Consciously Evolving Language

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L. E. Maroski

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Introduction

These essays were blog posts on my old website. I intended for the website to be interactive and immediate, a way to get some ideas out there and engage with people in real time rather than assemble them in a book that would take years to publish. However, bots seemed to be the main responders, so I shut down the comments after a few years. When the website crashed (from neglecting to upgrade Wordpress—a warning to the lazy!), I decided to refocus it. Nevertheless, the ideas in the blog posts are perhaps more relevant today than when they were written. Hence, now you have them in this form.

The final chapter, written in 2020, pulls them together and brings their message into today's world of #BlackLivesMatter and COVID-19. The need to take language itself broadband, not just the forms of media used to transmit language, is more pressing than ever. Although this book stands on its own, and my next book, which is still being written, also stands on its own, this volume provides some grounding for the next one.

I thank my Accountability Group partners, Helen J. Kessler and Gerald H. Thomas, for providing ongoing support, encouragement, and reality checks. You have been there for me when I have felt alone and scared. And I owe ongoing gratitude to John Dotson for his willingness to listen as I hash out ideas and for his love, which is vast, vast, vast. Thank you.

1. Home Page

Welcome to Consciously Evolving Language, a blog about all three of those words together as well as each one individually, interspersed with forays into linguistics, metaphysics, spirituality, psychology, possibility, and the future. My hope, in writing this blog and getting a conversation started, is to question some of the ways in which language (English primarily, but others as well) has structured our thinking and how we might synergistically alter language as our thinking shifts. For example, the very structure we use to construct sentences contains assumptions about the way the world is. How? If I say "I love you," arguably the content words that are most expressive of connectedness and oneness, the very structure of the statement—subject-verb-object—separates me from the one I love. The assumption of separateness between ourselves as subjects and the world as objects is embedded in such a grammatical structure, and this is the world we speak into existence in every utterance—a world in which we are separate from everything else. We cannot help but assume separateness because that is the reality our language creates every time we use it. Even now. I'm guilty of it this moment, as I refer to myself as if I am separate from the language I'm now using and as I refer to language as if it is something "out there" existent in space and time regardless of my participation in it.

How can we formulate answers to questions about our assumptions if we use the same assumptions to ask the questions?

This shift in who we know ourselves to be—separate or interconnected (and correspondingly how we speak and write about that)—is an important piece of our growth and development not only as humans but as beings who share the universe with a bunch of other types of beings. A few short centuries ago, our ancestors faced a similar type of shift, which seems oh-so-obvious today: they shifted from thinking the earth was flat to thinking the earth is round. Today we are faced with a similar but different shift, from thinking

that we are each separate to thinking that we are already always interconnected.

I recommend reading the entries in order because later entries build upon earlier entries. Consider adding your voice to this quest to explore ways in which we can "catch language up" to the unfolding spiritual-scientific worldview. Although there's a judgment in claiming to "catch language up," a sense of "there's something wrong here," I acknowledge that and assert that there really isn't anything wrong. There's an opportunity to be creative. There wasn't anything wrong when the Wright brothers (and others) noticed that humans couldn't fly, but there was an opportunity to create the ability to fly. That's what we have before us, an opportunity to expand our horizons in thought, word, and deed.

How do we do that? When presented with a doughnut, some people see the doughy part and some people see the hole. Some people study the qualities and characteristics of what exists in exquisite detail, and others see what's missing. Lao Tze said this on seeing the hole:

"Thirty spokes converge on a single hub,
but it is in the space where there is nothing
that the usefulness of the cart lies.
Clay is molded to make a pot,
but it is in the space where there is nothing
that the usefulness of the clay pot lies.
Cut out doors and windows to make a room,
but it is in the space where there is nothing
that the usefulness of the room lies.
Therefore,
benefit may be derived from something,
but it is in nothing that we find usefulness."
   Tao Te Ching, translated by Victor H. Mair

It's not as easy to point to what's not there as it is to point to what's there, and in this blog, I'm going to try to point to what's not there and speculate on what could be created.

In a nutshell, what we shall explore here includes (but is not limited to):

- how the assumptions of the rational materialist worldview of the 18th century are so embedded in language that we keep speaking such a world into existence even as we try to create new paradigms. How do we embed different assumptions about the world into our language(s)?
- how discoveries in physics and biology are shifting our worldview very radically
- some of our basic assumptions about things, including the very nature of "thingness"
- the structure of language and how to expand, modify, stretch, and mess with it so that it might better reflect those shifting worldviews, assumptions, and scientific discoveries
- all manner of other things I'm interested in, including the metaphoric basis of our language, paradox, tango, sailing, our profound interconnectedness, and how all this bears on the world we want to create and are creating for our future.

2. Back Story

…a little about how I came to be so obsessed with all this language stuff…

I first became interested in language through the exploration of questions. I was fascinated by how we could know enough about what we don't know to ask a question about it. I was also curious about why some people ask a lot of questions and why some people don't.

After that, my focus shifted to dualities, such as the curious nature of light as both a wave and a particle. Then I started seeing both/and in more aspects of the world (nature and nurture, heart and mind, spirit and matter, and so on) and that everything is so profoundly connected that we are all one. I began to wonder how we could better express these relationships of interdependent co-arising, like yin and yang, how we could speak from the perspective of being all one yet able to respect our uniqueness and differences. It seemed to me that there was a bias in our worldview toward seeing the world through the lenses of "either/or," whereas I was starting to see through the lenses of "both/and." For a while I didn't even see how deeply engrained that was for me because I was still opposing them in an either/or manner, like this

Both/and   OR   Either/or
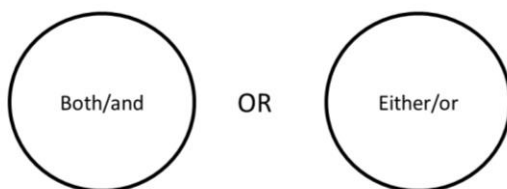
It wasn't until I saw that either/or is actually a subset of both/and that I really understood the power of both/and thinking,

and how it could honor difference and distinction while also joining together, like this[1]
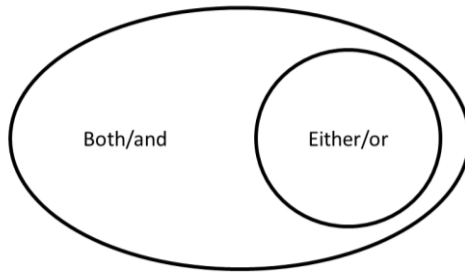
I started playing with inventing concepts based on the assumption of both/and in a novel I wrote called *The One That Is Both.* I'll have a post or two about them.

One of the ways in which we are both/and is that we are both material and spiritual beings. But in typical either/or fashion, we have tended to emphasize the material part. The prevailing view was that humans are first and foremost a body, and, oh by the way, we have an animating, life-giving part called a spirit or a soul, or, oh consciousness, that's just an epiphenomenon or emergent property of matter. When I started reading physicists who were saying "hey, matter might not be most primary—consciousness might be more primary," I realized that they were having such a hard time making any real progress on that because our language (its structure not just its content) so thoroughly assumes that matter is primary that we have no way to speak from the perspective that consciousness is mu-ishi-wa with matter (that's one of the concepts I made up—it means "there is only one side that serves as both sides [think of a Möbius strip]).

So in this blog, we'll look at expanding language (I like to say "taking language broadband") to express our both/and-ness, the ever-evolving   embedded   energy-systems-in-process   that

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[1] Similarly, neither/nor encompasses both/and; it is the nothingness that is the ground or source of somethingness.

comprise this "reality" we experience and co-create by our being, thinking, and our speaking.

3. Being a Cell in the Earth Organism

Posted on October 19, 2010

Something miraculous occurs when a critical mass of individuals forms a whole.

Whole does not mean homogeneous. An engine is a whole, but it is made up of lots of very different parts, each of which has a unique function. Engines, however, are static, mechanical systems. I prefer to think in terms of a living system or body, like my own. As a medical editor, I have learned that cells are really complex little microcosms, with all kinds of proteins that start and stop cellular processes and that let other substances inside or keep them out. And there are also substances that enable cells to communicate with other cells. Without going into the extraordinary technical detail (which I am not qualified to do anyway), just try to imagine that we humans as a species are as intricately diverse and organized as the cells in our bodies. Of course, we're not that organized yet. The left thumb is at war with the right pinkie, and the mouth is sucking dry the bloodstream.

Can you imagine your own body not realizing that the foot is connected to the thigh? You couldn't walk. Can you imagine what would happen if your lungs decided to go on strike? Or if certain rogue cells decided to start a new body of their own and began reproducing at a faster rate? When all the elements are not functioning together smoothly, the whole organism doesn't function. That's what seems to be happening with humanity at the moment.

Now can you imagine being a self-conscious cell of a supra-conscious organism? Free will doesn't go away. *And* you're aware of a will that is beyond yours, into which yours can flow, or not. Imagine being a cell in a finger and getting the call that the skin on the nose itches. A response is automatically coordinated

through the hand and the arm to get you and your other finger-cell buddies, with the help of arm cells, over to the nose to scratch it. And it all happens seemingly effortlessly, in flow, so to speak.

What can this body of humanity (and even the body of the earth, including humanity) as a whole accomplish with you accomplishing your part and everybody else, all the other cells, accomplishing theirs? What grandness could the earth/human organism be up to in the universe? It's almost inconceivable—like my nerve cells trying to conceive of me wanting to write a book.

Before we can get to this place of integration, we need to recognize just how connected we all are, as cells are in a body. And we need to expand our ways of being in "communication" with each other. I put the word "communication" in quotes because it is so much more than the external type of linguistic smoke signals we currently send to each other through writing and speaking. It's more like a communication that involves co-feeling from the inside.

Sometimes it happens when I'm in love and I am in such resonance with my beloved that I can sense his thoughts, his feelings. We've all felt those moments of oneness with another. Do we need to ALL be in that state of profound being-in-love-with in order to attain that kind of internal communication that my body's cells have with each other?

Let's try it and see what happens.

Responses to *Being a Cell in the Earth Organism*
John D. says:

Cells. All sizes of cells. A quantum flux is a cell. A galaxy is a cell. A cluster of galaxies forms a cell. All membranes are permeable. As I live and breathe and feel—there is this weird permeability. Where I find all and everyone and everything.

admin says:

John D. sent me the following poem:

CONSTRUCTIVIST
    can't grip my errors
of scale at the first instants
each wake up alarm
    there's nothing I can measure
the field is everything
    I take out my blocks
build bridges where I left off
string actual lights
    my body presentiates
rivers islands continents

To which I replied:

it I
is all
a piece
of mind

To which he replied:

a lucid cubelet
in a larger cubic
transparency

    *****

…referring to, among other things, a sculpture by Jon Kuhn, which is made of tiny pieces of crystal glued together to form cubes [and other shapes]–beautiful metaphors for our collective being and how the light strikes each piece and refracts it differently, generating a beautiful splash of colors. I love Jon's

cubes as physical metaphors for how the integrity of the whole (of humanity) requires each piece (all of us) to refract the light in our own way. So, if you think you don't matter, guess what, you do.

4. The Default State of Being Human

Posted on October 19, 2010

Arjuna Ardagh asks, "What have we come to accept as the default state of being human?" then answers, "Most agree that human consciousness is characterized by an unnatural sense of separateness, a sense of a 'me' and a 'not me.' We act as though we are separate from the source itself, from the divine. On the basis of this feeling of separation stands everything else that feels abhorrent to the heart—child abuse, domestic violence, people lying to and cheating each other, environmental degradation, war. All of these things arise from this feeling of 'me' and 'them' as separate, or 'me' and 'the planet' as separate".[2]

It hasn't been easy to decide where to start writing this blog—there are so many topics that I want to write about, from this shift in consciousness that is occurring to the need to catch language up to it—but I seem to come back to this quote over and over in the scribbling I've done for the past few months, so this is where I shall start. It echoes a favorite passage from Alan Watts written 30 years earlier:

> "We suffer from a hallucination, from a false and distorted sensation of our own existence as living organisms. Most of us have the sensation that 'I myself' is a separate center of feeling and action, living inside and bounded by the physical body—a center which 'confronts' an 'external' world of people and things, making contact through the senses with a universe both alien and strange".[3]

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[2] Ardagh, A. 2007. The Clock is Ticking. In: *The Mystery of 2012*. Boulder, CO: Sounds True, pp. 213-228.

[3] Watts, A. 1972. *The Book: On the taboo against knowing who you are.* New York: Vintage, p. 8.

You mean, after having spent years crafting a quirkily unique personality that distinguishes me from my mother, father, and brother (of course, they'd say I'm just plain weird), I'm not actually the pillar of individuality I have tried so hard to become? Damn.

Don't be so hard on yourself, Lisa. It's not what you think.

Who are you?

That little voice in your head.

Yeah, I know. But *who* are you?

Oh, you need me to be a "separate center of feeling and action" too? Well, I'm not. I'm that part of you that is not deluded about being separate; I'm the part that is still fully connected and has no sense of separation.

Am I hallucinating you?

Or are you hallucinating yourself?

Point taken. But let me get back to my original point. Both Watts and Ardagh seem to suggest that we wouldn't do the awful stuff we do to each other if we just realized that we aren't separate egos, that we are instead like different fingers on the same hand. Who ever heard of the thumb fighting with the pinkie, trying to gain dominance over the whole hand, because after all, having an opposable thumb is what gives humans an edge over, say, dogs? If I look at you and see a slightly murky reflection of me (rather than an "other")—and I say *slightly* murky because, after all, the DNA differences between us are minimal compared to the similarities—then I would be less likely, for one, to be afraid of you. I think that's what they're trying to get at: the feeling of separation leads to (or perhaps comes from) feelings of fear, and we definitely do bad s*&@# out of fear.

Ok, so if you didn't feel so separate, what would your experience be like?

That's a tough one to answer because I have felt very separate most of my life.

And you think you're the only one who has felt this way?

No, when you don't have good boundaries, when you don't realize that you're not distinct from another, isn't that a type of personality disorder? A friend of mine used to have a joke about that. He'd say "what's mine is mine, and what's yours is mine too." That can't be the type of non-separation that they're talking about.

The notions of "yours" and "mine" are what Watts and Ardagh are saying don't exist, as there isn't really a "you" and "me"; that's the fallacy we have all bought into, the hallucination, the unnatural sense of separateness. There's another joke you might have heard: Why is there so much suffering? Because 99% of what we do is for our self, and there isn't one.

Well, what is there, then, if there isn't a "me" and a "you"?

There is only Love.

Response to *The Default State of Being Human*
Randall S. says:

Ah, yes, we've heard that: there is only Love. For one to be able to recognize Love one apparently needs to experience non-love.

We each know the extreme value in air when suddenly we are deprived of it.

Which, incidentally just may be the carrier of the Love of which we all lean into as often as possible. Love, Air, Consciousness—the great triad on planet Earth. Unable to be separated in any way. It came along with us as we clamored into our vehicle and exploded out onto our blank slate of a new experience. That grand day we all refer to as our birthday.

5. Before Speaking from Oneness, Feeling It

Posted on October 20, 2010

I used to race sailboats. Can you believe it? A Midwest bookworm with hardly a competitive bone in her body went out on Lake Michigan in rain, sun, wind, and no wind to tack and jibe around a few inflatable buoys practically every Saturday in the summer. Aside from the fact that it's generally a lot cooler on the lake, why?

There's a feeling you get when the sails are trimmed right for the wind—that the boat and you are in harmony. The boat practically sails herself. She just "feels good" (which, when you're racing, means that she feels *fast*). I like to trim the spinnaker downwind (that's me on the right), because there's another kind of "being one with" that happens then. After you learn all the signs to look for when trimming the "spinny" (e.g., Is the luff curling? Is the pole at the right height? Are the clews even?), you just feel what needs to be done and do it without having to think about it. You let your consciousness merge with the sail, and you don't even have to analyze all those signs, your body just responds to what the sail needs. You become one with the spinnaker.

Why is it so easy, relatively speaking, to become one with inanimate objects like spinnakers and so difficult to become one with fellow human beings? For one thing, spinnakers don't argue

with you. The spinny doesn't yell at me for pulling too hard on the sheet, although she might collapse if I pull too hard or ease out too much; either way the boat goes slower. Kidding aside, we've been hearing for decades (centuries, if you read ancient spiritual texts) that we are all one. Why, then, is it so hard to be one with fellow humans?

Is it more difficult to let my consciousness fade away into another person's consciousness than to let it fade into the spinnaker's? Is it more threatening to my ego to merge with another person? What is the barrier? What fear must I conquer?

Is it that other people provide a challenge, even when not being intentionally challenging? When others challenge our views, their otherness becomes heightened. When differences are emphasized, perhaps we are less able to stay present to our oneness (which is not sameness). Indeed, that is happening in the United States right now [i.e., in 2010, when I wrote this]. The media insists on exaggerating differences, and that is causing our unitedness to weaken. (But I digress…)

If the unitedness of my body were to weaken, then my nervous system might stop speaking to my muscles, and consequently I would lose the ability to walk, talk, and (horrors) dance. That is what we are doing to the "human body" by focusing on our separateness rather than our oneness.

I envision a day when we (humans and nonhumans alike) are so present to our oneness, in the way that my own body is indeed one, that when there's an itch the hand will scratch it. My body is so connected that when an itch happens, there's an immediate response. When we as humans are in a state of separateness from one another, if the foot itches (i.e., when there's turmoil somewhere in the world) the rest of us don't know it. We don't just "know" it the way my body "knows" when an itch or a pain happens.

Of course, that might be protective! It might be overwhelming to feel all the discomfort of all people, plants, animals, and

minerals throughout the world. With all the wars, mining, drilling, underground nuclear testing, and so on, there's a lot of itching going on! And we wouldn't be able to ignore it as we currently do.

So how do we do it? How do we feel what needs to be done and just do it on a global level? How do we become one with each other in such a way that we know our connectedness the way my body and your body each knows its own connectedness? How do we become "a global body-mind-spirit"?

6. How Do We Speak from Wholeness?

Posted on October 24, 2010

In *The Holographic Universe,* Michael Talbot quotes Bernie Siegel who said that "people are addicted to their beliefs. When you try to change someone's belief they will act like an addict".[4] If we are addicted to our beliefs, we won't give them up until we see how they are wrecking our lives. Did we choose to believe that we're all separate beings from everybody and everything else? No, that belief was so firmly established both by our experience of ourselves as young children and by how others treated us, then reinforced by language that separates I from You, that we just take it for granted that we're all separate.

Well, what if we're not?

Language served (and continues to serve) as an external technology for bridging that perceived gap between individuated consciousnesses. Perhaps it even allowed our process of individuation to flourish by paradoxically embodying the assumption of separateness that characterizes the process of individuation (even though in-divid-uation itself implies not-divided-ness). (I love the irony!) How does language embody the assumption of separateness? [Caveat: not all languages do, so please forgive my generalization if you speak a language that does not assume separateness. And please step up to show the rest of us how to toss aside our crutches.]

The languages that do assume separateness generally have a structure that both separates the subject from him/her self as the agent of action—which takes the form of subject-verb—and which

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[4] Talbot, M. 1992. *The Holographic Universe*. United States: HarperCollins, p. 6.

separates the subject from what are called objects—which is practically everything that isn't the subject. (Except for naming, even when we refer to other people, other presumed subjectivities, they get treated linguistically as objects. For example, "I gave the book to him" treats book and him similarly. Compare "I gave water to the plant.")

The agent is further assumed to be a point of consciousness (located generally in the head, around the pineal gland) inside a bag of skin. Hence, the agent even separates itself from the different aspects of the bag of skin in which it locates itself. Hence, as a language-using agent, when I say "my toe itches" there is a sense that the subjective part that is experiencing the itch is separate from and located somewhere other than the toe! How weird is that? (If you've ever tried to "move" the consciousness of the itching from the head area into the area that itches, it's amazing to experience the itch go away.)

In his blog #11, "Languages," David Spangler describes this same idea with the following example and explanation:

> Many years ago, I heard a lecturer say that the relationship of the soul to the personality and body was like that of a driver to a car. This is certainly a compelling image and a common one. It draws its power from its simplicity; it is metaphorically appealing. On the other hand, it also has the effect of dividing us into at least two parts, soul and personality or spirit and body and making one subordinate to the other. After all, a car is an unthinking thing that we use, not a partner or part of our wholeness. If this is the basis of our thinking about ourselves, then it creates a foundation for the kind of inner conflict I mentioned above.

Let's call this the language of separation. It's pervasive throughout human culture. It is the language of "us" vs. "them,"

at the root of so much violence and suffering in our world today, and not just between people. It colors much of our thinking about our relationship to the environment was well. Not that all separative language and thinking is bad. There are times when the ability to draw clear distinctions and boundaries is important. To say that all separative thinking is wrong is itself an example of separative thinking. But there is no doubt that when such language and thinking are carried to an extreme and are not balanced by equally compelling images of our unity and connectedness, we end up with horrors like the Holocaust.

In a sense, language has served as a crutch, to help us get through the process of individuation. However, we have been living with the language crutch for so long that we consider it the defining characteristic that makes us human, the capability we have that the "other" animals do not have. How difficult will it be to relinquish this crutch with which we have so strongly identified as we step into the next phase of development—reintegration to a new level of wholeness without losing the perspective and uniqueness of individuated identity?

When I sat down to write this, I had no idea it would end up here. Now I look at the job ahead and cringe, knowing the resistance we humans have to de-identifying with that which we have identified. Who among us is ready to say, "I'm willing to let go of those beliefs that seemingly keep me separate. I'm willing to see how language has served to separate me and now do something about it to reintegrate myself with Self"? (I'm aware of the irony of using language to say it's time to wake up from our use of language.)

Individually and collectively we have to find, return to, and be that whole being that We are, *in addition to* the separate being that we think we are. (After all, we are One that is Both.) Then, how do we speak from that wholeness–the wholeness that each of us is as an individual and the wholeness of the All?

Responses to *How Do We Speak from Wholeness?*

Steve R. says:

I as a Point of View in Consciousness

On your home page, in bold text you say, "How can we formulate answers to questions about our assumptions if we use the same assumptions to ask the questions?"

I challenge your assumption that wholeness or separation is expressed and created in speaking and suggest that the idea of wholeness or separation is in the context of listening.

For example, what if the inquiry focused on our "listening" for the experience of whole rather than our "speaking an experience of wholeness" into a world out there? And what if we listened from being whole rather than from an individuate sum of parts separated from other and from the whole? It could just be that our "listening for" or sensation of experience in wholeness is that of a "single point of view within the field of the whole of consciousness."

Just as one finger of a hand may experience its own experience not generally shared by its neighbor fingers or other body features, it is still as much "of the whole human" as any bodily feature. That finger does not get to go off, alone, separate, and distinct from the human body and still survive. Yet that finger experiences just one point of view in the experience of human. That experience is called finger.

A point of view in consciousness may be referred to as an "I" in the vernacular and may express the experience of its own experience or sensation which is not mutually shared with its neighboring points of view. Yet it is all in how we (we "I"s) listen our own point of view that determines our confusion or non-

confusion over the whole/separate context and by extension, speaks confusion into other confused (listenings, or) points of view.

The whole of consciousness is privy to all the goings on of consciousness and experience. The intensity of the experience of being a physical point of view housed in the occurrence of human masks the, subtle by comparison, experience of wholeness for a purpose. The sole purpose may be that we (we "I"s) distinctly experience *experience* for the whole of consciousness from our distinct points of view.

What generally happens with language is hardly an evolution. It is more aptly a degenerative mutation. The value of language and its ability to communicate is in its distinctions. Without distinguishing the richness of listening from speaking, or love from need and attachment, or truth from metaphor or validity, we lose our capacity to relate to the wholeness of consciousness and eliminate our capacity to access it as source.

So I further suggest that language can be viewed as the sea (or field) of consciousness in which we swim, having no (external nor internal) location rather than an external technology created or found by humans. I have it that it is the very essence of, and our access to, the experience for which we exist.

It seems so appropriate to use "I" to refer to the point of view I experience through, yet my listening creates that "I" as a lens for the whole that listens or senses from a perspective not available from any other point of view. And yet, when I am that "I", I have access to accepting the validity of all other points of view providing unique experience within the whole of consciousness because I get that that is all that I am and damned glad to Be.

And Lisa, I acknowledge you for taking language on and your commitment to language that works.

Steve,
This is a beautiful reminder of the importance of both/and.

I challenge your assumption that wholeness or separation is expressed and created in speaking and suggest that the idea of wholeness or separation is in the context of listening.

Could it be that our assumption spans both speaking and listening? I know you know that when one listens from a broader context, such as the context of the whole, it empowers the speaker to say things s/he would not feel the "space" to say were the listener listening simply from a narrower, I-based context. Perhaps you are better at staying aware of the whole when listening than I am, but I often get sucked into listening from "what's in it for me?" or "what does that person want from me?" Indeed, how can we remind ourselves to listen from that space of wholeness? I'm trying to propose a way to do that in our speaking, which would automatically trigger it in our listening as well. So, if our language had the whole and the halves as a unit, that is, if the concept I had to use was one of speaking/listening I might not have been so careless. Thank you for pointing out that I only included half of the whole!

And what if we listened from being whole rather than from an individuate sum of parts separated from other and from the whole?

I would add to this, not just listen from being whole, but listen from being THE WHOLE. As you say, "The whole of consciousness is privy to all the goings on of consciousness and experience." You are quite right. I'll talk about The Holographic Universe in a later post, but for now, I'll just say that it's important to get that we are not just whole individuals, we are individuals AND the whole. That's the paradox I want to bring into language.

What generally happens with language is hardly an evolution. It is more aptly a degenerative mutation.

I just started reading *The Unfolding of Language,* by Guy Deutscher. It looks at the issue of the degeneration of language, but also the creative aspects. I look forward to seeing what he has to say.

The value of language and its ability to communicate is in its distinctions.

Yes, and my project is to *add to* the types of distinctions we can make, not to decrease them.

Steve, again, thanks for the challenge/contribution. This is what communication looks like when it's working!! Loving it…

7. My Questions Regarding the Na'vi Language in the Movie *Avatar*

Posted on November 4, 2010

I guess it shouldn't have surprised me that within hours of the release of *Avatar*, people had decoded the made-up language in it, called Na'vi. It's amazing that someone could do it so quickly. I'm impressed.

But there's one niggling thing that is bugging me. It seems to me that Na'vi was just mapped onto English—new sounds for the same concepts. Did Paul Frommer (the creator of Na'vi) simply paste our cultural assumptions (e.g., subjects and objects exist in a container called space, animals and plants can't "talk" to humans, rocks aren't conscious) into that language? Or did he incorporate the culture of Pandora into its language?

On Pandora, in addition to the obvious new concepts, such as "floating mountains" (more on that later), I didn't get a sense in the language for what is truly remarkable about that culture, namely, their ability *to become one with*. (Or am I mistaking conquering and dominating for becoming one with?) For example, that special relationship the Pandorans have with the horse-like animals and pteradactyl-like animals in which they become one through the connection that looks like an organic electrical socket—how is that oneness conveyed in the language, if at all? The subject-object relationship of rider and horse breaks down when they merge. They become one unified being, with one mind and two hearts. Is that expressed in Na'vi, and if so how? Is there a form of "I" that is a "we" or a form of "we" that is "I" or a new type of pronoun altogether?

What I want to read about, but haven't found anything written yet, is how the language and the culture of Pandora intersect. So far, the people interested in Na'vi seem only interested in the

technical aspects like the vocabulary and the grammar. I want to find out what cultural assumptions underlie Na'vi itself and how they are expressed in the language. Because if they can be expressed in Na'vi, then we can surely express them in English, right? The culture of Pandora was grounded in harmony with the natural environment, and I want to get Frommer's take on whether he built that into the language.

What is Conscious(ness) on Pandora?

The jellyfish-in-air parts of Eywa definitely had a consciousness of their own. How is the attribution of consciousness conveyed when it pertains to nonhumanoids? This might be part of the animacy hierarchy that William Annis asks for in his description of Na'vi [this used to be on https://learnnavi.org, but I can't find it anymore].

How do the Pandorans address the living environment, as someones or somethings?

The floating mountains, how is *that* relationship to gravity expressed while the rest of their world has a more earth-like relationship to gravity? It could just be James Cameron's "artistic license" in which surrealist imaginings were used essentially for effect. And I love the paradox of it. AND I want to see whether the imagination that went into creating Pandora can help us re-imagine our own world.

Obviously, the reason I have these questions is because I am on a quest to build similar types of cultural assumptions about connectedness into our own language (instead of making up a new one). And perhaps all the creative people out there who are working with Na'vi might consider making up a new type of concept or new type of structure for existing languages that will actually make a difference in our world. What is the point of learning Na'vi if it's just another language like English, French, or Polynesian? Maybe if we think about these types of things for Na'vi, we can also think about them for English (and French and Polynesian and…). Let's invent something that, as Einstein says,

uses a new type of thinking so that we can solve some pretty significant global "problems."

(Readers of my novel, *The One That Is Both* know that I tried to invent new types of concepts that embody paradox. However, it had none of the systematicity that Na'vi has. I honor the contribution that Paul Frommer has made and hope that there's more depth and detail to come.)

Post script: In 2017, I had the honor of meeting Paul Frommer at a Language Creation Society conference. After apologizing for raking him over the coals in this blog post, we had a great conversation about these issues. It will be interesting to see whether and how Na'vi evolves in the planned sequels, if they ever get made.

Geocentric vs. Heliocentric

Ego   Nature
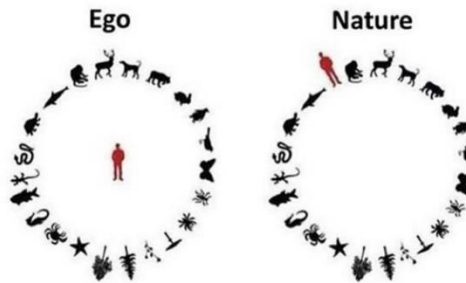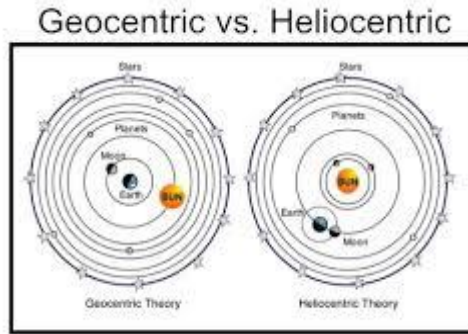
8. The Emerging Paradigm Shift and the Assumptions it is Questioning

Posted on November 8, 2010

"Similarly, he [David Bohm] believes that dividing the universe up into living and nonliving things also has no meaning. Animate and inanimate matter are inseparately woven, and life, too, is enfolded throughout the totality of the universe. Even a rock is in some way alive, says Bohm, for life and intelligence are present not only in all of matter, but in "energy," "space," "time," "the fabric of the entire universe," and everything else we abstract out of the holomovement and mistakenly view as separate things."

–Michael Talbot, *The Holographic Universe*, p. 50

All some*things* are some*ones*. –David Spangler

These new paradigm writers are asking us to question assumptions/presuppositions that we've had for the past few centuries—assumptions including materialism, reductionism, and the influence of randomness. They are asking us to investigate different assumptions, such as

- consciousness as the origin of matter, energy, and the laws of nature (Amit Goswami)
- we are one being in many physical forms (Bernard Haisch)
- we can consciously influence our own evolution (Barbara Marx Hubbard)
- subjects, objects, and space are unified (Steven M. Rosen, Nassim Haramein)
- we're subject to both quantum and classical effects (Amit Goswami)
- we comprise one global mind (Ervin Laszlo, Willis Harmon)
- we tap into a transcendental world that exists in potential (Haisch, Goswami, Bohm)
- creation as subtraction from the infinite rather than building from elementary particles (Haisch, kabbalah)
- inherent paradox

These shifts might seem easy to accept intellectually. We can talk *about* them the same way we talk about what we had for dinner last night. They make great party conversation starters. If they're left at that, well, we might as well dig our rational materialist union cards back out and stop pretending we're not. How do we embody these assumptions? What can we create from them?

When it became clear that the earth was indeed round rather than flat, it really didn't change the lives of many people in the

short run. Even today, when I walk to the store or ride my bike, I operate in such a confined space on the globe that it indeed seems flat. I don't have to account for the earth's curvature when I plan my trips. I hope, however, the airplane pilot doesn't make such assumptions when s/he's jetting me across the Atlantic to Europe. What did the awareness of the roundness (more or less) of the earth open up for us? In some ways, I think that is the foundation for our understanding of our interconnectedness. The polluted water we dump into the rivers and oceans isn't going to run off the edge, where we don't have to bother with it anymore. Nope. It all stays here. Similarly, what will our awareness of our oneness as a being open up for us? What will become available to us from the adoption and exploration of these assumptions?

The question in the forefront of my mind is, how do we come from such perspectives?

How do we speak *from* the perspective of the one global mind? the unity of space, subject, and object? the inherently paradoxical beings that we are?

That's the point of this blog, to begin to develop ways to do that. Other teachers are showing us how to do it through our being, by developing mindfulness practices, intuition, and other ways of inter-being. That is part of it. I'm a Gemini; my thing is language, so I'm working on the language angle. Each of us has our angle, and each angle is necessary to the whole. As we develop the capacity to hold more than just our own individual angle, we develop what I call "diamond consciousness" (as opposed to facet consciousness, where you're mired in your own facet and can't see the others, which Jean Gebser distinguishes as "perspectival" versus "aperspectival" awaring). We then can become completely aware that we are the global, unified, paradoxical, uber-being that is all of us and is more than just all of us.

Authors/books referenced above

Bohm, David. *Wholeness and the Implicate Order.*
Goswami, Amit. *The Self-Aware Universe.*
Haisch, Bernard. *The God Theory.*
Harman, Willis. *Global Mind Change.*
Hubbard, Barbara Marx. *Conscious Evolution.*
Laszlo, Ervin. *Quantum Shift in the Global Brain.*
Rosen, Steven M. *The Self-Evolving Cosmos.*

Responses to *The Emerging Paradigm Shift and the Assumptions it is Questioning*

gold account says:

This is why I prefer the term process to progress. I think the processes get more complex and develop in certain ways, but I think there's too much conflation of developmental processes with progress. I'm not saying there is no progress either—just that it is a much more multi-variable reality than it is often made out to be in the integral world.

offshore corporation says:

This new level of openness and connection in Integral (and beyond) also opens us to Universal Mind even more, as we no longer grasp quite so tightly to our small ego's perspective. One of the treasures of realized aperspectival development is the correlative acceleration of spiritual evolution. More and more of our sense of self is now centered in the transcendent, who we know ourselves to be is the absolutely clear and radiant connection fundamental in all beings. And as we practice resting in this state of awareness, the oneness of all that is becomes our experience, not a belief or a slogan, but a clear and stable perception.

9. Introducing Möbius (Strips) and Klein (Bottles)

Posted on November 11, 2010

Two visual structures that I use a lot are the Möbius strip and the Klein bottle because they embody paradox. Specifically, they have only one side although it seems to be two sides. That concept is very important for what's to come, which is why I am introducing it early on and without other content. So, without further adieu, let me introduce to you, first, the Möbius strip.

The Möbius Strip

The Möbius strip, named after August Ferdinand Möbius, is a two-dimensional surface that requires three dimensions for its existence.

Figure 1. August Ferdinand Mobius

The interesting thing about the Möbius strip is that it has only one side. Locally, it seems to have two sides. If you took a snapshot of a piece of the Möbius strip, you could point out what seem to be a front and a back; however, when you consider the entire surface globally, there is only one side. For example, if you draw a line down the middle, you will never lift your pencil up yet the line will be on both sides.

To make a model of a Möbius strip, take a piece of paper that is longer than it is wide. Join the narrow ends together, like you are making a loop, *except* give one end a half twist just before you join it to the other end.

Figure 2. Mobius Strip

As a result of the half twist, the Möbius strip has only one side and one edge!

Test it for yourself by drawing a line down its center until you return to your starting point. Did you ever cross an edge? Or, hold the edge of a Möbius strip against the tip of a felt-tipped pen. Color the edge of the Möbius strip by holding the highlighter still and rotating the Möbius strip around. You were able to color "both" edges without lifting the pen, right? For something completely different, cut the Möbius strip along the center line that you drew. Then draw a line down the center of the resulting band, and cut along it. What happened?

The Klein Bottle

Figure 3. Felix Klein

Whereas the Möbius strip is a 2-dimensional surface that requires three dimensions (for the twist), the Klein bottle is a 3-dimensional surface that requires four dimensions. It's not as easy to imagine a Klein bottle because the drawing of it in the figure shows it represented in only two dimensions. The Klein bottle was invented (or imagined) by Felix Klein (1849-1925), another German mathematician.

The Klein bottle, proper, does not self-intersect in four dimensions as it seems to do in the drawing. Nonetheless, there is a way to visualize the Klein bottle as being contained in four dimensions. By adding a fourth dimension to the three-dimensional space, the self-intersection can be eliminated.

I like to use the Klein bottle as a metaphor because by its very nature it requires a higher dimension that isn't part of our everyday reality. It's an entity, like us, that exists in three dimensions but requires four dimensions to do so. It points to the

mystery of our existence, to the existence of the unknown, the n+1 dimension.

Figure 4. Klein bottle

Similar to the Möbius strip, the Klein bottle embodies a continuum that encompasses a seeming duality, where inside and outside are not distinct but one continuous unity that flows from one to the other. It shows how the labels of a duality or polarity are only labels of aspects of a whole that are not, in fact, separate.

I use Klein bottles to help us think of concepts as "linguistic containers." If we conceive of words as being containers for meaning, which enable the speaker to convey her ideas to others, then adding content words about interconnectedness is like pouring new wine into old bottles. I'm suggesting instead that we develop new types of bottles. How will these new "containers" look? How will they function?

Wine bottle	Klein bottle
Inside vs. outside	Inside and outside are a continuum; one merges into the other
Holds and contains something	Embodies the notions of contained and uncontained
Either/or paradigm	Both/and paradigm
Static unity	Dynamic, interpenetrating unity
Words used to convey separateness and distinctions	Words used to convey interconnectedness, process, paradox, and unity

The Klein bottle exemplifies the concept of a merging continuum or union of opposites. It embodies the type of paradox that could be incorporated into language to be able to speak into being a world that works for everyone—us *and* them, old *and* young, rich *and* poor, conservative *and* liberal, black, white, yellow, *and* brown—at the same time. For the world to work for all, I propose a linguistic structure based in the notion of both/and.

How would *you* devise such concepts?

Responses to *Introducing Möbius (Strips) and Klein (Bottles)*

diego r. says:

I came to know about your book which I look forward to read. Perhaps you would be interested in my work on the Klein bottle and surmounting the Cartesian cut, much available on the web or you may write to me for the articles. best wishes, Diego

Craig N. says:
This is an insightful blog. An odd omission from the English language is the word outsight. The notion of duality establishes an inside and an outside. A Klein bottle possesses no inside and outside and has no boundary to make any such distinction. The notion of one-sidedness is therefore imported from the secondary notion of two-sided duality. The notion that people can claim to possess intellectual insight, but not outsight, reveals the fact that intelligent language is well-founded on the one-sided (universal) logic of the Klein bottle structure.

10. Goodbye to "It"

Posted on November 11, 2010

> All some*things* are some*ones*. –David Spangler

That quote hit me in a way that the usual psychospiritual talk doesn't. It forced me to face up to the assumptions I have about the nature of life itself (and what is alive and what isn't). I certainly don't relate to most somethings as someones. Could I bear putting the coffee beans in the grinder if I saw them as little someones? Could I throw away that shirt I haven't worn in 5 years if she (la chemise) was a someone? Granted, sometimes I talk to my computer as if it were a someone ("Why won't you do what I want you to do?!"), but I'm just talking out my own frustration.

That quote also sums up the current shift in perspective in four simple words. I would add to it "all someones are me/us," which really means that I/we am/are all someones. That simple statement is revolutionary. Yes, you have heard it before in different forms, such as "we are all one" or "the earth is a living being," but this form makes it clear that the world is being turned inside-out and upside-down. No not just that, the inside/outside boundary is being dissolved but not destroyed. It's more like an exoskeleton is being turned into a cell wall. I am struggling to put this into language because the boundaries between concepts (and hence words) are so rigid in English.

Mr. Spangler is giving voice in everyday language to something the scientists are also saying, namely that matter is secondary to consciousness. Consciousness is the primary reality of the universe, what enables it—us—to be here.

To conceive of the world not as filled with things but as filled with points of consciousness radically alters one's own being and doing. Essentially each and every point is its own point of

consciousness, and many points make up a larger point, such as me or the chair I'm sitting in, the violet on the windowsill, and so on. Each is a holon, a part that is also a whole. Each holon has its own sovereignty, and each is comprised of parts that have their own sovereignty as well. For example, I am made up of billions of cells, and each cell in my body has its own sovereignty, and each subcellular structure, even each base of my DNA has its own sovereignty. As the former cell biologist Bruce Lipton says, "you are in truth a cooperative community of approximately 50 trillion single-celled citizens" (*The Biology of Belief,* p. 27). The quantum physicists are finding that you can keep dividing and dividing. You never get to the bottom, to the most fundamental "bit." Why? Because we can continue to conceive that there are more fundamental bits. Our ability to imagine them, to conceive of them enables there to be more. So, is that where it starts—with us? Back to the idea that each "thing" is a point of consciousness or sentience. This is profound because it implies the possibility of communication, as I said earlier, that is more like co-feeling from the inside, the way the hand knows where to scratch the itch. In a world of nonsentient things, there is no possibility for communication; however, with the realization that all of "it" is sentient at some level (not necessarily the same level that we are), there exists the possibility that there can be communication. But in what form?

Communication happens at many different levels, from chemically based communication in between cells and between plants, to verbal to structural (body language) to energetic ("I was just thinking about you! What a coincidence that you called."), and probably many other levels of which we are not yet aware. How does one communicate with these other forms of sentience? This is where we have to examine internal/external again and see that communicating externally, the way we talk to each other now, is only one way. What might others be?

Tango — a poem

Posted on November 12, 2010

I wrap my arm around you
press my heart into yours,
trusting
that I will not fall
while fading into the oblivion of music and moving and
breathing and losing
myself
in the dance

Response to *Tango — a poem*
John D. says:

losing without falling…
heart
arm
music
dance

11. My Debt and Gratitude to Barbara Marx Hubbard[5]

Posted on November 17, 2010

There is a deliberate similarity between the title of this blog, Consciously Evolving Language, and Barbara Marx Hubbard's book *Conscious Evolution: Awakening the Power of Our Social Potential.* Einstein said that he stood on the shoulders of giants. I do too; she is one of them. She transformed the concept of evolution from being something that just happened outside of our control to being something within our locus of control. We don't have to sit by and watch how we evolve(d) in the rear-view mirror. We don't have to leave it to "chance." These days it is imperative that we do not leave it to chance!

Barbara has continued to evolve her own thinking way beyond what is in the book. It can be found through her website, in the movies, videos, and podcasts she has made, in the courses she teaches. www.barbaramarxhubbard.com

From the richness of her writing, I'll extract just a few points that interact with and resonate with what this website is all about.

1. Telling a New Story

In her book, she tells us, "We need first and foremost to know our 'new story'" (p. 19). Indeed, that is what the new paradigm writers are trying to craft, a new story by which we might better understand our reality. As she mentions, our stories have shifted from the exploits of the gods and goddesses of Greek and Roman times, to the story of a man whose life was dedicated to transforming the world through the power of love, to the story of

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[5] Barbara left this world April 10, 2019. Her work is being carried on by the Foundation for Conscious Evolution.

progress through knowledge of how the "out there" works and the importance of shaping your own being. But somehow pursuing the story of freedom, wealth, and the sovereignty of the individual has resulted in a world of over-consuming, over-defense, starvation, and violence.

The importance of having a new story is that it provides a vision of where we are going. Unfortunately, we don't have many positive visions of our future. (Well, I'm sure readers of this blog do, but just look at the apocalyptic movies that Hollywood keeps feeding the general population.) The futurist Fred Polack looked back historically at what previous generations thought the future would be like and found that society's image of the future is a self-fulfilling prophecy.[6] Knowing that, what story do we want to have fulfilled by none other than ourselves?

Stories occur in language (well, not exclusively, as you can tell a story in pictures, mime/acting, music, or dance). Telling a *slightly* new story could involve changing around some of the players, like putting the sun rather than the earth at the center of the solar system. Or it could involve adding new players, such as quarks and gluons. What might a *radically* new story be? Would it involve revising the nature of the relationship between the players, wherein two separate things are now seen to be interconnected aspects of one fundamental reality, like the sides of a Möbius strip in which there seem to be two sides but there is only one side?

Can we tell a new story using language from the paradigm we are leaving, the one we are consciously evolving out of? Perhaps, but that might simply keep us stuck longer in the old paradigm.

How are our stories limited by the language we use to tell them? To answer that, we may need to ask a more basic question:

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[6] Ray, P. H., Anderson, S. R. 2001. *The Cultural Creatives: How 50 Million People are Changing the World*. Italy: Three Rivers Press, p. 341.

2. What is Language?

Barbara Marx Hubbard says that "Language is a design innovation, a way to pass on information exogenetically" (p. 63). So let's keep designing it, innovating it, finding ways to pass on more complex information, more simultaneous information, different types of information (but let's not get stuck in the "more is better" paradigm—indeed that might be one of the stories to retell). In fact, we have been doing that, while the complexity of language has also deteriorated (e.g., we no longer have to make nouns have the different case endings of Latin). The process of creation is inextricably bound to the process of destruction. For example, as the speed and volume of information transfer has increased, it has been vastly simplified (would my grandfather, who doesn't text, understand LOL, OMG, or CUL8R?). When I was still using dial-up internet service, I spoke and typed essentially the same words and definitely the same types of words that Isaac Newton used! It is time to bring broadband capabilities to language.

3. Co-creation

One of the foundation stones of conscious evolution is the notion of co-creation, that we are partners with ((God, source, the great mystery, whatever you want to call "the wellspring of creation")) to create this world of "ours" (though it certainly doesn't belong to us, in the sense of ownership), this world for which we are responsible. Barbara proposes a "new spirituality in which we shift our relationship with the creative process from creature to cocreator" (p. 99).

We create all the time, consciously and unconsciously. It is our nature as humans to operate in the image of the suprahuman creative principle. As we come to know and experience our profound interconnectedness, we become aware that the whole, of which each of us is an integral part, is/has a creative capacity of "its" own. (By no means is it an "it," but I don't have other

adequate options for pronouns. That might be the first language innovation we could co-create!)

Thus, it is likely that by changing the form of language the consciousness of human beings will also change (and vice versa). Thus, our project is not just "catching language up" to the shifts that have already happened, it is also about laying the foundation for the next stage of human consciousness, which is/will be co-creative. That is also to say that it will be more attuned to collective consciousness. We will be more aware of the paradox of having an individual consciousness as well as access to the consciousness of the whole, what Jung called the collective unconscious.

So, thank you, Barbara for being an inspiratrix for this endeavor, which, of course, is intricately interwoven with your own endeavor. We here at Consciously Evolving Language join with you in cyberspace to co-create the awareness of now-becoming-next now interconnected in thought, word, and deed.

A Hundred Gulls — a poem

Posted on November 21, 2010

Well definitely not quite so many
Yes, not quite
    on the jetty in the big lake today
    As I watched curlicues of waves
wash over cleaning sandy shore
    beating a steady rhythm
    ***
    They stood there all haphazard
some sleeping I'm sure
    birds with nowhere to go
    no graceful flight to faraway lands
just vagrants, bums, ne'er-do-wells
    stressing the social order
out there on that long jetty into the lake
    What will we do
    about their standing
almost motionless
    bracing themselves against the wind

Responses to *A Hundred Gulls — a poem*

admin says:

I wrote this as a parody (another word for "if only I were that good a poet") of John Dotson's "A Thousand Gulls" published in *Rivulets of Light: Poems of Point Lobos and Carmel Bay*.

As I was writing it, however, I saw it start to reflect how we view the homeless.

Paul N. says:

This poem reminds me of the homeless too and our common projection of them: "vagrants, ne'er-do-wells." It also reminds me that our projection is the basis of our perception, our reality, and the separation that, unknowing and unseen, co-arises with it and distances us from being there, maybe even for a moment, in their shoes.

12. Meditation to Become One with Space

Posted on November 29, 2010

This meditation is from a presentation I gave at the final Lifwynn Foundation conference in 2010. It is intended to help you get past the boundaries of subject, object, and space.

> Hence it is clear that the space of physics is not, in the last analysis, anything given in nature or independent of human thought. It is a function of our conceptual scheme [mind]. Space as conceived by Newton proved to be an illusion, although for practical purposes a very fruitful illusion.
> *–Albert Einstein*

Why is it important to reconceive of space? Although there has been lots of talk in psycho-spiritual circles about the wholeness or lack of separation between subject and object, there is still a very old assumption still operating that hasn't been questioned, namely, the assumption that space is simply a container that holds or contains the subject-objects. It's a useful metaphor for day-to-day living, but it is being questioned in the new paradigm. Hence, if we eventually want to be able to talk from the new paradigm, we will need to conceive of space differently. And to do that, we will need to experience ourselves as spatial beings differently. Perhaps this will help. Perhaps not.

Sit comfortably.
Close your eyes.
Breathe.
Each time make it deeper.
As you exhale, sink into your body.

Move your consciousness around your body. Feel it in your butt, as you experience the hardness or softness of your chair.

Feel it in the bottoms of your feet touching your shoes, touching the floor.

Move it up to the center of your chest, around your heart and lungs.

Now see it move into the cells of one of your organs, like your heart. See your consciousness pop through a narrow channel which takes you through the cell wall into the gooey cytoplasm.

You swim through the cytoplasm to the nucleus, where everything is very orderly, like a factory.

You watch your RNA making proteins to be sent to various parts of your body.

You watch your DNA and marvel at the beautiful twirling structure it has. It seems to be like a miniature crystal or diamond sparkling with light.

Now go into your DNA, into one of the bases, thymine, cytosine, guanine, or adenine.

It is made up of simpler elements, like carbon and oxygen. Go into one of them and see how different it feels. Unlike the very precise crystalline form of DNA, this is cloudy. You feel a charge in the atmosphere. Indeed, those might be electrons, but they are zipping around so fast that you can't really see them you just feel their presence.

And notice that there really isn't any-THING there, just a vague feeling of charge.

Feel into this charged emptiness.

Let your consciousness expand into it because every atom in your body is this charged emptiness. Feel the spaciousness that your body is.

See it expanding beyond the skin, because the skin is just as spacious. Your body is space configuring itself in a particular way at this particular time.

Imagine moving your arm up. You are the mover and you are the arm and you are the space. Your arm is simply space configured a certain way. So as the unbounded subject choosing to move your arm, you are space reconfiguring yourself so that first "the arm" was down here and now it is up here.

You can do this with your whole body. As you move your body space simply reconfigures itself from manifesting your body where it was to where it now is.

Now imagine that you could imbue space—the space that you are and will be—with a quality, like love or peacefulness or adventure. As space reconfigures itself, it does it in that way.

See space reconfiguring your arm in a space of love. See your whole body being reconfigured in space imbued with love.

See this space imbued with love expanding to the whole room, to the whole building, the whole city, and as far out into the universe as you want to take it.

Just sit with that sense of being boundless, loving space. Let your mind take you wherever it takes you. And when you are ready come back and open your eyes.

Response to *Meditation to Become One with Space*

Dan F. says:

Speak a new language
so that the world
will be a new world.
– Rumi

13. Shifting the Very Nature of Relationship

Posted on June 6, 2011

The post that started with the Arjuna Ardagh quote (see) could have gone off in another direction. What Ardagh and Watts both propose is essentially a radical shift in the nature of relationship. They are proposing that there is no "other." What you perceive to be other than you, or not-I, actually is still all you. Whoa. If I perceive it to be outside of me, literally over *there*, not here, then how can that be me? Indeed, a radical boundary redefinition is required. The boundaries that you think define and delimit where you are located, compared with where supposedly otherness (other things, other people, other places) is located, perhaps are an illusion.

I'm writing this in downtown Chicago near "The Bean" (more precisely, Cloud Gate, pictured above), the kidney bean–shaped sculpture in Millennium Park. It's made of highly polished stainless steel, so it reflects like a mirror, only it's bean-shaped,

and the inside of it is funnel-shaped. Hence, when you watch people move toward it and away from it, at certain spots their reflection splits into two images, or the two images of them combine into one. Given that Einstein showed that space itself can be curved, this experience serves as an interesting metaphor for our perceptions of this reality. How might our perceptions be distorted in ways we aren't even aware of because we can't see the bigger "space" or the curvature of the space within which we're located? Perhaps meditating to become one with space will reveal such distortions. Will we realize, for instance, that our opacity is a distortion or that what seem to be boundaries are not boundaries at all, just different configurations of space (the way the squares on a chess board are just colors not separate pieces of the board)?

Might Ardagh and Watts be pointing to one such distortion, namely, our perception of ourselves as separate? If there is no Other, i.e., no you or it, then that alters the whole nature of relationship, as there is only me (for each person reading this) and hence nothing "else" to be related to.

If there is no you, no it, no them, then it makes no sense to say "I love you" or "I hate you." In those moments, the only reality is the loving or the hating that I am experiencing of myself. In this, we see that relationships are central to the way we've been communicating but not necessarily to the way communication might happen in a world where we understand the perception of separateness to be illusory. With no distinction between perceiver and perceived, there is only the happening. With no separation between the subject and object there is only the verb.

Frank Waters explains how, in the Hopi language, if you want to say "the light flashed"—because there is no difference between the light and the flash, you need only say *rehpi* or "flashing." The experience of the flashing is not separate from the experience of the light.

What happens, however, when I (the perceiver) see a seagull eat a peanut? Although there is just the act of eating, I might want to specify what was eating and what was being eaten. But if there is no separation between me, the seagull, and the peanut, then what am I perceiving?

As I sit here writing (distinguishing my boundaries from those of Others), I watch people taking pictures, relaxing at tables, texting (always texting!) even watching me watching them. I consciously try to shift from observer of all these activities to being a co-participant in them. All of what I see (and don't see) is me walking, talking, taking pictures, pushing a stroller, flying, watching. It's like an anti-magic trick. Instead of physical sleight-of-hand, it requires mental shift-of-mind, a dropping of the mirror that shows me my reflection in what I perceive to be Other.

I seem to be able to do it piecemeal at the moment. I can put my imagination over there and become the Other, for example, by seeing through the eyes of the seagull or experiencing eating that peanut. However, I haven't yet developed the capacity to simultaneously experience what the seagull and the man taking a video of his family and the girl in the pink shorts playing with her dolls and the businessman sitting on a bench texting and the 17 people all taking pictures of The Bean from different angles are all experiencing. If I could do that, perhaps Ardagh's and Watts's words would no longer make sense to me.

14. Language as an Invisible Architecture

Posted on April 6, 2013

First, let's look at visible architecture and the effect it has on us. Imagine walking into each of the buildings in the pictures above. What felt sense do you have? What kind of "world" is created inside of each building? The architecture literally defines the space inside of which the inhabitants or users of the building operate. It can channel movement through narrow hallways or leave movement unrestricted in large open rooms. It can encourage certain activities or discourage them. (You wouldn't try square dancing in a church, what with all those pews in the way. Or maybe you would, I don't know.) Not only can walls serve as boundaries, but patterns on the floor can too. Windows can encourage or discourage interaction with the outside world. The style of architecture can make you feel free or oppressed, comfortable or uncomfortable, all kinds of different ways.

"Architecture, when understood in the broadest sense, refers to structured spaces in which we evolve individually and collectively. These spaces can be easily accessible to our senses (building architecture, space occupation) or partially perceived (language, money, social conventions, time…). In the first case we

will refer to visible architectures, in the second case we will refer to invisible architectures".[7]

Imagine that you signed up for a workshop, and when you arrive at the room in which it will be held, the chairs are placed in neat rows and there is a podium in front. What expectations do you automatically have? Now suppose that when you walked in, the chairs were arranged in a circle, with no podium. How are your expectations different? How would you behave differently in those two "visible" architectural contexts?

As simple arrangement of chairs in a room illustrates how visible architecture can influence our expectations and behavior, let's consider how language functions as an invisible architecture. How does it affect the "space" we communicate in? First, Benjamin Lee Whorf proposed that "the structure of a human being's language influences the manner in which he understands reality and behaves with respect to it".[8] The structure of language, that is, its architecture, is not learned explicitly (despite the hours of English classes on subject-predicate-object), rather we learn its invisible architecture implicitly when we are taught what can be or cannot be predicated to what. When we make a mistake as children, e.g., by drawing a purple dog, our parents and teachers are quick to correct us (unless they're poets or artists…). "Principles of predication are at the same time ontological principles".[9]

Here is the key to how language functions as an invisible architecture. The principles of predication, i.e., what words can be put together to make sense, reflect the speaker's worldview and provide a way to communicate that worldview. For example,

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[7] Jean-François Noubel, www.thetransitioner.org "The Role of Architectures in Human Resources" p. 1.

[8] Whorf, B. L. and Carroll, J. B. 1964. *Language, Thought, and Reality*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, p. 23.

[9] Gangadean, A. 1998. *Between Worlds: The Emergence of Global Reason.* Peter Lang, p. 4.

everything I have written so far has conformed to the principles of predication in a materialist worldview. However, if I started writing frothy sentences that wildly pulled red meanings from the blatant countryside, you not only might not understand, but would probably question my sanity. I clearly did not obey the principles of predication, and the result was nonsense—in this context of expository prose. Dylan Thomas can write

"Always when He, in country heaven
(whom my heart hears),
Crosses the breast of the praising east and kneels,
Humble in all his planets,
And weeps on the abasing crest…"

but it is poetry rather than nonsense. He has stretched the structure of the language far beyond ordinary predication (hearts don't hear…the east does not have a "breast"). Where does the line between poetic metaphor and ordinary language metaphor lie?

Sometimes, though, great discoveries are made when one is willing to think beyond those same principles of predication. For example, Riemann and then Einstein made it possible for us to speak of space as curved. Until then it would have been nonsense to say that space was curved. Space was fixed in a Euclidean geometric sense, and "curved" could not be predicated to "space."

In that sense, then, "language is a paradigm generator—guiding us toward a particular world view, an epistemological framework—determining what and how we can learn [about] and know our world, an ontological map—it proscribes what we see as meaningful and significant to pursue as humans". [10] For example, think of the differences in paradigm between English

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[10] Carol Sanford, "Psychological Aspects of Language"
www.carolsanford.com

and Hopi. Even without knowing many specifics about Hopi culture you can glean a significant difference in worldview from this simple (perhaps oversimplified) difference in how a basic phenomenon would be described: "Like most American Indian languages, Hopi sentences are not divided into subjects and predicates. In English we say, 'the light flashed.' 'Light' is the subject; 'flashed' is the predicate. The Hopi says simply '*rehpi*'— 'flash' for the entire phenomenon. For what is it but the light and the flash combined, synonymous subject and verb?".[11]

There can also be vastly different worldviews not just between languages but also within a language. For example, George Lakoff in *The Political Mind* describes how the notion of family and the political worldviews that follow from different notions of family result in radical differences between conservatives and liberals.

The invisible architecture of language influences worldview in subtle and profound ways that most people don't stop to question. Why question something that is "obvious?" Well, here we're going to question…and perhaps begin to dismantle the old invisible architecture of language so that we can begin to build something new, something that fits our evolutionary drive toward co-creation and paradoxical uniqueness-within-oneness.

As our current culture shifts in a way that is more radical than that from fixed space to curved space-time, the structure of language—and the principles of predication—must also shift in a corresponding manner. In this blog, I will continue to investigate the ways in which the worldview is changing and explore ways to shift the structure of language to keep up with those worldview shifts.

Indeed, we're going to *take language broadband*.

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[11] Waters, Frank. "Words," p. 4.

15. From Language 2.0 to Language ∞

Posted on April 13, 2013

We're immersed in language like fish in water. I often use that analogy to describe how blind we are to the linguistic world in which we swim, how its structure enables our being in the way that the ocean enables the being of this jellyfish. It is "invisible" to us if we just use language without looking at how we use it or how it uses us.

If you have ever had the experience of having a thought but have not been able to put that thought into words, that is the fundamental experience from which this post starts. Perhaps you found yourself making up odd concoctions of mashed-up roots, prefixes, and suffixes to say what you wanted to say, things like "disunderstandingness." Shakespeare did that. He is reputed to have introduced thousands of words into our current vocabulary.

The Adaptability of Language

Maybe you made something up in the heat of the moment, and it stuck. I've adopted turns of phrase that my friends have made up, for example, calling a hammer a "persuader"; calling $20 bills "yuppie food stamps." A more philosophical friend coined the term "cinemaesthesia" to identify the new type of awareness engendered by photography, cinema, and other new media. Even old words take on different hues, flavors, or tones at different times, in different circumstances, with different nuances in meaning. Language is so adaptable and flexible, in fact, that I can use a word to mean its opposite.

But do these types of adaptations of language really do anything more than the equivalent of rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic? Will they be sufficient to take language broadband?

"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."
–attributed to Albert Einstein

The short answer, IMHO, is No.

The Language of Separateness

Why not? In an earlier post, I quoted Arjuna Ardagh who said that our problems, such as child abuse, domestic violence, people lying to and cheating each other, environmental degradation, and war, stem from our sense of separateness, a sense of a 'me' and a 'not me'. According to Einstein, those types of problems will need to be solved by coming from a different mindset, perhaps one that sees uniqueness-but-nonseparateness, as are the different facets of a diamond. And yet our language itself—its very structure of subject-verb-object—assumes separation. Consequently, *any time we talk about such problems, even as we try to solve them, we're back in the same separatist mindset in which they were created*. A bit of a catch-22.

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Although the mindset is beginning to change in society—I hear it echoed in the refrain that "we are all one"—whole*heart*ed change is being hindered by the lack of concurrent change in language. And so, there is the dilemma I seek to address.

It is our generation's "problem that has no name." Like the problem that had no name until Betty Freidan[12] recognized and named it, which led to the women's movement, and the problem that Martin Luther King addressed for black people, which led to the civil rights' movement, this problem with no name is as deeply if not more embedded in our culture. The current "problem with no name" with regard to language is more insidious because it is harder to see—it doesn't involve an easily identifiable subgroup or minority. It's in our language, which everyone uses, so it affects everyone equally.

Who is disempowered by this problem that has no name?

WE ALL ARE.

That's why it is so hard to see—because there's no contrast between an empowered subgroup and a disempowered one, no us-against-them, no basis for struggle. In fact, my grad school advisor said about this topic, "I don't see what your problem with language is. It works just fine for me." Indeed, it does work just fine if you don't see how it works or if you want to remain coddled in the old mindset.

Unlike the previous "problems with no name" the identification of which served to empower women and minorities, this is a liberation movement for everyone, regardless of race, creed, culture, gender orientation, or political persuasion. *It is liberation from the limits of our small- or separate-mindedness, the constraints of our self-consciousness, our "ego-minding"* as Ashok Gangadean puts it. It is a liberation to our knowing/ being/ awaring of wholeness, our expansiveness, our becomingness. It is

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[12] 1.   Friedan B, Quindlen A. *The Feminine Mystique*: W. W. Norton; 2001.

time to step into and speak from the perspective of our Selves as the paradoxical Divine Humans that we are.

Whereas those other movements challenged social codes, this one goes much deeper than social codes. I don't even know if there is a word for the kind of code that our language gives us (an ur-code?). Language underlies all social codes, all moral codes, legal codes—all codes, because the social, moral, and legal codes themselves are constructed within language. (It is what gives us our ontology, as Ashok says; it's an onto-linguistic code.)

It will not be easy to identify the kind of thinking that was used to create our problems, because doing so forces us to look at ugly truths, blind spots, the best intentions that ignored their unintended consequences, and our motives for thinking that way.

What will a new type of thinking/being/awaring and a new way of languaging enable us to do? Indeed, what is the end point, the purpose of thinking differently to solve our problems?

If our current way(s) of thinking have led us to an increasing sense of fragmentation, of breaking down of old structures, such as the nuclear family, the corporation, community, marriage, and even democracy, then what will a new way of thinking provide?

What seems to be missing from our current worldview, which a new way of thinking could provide, is awaring of and living from wholeness.

Taking Language Broadband

How do we take our first steps toward this wholistic and integrated way of communicating? What is our first baby step? When I switched from my dial-up internet service to broadband cable service, the speed of downloads increased tremendously. I was thrilled. It was easier to watch videos. The sound and images flowed and were synchronized. Oh frabjous day, calloo callay!

With regard to my computer, broadband means more bits per second, which translates into sound, images, and words—more information at the same time. To use another analogy, it's like having a full orchestra playing, not just a lone piano. In a TED.com video, David McCandless discussed the findings of a Danish physicist by the name of Tor Norretranders, who found that we get the most information visually, next-most audially, then tactilely, and least through taste.[13] I'm going to focus on the visual, although given that we don't just write but also speak, we'll need to think about that as well.

When it comes to our language, what are some of the ways that we already get more "bits per second?"

When you're talking with someone who is physically present, you get their words and gestures, the verbal and the nonverbal language. (Texting, to me, is like taking broadband and diluting it to dial-up.)

In some tonal languages, additional layers of meaning are conveyed by the tone in which the words are spoken. Much like tonal languages, sung messages can convey extra meaning (or not). However, we don't yet have a "lexicon" in music as there is in tonal languages. In other words, there is no social agreement about what the sound quality means apart from the meaning of the words; it is left entirely to subjective interpretation.

What are some other ways in which we could increase the bandwidth of language? And why would we want to? For starters, the text that you are currently reading is mostly activating your left brain, which is processing information in a linear fashion. (Yes, there is some right-brain pattern recognition of the letters going on too…and other things.) To increase the bandwidth, we could add elements to language that would also tap into the right brain's information-processing capabilities. In

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https://www.ted.com/talks/david_mccandless_the_beauty_of_data_visualization

my novel, *The One That Is Both,* I introduced some new types of concepts that do just that (see the graphic at the beginning of this chapter). But I'm getting ahead of myself. Here are a few ideas I had for ways to increase bandwidth. What others are possible? What do you suggest?

1. Build mutual interdependence into concepts themselves, perhaps by creating a new type of concept

Why? As we increasingly come to realize that we live in a world that is black AND white, nature AND nurture, individual AND collective, we need a way to express that interdependence. Our current language usage (and logic) pits those concepts against each other, implying that it's either one or the other. That creates power struggles between those who believe it is one and those who believe it is the other. And they're both right, AND they're both wrong because the separation of such polarities is an artificial and inaccurate representation of things. Yes, sometimes they are opposed, but they can only be opposed because they are related.

2. Build color into the language, with different colors (which could be represented vocally by different frequencies or tonalities/pitches?) signifying different meanings

Why? This could be used, for example, to convey context like Ashok does—one color signifying the ego lens, another signifying the nondual lens, another signifying the both/and integration of those two lenses.

3. Use more graphic types of images (like the ones in my book) to convey complex relationships or concepts in a single glyph (like Chinese or Mayan)

With computers and even cellular telephones becoming more graphics based, this would not be difficult to do.

Again, I come back to the questions, "Why? Is it necessary?" To answer those questions, we have to look not just at where we are but where we're going. Time seems to be speeding up. The world is becoming more integrated and global. Supposedly we're going to have more DNA strands "activated". All this is leading up to our shift from being individual beings to being a human organism. Each of us is to be a "cell" in a much larger organism. (Perhaps we already are, we just don't know it and/or don't know how to relate to humanity as a meta-organism.) *When our tuned-in-ness of the whole comes online, we will be flooded with information on all sides about what the other 10 billion of us are up to.* That's a lot of information to sort through each millisecond. Although we're learning how to process that much information externally, it will not be external, it will be internal. In fact, the internal/external distinction will become one of those Kleinian both/and concepts—so we'll know that it's both.

The information flow will become so integrated that it will seem instantaneous. Right now, our communication system is designed to transmit and receive specifically from other somebodies out there. However, when we evolve to be the supra-human-earth organism, we will know that there is no other "somebody" out there. The convergence of space-subject-object into a unified whole (spatiosubobjectivity, as Steve Rosen says[14]) will be complete. And we will need to have a communication system that *assumes* that there is no other somebody out there and conveys information on that basis.

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[14] 2.   Rosen SM. *The Self-evolving Cosmos: A Phenomenological Approach to Nature's Unity-in-diversity*: World Scientific; 2008.

The role of language in this return to wholeness is important (in my humble opinion) because ultimately we won't need a spoken language. We'll all be tuned into each other (Language 2.0 is just a small step toward Language ∞), like, when the foot itches, the hand just knows where to scratch—no deliberating involved. The cells in my body, be they as different as muscle cells and nerve cells and skin cells, function as a whole and can communicate with each other seamlessly (when not dis-eased in some way). Imagine the universe being like that! Maybe it already is, and we just forgot.

That kind of near-instantaneous communication is a huge leap to make from where we are now. The shifts in language that we'll be exploring are simply stepping stones, phases that must be passed through to get to where we're going. Most of us needed to learn to ride a bike, for example, by starting with a tricycle (to get the pedaling motion practiced), to a bicycle with training wheels (to get the basics of balance), to a bicycle, to a unicycle, and from there to cars, boats, airplanes, and helicopters. To go from the radical separation stage that we are currently in (and coming out of), we can get to fully integrated (without it freaking us all out) by first finding a way to speak from wholeness rather than from separation. We need to build assumptions about our connectedness into our everyday ways of thinking. We need to build the paradox of our uniqueness and oneness (and all the other paradoxes) into the infrastructure, the invisible architecture, of the language. Then we might truly be able to act (and speak) from that place of wholeness. Since our thinking/being/awaring is so interwoven with our language, I believe that we can influence one by influencing the other. In doing so, we influence how we are in the world, and how we are might then preclude things like violence to each other and to our home planet.

Responses to *From Language 2.0 to Language ∞*

Richard D. says:

Your words resonate with great vitality as an expression of the huge shift in consciousness occurring on this planet. You are a language visionary!

June G. says:

One of my issues about language is how we "touch" each other, when we refer to one another by first names. So I hope I have that right—that this is "Lisa"?

I'm also interested in language and learning by "connection," how one "finds" those others around them that are critical to what they are exploring or learning or driven to understand in that moment—the important "teachers" at the time most important. Your post here about the new "language" needed to imagine the new world we have to create together to sustain humanity and our planet, was water in a very parched desert for me. Beautifully written, hard-to-articulate concepts—you did it incredibly well.

It made me so excited as I work on such similar issues in terms of emotional and social intelligence and the teaching of those key and critical concepts to our children, but I struggle always with the language, not to explain it to them—they still retain the ability and greater facility actually with the "non-spoken" but thus necessarily interpersonal language—but to try and explain it in the left-brain narrowed, linear language that our education system has so dramatically defaulted and constricted itself to using. It's actually, for many who spoke "other" languages of care, curiosity, and more "whole" learning of another, a brutalizing process to be "reduced" to dominant paradigms of dominating "thinkers" who want the world to continue to look and think and "talk" just like them. Just like they were taught. But as you so clearly point out, it just isn't enough anymore—not in this "new, connected" world, in order to survive our separateness and our "aloneness"—to survive together in new ways of

understanding and appreciating each other for our differences and using them to elevate the whole.

At any rate, I'm so deeply excited to have found your blog. Now, as is always my preference, I would love to find you. As Phoebe H. can attest, the interpersonal, probably because of this very issue about communication and language you've explained above, is by far my most important way to get the information that is most critical to me to learn anything and especially about another's thinking and where it is coming from and going to. To bridge over that "separateness" that is blocking what I am most trying to learn from them, what they are most able to teach me if they can speak more clearly to me as "both" and not just "one".

Sorry for the length. Just SO VERY grateful for your words. Would therefore, really love to meet you someday and "talk" some more about these ideas.

admin says:

June, it is as much water in the desert for me to get this, as I have felt like I've been struggling alone to clarify a vision that no one else sees! It is wonderful to find a fellow traveler on this road. I will be in touch shortly, so we can talk, connect face to face or voice to voice. Your comment reminded me of the commencement address that Ursula K. LeGuin (one of my favorite authors as a child) gave at my college graduation. It was about the language of the patriarchy, which is what we had just learned in academia, and how different it is from the language of mothering. It is published in *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places* (1989), p. 147.

16. Deconstructing the Metaphoric Basis of Language, Or, Making Visible One of the Infrastructures of its Invisible Architecture

Posted on April 30, 2013

Using the methods of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By*, I'm doing the following analysis to expose the metaphors that might slip through the unconscious as we read something as basic as the opinion page in the newspaper, in this case, my local newspaper, the *Monterey County Weekly*. Granted, I specifically chose a piece that makes it easy to see the metaphors, as this is the first of this type of analysis that I am posting here.

Why expose the metaphors (note that the metaphor I just used is PROSE IS A CLOTHED BODY)? Because, by and large, we don't know that we're using them. We did not learn them explicitly; we picked them up by imitating how others used language. These implicit metaphors structure our language (text, speech) just below the level of consciousness. The author of the article I chose might have been more aware of using them than most people, but I chose his opinion piece because I could readily imagine people at a party or sitting around the kitchen table talking this way.

After I analyze his piece for the implicit metaphors, I will rewrite it using different metaphors, just to show that it is possible—to inspire, not to say "these are better." No. The point is to BE CREATIVE. Get out of the clichés. In order to transform language (which is what this blog is about), we have to know how we are using language in the first place (and how it is using us).

Note that the words suggesting the implicit metaphor are highlighted, and the metaphor is in ALL CAPS, following the form that Lakoff and Johnson used.

Will voters forgive Obama for cutting social security?
by William Greider
Thursday, April 18, 2013

Step 1: what are the underlying metaphors?

President Obama has riled Democrats by tossing Social Security onto the table in his poker game with Republicans.

[POLITICS IS A GAME]

Not to worry. A year from now, when the 2014 congressional campaigns are underway, Republicans will be promising to protect Social Security from the bloodthirsty Democrats.

[POLITICS IS HUNTING. HELPLESS VICTIMS (i.e., SOCIAL SECURITY) NEED TO BE PROTECTED FROM CARNIVORES.]

By then, having lost on his too-cute strategy, the president will be reduced to lamely reassuring old folks.

[THE PRESIDENT IS AN INJURED ANIMAL]

Really, he didn't actually intend to cut their benefits, really he didn't. It was just a ploy to get tightwad conservatives to give in a little on tax increases.

[POLITICS IS A GAME INVOLVING DECEPTION]

Republicans can pull out the videotapes in which Obama and team

[POLITICS IS A SPORT]

explain their high-minded purpose

[HIGH IS UP, GOOD, RATIONAL, GOD-LIKE, ETC]

– sacrificing the Democratic party's sacred honor

[POLITICS IS RELIGION]

in order to get Republicans to play nice.

[NOT ONLY IS POLITICS A GAME, BUT IT'S A CHILD'S GAME]

The president set this trap himself; now House Speaker John Boehner will spring it on him.

[PRESIDENT IS A HUNTER/HUNTED]

Does Obama not remember how Democrats lost control of the House back in 2010?

[CONGRESS IS A WILD ANIMAL]

The party got very little credit for enacting health care reform because the Republicans had already demonized the accomplishment

[POLITICS IS RELIGION]

as a threat to the much-beloved program of Medicare.

[MEDICARE IS AN IDOL]

The rightwingers promised to save Medicare from bloodthirsty Democrats

[REPUBLICANS ARE HEROS]

by repealing Obama's new reform program. This was all a ridiculous lie, but the White House declined to call out the liars. Instead, Obama responded with flowers. This time, he is taking Republicans out to dinner.

[POLITICS IS LIKE DATING]

So who gets to tell folks their FICA deductions were a joke?

[CITIZENS ARE GOONS /POLITICIANS ARE INSINCERE]

So here is what I expect to happen. The elaborate and confusing charade of deficit politics

[POLITICS IS A GAME INVOLVING DECEPTION]

will continue through this year and next – both parties solemnly seeking to shrink the swollen federal deficits

[POLITICIANS ARE DOCTORS]

– and distracting Washington

[SYNECDOCHE: OUR CAPITOL/POLITICAL SYSTEM IS A PERSON]

from the real economic threat of stagnation or worse.

[THE ECONOMY IS A BODY OF WATER]

Social Security will not be cut. Nor will much else be accomplished.

Now you try it for yourself. I highlighted some phrases that might have such underlying metaphors. What might they be? It is my hope that this is what people will do with their time when Sudoku finally bores the pants off of them.

These budget promises do not become real until Congress authorizes projects and appropriates the money. The appropriators have the real power and they can change the numbers and whatever else they wish. Depending on how senators and representatives feel at the time, they can embrace the promises and cut specific spending or totally ignore whatever the budget resolution had promised the public.

This is why I expect Social Security to survive the onslaught. When it gets to the money roll calls this year and next, individual members of Congress will have to swallow some big lies in order to vote for cutting Social Security benefits. The cost-of-living gimmicks Obama has proposed will not shave a penny off the federal deficits or debt. That is because the Social Security benefits are not paid by the federal budget. They are drawn from the Social Security Trust Fund – the money paid in by working people.

So who gets to tell folks their FICA deductions were a joke – only an accounting fiction? Obama's so-called cost-of-living reform, it will be compelled to announce that whacking the old folks contributes not a penny to reducing the federal government's deficits.

The debt to Social Security beneficiaries now totals nearly $3 trillion. The day is approaching when that money will be needed for its original purpose: paying Social Security benefits to the working people who contributed to the fund.

That is the real crisis that makes the financial barons so anxious to cut Social Security benefits. They would like to get out of repaying the debt – that is, giving the money back to the people who earned it.

The only way to do this is cut the benefits – over and over again. If the president and Congress succeed in this malicious scheme, they will come back again and again to cut more and more. If the politicians join this sordid conspiracy, voters should come after them with pitchforks and torches.

Veteran political journalist William Greider is national affairs correspondent for *The Nation*.

Step 2: what other metaphors could we use?

The purpose for this next step is to consciously extricate ourselves from the "usual" metaphors. Yes, politics has been described as a game, as religion, as war, ad nauseum. If we want to reform our political system and/or our society, then we have to come up with other ways to think about politics, perhaps ways that have different implications: wars and games have winners and losers. By couching politics in those metaphors we assume, by association, that there must be a winner and a loser. And we hope that our party wins and the other loses. Well, if we are all One, and we are all in this together, maybe we don't want to polarize ourselves into winners and losers. It keeps us in an infantile mindset and a destructive parent/child power dynamic.

So now I am going to rewrite this article using metaphors grounded in the notion that we're all in this together, we're all one, we're all related, as in the Native American greeting *mitakuye oyasin*, "all my relations." Why this metaphor? Because, according to George Lakoff in *The Political Mind*, a primary difference between conservatives and liberals is their view of the family. He claims that conservatives have a more authoritarian "father knows best, everybody else serves the leader" view of the family, whereas liberals have a more egalitarian "hey, we're all family, right, we look out for each other" view of the family. And these different conceptions of family get projected as different outlooks onto the national political scene.

So, with kudos to Mr. Greider (I mean absolutely no disrespect)…

President Obama has upset those who love him and encouraged him to lead us by sharing Social Security—his beloved teddy bear—with those of us (we're all one family, remember?) who want to rip the arms and legs off of it. Maybe even robotic arms and legs—a kind of droidbear.

[POLITICS IS ABOUT SHARING YOUR TOYS]

Not to worry. A year from now, when the 2014 congressmen and women are appealing to us to let them keep their jobs, Republicans will be promising to sew the arms and legs back on to the very same bear.

[POLITICS IS A SOCIAL CONTRACT]

By then, having lost on his too-cute strategy, the president will have to admit that he was just trying to show the people, especially the Grandmas and Grandpas that he didn't actually intend to leave the Social Security bear limbless, really he didn't. It was just a way to get those other family members to who only play with sticks and stones to give up their mean-spirited threats to strangle some of the not-so-rich family members.

[POLITICS IS STRATEGIC NEGOTIATION]

Republicans can pull out the videotapes in which Obama and his/our sisters and brothers

[WE ARE ALL FAMILY]

explain their overall intention—sacrificing one of their successful ways to keep the Grandpeople happy and healthy

[POLITICS IS PITCHING IN]

in order to get the Ones Who Say They Hurt to stop battering other family members.

[CAN YOU SAY "STOCKHOLM SYNDROME"?]

The president built this rope bridge himself; now House Speaker John Boehner will cut the rope and we'll all fall down.

[POLITICS IS BRIDGE-BUILDING/DESTROYING]

Does Obama not remember how the bucking bronco of a House threw its rider back in 2010?

[CONGRESS IS AN ANIMAL WITH ITS BALLS IN A CINCH, JUMPING AROUND A LOT, STIRRING UP A FUSS, BUT GOING NOWHERE]

That part of the family got very little credit for enacting health care reform because the other part of the family had already thrown its own mama under the bus.

[POLITICS IS LOYALTY/BETRAYAL]

You get the idea by now. Granted, I got a little silly, and that might have detracted from my point or it might have made it even stronger. When we get away from the usual metaphors, which seem more literal than metaphoric simply because of how cliché they are, we can see the color of the lens we're looking through. Language provides the lens through which we see and say the world. But unless there's a speck of dirt in my eye, I forget all about the contacts I'm wearing.

Addendum: Further reading. Here are some important reasons why this emphasis on metaphor is, indeed, important:

http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2011/05/why-are-spy-researchers-building-a-metaphor-program/239402/

The original study mentioned in the preceding article:

http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0016782

17. The Emotional Dissonance of Paradox Regained

Posted on September 2, 2013

I just returned from a visit to Chicago, which was my home for 25 years, the longest span I have lived in one place. I moved out of Chicago a year ago, so going back there to visit friends resulted in a plethora of conflicting feelings that I am calling "emotional dissonance." The term is derived from the more general term "cognitive dissonance," which refers to "the discomfort experienced when simultaneously holding two or more conflicting cognitions: ideas, beliefs, values or emotional reactions" (from Wikipedia).

It occurred to me that, as we come to embrace the paradox(es) in our lives and integrate paradox into our language, we will be confronted more often and have to be able to deal with cognitive and emotional dissonance. In the same way that fear and excitement are two different experiences of the release of adrenaline into the bloodstream, emotional dissonance can be a pleasant or an unpleasant experience depending on the meaning you give it. Since paradox has mostly been abhorred by our

culture, emotional dissonance carries with it an unpleasant connotation. But that need not be so…

In order to be able to fully embrace paradox, we will need to feel the excitement aspect of the emotional dissonance reaction that paradox frequently causes.

On arriving in Chicago, it felt like I had never really left. I negotiated my way through O'Hare airport as if I was returning home, not as if I were going someplace new. Indeed, the old feelings of arriving back home were strong. But I wasn't arriving back home, I was arriving for a short vacation. I would be leaving in a few days to go back to my new home in California. As the week progressed and I went back to my old neighborhood, walked familiar streets, the pleasant and comforting feelings of "this is absolutely familiar and comfortable and 'home'" butted up against a sadness from knowing that I would be leaving in a few days as well as the certainty that I had made the right decision to leave. But it felt so good to be back.

In some ways I felt like I was both there and not there. I wasn't there permanently anymore; I was like a ghost from the past wandering the streets of the present. I have such fondness for those streets and yet they were worn out from over two decades of circumambulation. It would be so easy to slip back into the old familiar routines, but I knew I couldn't and actually didn't want to be drawn into the same old gravitational pull of my old haunts.

I was pulled in anyway. I had to go back to my favorite places—Bittersweet (yes, even my favorite pastry shop has a paradoxical name), La Crêperie, the Art Institute. It was bittersweet especially to return to La Crêperie, as it was closing that very week. I had spent most of my life in Chicago enjoying the food and ambiance there. To go there one last time was…well, you know. (Fortunately, it did not close. A new owner saved it from oblivion.)

And so, as we alter our mindset to embrace paradox, it might feel strange and uncomfortable at first, until we get used to—and eventually even energized by—the *Bewusstseinsspannung* (tension of consciousness) of living within and speaking from the context of both/and—until, that is, we arrive at paradox regained.

18.   The Future of Language

Posted on January 28, 2017

AN EMERGENT LANGUAGE OF PARADOX: RIFFS ON STEVEN M. ROSEN'S KLEINIAN SIGNIFICATION OF BEING[15]

ABSTRACT: First, I briefly recapitulate the main points of Rosen's article, namely, that the word "Being" does not adequately signify the paradoxical unification of subject and object and that the Klein bottle can serve as a more appropriate sign-vehicle than the word. I then propose to apply his insight more widely; however, in order to do that, it is first necessary to identify infra- and exostructures of language, including culture, category structure, logic, metaphor, semantics, syntax, concept, and sign vehicles, that preserve the status quo and keep subject and object disjunct. After analyzing those infra/exostructures, I engage a complementary process of integrating them, *coagula*, in order to spark ideas for innovating ways in which more of those facets of language can embrace paradox.

Or perhaps, better titled, "Language of the Future." Lots of trends are converging to create an opening to take language broadband, the theme of this blog. We now live in what is called a "post-truth" world, one that George Orwell would be cringing to know that he foresaw. We also live in a time of great creativity in the realm of constructed languages. And if there were an Irony

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Index, it would be skyrocketing. I think these are nascent signs that the deficient integral consciousness structure (described by Jean Gebser in *The Ever-Present Origin*) is emerging more strongly into consciousness. Let us foster its development into efficient integral consciousness. To that end, let me share with you my most recent publication, "An Emergent Language of Paradox: Riffs on Steven M. Rosen's Kleinian Signification of Being." It can be found at

http://cosmosandhistory.org/index.php/journal/article/viewFile/546/968

Steve Rosen's article, on which mine is based, can be found at

http://www.cosmosandhistory.org/index.php/journal/article/viewFile/439/865.

19. From Fantasy to Reality: Conlanging as Psychosocial Activism

Posted on July 19, 2017

The seventh Language Creation Conference was held in Calgary, Alberta, Canada in 2017. It featured a wonderful spectrum of presentations on general and very technical aspects of creating languages. We also got to see the world premiere of a film called *Conlanging: The Art of Crafting Tongues*. [16] All the presentations are on YouTube (search LCC7). Here is the text of mine:

What kind of world do you want your children and grandchildren to live in?

Not the kind of question you were expecting to launch a *Language* Construction conference, eh? It is a type of fantasy, not sci-fi, but a fantasy of the future.

Do you think your kids would like to live, as Buckminster Fuller suggested, [17] in a world that works for everyone? The correct answer is "Yes," unless of course you are Donald Trump.

Constructing languages is a way of making worlds. I borrow that phrase from the philosopher Nelson Goodman who wrote a book called *Ways of Worldmaking*. He says "We can have words without a world but no world without words or other symbols. …

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[16] Available now on Amazon.

[17] "We are called to be architects of the future, not its victims. [The challenge is] to make the world work for 100% of humanity in the shortest possible time, with spontaneous cooperation and without ecological damage or disadvantage of anyone." -R. Buckminster Fuller

Worldmaking as we know it always starts from worlds already on hand; the making is a remaking" (3).

I'm not here to suggest what kind of world to make. You already know what lights you up.

In 1989, I knew what kind of world I wanted to make and I was trying to find the words for it. As a grad student at the University of Chicago, I wanted to study topics like paradox, mutual interdependence, nonduality—and I wanted to invent new ways to express them in English. Where others saw an either/or world, I saw both/and. I dreamt that I would find a way for language to *do more*. When I had to explain my ideas to the department chair and lay out the plans for my thesis work, after I finished, he looked at me flatly and said, "I don't see what your problem with language is. It works just fine for me."

My future as Sisyphus flashed before my eyes. I would roll the rock up the hill —"Do you get it now, professor?"—and he would kick it down again and again and again.

I still believe that language can do more. Language content is always being added so that we can say more. And with constructed languages, we can say things in ways that are not possible in natural languages. The fact that you're here means you're interested in creating something different. You are questioning, looking for new ways to express yourself, perhaps even to communicate with others.

Marshall McLuhan, the prophet from Edmonton, wrote the following 50 years ago, and it is still relevant today: "Our time is a time for crossing barriers, for erasing old categories, for probing around…when two seemingly disparate elements are imaginatively opposed, put in apposition in new and unique ways, startling discoveries often result" (4).

Before that grad school crash and burn, I studied questions. Questions are funny things, epistemologically at least. You have to know enough about what you don't know—what you desire to know—in order to formulate a question. So, you can't formulate

a question about what you truly don't know you don't know. But that is where the juice is, when creativity drags you along for the ride.

There are things you know about language, but you learned them before you developed the ability to question them. Hence, they got submerged into a kind of unconscious knowledge, what you don't know you know.

Back in Chicago, I wanted to know how to build paradox into the core of a concept. Not just create merged concepts like bittersweet, but more like not-X becoming X, where X and not-X are one but also different, as in the acorn becoming oak tree. How could concepts contain the essence of paradoxical structures like Möbius strips and Klein bottles, the way Heidegger's concept of Being integrated the concepts of subject and object (5)?

Ten years ago, still in pursuit of that, I wrote a novel in which I developed what I considered new types of words (6). It wasn't a fully developed conlang or ficlang, and now, looking back, I can see that I only came up with some trees without seeing the forest, let alone the whole ecosystem. To see the ecosystem, I had to learn to ask some questions that helped me become aware of what I didn't know I didn't know (7). I'll share them with you. These are questions that you can take with you to the other presentations, that you can take home with you, that might even keep you up at night. Maybe you will find them useful as you make worlds and construct languages. Maybe they will help reveal your language's ecosystem.

1. Why am I doing this? Indeed, that is the ur-question. There is no wrong answer. It's just good, as Plato said, to know thyself.

2. What assumptions do I have about "reality"—and I put "reality" in scare quotes because it really is getting scary out there. Specifically, *what assumptions do I have about the reality I am creating by means of this language?* You might think, "but I'm not creating reality, I'm creating a fantasy world." Hold that thought; we'll come back to it.

3. What assumptions do I have about language—about how it works, about what is required versus what is superfluous, about its purpose?

4. What are the assumptions underlying the subsystems in my conlang? And how do I envision the relationship among these? I am referring to all those facets of language that are necessary and that together make it work—like sign vehicles, concepts and category structure, syntax, semantics, logic, metaphors both explicit and implicit, and of course the oral and graphic representational systems.

Each one of those subsystems is a place to tweak your assumptions.

5. What are the suprasystems—the cultures and subcultures— in which my conlang exists? The suprasystem, culture and/or subculture, defines the category structure. The broader you go, namely, toward larger and more entrenched systems, the more difficult it is to change the assumptions. Cultural change is often fiercely resisted. Imagine trying to change the "more is better" assumption on Wall Street and in Walmart.

Each subsystem can be questioned separately, but they all function together. Twenty/twenty hindsight has shown me that my big mistake was that I questioned language only at the levels of concept and sign vehicle. I completely missed the rest of the interconnected subsystems! I didn't realize that what I wanted to do would also require, for example, a radically different form of logic to handle both/and reasoning. In my attempt at a conlang, the law of noncontradiction itself needed to be questioned too. But that was in my blind spot, what I didn't know I didn't know. Another example: if your world is based on a holographic paradigm—namely, where every part contains the whole—then perhaps even the law of identity needs to be questioned.

6. What is your category structure? How do you divvy up the world? We learn category structure by what can be predicated to what. In your language-world, do trees have emotions? Are

mountains sentient, or do they merely float, as on Pandora (in the movie *Avatar*)?

7. What is fundamental—discrete objects, discrete processes, nondiscrete fields—or something else entirely? Indeed, what is the nature of boundaries?

If there is one take-home point to my talk, it is this: question your assumptions.

But why? Why would I suggest such a radical thing?

This brings me to the subtitle of this talk: Conlanging as Psychosocial Activism.

The social activism part is self-evident, right? Language is at the core of all our social institutions—government, education, commerce, even marriage. If those institutions are not working, let's look to language. Let's invent something new.

We circle back to world making. What kinds of social worlds are you making, do you want to make? If, and I emphasize *if*, Benjamin Whorf is right that "the structure of a human being's language influences the manner in which he [or she] understands reality and behaves with respect to it" (8) then the structure of the languages you create can have powerful effects. So, for example, in *Avatar*, the culture of Pandora, among the indigenous people anyway, is highly interconnected and spiritual. I look forward to the sequels to see whether Paul Frommer has done anything like bring that inherent connectedness and nonduality to the structure—not just the content—of Na'vi.

What do I mean by the psycho part of psychosocial activism? Imagine protesting yourself, marching against your most cherished beliefs in order to open your own mind to something else. I think conlanging is a path to doing that.

Earlier I asked you to consider a lot of questions that might help you examine your assumptions, and I asked them in the first person: Why am *I* doing this? What assumptions do *I* have? But under those questions is the big, unanswerable question, "who am I?" Aside from the psychological aspects of that question,

what that simple one-letter word conveys is anything but simple. The great trickster Alan Watts noticed that "few people seem to use the word "I" for their whole physical organism. "I *have* a body" is more common than "I *am* a body." We speak of "my" legs as we speak of "my" clothes, and "I" seems to remain intact even if the legs are amputated or the clothes are taken off (9).

And what about all those not-I's out there—all those Objects in Space before "I" as a perceiving Subject? Our collective assumption via the containment metaphor that there are actual objects in actual space before actual perceiving subjects pertains directly to syntax. What does it mean to be an object? a subject? What does it mean for them to be "contained" in space? Could there be other ways of conceiving of reality—as events? as intersections of waveforms? As strings getting tangled into knots? As fields playing a kind of musical field dynamics?

Watts would ask whether there are even any not-I's out there. He says, "The fact is that because no one thing or feature of this universe is separable from the whole, the only real You, is the whole" (9). So how do we speak, not just about that, but *from* that perspective of individual-within-wholeness?

The futurist Fred Polak studied what past societies thought about the future and wondered whether their ideas came to pass (10). Spoiler alert: they did. As to our future, he asked, what are the implications of a disintegrating image of the future of Western culture for the future of this culture? We just have to look to Hollywood for disintegrating images of the future of Western culture.

I come back to my original question: what future do you want to live into?

We humans, through our language, get to lay the foundations for the future, our future, our children's future. English, as you know, is shot through with war metaphors. (You see?) Politics, sports, healthcare, even the weather rely on war metaphors. Do you think we will create a peaceful world for our children if we

continually talk about some of the most important topics in terms of war?

Will we solve the big issues like climate change or inequality and prejudice if we continue using language structures that presuppose separateness rather than our connectedness?

As we create languages for whatever purpose—film, books, as art, or just for the hell of it—consider what your language could do to make a future you want to live into. And consider that since language requires more than one participant, what new media might be required?

"All media work us over completely. They are so pervasive in their personal, political, economic, esthetic, psychological, moral, ethical, and social consequences that they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected, unaltered" (4). We learn languages differently as children than as adults. Today's children are learning the "language" of electronic interfaces before age 8 years, at the same time that they are learning their natural language. How might the symbol-based medium of cell phones, tablets, and computers restructure their brains, alter their view of the world, "work them over?"

In the 30-plus years I have been thinking about these things, only in the last few have I become aware of how many other people are interested too. Why is this happening now? Twenty-five years ago, I was shamed out of the academy for trying to find a way for language to presuppose wholeness and for proposing to create new language. Now here we are doing just that. What is happening—globally, culturally, within our consciousness—that so many people want to create language? I don't know, but I love it!

Might it be part of an evolutionary leap in consciousness? If so, how might the creation of conlangs inform changes to natural languages—and hence to culture, to our world, to life as we live it?

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20. Fast Forward

Ten years. How do I bring what I was thinking ten years ago into the age of COVID-19 and #BlackLivesMatter? Presently, we live in a world that seems more divided and either/or than it was when I started this project. This splintering of worldviews in which different groups seem to live in their own algorithm-induced "truth bubbles" makes it even more difficult to communicate, more difficult to trust those in different truth bubbles. The words of others have been politicized and demonized. Facts, which once seemed immutable, can be "alternative," if one so chooses. And lying has become the new black. We can't even agree to wear face covering to protect oneself and each other from a deadly virus. How do I bring forth a language of connectedness when it seems like the world is falling apart? Sometimes I feel like I'm whispering into a hurricane.

I and my Father are One.

I'm usually not one to quote the Bible. I repudiated my Catholic upbringing decades ago. Yet what comes to mind strongly right now is that Jesus knew he was "one that is both"—both human and divine, both here and now and ever present, both humble and powerful. He showed us the way to our interconnectedness, through love.

That was two thousand years ago. Has anything changed in two thousand years? Herod was genociding first-born males of Jewish households. Pontius Pilate was a racist ruler of that era, doing lots of things to offend the Jews. Is it even possible to hear those ancient teachings about love in a world in which christianists have politicized climate change, genocide, and racism?

If Jesus's message of love and the Buddha's message of compassion have not shifted us out individualism, what more coercive forces might cause us (humans) to come together as a unified *humanbody*—a both/and body of bodies, minds, and souls? We see glimpses of such coming together during disasters and other tragedies. We mobilize to heal a collective wound caused by a hurricane or an act of terrorism. We find the collective will and capability to scratch that itch. George Floyd provided a catalyst to show us that some itches are autoimmune—the humanbody killing its own cells, starving its own lungs for air.

When the coronavirus infected the humanbody, Americans—leaderless—have had to imagine a different kind of response to this situation. Individuals have taken responsibility as institutions and governance structures fail to do so. *What can I do right now to help? Sew masks? Volunteer at an out-of-state hospital?* Such individual responsibility is the form of empowerment that will enable the humanbody to evolve into a fully interconnected form.

Many of us who have been nonconsensually removed from our routines have had to imagine a new purpose for ourselves. More vulnerabilities in the humanbody have been exposed—do we care about our elders, our children? Do we fight each other for scarce resources or come together cooperatively to ensure our collective survival? Fragile institutional systems have cracked and broken, plunging millions into Existential Unknowns—how to eat, pay rent, support one's family?

And where was language in all this?

Where it always is, at the center and in the shadows. In the central language we heard demands for change, reform (re-form, making a new form, a different form, a different structure) of policing, of healthcare, of democracy. But in the shadowed language (of which no one demanded re-form), we unconsciously kept its either-or infrastructures in place. *If* we get rid of police, *if*

we change their duties, *then* we will be less safe. Conditional either/or won. Again. In order to re-form cultural institutions, it will be necessary to re-form the source of their being, namely, the words that created them, through laws, through mission statements, through agreements. All of our cultural infrastructures have their foundations in language. How can we change not only the policing infrastructure but also the other infrastructures, social infrastructures that support and uplift people in our communities as well as linguistic infrastructures that comprise and constrain what is expressible?

The infrastructures of language itself—its syntax, concepts, category structure, logic, and implicit metaphors—when it comes to revolution, who thinks about changing them? Dare we think about re-forming logic, animacy categories? For together they protect our cherished cultural values, our unquestioned assumptions, and our very worldview. To take language broadband would require us to address that whole knot of language's inner workings.[18]

Language written using rows of letters (rather than, say, glyphs) helped to strengthen our rational capabilities, foster linear if-then thinking, and oppress most gifts feminine.[19] We are paying the price for that now. #MeToo.

Me. My. Mine. Our collective ascent of the highest summit of narcissism resulted in the election of the Narcissist-in-Chief. We have reached peak-ego. If we are delusional enough to think that we can climb higher, become more individualistic, our next step will be into thin air, followed by a resounding thud. Instead, let us perceive clearly, from the rarefied vista of peak-ego, that ego

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[18] I go into this in more detail in "An emergent language of paradox: Riffs on Steven M. Rosen's Kleinian signification of being." *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2017.

[19] Shlain, L. 1999. *The Alphabet Versus the Goddess: The Conflict Between Word and Image*. Spain: Penguin/Compass.

without soul is vacuous, but ego with soul enjoins inseparably I and Thou.

What, I wonder, will turn our attention to the daily language structures we pass by, clutching our sanity for dear life? Will a poet like Dylan Thomas inspire language-play, or will an orator like James Baldwin shame us into seeing the burning crosses demarcating hallucinated 2 x 2 logic squares? What if there's more than this OR that? How close to the brink of extinction will we get before the collective realization sets in, "OMG, we ARE all connected; if I am careless, you might die, and vice versa."

And then, how do we communicate from inside that connectedness? What kind of self-referential structures will we need to add to language to signify that "the stuff out there, what I perceive as external to me, is intrinsically connected to me; we are not separate; I am that; it is me"?

As our microbes live on all our epithelial surfaces, we are like microbes on the skin of our Mother, Earth. The microbes on my skin help protect me from pathogens. Have we forgotten our role as microbes on the skin of Earth? Have we become her skin cancer? Has she unleashed this virus as an immune response?

Like Indra's pearls, in which each pearl is reflected in every other pearl, perhaps we are all fractal reflections of each other? If so, soul refuses to be hotelled up in only this, my white female body or that, your black male body. (My)[20] soul knows that

> [For] I am the first and the last.
> I am the honored one and the scorned one.
> I am the whore and the holy one.
> I am the wife and the virgin.
> I am <the mother> and the daughter.
> I am the limbs of my mother.
> I am the barren one

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[20] My soul is not mine. I do not possess her. She lets" me" be "we."

and many are her sons.
I am she whose wedding is great,
    and I have not taken a husband.
I am the midwife and she who does not bear.
I am the solace of my labor pains.
I am the bride and the bridegroom,
    and it is my husband who begot me.
I am the mother of my father
    and the sister of my husband
    and he is my offspring.
I am the slave of him who prepared me.[21]

My soul knows that I, too, am one that is both and you are too. Jesus didn't only show us who he was, he showed us who we are. I and my father and my mother and the walrus are one.[22] Our interconnectedness reveals our differences. Gaia shows us that, if we stop to look at how the bees and the flowers and the rain and sun and the fruit of the trees and the multinational company that distributes the fruit and the supermarkets that sell it to me for breakfast, all form one whole. And yet my language has broken it into pieces and monetized as much as it could.

Like the shamans and translational medical researchers who figure out how a particular plant or microbe could heal our maladies, who are the translational cognitive-linguistic scientists that can figure out how covalent bonding of our concepts could heal our separateness? Could they please work with some talented conlangers to trans-stand[23] how we process language and how we process images to find ways to integrate them into new

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[21] 1996. excerpted from "The Thunder, Perfect Mind." trans. George MacRae. *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*. E.J. Brill. Another text from about two thousand years ago that embodies both/and in language.
[22] According to John, Paul, George, and Ringo.
[23] understand, overstand, across-stand, stand in multiple relations to.

linguistic structures that integrate our individual understanding with our collective understanding, our collective *wisdom*?

Ralph Waldo Emerson might have been slightly hyperbolic when he said that every word was once a poem. When the poetry evaporates from the words, rats and literalism invade. When entropy gets the best of our buildings, we renovate them. But when language structures deteriorate, we simplify language. [24] Just think if we did that to math! Going to the moon or to Mars would become the stuff of legends.

We have more to concern ourselves with than dessicated concepts. We have post-truth alternative facts and "owning the narrative" to show us that language is not just succumbing to entropy but is being strong-armed into serving ideologies and agendas. Who will march and chant "Liberate language!"?

Let us not content ourselves with a new word here and there, a new shade of meaning to a former-poem. Let us not even look to new scripts. Let us embrace the graphical user interface to a fuller extent, with color, shape, sound, and speed. As in *Star Trek: Next Generation*, which featured an alien language that had different-sized scripts scrolling by at different rates, let us create entirely new forms and functions for expressing the wholenesses within wholenesses of our many ecologies—from natural ecologies to information ecologies. David J. Peterson, creator of many constructed languages, sees the vast "uncharted territory" of what is possible to create. "The possibilities of what to encode and how to encode it are endless, and in about one thousand years

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[24] In *The Unfolding of Language*, Guy Deutscher quotes many historical figures who were distressed at the decay and degeneration of their native tongues. Deutscher goes on to show that some of the changes occurred rather systematically and across languages, as if they were all being pulled by the same attractor. Deutscher, G. *The Unfolding of Language.* 2005. New York: Henry Holt.

of active language creation, we've barely scratched the surface of what's possible."[25]

Perhaps we might consider Kleinian linguistic structures. How does a Kleinian structure work? According to Steve Rosen, "the Klein bottle, as a living symbol of integral consciousness (a "four-dimensional sphere"), brings unity and diversity together in such a way that neither is deficient. In its deficient expression, "diversity" amounts to mere atomization or fragmentation, with parts being disconnected from each other (as in the negative form of postmodernism). This is sheer discontinuity. In the deficient expression of "unity," we have a totalistic, monological uniformity. As I understand Kleinian integrality, it isn't enough to have both atomistic diversity and totalistic unity complementing each other. Rather, unity and diversity must interpenetrate each other in the Kleinian fashion in which they are different yet, paradoxically, they are at once identical. The simplest example of this is given in the way the sides of a Möbius strip flow completely together while retaining their distinctness."[26]

And then we will need a Charlie Kauffman or a Taika Waititi to make a movie that shows Kleinian interpenetration, via a new culture and an evolving language that fits it. Although such vicarious experiences can entertain, can they teach me, can they touch me? I can watch someone else's imagined future, but if I do not imagine it for myself, will the future I want to live into always remain elusive?

But quick, this new language-house must be constructed. Our lives rely on it in order to quash the cytokine storm of self-and-other loathing afflicting our collective consciousness because we have forgotten our true nature as self-*and*-other.

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[25] Peterson, D.J. 2015. *The Art of Language Invention*. New York: Penguin Books.
[26] Personal correspondence.