Varèse and Xenakis, or in Penderecki's *Dimensions of Time and Silence*, and aptly illustrates the irruption of "four-dimensional" time as movement and change.

(5) But it is important to grasp the significance of a description in which the play of change is said to go "nowhere *and/or* somewhere." Although these divergent possibilities--the shimmer of global texture and density, where no fixed direction dominates the emerging sound events, and

the shaped, directional movement of a cohesive musical phrase--may appear to present a logical contradiction, they actually suggest another element of atonality. This element may be named integral texture. Integral texture manifests the "as well as," "yes but also," "both/and," and "neither/nor" that Gebser found to criss-cross the integral world and consciousness-structure. In concrete musical terms, it means that musical expressions manifesting other consciousness-structures may appear in an atonal work, not in the guise of source materials "updated" into some "modern" version that would necessarily be "dissonant," etc., but simply as themselves, with the worlds to which they point and which they make present. As Pousseur writes,

I would even hazard the prediction that evolution in the near future will be in a direction such that all types of musical expression known up to the present will be made usable again (along with other, entirely unknown types relating to other domains of our auditive experience). The only condition which it would seem necessary to respect is that no one of these elements be allowed to predominate over the others³¹

Penderecki's *Utrejna*, for example, includes pre-tonal, tonal, non-tonal, and atonal music. There are brief recitatives in the style of Eastern Orthodox Chant, and there are two short choral passages in five-part harmony; there are instances where non-tonal dissonance is deliberately used to create tension, and there are regions of shifting sonorities where the consonance-dissonance distinction is irrelevant. All of these styles and textures are integrated into the finished work, which also displays the elements of an open acoustic field, diaphoneity, aperiodic self-temporalization, and "the emerging." Thus *Utrejna* may stand as an excellent example of the way in which atonality need not reject tonality, but can embrace it while at the same time manifesting the integral world. (Some of the works of George Crumb may provide further examples of integral texture; the appearance of tonal fragments within an atonal texture suggests at times an almost frightening nostalgia, at times a haunting tenderness.)

(6) There is yet another way in which atonality manifests the self-concretization of time. Certain pieces, be they aleatoric or completely notated, neither presuppose nor establish a fixed form or set of limits designed to safeguard the dynamic interrelationships summed up in the phrase "variety within unity." Instead these pieces display the play of latency itself. Hans-Klaus Metzger writes:

Music so conceived does not confirm what already exists, but compellingly questions the assumptions on which it is based, solely by virtue of its own logical organization.³²

Pousseur speaks of "permanent renewal" and "constant regeneration" in announcing that with this music "one enters a world that is held firmly open, imperfect until further notice, constantly breaking-up."³³ Similarly, Ligeti writes of pieces that are not exemplifications of a pre-given form "projected" onto linear time, but rather maintain a state of fluidity, of "elastic contours"--"at every moment the composer has the possibility of taking a decision that will alter the future course of the piece entirely"³⁴--in a continual play of unpredictable mutations and self-correcting feedback. And Friedhelm Döhl finds this "in-formal" music to be "the ever new *adventure of freedom*, i.e., the ever new decision from the zero-point."³⁵ Hence the piece does not coagulate into a "form" at all. It does not become an "object," a fixed form "in" time, or even a "time-object," but rather manifests the irruption of time itself. In an interlacing play of structuration, of formation and deformation, the work is always on the verge of cohering, but never picks a single irrevocable direction. Yet the self-shaping of the work is not abstract or arbitrary. One might say that time itself "steers" the work. And the work is a self-concretization of this "steering" in that the temporal lines of implication are continually feeding back into the latency of the "zero-point," intensifying rather than extending it. Hence atonal music may display latency in the very act of

cohering, rather than regaling the listener with the achievement of a cohesion that is no longer open to question. It might even be the case that such music requires a special kind of active, participatory listening: the work is no longer an auditory "object" confronting a "subject," but a shared self-temporalization whereby music and listener alike are swung into the play of a "world without opposite."³⁶

MUSIC AND SOUNDPLAY

But is this *music*? The term itself is rich with associations. Gebser has pointed out the connection between music and magic, describing the spellbinding sway of magical sound. Furthermore, "music" names the art of the Muses, and the Muses are the daughters of Mnemosyne, of Memory. Hence it is not surprising that much of our ritual and ceremonial music is past-oriented. Certain occasions demand the appropriate music, and the appropriate is the traditional. We would not expect to hear a funeral dirge at a wedding, for example, or a Christmas carol at a baseball game. But the proper music confirms our participation in the familiar, seasonal cycles and reaffirms the traditions that shape our celebrations from birth to death. Music, then, can move us at a deep psychic level, gathering us into the reassuring rhythms of our communal heritage.

But in Western music, the mental structure tends to predominate over psychic attunement and rhythmic circularity. For example, both Plato and Aristotle recommend that the communal psyche be ruled by the "correct" music, i.e., that which moves the listeners in the right way. Furthermore, music represents the imposition of rational form on irrational matter, accomplished above all by the establishment of a meter to measure out the blind and ceaseless flow of time. And the notion of musical "measure" refers not only to the regulated number of beats within the bar lines, but also to the broader theme of ratio and proportion underlying much music theory. Each of these examples assumes the perspective of a consciousness that can stand back and see the realm of sound for what it is, substituting visual analysis for aural attunement. Yet music never becomes completely rationalized. Even where the metaphor of "harmony" is invoked to indicate a hierarchic principle reconciling the many in the one, the spatial preeminence of the "higher" principle is shot through with a polar tension. Just as each note in tonal music may point beyond itself to the tonic from which it derives its meaning and direction, so also may each thing point beyond its contingency and uniqueness to the harmonious whole that is its ground. Such a structure may be expressed in terms of music (cf. Boethius and the medievals on *musica mundana*, *musica humana*, and *musica instrumentalis*), or in a poem like William Blake's "Auguries of Innocence," inviting us

To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour.

The specific and the universal are not logical opposites, but require and symbolize one another; the musical notion of "harmony" becomes a metaphor for any situation in which the mystery of a single guiding principle is felt to suffuse all diversity. But to characterize music only in terms of the metaphor of harmony is to miss an equally important implication.

The problem of music is to span time. Music operates in a linear temporality where each note or chord sounds, then vanishes. These perishable tones are the epitome of ephemerality and mortality. It is the task of music to become a "stopgap" against time, using formal devices such as the return to the tonic and the repetition of thematic material in order to "retrieve" the past, literally "saving" time.³⁷ The ideal forms of music and harmony are an attempt to escape what

Nietzsche has called "the revenge of time and its 'it was.'" We depend on music to give us at least the illusion of refuge from the irrevocable disintegration wrought by spatialized time:

The third world is music;
 Its chemistry: sound.
 Evoked from this chaos,
 It turns around

In the mind's half-instant,
 With seas running fresh
 And forests of lyric
 But vibrant flesh.

Earth-built and earth-bordered,
 Tropics to pole,
 This still is the planet
 The nostalgic soul

Runs to inhabit,
 Tries vainly to hold,
 As it spins into darkness
 And the night turns cold.³⁸

Music, the art of time, is the cry wrung from us at the pain of time's erosion.

But if all this is true, then atonality is *not* music; it does not manifest the same presuppositions concerning time. A new term would seem to be required. I would like to suggest the word "soundplay" to indicate the atonal manifestations of the integral world.³⁹ Soundplay names the play of the "expectant silence" whereby the interwoven implications of a silent background are "unfurled," "unpacked," "displayed" as a style of self-concretization, of self-temporalization. The play of this self-shaping time-field may be expressed in terms of "objectivity" (the measurable notes, durations, etc.) or of "subjectivity" (the individual listener's existential situation, etc.), yet both the "objective" and the "subjective" become transparent in favor of the self-temporalizing play of a global field. In this way soundplay becomes a manifestation of an integral, aperspectival consciousness-structure rather than an "object" to be experienced from the standpoint of a "subject."

Soundplay may be further described as the cohering of latency in such a way that the field is tensed toward a particular inscription or signification, which, however, continues to manifest the "expectant silence" implicated in its birth. The inscription does not become an object whose temporal shape gradually tightens toward an inevitable cohesion (as in tonal music, with its concern for form and for cadential resolution), but rather delivers at each step the residue of latency and the horizons of possibility haunting the play of its self-shaping concretization. In short, the latency is inscribed along with the cohering. The atonal piece sounding forth is intertwined, not only with the silence of the tacit background whose elements have been described above, but also with the silence of "it could be otherwise," of latency. Thus the work is time-free; it gathers more than the particular concretization of time that its own style displays. It is an inscription transparent with its own opacity and density, yet this opacity may be perceived

as the very thickness of intensive time. Hence soundplay opens a diaphonous depth, the presence of an originary upsurge (*Ursprung*).

We may leave this investigation with the remark that listeners today live in at least two worlds: that of music and that of soundplay. We are open to both; both make sense to us, and accepting the one does not close us off from the other. When, for example, we listen to a piece such as *The Unanswered Question* (1908), by Charles Ives, we can hear tonal music and atonal soundplay intersect, merge, converge, and diverge without resolution. But the Unanswered Question is not a riddle to be solved: it is an entrance to an open field where questions *with* answers are neither precluded nor obligatory. And the task of soundplay is not to replace music, but to enter this field, joining the play of flesh and time that is the living presence of our world.⁴⁰ .*

NOTES

- ¹ Gebser's *magnum opus*, *Ursprung und Gegenwart*, was originally published in two parts: the first part, "Foundations of the Aperspectival World," initially appeared in 1949 and the second, "Manifestations of the Aperspectival World," first appeared in 1953. The work as a whole subsequently appeared in several different editions in the original German. The principal discussion of music appears in Part Two, Chapter 9, section 1; see Jean Gebser, *The Ever-Present Origin*, trans. Noel Barstad with Algis Mickunas (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1985), pp. 454-64. (In this paper, I follow Gebser--see *ibid.*, p. 459--in retaining the designation "atonality," despite various controversies about the term.) For general introductions to Gebser's work, see Georg Feuerstein, *Structures of Consciousness* (Lower Lake, CA: Integral Publishing, 1987), and Elizabeth A. Behnke, "An Introduction to the Work of Jean Gebser," *Phenomenology and Social Science Newsletter* 3:1 (April 1988), 7- 21; for an example of a Gebserian approach applied to the arts in general, see, e.g., Algis Mickunas, "Interpretative Dimensions of Art," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 9:1 (1975), 43-66.
- ² Jean Gebser, "The Foundations of the Aperspective World," trans. Kurt F. Leidecker, *Main Currents in Modern Thought* 32:2-5 (Retrospective Issue, 1940-1975), 201 (see *Ursprung und Gegenwart*, Part One, Chapter 3, opening/*The Ever-Present Origin*, p. 36).
- ³ Gebser cites the following remark by conductor Ernest Ansermet, who met Stravinsky around 1914 and became one of his closest friends: "Ce que Stravinsky voit dans la musique, c'est le temps qui se concrétise"--Ernest Ansermet, "L'expérience musicale et le monde d'aujourd'hui," *Rencontres Internationales de Genève 1948* (Paris: La Presse Française et Etrangère, 1949), p. 45 (see *Ursprung und Gegenwart*, Part Two, Chapter 9, note 3/*The Ever-Present Origin*, p. 505, note 3). As readers familiar with Gebser's work are well aware, the theme of the concretization of time is fundamental to his presentation of the integral world and consciousness-structure.
- ⁴ That George's original German text departs from the usual practice of capitalizing every noun may point to a dissolution of the substantive tradition: the enduring "things" symbolized by nouns are no longer singled out, and all elements of language become equally capable of manifesting change, transitoriness, dynamism.
- ⁵ Henri Pousseur, "Outline of a Method," trans. Leo Black, *Die Reihe* 3 (Musical Craftsmanship), English ed. (1959), p. 46.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

- ⁸ See Elizabeth A. Behnke, "The Search for an Invariant of Silence," in *Continental Philosophy in America*, ed. Hugh J. Silverman, John Sallis, and Thomas M. Seebohm (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1983), pp. 245-56.
- ⁹ Cf. John R. Wikse, *About Possession: The Self as Private Property* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977), p. 52: "A context is not the sum of its parts but their ordering principle of intelligibility and meaning."
- ¹⁰ On the metaphor of a "high" or "low" note, see Kathi Meyer-Baer, *Music of the Spheres and the Dance of Death* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 71-72. On the broader question of visual metaphors for music and sound, see F. Joseph Smith, *Jacobi Leodiensis Speculum Musicae II: A Commentary* (Brooklyn, NY: Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1970), pp. 146-52. The "divisive" nature of rational time (considered as a succession of mutually exclusive "now-moments") is also evident in conventional music notation, which shows change in pitch in terms of a series of discrete symbols representing individual "notes."
- ¹¹ On the hierarchic principle, see György Ligeti, "Weberns Melodik," *Melos* 33:4 (April 1966), pp. 116-18; on the linear, directional principle, see Victor Zuckerkandl, *Sound and Symbol: Music and the External World*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1956), passim; on telic structure in music and dance, see Elizabeth A. Behnke, "Prelude & Fugue," in *Sexuality and the Dance*, ed. Seymour Kleinman (Reston, VA: National Dance Association/American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, [1981]), pp. 13-18.
- ¹² For a cross-cultural exploration of the relation between music and number, see Ernest G. McClain, *The Myth of Invariance: The Origin of the Gods, Mathematics and Music from the Rg Veda to Plato* (New York: Nicolas Hays, 1976; rpt. Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1978).
- ¹³ György Ligeti, "Metamorphoses of Musical Form," trans. Cornelius Cardew, *Die Reihe* 7 (Form-Space), English ed. (1965), p. 16.
- ¹⁴ Anton Webern, *The Path to the New Music*, ed. Willi Reich, trans. Leo Black (Bryn Mawr, PA: Theodore Presser, 1963), p. 36.
- ¹⁵ Although Gebser rejects the term "style" in favor of the notion of "structure," I use the word "style" to suggest the dynamization of structural possibilities: the "style of silence" names the way that tacit interconnections are swung into play, the "how" of their concretization.
- ¹⁶ For example, I shall not try to discuss Schönberg's twelve-tone system, or Stravinsky's conscious attempt to organize pitches by means of "polarities." On the latter, see, for example, William W. Austin, *Music in the 20th Century from Debussy through Stravinsky* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966), p. 260.
- ¹⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 378-83, for a valuable chronology of landmarks in the shift from traditional materials of music to an open acoustic field.
- ¹⁸ Karlheinz Stockhausen, "The Concept of Unity in Electronic Music" ["Die Einheit der musikalischen Zeit"], trans. Elaine Barkin, in Benjamin Boretz and Edward T. Cone, ed., *Perspectives on Contemporary Music Theory* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), pp. 217, 215. Spatial localization of sound source might be cited as a "parameter" of sound irreducible to temporal structure alone.
- ¹⁹ See Ligeti, "Metamorphoses of Musical Form," p. 14, and see section (2) below.

- 20 See John Cage, *Silence* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), p. 8. The integration of ambient sound into certain of Cage's pieces not only makes present the audible texture of time, but also illustrates the breakdown of a dualistic opposition between "art" and "life."
- 21 Here the word is deliberately spelled *diaphonous* (from *phone*, voice, sound) rather than *diaphanous* (from *phanein*, to shine, show) in order to avoid the visual metaphor. No connection with the medieval term "diaphony" is intended. However, the *diaphoneity* of atonality does manifest the *diaphaneity* that Gebser describes.
- 22 Webern, *The Path to the New Music*, p. 22.
- 23 Reported by Peter Stadlen, "Serialism Reconsidered," *The Score* 22 (Feb. 1958), p. 19.
- 24 Ligeti, "Metamorphoses of Musical Form," p. 8.
- 25 Herbert Eimert, "The Composer's Freedom of Choice," trans. Leo Black, *Die Reihe* 3 (Musical Craftsmanship), English ed. (1959), p. 4. Eimert is referring to Goethe's *Faust*, Part I, Scene I: "am sausen den Webstuhl der Zeit" (line 508).
- 26 See Peter Michael Hamel, *Through Music to the Self*, trans. Peter Lemesurier (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1979), pp.76ff.
- 27 See, for example, Rudolf Laban, *The Mastery of Movement*, 2nd ed., rev. by Lisa Ullman (London: Macdonald & Evans, 1960).
- 28 Ligeti, "Weberns Melodik," p. 116.
- 29 Hans-Klaus Metzger, program notes to the LaSalle Quartet's recording of string quartet music by Lutoslawski, Penderecki, and Mayuzumi (Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft, 137 001).
- 30 Cage, *Silence*, p. 38.
- 31 Henri Pousseur, "The Question of Order in New Music," trans. David Behrman, in Boretz and Cone, ed., p. 114. Readers familiar with Gebser will note that he sets aside the notion of a directed "evolution" in favor of discontinuous mutations, irreducible to yet integrating what has gone before. On integral texture as playing "music between the worlds," cf. Hamel, p. 136 (and cf. pp. 161-64, where Hamel describes two of his own attempts at an "integral music," *Diaphainon* and *Maitreya*). See also John Cage, "The Future of Music," in his *Empty Words: Writings '73-'78* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1979), pp. 177-87, especially pp. 178ff. on "musical open-mindedness."
- 32 Metzger, program notes cited in note 29 above.
- 33 Pousseur, "Outline of a Method," p. 47.
- 34 Ligeti, "Metamorphoses of Musical Form," p. 12.
- 35 Friedhelm Döhl, "Sinn und Unsinn musikalischer Form," in *Terminologie der neuen Musik* [Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für neue Musik und Musikerziehung, Darmstadt, Band 5] (Berlin: Merseburger, 1965), p. 68.
- 36 Cf. Jean Gebser, "Die Welt ohne Gegenüber," *Gesamtausgabe* V/I (Schaffhausen: Novalis, 1976), pp. 267-81.
- 37 Cf. Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Ouverture" to *Le Cru et le cuit* (Paris: Plon, 1964), pp. 23-24.
- 38 "The Third World" is, to the best of my knowledge, an original poem by Ginna Zimmerman.

- 39 The term is *soundplay*, not "audial" or "auditory" play; it does not refer to an event in a subject, but to a worldly "dimension," i.e., sound. "Play" is to be understood as it is presented in Eugen Fink, *Spiel als Weltsymbol* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1960); neither a derogatory connotation nor a comparison with something "more real" is intended. "Soundplay" may be translated as "jeu sonore" or as "Klangspiel."
- 40 Here it is appropriate to express my thanks to Prof. Algis Mickunas, who not only introduced me (and many others) to the work of Jean Gebser, but also supported and encouraged concert presentations of soundplay in conjunction with philosophical conferences.

THE EXPRESSION OF LIVED-EXPERIENCE:

Toward a Poetic Understanding of Language

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Barbara Du Bois identified the central agenda for feminist scholarship as addressing the experience of women in their own terms. Feminist theory must be grounded in the lived-experience and language of women. To accomplish this, we must view the complexity of women's reality contextually. It must be understood within the matrix of interacting contextual components, including researcher as 'knower' (105-116).

Feminist scholarship rejects the possibility of a non-reciprocal relationship between the research subject and the research object, as well as other assumptions of traditional scholarship. We deny that researchers can be removed from context to examine a particular variable out of objective professional interest. Examining the experience of women from this traditional perspective forces the researcher into the schizophrenic position of being elevated from the oppressed, objectified female research material (Klein 88-104). Methods to examine women's experience cannot be built upon masculine modes, for, as Audre Lord succinctly expressed: "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (98).

We must move beyond a discourse and logic conceived in linear, hierarchical interpretations of reality. The distance between the examiner and the examined is eliminated by the extraordinary opening of the field of subjectivity. Subjective experience may be better understood by recognizing dimensions of consciousness which enable expression.

In The Ever-Present Origin, Jean Gebser revealed dimensions of consciousness present in the world. Feminist approaches to examining women's experience propose that different dimensions of consciousness be emphasized. Julia Kristeva's works move most closely toward the integral or fourth dimension of consciousness. Gebser introduced the concept of systasis to methodology which enables scholars to view this fourth dimension. Poetic language is a form of signification which integrally expresses experience.

EXPRESSIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

Jean Gebser offered an introduction to the dimensions of communication or consciousness. Each dimension identifies a different way to structure time-space-movement of the world. The vital-magical dimension of consciousness deals with the transformative ability of words (e.g., the power of rhetoric to sway human action). In the psychic-mythical dimension all symbolic thought is structured in terms of a cyclical process of polarities which constantly move toward and through each other (e.g., light and dark, male and female). The mental-rational consciousness recognizes that the word is a sum of spatially and temporally arranged objects in a linear, directed orientation (e.g., propositional language). The integral dimension stresses the concrete whole in its dynamic process of temporalization. Contemporary feminist critics discuss the psychodynamics of expression in their work. Different critics identify a different 'space,' or dimension of consciousness as the place of women's expression. Jean Gebser suggested the emphasis of a single dimension diminishes an understanding of lived-experience.

Juliet Mitchell's (1974) work speaks for women from the space of the hysteric; her work expresses the vital-magical dimension. Carolyn Heilbrun (1973) finds a very 'different' space in the form of the androgynous heroine; her work expresses the psychic-mythical dimension. Mary

Daly (1984) speaks from the place of absence about a new language; she expresses the mental-rational dimension of consciousness.

The French writers Monique Wittig (1975), Julia Kristeva (Language), Helene Cixous (1988) and Luce Irigaray (1985) all oppose phallogocentric language, but they envision different ways of moving beyond traditional interpretations of reality. They agree language has been the central mechanism by which men have defined the world. Women are dominated by the linguistic devaluation of sensuality in favor of symbolism. Each writer alludes to the contemporary emphasis on the mental-rational dimension of consciousness in discussing issues of feminist research.

Maggie Humm identified the major challenge currently facing feminist critics: "How can one speak from the place of the Other? Where and what are the places and spaces of the Other? How can women in literature, or for that matter men, be thought about outside the existing Masculine/Feminine framework?" (60). Viewing the dimensions of experience from Jean Gebser's work describing manifestations of the fourth dimension, these questions are no longer appropriate. Dichotomous mental-rational frameworks for world experience dissipate.

Julia Kristeva's work in feminist criticism comes closest to accomplishing an integral understanding of women's experience. She attends to the semiotic/preverbal (vital-magical) and understands the semiotic as the organization of instincts by rhythm and intonation (psychic-mythical) which proceeds the system of meaning created in language (mental-rational). Her work seeks to describe the fourth dimension of consciousness.

SIGNIFYING PROCESSES

Julia Kristeva reads the feminine as rooted in language and subjectivity. Meanings emerge from nonverbal, pre-linguistic elements of the female body: women must reject the symbolic, its social code, and its paternal function. Kristeva seeks a discourse closer to the body and emotions, referencing that which is unnamable, repressed by social contract. Her discussion of the feminine is an avenue which enables integral understanding. It should be noted that neither matriarchy nor patriarchy shall dominate in the integral world, but rather each will complement the other (Gebser 151).

Kristeva discussed two types of signifying processes to be analyzed within any production of meaning: semiotic and symbolic processes. The semiotic is the organization of instinctual drives which precede the imposition of the symbolic, a system of meaning created in language. The semiotic always appears as a disruption within the symbolic order. The semiotic occurs as a "pressure" on symbolic language revealing itself in the absences, contradictions and turning moments in a text. The semiotic enables the presence of pre-symbolic patterns to form the sub-text of symbolic discourse. Kristeva is concerned with safeguarding a place for the subject-in-process, because that is "the instance which allows us to account for the various heterogeneous forces (drives, pulsations) which disrupt language ("From One Identity" 136).

The symbolic order of expression is ordered in a temporal model. It provides a point of reference and therefore "defines all possibilities of measurement, by distinguishing between a before, a now and an after" (Kristeva "About Chinese," 152). The semiotic is present as a sub-text of symbolic discourse because it occurs chronologically prior to the symbolic expression. Kristeva stated:

There is no time without speech. Therefore, there is no time without the father. That, incidentally, is what the Father is: sign and time. It is under-standable, then, that what the father doesn't say about the unconscious, what sign and time repress in the drives, appears as their truth (if there is no 'absolute,' what is truth, if not the unspoken of the spoken?) and that this truth can be imagined only as a woman. ("About Chinese" 153) The unconscious "displaces, condenses,

distributes;" it retains everything repressed by symbolic codes ("About Chinese" 153).

The symbolic process is based in bodily lived-space. Lived-space enables the dimensions of textual space to be expressed as writing subject, addressee, and exterior texts. Enunciation occurs "within the gap opened up between signifier and signified that admits both structure and interplay within" (Kristeva "From One Identity," 128).

Julia Kristeva ("The System") discussed her understanding of semiology. Within this process:

the release and subsequent articulation of the drives as constrained by the social code yet not reducible to the language system as a genotext and the signifying system as it presents itself to phenomenological intuition as a phenotext; describable in terms of structure, or of competence/performance, or according to other models. The presence of the genotext within the phenotext is indicated by what I have called a semiotic disposition. (28)

Poetry works on the bar between the signifier and signified and tends to erase it (Kristeva "The Novel," 174).

POETIC EXPRESSION

Poetry furnishes us with an explanation of how processes of creativity affect people. Jean Gebser stated "it is important that we know of this effectualization since it is the source of the new consciousness" (316). Julia Kristeva identified poetic expression as the symbolic vehicle by which to access women's experience. Poetic language allows linguists to pursue experiential truth which is screened out by the constraints of ordinary language.

In eliciting an ego-consciousness in poetry, the initial step toward the supersession of time is a detachment from memory. Gebser explained memory is always time-bound; it temporalizes the timeless without transforming it into temporal freedom. The turn away from memory is a turn toward freedom; the poetic emphasis shifts from the recollected past to the present which encompasses and requires a new consciousness structure (324).

The "new obligation" is no longer to an ordering the soul and thinking; it belongs "to the order of the spirit." The source of creative power in the poet changes in proportion to the intensity of the new mutation. This source shifts from the mental to the integral structure of consciousness (Gebser 327). The integral consciousness is manifest in aperspectivity, atemporality and wholeness.

Aperspectivity does not assume a specific viewpoint. It is free from the spatial structure (extension, hierarchy, nonreversible seriality) or mental-rational logic. Aperspectivity disrupts the structure of spatial consciousness.

One may be freed from linear time structure by recognizing various temporal forms that constitute the human being and make available pre-conscious timelessness. Such temporal forms are magic timelessness, mythic temporality and mental-conceptual temporality. The intensification of time will transfigure aspects and affect all of humanity, whether people are consciousness of it or not.

Wholeness in Gebser's sense must not be confused with the mental concept of a whole as an object or entity which may be thought of as 'greater than the sum of its parts.' Instead, wholeness might better be indicated by wholing, which would reveal the dynamic process. The whole may be perceived in all dimensions of consciousness. It is experienced in the magical, visible in polarizations of the mythical, and conceptualized through measurement in the rational.

C. Elaine McCoy isolated three main concepts through which integrating consciousness appears and is expressed:

1. The "concretization of time" where all endeavors to concretize "time" are subsumed.
2. "Diaphaneity," the shining through and the transparent . . . perceivable only in a "world" where the concretion of time transforms time into time-freedom.
3. The a-waring as truth-giving and truth perception of the whole, is the realization form of the integral consciousness structure instituting a transparent potency to the aperspectival world. (149)

Every realization of a fourth dimension must be considered as an integrating dimension. If this dimension is considered merely as an incremental dimension, the result is simply further expansion of "space" and it will destroy the genuine form of the integral structure (Gebser 347).

ACCESSING THE POETIC

Kristeva posited that a model which would acknowledge the spatial and infinite dimensions of poetic language is possible through new mathematics. Space may be examined by using mathematics to decide questions concerning the 'sense' of corporeal formation as it enables signification. The fundamental gesture of semiotics is a formalization or production of models.

"If there is a model for poetic language, it no longer involves lines or surfaces, but rather space and infinity-- concepts amenable to formalization through sets and the new mathematics" (Kristeva "Word, Dialogue," 88). The concept of non-Euclidian geometries makes possible for the first time a conception of a fourth dimension (Gebser 343). One form of these n-dimensioned conceptions of space was elaborated by Einstein in his theory of relativity. His theory postulated the four-dimensional unity of space and time and demonstrated its validity for certain phenomena -the speed of light is the constant that unifies time and space. This enabled certain spatial phenomena to be mathematically described. It is particularly useful to those phenomena relative to one another as a result of having two different points of observation (341-342). The aperspectivity of world-perception can be structured mathematically. The results of the new research in physics are at the very least inceptions and initial manifestations of an aperspectival kind (377).

Traditional methods for accessing experience are only able to evaluate one dimension of consciousness at a time. Jean Gebser's approach to revealing the structures of consciousness is termed "diaphany." This allows the integral simultaneity of the dimensions of consciousness to be made transparent (143).

The study of integration and interplay of multi-dimensional consciousness is termed "eteology." An eteologeme is a pure statement of verition. Veracity is a statement of truth or the implicit being-in-truth. Verition is an integral a-waring of perception and lends dimensions a transparent reality as an integral structure. A-waring is perceiving truth free of space/time constraints. Eteology occurs through the key functions of systasis and synairesis.

Systasis circumscribes all aspects of time which cannot be the object of categorical systematization. It recognizes the acategorical elements which make possible the integral perception of the world. Categories cannot account for the dynamism that is inherent in the very system which is disrupted. Quantitative disruption of time occurs through the qualitative irruption of time which cannot be categorically reduced.

Basically, synairesis is the perception of systasis and system. It is the integral act of encompassing all that is through an informed awareness of an individual. Synairesis is the act of aperspectival perception. The integrating form of expression enables perception of integral consciousness by avoiding a reduction to any one mode of consciousness. Synairesis integrates phenomena, freeing the integral through a-waring or perceiving truth from space and time.

Systasis and synairesis make the integral accessible and bring together what is incommensurable so it becomes comprehensible (309-312).

Diaphany is based on synairesis, on the etiological completion of systasis and system to an integral whole, for integrality is only possible where "temporal" elements and spatial magnitudes are brought together synaoretically. By introducing systasis, we recognize a "method" which is no longer three-dimensional. This new method is four-dimensional diaphany; in this what is merely conceivable and comprehensible becomes transparent.

The diaphanon is neither a form of symbolism or a methodology; it is neither psychic, mental, nor magical. It refers to the visibility of new structures in which all previous spatio-temporal compositions are integrated and made meaningful. This presence enters the realm of consciousness and visibility as these spatio-temporal unfoldings integrate (135). This approach acknowledges the integral expression within poetic language.

Defining the word as signifier for different modes of expression within different genres or texts places poetic analysis at the center of contemporary 'human' sciences at the intersection of language with space. Literary genres must be viewed as imperfect semiological systems "signifying beneath the surface of language but never without it" (Kristeva "Word, Dialogue," 37). To investigate the status of the word is to "study its articulations in relation to other words in the sentence and then to look for the same functions or relationships as they are articulated in larger sequences" (36).

In the signifying practice of 'poetic language,' the semiotic disposition will be revealed in deviations from the grammatical rules of the language. Julia Kristeva ("The System") noted these deviations include:

articulatory effects which shift the phonemative system back towards its articulatory, phonetic base and consequently towards the drive-governed bases of sound-production; the over-determination of a lexeme by multiple meanings which it does not carry in ordinary usage but which accrue to it as a result of its occurrence in other texts; syntactic irregularities such as ellipses, non-recoverable deletions, indefinite embeddings, etc. (28-29)

We should also examine relations among larger narrative units such as sentences, questions-and-answers, and dialogues which are not necessarily the principle of semantic expansion. Kristeva ("Word, Dialogue") explained we could then demonstrate that "any evolution of literary genres is an unconscious exteriorization of linguistic structures at their different levels" (37).

POETIC EXPRESSION OF THE APERSPECTIVAL

Language reflects structural and mutational changes taking place that we have attempted to discuss through examination of the integral dimension and semiotic disruption. The last section of this paper provides an example of the aperspectival dimension as recognized in poetic language. In poetry we can discern the shift of consciousness which has overdetermined the three-dimensional (temporal) mode toward the four-dimensional (atemporal) mode of understanding.

Poetry writes a history of the dateless. It records and declares events and occurrences that are prompted from semiotic disruption and become the poetic word. The dimensions of consciousness are manifest in social, political, and scientific actualities referred to and emerging from the poetic (Gebser 488).

In the integral dimension, the concern is no longer oriented around the temporal, sequential succession of terms. The emphasis is on the true and undivided whole. Time is articulated in poetry essentially, psychically, thematically, and structurally. Time is expressed essentially to the extent that the originating-creative nature of language is recognized. Time is expressed

psychically to the extent that expression yields to "stream of consciousness." Time is expressed thematically to the extent that poetry deals explicitly with 'time.' Time is expressed structurally to the extent that grammatical aspects enable syntactical freedom (Gebser 491). Ferdinand de Saussure's (1979) work provides an example of the aperspectival manifestation of the dimensions of consciousness in poetic expression. (For additional examples of aperspectival poetic expression see Gebser 487-495).

By tackling the system of poetic language, Saussure (1979) demonstrated expressive characteristics that seem to question even the notion of the linguistic sign. He examined Saturnian verse and Vedic poetry, and recognized in each the name of a divinity, or a warrior chief, or some other character was almost hidden in each line. These meanings were identified through a process of reconstituting syllables dispersed in various words. Saussure noted that each message contained an underlying message that was at the same time a double code. Each poetic unit had at least a double signification, each text was another text. The play of the signifier enabled a reconstitution of what was no doubt unconscious to the poet. This enabled Saussure to isolate a characteristic of poetry: "that supplementary meanings slip into the verbal message, tear its opaque cloth, and rearrange another signifying scene" (Kristeva Language, 293). The underlying message superimposed itself in the line of communication, and announced the unconscious dimension.

Aperspectival expression raises origin into the present, rendering it transparent. From the accounts of Homer to the Classics, the word was predominantly a tool for representation and description of experience. Following this, the word holds expressive power with independent value. The word is freed from the limits of space and time, giving birth to aperspectival language capable of expressing the new consciousness structure (Gebser 492). *

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Biographical Sketch

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THE TWELVE STEPS OF SPIRITUAL RECOVERY

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In recent years, much has been said and written about addiction to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, food, sex, and relationships. We can now appreciate how widespread a phenomenon addiction really is. In my recent book *Sacred Sexuality* I made the point that ordinary life itself can be considered a form of addiction, because we are habituated to its dominant state of consciousness.*1

That state of consciousness revolves around the dichotomy between ego and world. We naturally and habitually experience ourselves as separate from everything and everyone else. This split between subject and object is the basis of perception. However, this dichotomy is particularly marked in what Jean Gebser called the rational consciousness, which is the ruling structure of consciousness in our Western civilization. As he explained in *The Ever-Present Origin*, the rational consciousness is divisive, atomizing, and ultimately destructive. It is the deficient form of the mental structure of consciousness, which emerged during what Karl Jaspers named the "axial age" around 500 B.C.

The rational consciousness has perverted the natural perceptual dynamics between an experiencing subject and an experienced object into a sweeping ideology, which is now overshadowing not only science and technology but all branches of our culture and all aspects of our personal lives. This, in turn, has sharpened the opposition between ego and world to the point where we experience ourselves as estranged from the world we live in.

Because of this alienation we are sick at heart, and our world is in pieces. We can usefully compare this state of affairs to the problematic and troubled life of addicts. By calling the strongly ingrained habit of dualistic perception of ego and world an addiction, we admit to ourselves that this state, though common and widely reinforced in our Western culture, is by no means natural.

First of all, when we deny that there is anything wrong with our "ordinary" state, we engage in collective self-denial. Addicts always tend to live in a state of denial. They refuse to admit that they have a serious drinking problem or a problem with drugs. They do everything to maintain the illusion that all is well with them. By labeling our ordinary state, the consensus consciousness, as "normal" we dismiss and disempower all other states of consciousness. This is clearly shown in the fact that we call them "altered" states, meaning that they are "merely" modifications of the ordinary waking state to which we ascribe "normalcy." Sometimes they are collectively and pejoratively referred to as "irrational" states of consciousness, which suggests of course that the rational consciousness is the supreme standard of judgment.

Second, our insistence on seeing ego and world in stark opposition engenders isolation and fear. Addicts chronically suffer from both these negative experiences. In order to maintain their state of illusion about themselves, they have to cut themselves off from others, and this inevitably creates fear. Similarly, our own alienation is attendant with fear--both the fear of interference from the outside world, of unwanted feedback from others, and the realistic fear that one's life has gone out of control.

Third, in our addiction to the rational consciousness and its countless props we believe the myth that we are really powerless to do anything about it. Addicts typically feel disempowered. The object to which they are addicted seems to them bigger and more powerful than their will. Similarly, stuck as we are in the lop-sided worldview spawned by the rational consciousness, which tends to discredit other forms and states of consciousness, we do not believe that there is anything we can do about our situation. As addicts of the rational consciousness we do not believe in a universe that is inherently benign. We refuse to consider that the world we live in is

actually comprised of the kinds of dimensions of reality that religions and spiritual traditions talk about. We disallow ourselves the possibility of inner or spiritual growth, because our view of human potential is limited to the capacities of the rational mind, which is viewed as the finest product of evolution.

Fourth, like the typical addict, we tend to weave all kinds of explanatory tales to justify our present condition to ourselves and to each other. In this category belongs the "everybody thinks so" attitude, which is modeled not on the few exceptional men and women who can see farther than the rest, but on the lowest common denominator of understanding and living: a flagrant perversion of the democratic ideal. In other words, through word magic we engage in an act of massive repression by which we deny ourselves the opportunity to grow; we deny ourselves access to those forms and states of consciousness that our rational consciousness forces us to deny and belittle. Thus our experiential repertoire remains limited and truncated.

Fifth, addicts tend to be inflexible, dogmatic, and arrogant about defending their position, and we addicts of the rational consciousness are subject to the same mood. Because we have entrenched ourselves in an untenable position, in which the rational ego rules supreme, we meet any challenge to our unviable approach to life with haughty intransigence. We need to be right, because our entire worldview and life-style are at stake.

And yet, sixth, like true addicts, those of us who are transfixed in the rational consciousness are deeply suffering our mood of separation, self-centeredness, and self-fragmentation. All life, observed Gautama the Buddha, is suffering. But there is suffering and then there is suffering. It appears that whenever we take the presumed independence of the human personality too seriously, cutting ourselves off from other beings and regarding the world as an enemy to be conquered, we become our own source of suffering. This suffering is superimposed on any adversity and pain we may experience as part of our human adventure on this planet. It is a psychological malaise from which we can recover only when we stop pinching ourselves.

Our addiction to the "normal" rational consciousness is so potent that we cannot easily shake this habit even when we have realized that our habit of egoic self-encapsulation is artificial and self-inflicted and resting on a denial of the essential interconnectedness and interdependence of everything. This universal interlinking, or what the Czech indologist Adolf Janacek called the "panplectal principle," has been unceasingly proclaimed by generations of mystics and spiritual visionaries who have experienced the unbroken unity and wholeness of the cosmos.

From this much broader, multidimensional perspective of the world, ordinary life is based on an impoverished and even distorted view of reality. When Freud spoke of the psychopathology of everyday life, he caught a glimpse of this fact. Only he did not look deeply enough, or he would have seen that the dichotomic rational consciousness itself is the root of our malaise. For it is the rational consciousness that creates the unhealthy split of the ego from the id, or consciousness from the unconscious. Freud's work was a first effort within modern rationalistic psychology to reintegrate the unconscious with the conscious part of the human psyche and culture. However, it was still largely subject to the constraints and prejudices of the rational consciousness itself. Thus, most significantly, Freud was unable to move beyond his concept of the unconscious as a dumping ground and so could never appreciate the rich texturing of other forms and states of consciousness and philosophies based on experiences of "nonordinary" reality.

When Gebser stated in his magnum opus that the present-day crisis is a crisis of consciousness, he meant that it is a crisis of the rational consciousness. Freud was as yet unable to see this, but some of his students, notably C. G. Jung and Otto Rank, took the next step. In doing so, they created a first tentative bridge between psychology and spirituality.

Spiritual life can be regarded as a course of gradual recovery from the addiction to the peculiar type of awareness that splits everything into subject and object. This primary addiction is the

seedbed from which arise all secondary addictions. These latter are possible only because the ego is confronted by objects, which it tries to control or by which it is, or feels, controlled.

To be more specific, the secondary addictions are all substitutes for the bliss that is the essence of the experience of transparency, which is at the heart of the integral consciousness, as defined by Gebser. This experience of transparency reveals the archaic interconnectedness and simultaneity of all beings and things without disowning, displacing, or distorting the cognitive realizations characteristic of the magical, mythical, and mental structures of consciousness.

The secondary addictions are desperate, if mistaken, attempts to remove the primary addiction, which is our addiction to self-conscious experience, revolving around the division between subject (mind) and object (world). They are mistaken because instead of removing the primary addiction, they fortify it and thus also aggravate the sense of isolation and powerlessness experienced by the faltering rational personality. The British novelist Aldous Huxley saw this very clearly. He said:

The urge to transcend self-conscious selfhood is, as I have said, a principal appetite of the soul. When, for whatever reason, men and women fail to transcend themselves by means of worship, good works, and spiritual exercises, they are apt to resort to religion's chemical surrogates--alcohol and "goof-pills" in the modern West, alcohol and opium in the East, hashish in the Mohammedan world, alcohol and marijuana in Central America, alcohol and coca in the Andes, alcohol and the barbiturates in the more up-to-date regions of South America.*2

Huxley did not even mention workaholism and sex as two widely used substitutes for the realization of ordinary bliss. He spoke, however, of some people's fascination with, and fatal attraction to, precious stones. This passion for gems, Huxley observed, is anchored in the fact that they "bear a faint resemblance to the glowing marvels seen with the inner eye of the visionary."*3 But deeper still than such splendid visions is, to use Gebser's terms, the transcendental "light" of the undivided Origin itself.

Realizing that "light" through voluntary self-transcendence is the ultimate form of healing both the person and the planet. That is the purpose of authentic spirituality. Spiritual life can usefully be pictured as a progressive recovery from the addiction of ordinary life, which is inherently schizoid and hence lacking in fullness and bliss. The well-known twelve-step program of recovery used in the literature on addiction also can serve as a convenient model for the spiritual process. Spiritual recovery is an uncovering of the spiritual dimension, whether we call it transcendental Self, God, Goddess, or the Ultimate--the dimension that is ordinarily covered up by the self-divided ego-personality, especially when it comes under the influence of the rational consciousness.

Here are the twelve steps of spiritual recovery:

1. We admit the fact that our ordinary human condition, based on the dualistic perception of life, is a stubborn habit that we normally conceal from ourselves through denial.
2. We begin to look and ask for guidance in our effort to cultivate a new outlook that embraces the spiritual vision of the interconnectedness of all existence. The means of doing so are varied--from supportive spiritual environments to uplifting books.
3. We initiate positive changes in our behavior which affirm that new outlook. It is not enough to read and talk about spiritual principles. Spirituality is intrinsically a practical affair.
4. We practice self-understanding; that is, we accept conscious responsibility for noticing our automatic programs and where they fall short of our new understanding of life.
5. We make a commitment to undergoing the catharsis, or purification, necessary to change our old cognitive and emotional patterns and stabilize the new outlook and disposition,

replacing the egoic habit of splitting everything into irreconcilable opposites with an integrative attitude.

6. We learn to be flexible and open to life so that we can continue to learn and grow on the basis of our new outlook.
7. We practice humility in the midst of our endeavors to mature spiritually. In this way we avoid the danger of psychic inflation.
8. We assume responsibility for what we have understood about life and the principles of spiritual recovery, applying our understanding to all our relationships so that we can be a benign influence in the world.
9. Guided by our new outlook, we work on the integration of our multiply divided psyche.
10. We cultivate real self-discipline in all matters, great and small.
11. We increasingly practice spiritual communion, which opens us to that dimension of existence where we are all connected. Through such communion and through continued growth in self- understanding, we become transparent to ourselves.
12. We open ourselves to the possibility of bliss, the breakthrough of the transcendental reality into our consciousness, whereby the ego principle is unhinged and we fully recover our spiritual identity. Through this awakening the world becomes transparent to us and we are made whole. ★

NOTES

1. See G. Feuerstein, *Sacred Sexuality: Living the Vision of the Erotic Spirit* (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, 1992).
2. A. Huxley, *The Doors of Perception/Heaven and Hell* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1959).
3. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

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UNDERSTANDING CO-CONSTITUTIONAL GENESIS

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As I write this, ethnic strife continues to ravage the world. It has been suggested that since the end of the "cold war," this phenomenon will be the greatest threat to world peace.¹ In Germany, demonstrations and counter demonstrations mark the most recent murders of three Turks by fascists, a woman and two girls. Meanwhile, Eastern Europeans have been sent home by the thousands. Kurdish shanty towns have been destroyed by Iranian soldiers, raging Hindu mobs, encouraged by Hindu police and religious leaders, destroyed a 16th century Mosque to make way for a new temple to commemorate "the place" of the "Lord God Rama's" birth. The latter case has set off a wave of reactionary violence throughout the estimated 1000 million Muslims in the world causing disturbances in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and The United Arab Emirates. The current Christmas season of bombings in London, which is perpetrated by the Irish Republican Army is underway. The indigenous populations of the "Americas" continue to struggle so that this year's Nobel Peace Prize went to one of their defenders (Rigoberta Menchu) from Guatemala. After the collapse of the great communist coalition in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, millions are actively seeking and defending new identities and the resumption of old ones. Then of course there are the perennial crises in Africa and the Middle East. In all these cases, violence has been planned and carried out by organized national and religious interests. Since this is not a news publication, and since my audience is likely to be already very well informed about current events, it is not appropriate for me to "report" incidentals except as examples and illustrations of a principle. This principle I call, co-constitutional genesis, the womb of world/meaning.

Please allow me to begin with, for lack of a better phrase, a "thought experiment." This will require active participation on the reader's part as well as some degree of suspending suspicion at least until we've thought through this mental experiment. Of course, once complete it is open for critique. So with your participatory consent let us begin.

Imagine that "you" are drifting in an absolute void. This void is absolutely nondistinct so that there is no up or down, light or dark, contrasting or complementing colors, no now and then, here or there, hot or cold, loud or quiet, bitter or sweet, et cetera. Now, for the sake of my allegory, grant to me a linear, spatial metaphor. As "you" are suspended in this motionless and timeless state the only "other" thing in the void, a thick rope appears "at hand." "You" grab the rope. Then you turn to the "right" and look along the length of rope and you see that it stretches off into the "distance" without end. "You" look to the "left" and see the same monotonously endless stretch. Then in a vain attempt to establish your location (identity), to simultaneously identify where, when, who, and what you are, "you" announce that, "I am here."

But then you realize that because this rope is eternal and infinite, without ends, to say "I am here" is an absurd self-contradiction. This is so because to say "I am here" is the same as saying "I am everywhere and nowhere." "Here" is equally applicable to all other infinite number of places you might happen to grab. Because there is no other point of reference along the endless rope wherever you are, makes absolutely no difference. "I am here" is an utterly meaningless statement.

The thought of being utterly alone with the only distinction to constitute "you" being the rope (a "not you" but "it") may suddenly give rise to terrible emotions in your heart; fear, depression, loneliness, dread, meaninglessness. As Kierkegaard (1941) suggests, if there was a rationale for divine creation it was god's absolute, unimaginable loneliness. Of course Hegel (1967) too plays

on this idea but neither of these great thinkers clearly articulates the co-constitutional logic that dictates that when god created the other, at that instant, "he" created "himself" as that being which is distinct from creation, including of course the devil. The creator is co-constituted by the creation. This is really co-creation. Each completely depends on the other for its existence. I submit that the principle of co-constitutive genesis should also be applied to psychology. Unlike Freud, whose pseudo-scientific application of the thermodynamic model to the psyche, calling it a closed tripartite "energy system" of "personality," my model of co-constitutional genesis argues that the self is the consequence of the differences that manifest "others." I am what they are not -- "I am not rope." Thus all "things" are significations, communicative constructs of interdependencies -- differences.

All of this may seem to be a quaint yet irrelevant thought experiment, but for the moment be a generous reader and let's see what consequences may logically follow. When we attempt to apply this notion of co-constitutional genesis it may be acceptable to suppose that such dreadful thoughts haunted our ancestors. I suggest that the consequence was the invention of elaborate systems of magic, sorcery, witchcraft, totem, and taboo as attempts to give meaning and to explain and control the increasingly emergent awareness of the forces of nature as Other. Such systems generated fantastic and complex distinctions among the stars, good and bad fortune, and many other "things." Even Neanderthal generated ritual to "observe" and perhaps explain death -- the ultimate and most dreaded (untamable) natural force.

The first great cosmic distinction is the separation of human (as cultural being and maker) from nature (Kramer, 1992, p. 4). Culture is that which is not natural. At the instant of distinction both are created, and nature, as Other, looms ominously before humanity thus generating the vital need for culture (magical and other kinds of systems of signs and symbols) with which to combat this maelstrom of issuing forces (Cassirer, 1946; Humboldt, 1860). But these mystical systems did not prove to be wholly satisfactory in the desire to tame nature, to co-create "culture" and "nature" as mutually dependent phenomena. What follows are other elaborate systems such as religion, tribal/ethnic distinctions, mythology, philosophy, science, curricular specialization, oral and written history (remembrances of ethnic "blood" groups), and other explanatory schemes, all of which may be subsumed under the rubric "tradition." And what do all of these systems have in common? They purport to "locate" us morally, physically, legally, economically, tribally/nationally, historically, et cetera. All systems attempt to give us identities by situating us within a cosmic scheme. We thus become moral, economic, ideological, tribal/national (and so forth) beings.

So what exactly do I mean by a system? It is not the same as one finds in the various and sundry literatures about systems theory and cybernetics.² First of all I suggest that scholars like Talcott Parsons (1937, 1951) and Arthur Koestler (1967) are, inventing rules of systematics for efficiency's sake (hence their stress on rationalization, control, equilibrium, stability, hierarchization, equifinality, and other directional concepts). They do not explain (to my satisfaction) the inner dynamics of systems (especially organic, not legalistic ones) that are more fundamental, that have not been invented with the criteria of some meta- or suprasystemic value structure dedicated to "reason" or "progress." Religions, mythologies, sciences, and ideologies are not reasonable or efficient things. And yet they are very valuable to us -- indeed vital. The value they manifest is not however the modern one of efficiency, but identity and signification.

Let us return to my rope analogy. Science perpetuates our struggle against natural forces. However, it also occupies itself with massive and expensive efforts to establish points on the rope that can give us a sense of when and where we are, a sense of direction -- cosmic orienteering. Its *modus operandi* is measurement, the effort to relativize and mathematize phenomena along a common scale so as to generate meaningful comparisons. When was the big bang, when and how was the Earth formed, when and how did life emerge, when and how did hominids emerge, when

will the sun die, and so on. Astronomy, with its obsession to map the universe and "locate" its beginning and end in physical space/time, manifests this cosmological need. Particle physics too seeks answers about the "original" force of "singularity." Genetic mapping manifests the attempt to tell the story of evolution. In many ways the great questions of science are exactly the same questions at the core of religions and mythologies. They share the same motivation, a primal search for meaning and identity.

Religions and mythologies create elaborate systems and graphic portrayals of our "place" in spiritual "space" such as Medieval European icons and Oriental mandalas. Humans of course are "higher" than other sentient beings, they are "closer" to the creator, even made "in his image." The Forbidden City in Beijing, China is an extravagant three dimensional mandala that locates the emperor at the "middle" of the spiritual, political, and physical universe. The great central pole around which pagodas are built also represents the balance of orientation. This compulsion to establish bearings is evident cross-culturally by such massive efforts as the designs and directional orientations of Medieval cathedrals, Oriental stupas and temple-cities (Ankor Wat, Cambodia, and Lhasa, Tibet), and pre-Columbian and Egyptian pyramids. Cosmic mapping takes many forms and such expressions are usually sacred because they explain/identify all things including us vis-a-vis our relationships to all things. For instance, traditional "family books" in the Orient and genealogical charts such as "family trees" in the Occident, identify one through pedigree. In the Oriental world, perhaps the worst sanction that can be taken against an individual is to leave them out of the "family book," to efface, erase, and deny them so that descendants will not remember ("worship") them.

After the Renaissance, mythology became rationalized into ideology which also purports to explain who, when, where, and what we are and should be in terms of "roles," "structures," and "functions" (the modern mechanistic metaphors are indicative of the machine age). The rational bureaucratic mentality gives us flow and organizational charts, finger printing, voice printing, and genetic printing. We are "on disk."

We create points of reference and relate them into stories that orient, guide, and comfort us. For example, Christian eschatology places me spiritually and temporally as anno Domini (A.D.) rather than "before Christ" (B.C.). Of course my "place" relative to the coming of the savior makes a critical spiritual difference. The Marxian "end of history" mimics the "judgment day" teleology of Christianity from which it takes its inspiration.³ The Aztecs, Mayans, Incas, and other aborigines of the "Americas" all have elaborate stories/explanations about the "place" of humanity in the cosmos. Cross-culturally, creation and destruction myths abound. These are efforts to give ends to the cosmic continuum so that we can have a sense of purpose.

We are driven to create communicative devices such as maps; spatial, temporal (calendars), and moral ones. Saviors, both religious and secular, function as moral standards and other types of reference. Because such systems tell us who we are they are of fundamental importance to our very self-identities. This is why clashing systems are defended to the death. The defenders are not just defending some abstract religion or ideology. The struggle is for their very existence -- identity! This is the dynamic of "vital" interests. This is also why it is precisely when "a people" are in decline or otherwise feel threatened that the desperate invention and evocation of traditions and mythic "past" glories and even divine origins begins at a furious pace. At such critical times, the manufacture and defense of culture becomes a high priority -- indeed the supreme concern. All energies are given to the defense of "the order." This is why embellishment and celebration of the status quo manifests itself as reaction against change. This quickly becomes a tautological solution to any sense of decline or threat. We must be a worthy and great people because we have glorious roots and because we have a glorious and sacred tradition we are a great people. When a nation or a people are investing obvious effort in the invention and maintenance of a tradition, including the proliferation of new religious and pseudo-religious sectarianism and

secular pageantry, it is a pretty sure sign of current problems. For instance the authors of the book The Invention of Tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983) powerfully demonstrate that most of the "great tradition" and royal protocol in England is less than 100 years old, and that much of it was invented just as the English Empire began its decline. Likewise, when the European monarchies were facing the demise of feudalism they launched great remodeling and construction projects on their palaces. This is the case just prior to World War I in Vienna, Berlin, Moscow, and throughout Europe. Similarly, the last Shah of Iran spent a fortune on his coronation invoking a romantic version of imperial Persia's long lost splendor. Tradition seems to be a collective defense mechanism for society as a group. It maintains the self as a member of a group that includes generations that are living, dead, and not yet born.

The evocation of ancient and glorious roots that lie in a mystical and primordial past is typically heroic in stature (Siegfried, Gilgamesh, Arjuna, et cetera). A good example is Hitler's invention and coaptation of myth, folklore, and occult to his cause, signaling an intolerant turn to fantasy for the legitimation of present and future deeds. "Roots," "culture," and "tradition" are great magical sources of legitimation. I call them "god concepts." There is no more ferocious type of war than one for "sacred" causes. This is the source of fanatical murder and martyrdom (ritual suicide). In such conflagrations, nothing is to be spared, nothing is sacred because everything is sacred. Once the sacred origin is located, then the great chain of causation can commence with complete determinism. This origin may be the "first cause," or divine "prime mover," or the "big bang." It does not matter. Once faith in the great chain of causation is engendered, then all future events become inevitable, predictable, legitimized. Thus, entire populations pursue sacred "causes," and no obstacle is tolerated for their path is predetermined. Everything, including war, is preordained ("it is written") and therefore presumably justified.

"A people" that trace their pedigree, their story, back to such sacred origins tend to be very ethnocentric. Nothing can be more pure and complete than legitimation of power (in all its manifestations including economic and industrial) by tracing the lineage of the people directly back to divine origin. The magical elements of blood and semen constitute both the sources of and legitimation for the unquestioned exercise of power. Ethnocentric pride is rooted in mythic "pasts" (not necessarily long ago) that are presentiated by the physical presence of the current king, racial differences, documents, holy artifacts such as reverently preserved pieces of long dead saints and prophets, and other "concrete" expressions of authentic origin. This phenomenon, which can be observed cross-culturally, manifests what Jean Gebser (1985) calls the "ever-present origin." Since magic is not restricted to linear time or logic, such a contradiction is not a problem for the true believer. An example is the recent belief by Japanese that their emperor descends directly from the divine origin and that they are all his children. Japan is one big divinely legitimized family. This magical fundament is the very source of their techno-industrial success. Of course, science and technology are motivated by prelogical emotions such as arrogance, wants, and desires. The idea of a privileged or "chosen" people of course leads to exclusivity which is the seed of conflict.

But now the logic of difference and identity demonstrates a curious conclusion that is rarely noticed or appreciated.

If all the world were one "color," then that singular color would be colorless, and the very category "color" would not exist. If all people were black, then being black would not be significant. "Race" is a meaningful word (category) only because there are perceived differences. Now, if the logic of co-constitutional genesis is correct, then when one ethnic group seeks to exterminate all others it is unwittingly pursuing a suicidal course. Nihilism is the logical consequence of "purification." If the uniqueness of "I," as an individual or as a member of a unique "group," is dependent on the existence of others, then their demise impoverishes the significance of my own identity. Because of this logic, in order to maintain one's own suicidal purpose, ever more narrow distinctions must be made. Thus we witness the measurement of

degrees of racial purity being invoked. The circle of exclusivity tightens until everyone is excluded. This argument recommends that we appreciate rather than attempt to exterminate our mutual differences. The theory of co-constitutional genesis suggests that the cultural environment, like the biological environment, needs diversity in order to be "healthy."

APPLICATION

The theory of the co-constitution of meaning has many implications one of which is discussed here. This involves the "definition" and ontic status of national and ethnic selves. Self, not as a concept but as an identity, is the consequence of difference. While on a Fulbright to Bulgaria, many of my colleagues would suggest from time to time that the United States has "no culture," no "tradition." The unstated yet clear implication was that since I am an American, therefore my personal credibility could not match that of other Europeans including themselves. Despite the fact that they have very few books, almost no access to personal computers, and very poor networks of communication and world news, they believe that because they are European, and of a supposedly known pedigree that they know more than Americans about virtually everything including how to live generally. Because they were allied with the Nazis during the Second World War, they have a special affection for things German despite the fact that many Germans regard Slavic speaking peoples as "oriental" (meaning lazy and stupid) in mentality, and despite the fact that German judgment has proven to be tragically suicidal twice in this century.

Normally I perceived challenges to my identity/credibility as expressions of an inferiority complex that some Bulgarian intellectuals confessed to me (usually while intoxicated). But on the occasion of a public speech I gave, one older faculty person rose to ask me if I knew who Mohandas Gandhi was. After I answered in the affirmative, he went on to ask me if I knew what Gandhi had said about the United States. I responded that I did and decided to join the conversation. I reasoned that as a Fulbright I was in some way obligated to express my own perspective and to not simply listen. So to prove that I did in fact know what my colleague was talking about I recounted that when Gandhi visited the United Nations, he was asked, "What do you think of American culture." He responded, "It is a good idea." My colleague smirked and sat down. I then asked him a question that I deemed to be ironically appropriate for just that week India had once again exploded into the ethnic conflict mentioned earlier in this paper. I asked him, "What is an American?" He declined to answer me. One must understand that this conversation was taking place in a context of "ethnic cleansing" occurring in the neighboring former Yugoslavia. This policy had been precipitated by the forced expulsion of 300,000 Muslim Turks from Bulgaria in 1989 (until that date the largest refugee population in Europe since the Second World War). In large measure ethnic conflict constitutes the 4000 year history of the Balkans, if not the rest of the world.

So it is to this audience, in this context that I asked my question. My audience was obviously interested to hear my follow-up to a query that to them was unanswerable except perhaps in banal terms such as the "melting pot" metaphor or in more vituperative language such as "mongrelized nation." It had become obvious to me that they were thinking in terms that are highly perspectival (identity is everything) but yet highly emotional. Who you are is far more important than what you do. As Gebser (1985) has argued, blood and semen are the material sources of this social bond(age), including royalty, and religion, including communism, is an extension of this mentality into the realm of complex ideology.

It so happened that I had my passport with me. I held it up and declared that an American is a legal abstraction. I reminded my journalism faculty colleagues that the United States is founded largely by losers who took the extreme step of immigration because their "mother/father lands" had proven to be poor parents, not places of very pleasing experiences. Thus many immigrants were and are willing to give up their language and even alter their family names because what

they were (and are) leaving are sources of not very good memories. The great traditions these people abandoned mostly represented histories of war and oppression. Of course the privileged oppressors saw little need to immigrate. The United States, I argued, is bound not by race or creed but by a legal instrument (the Constitution) that had been written by journalists, intellectuals, and entrepreneurs who were steeped in the post-Renaissance rationalism of the Enlightenment philosophers, a philosophy that continues to evolve. The United States was perhaps the first and only nation founded on such a rational basis. The down side to this may be that we do not all share the same folkways, values, religious faiths, and so forth. The up side may be that this legal instrument manifests the attempt to guarantee legal recourse to all citizens equally -- with no regard to inherent difference. The rejection of tradition, like the desire to forget bad times, is a deliberate effort of the American phenomenon, what makes it really revolutionary. It is this orientation that fuels the perennial expression of isolationism in American life. Because they had just escaped Europe, many Americans were reluctant to return and sacrifice themselves in predominantly European (later world) wars called One and Two. Of course this purposeful amnesia is only partially desirable and hardly absolute. But it is this vastly different attitude towards the past and how it dictates the present and future, including self identity, what an individual is or may become, that constitutes the American dream of equal opportunity. To be sure, Americans risk not having a traditional identity, and this sense of modern alienation takes its toll, independence can be lonely and freedom forces responsibility. But the blind, highly emotional, sometimes hysterical and often murderous defense of tradition and ethnic identity has proven time and again to be a not very satisfactory alternative. Although an American is the consequence of a very secularly legal-rational worldview that may seem detached and passionless, it has been demonstrated that Americans are willing to defend this new ideal. As the saying goes, I am willing to die for your right to disagree with me, for your right to be different from me. To understand the vitality of the American system, one must understand this orientation.

The audience was visibly stunned. In the profound silence that hung like a fog, I asked whether there were any more questions. There were none. After we broke up several people, mostly democrats including a few ex-communists asked me to write this down for them. It occurs to me that writing it down may not be inappropriate for Americans too.

A second implication my theory of co-constitutional genesis has for mass media issues involves cultural extinction. Mass mediated communication, by definition, means that a single source communicates simultaneously to (not "with" for it is not yet interactive) many receivers. As mass mediation extends throughout the world, there is a problem of cultural "mainstreaming," to quote George Gerbner (1990). The "advancing fog of sameness," to quote Paul Feyerabend (1987), may not be driven by a master plan of "cultural imperialism," but its effects are the same -- a loss of cultural diversity. This impoverishes the sender just as much as it does the receiver, for increasingly they become the same. In fact, the sender is more harmed from this global trend because cultures around the globe have the benefit of their own indigenous ways so that the importation of American or British or French cultural products can take the form of enrichment by manifesting alternatives -- diversity. But the one-way flow imprisons and deprives the members of the sender culture of alternatives -- meaning. A one-sided conversation is not only a contradiction in terms but it is also eternally boring. *

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ENDNOTES

1. Of course ethnicity was an ingredient in the cold war itself.
2. I wish to distinguish my theory from several scholars by acknowledging their useful efforts. These include Anatol Rapaport, Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jakobson, Claude Levi-Strauss, Ludwig von Bertalanffy, Norbert Wiener, Claude Shannon, and Warren Weaver.
3. Marxist scholars are well aware that the essay Marx wrote for his entrance into university was about Jesus Christ. The Marxian theories of teleological history, alienation, and production are thinly veiled renderings of Christian ideas no matter that Feurbach "turned them on their head." For the early Marx, Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of the Proletarian hero. His dialectic is basically good versus evil and his hierarchic structure of base and superstructure, and labor value revisit the ancient religious problematic of incarnate spirit.

Poems By Jean Gebser (3)

[Untitled poem]

From nowhere do we come,
to nowhere do we go;
we sort of rest
in near-accomplished meaning.

We think of this and that,
yet that is part and pain;
the world is world and glass
and July or March,

is open and not void,
is origin, not beginning;
from nowhere do we come,
to nowhere do we go.

Translated by Georg Feuerstein from Jean Gebser, *Gedichte*
(Schaffhausen, Switzerland: Novalis Verlag, 1974), p. 93.

(c) Georg Feuerstein, 1992

COMMENTARY:

More than any other poem, the above deliberately untitled composition expresses Jean Gebser's basic philosophy of life.

The two opening lines, which because of their importance are echoed at the end of the poem, spell out his conviction that despite the hubbub of our everyday existence with its countless goals and projects, there is no progress. We are somehow moving, but we are not going anywhere. Our movement is an oddity, which does not strictly fit into our rational categories of motion and rest. As he puts it, "we sort of rest." I will come back to this curious phrase shortly.

We are not going anywhere because we are not coming from anywhere, and vice versa. All ordinary journeys have a starting point and a destination. At the deepest level of analysis, human life does not display such linearity, even though our surface impression is that we are on the way from somewhere to somewhere. This belief is axiomatic to human civilization. We need to think that we are on some kind of a journey, which has a beginning and an end. This is true even of tribal societies, though in their case the rational model of linearity is replaced with cyclical imagery befitting the mythic structure of consciousness.

From one point of view, our birth is a beginning and our death is an ending. But, as we know from Gebser's other writings, he does not subscribe to the limited materialistic perspective of human life. What appears to the conventional mind as an entirely new beginning is, for him, merely a transition from one state to another--a re-birth. Likewise what the average individual of

our postindustrial civilization laments as a final end is only a gateway to the invisible realm, which has its own regularities and laws.

Ontologically, then, our life is more an infinite loop than a finite line connecting point A and point B. However, epistemologically, there is movement. "We sort of rest," which also means: we sort of move. We are not entirely stationary, for this would imply nonexistence. Yet we are also not actually progressing from A to B. Rather, our lives are embedded in the infinity of existence, which is the sum total of all possible points: A, B, C ... Z^n .

The progress we tend to associate with our lives belongs to the province of meaning--the domain of the human mind. Our thinking makes it so. However, no Parmenidian sophistry is intended here, which would merely be a gyration of the rational mind. Instead, Gebser is making an existential statement. What he appears to be saying is that, unlike the great adepts of the East, we are not satisfied with resting in the presence--what he calls the "ever-present Origin"--but are forever seeking to conceptualize reality.

In this intellectual endeavor, we largely rely on the categories of space and time, which are the forte of the mental structure of consciousness. Where there is in reality only a "... buzzing confusion," to use William James's words, we construct a world that extends in space and endures in time. Then we project upon this construct all kinds of meanings--our personal and collective mythologies and models.

But the meanings we create are never entirely satisfactory. Reality is larger than the semantic net we can cast upon it, and so our understanding changes and we find ever new ways of conceptualizing reality. There is no completion to this task, and thus our meanings are always only "near-accomplished."

Our intellect operates on the basis of categorization, or division. However, reality, as the Upanishadic sages taught long ago, is neither this nor that--*neti, neti*. "This" and "that" pertain to the mind, to human thought. For Gebser, "this and that" is "part and pain." All partial experience of reality entails an element of suffering. The very incompleteness of our experiences keeps our quest going. Ken Wilber called this the "Atman project," the deep-seated impulse to wholeness, transcendence, perfection, and the unmediated realization (rather than mediated experience) of reality. We protest our finitude, or incompleteness. Human civilization, as Becker saw rightly, is build on a profound denial of death.

Yet, even while we deny death and long for perfect wholeness, we continue to look for it in the wrong place--namely in our conceptualized worlds. But those worlds, or creations, are makeshift arrangements that guarantee no fulfillment. On the contrary, they are as the Sufis put it, a veil of tears. All partite existence is painful. This is the intent behind the phrase "part and pain."

If we were to desist from looking at the world through our diverse intellectual spectacles even for a brief moment, we would discover reality as it is: "the world is world. . ." It is not what the intellect specifies it to be. It ceases to be a "hell hole" from which we must escape, just as it ceases to be a "Garden of Eden," which we must cultivate. Gebser is not saying that the world lacks all determinate qualities. This would be blatantly absurd. He does not deny evolution or history. He does, however, claim that evolution and history are so overburdened with concepts that the realities for which they stand have become hidden from our view. As he made clear in *Der unsichtbare Ursprung* [The Invisible Origin], when viewed from the Origin, evolution is neither development nor progress but the crystallization of what has been predetermined in the invisible dimension.

Strictly speaking, no labels apply to reality. Gebser tries to express this almost surrealistically by saying that the world, as it is in itself, is "glass/and July or March." This contains an echo of the famous Zen statement that upon enlightenment the blue hills are simply blue hills.

This nonconceptual world is transparent, is "glass." When we are not wearing any semantic goggles, reality is crystal clear. Murkiness is a feature of the mind that is not attuned to reality.

The transparent world, Gebser emphasizes, is not merely empty but open. It is not an utterly featureless world of unsurpassable anonymity. Rather, when we truly see, then all distinctions manifest in the same strong light. Openness suggests a situation where there is much light. Heidegger spoke of a clearing in the forest of being, and this is perhaps a convenient metaphor in the present context. Even the Buddhist concept and spiritual realization of *shunya*, which is often translated as "voidness," suggests a condition that is marked not merely by the absence of things but by a fundamental openness. In talking about reality in this way, we are stretching the conceptual mind to its limits, and we can only understand these meanings if we allow ourselves to intuit them by stepping beyond the constraints of language.

This is also true of Gebser's final statement, which distinguishes the Origin from temporal beginning. The world in which we live is not just the universe that mysteriously sprang into existence some five billion years ago. Our actual world is the ever-present Origin. What this implies is that we are continuously immersed in the larger reality, which is also the claim of Mahayana Buddhism, even though we are generally not consciously in touch with it.

Our being out of touch with the ever-present Origin is precisely our dilemma, because it pushes us into partial experiences of reality and thus into the simultaneous experience of suffering ("pain"). Yet, the fact that the Origin is not located in time but is ever-present gives us reason for optimism: We *can* transcend our partial experiences and come to a realization of the world as it is prior to all superimposed concepts. We *can*, to use religious language, enter the Kingdom of God, which is always at hand. In fact, this is the task before us as a result of the emergent integral structure of consciousness. ★

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Georg Feuerstein's translation and commentary on an untitled poem of Jean Gebser approaches one of the interesting questions of Jean Gebser's work. How do we interpret the Origin and what does this mean for integral consciousness? What means the integral consciousness; how intensifying, diaphanous? How do understand a "development" which is not evolutionary yet "mutates" but not in a biological sense? Discussion is of course welcome.

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