

Choice: An Epilogue

A man is up in the hills, collecting various plants and roots. He's an *akbaalia*, "one who doctors," and with these plants and roots, health will come to many. As he walks the slopes and ridges, the *Awakkule*, the Little People, pay him a visit. They lead him into the distant mountains. There, standing before a large cave opening, he's asked to choose between two tunnels. One has an ending in sight; the other is without ending. He's to choose between two paths in life. One path is easy, with much reward, but is short-lived. The other is a difficult path, with unknown rewards, but is long-lived. The choice is with the man. He chooses the tunnel without end. And as it happens, he's led on a long life, with many rewards.

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My intention in this workbook was never to offer a conclusion. Any conclusions should reside in your own interpretation and clarification of values, in your own ability to eye juggle the stories of other peoples as well as your own story. Nevertheless, I will propose three observations. In the first, I will offer my own eye juggling and interpretation of the previous story texts. The texts will be eye juggled as a collective story text, taken as a whole. The interpretation I will be offering is simply one of many voices, including your own, for interpreting the varied stories of our common humanity. I will then discuss and reflect on what I see as some of the implications and consequences of our values on how we relate to our world. Included here is a discussion on the "culture of consumption." And finally, I will comment on the importance and responsibility of

"choice" in our lives. This entire epilogue is my own attempt at interpreting the *what* and the *why* of the Dream Animal.¹

The Great Paradox

My first observation. In creating and living in the world of cultural story, the Dream Animal has journeyed far out of the forest, out of nature. The Dream Animal is separated and estranged from the natural world in two fundamental ways. First, by creating the artificial world of culture, the Dream Animal has erected a shield that more or less mediates and cushions the direct forces of nature from him. It is a shield made up of technological and social fibers. Second, the symbolic process itself necessarily presupposes a separation between the referent and a unit of reference, i.e., between something and something else. In such a process there are an observer and an observed, a self and an other, a subject and an object. It is a shield predicated on the very ability of the Dream Animal to symbolize. The Dream Animal is thus forever set apart from the natural world.

For the Dream Animal, the cultural story of the "setting apart from the natural world" gave birth to six primary and interrelated values. While less apparent in the early history of humanity, with the passage of time, these values would come to fruition and pervade all aspects of the cultural story of the Dream Animal, from the social, ideological, psychological and ecological domains to the ethos and persona. The degree to which these six values influence and are expressed in any given individual, group or society will, of course, vary greatly. Each of the six values can be identified, embedded in the story texts of this workbook. The values are: objectification, gradation, quantitation, secularization, progression and reduction. While the terminology may be new to the reader, the concepts

¹As with all "interpretation," that which is offered here is *heuristic*. It is meant to simulate discussion, to initiate discovery, and to increase our overall understanding and appreciation of our human condition. However, it should not be considered as somehow the "definitive word."

referred to should not be. In fact, each term is rather elemental, and thus inclusive of other, more readily identifiable values.

Each of these six values represents what has become associated with the desirable, an ideal to be sought, and not necessarily what is. Judgements are predicated on them; actions strive to bring them about in people's lives. But judgements and actions as with values sometimes fall short of their ideals and goals.

Objectification refers to a process of presupposing and establishing an autonomous, separate world. There is a reality "out there," an "otherness." And that reality is made up of "objects" existing independent of human and divine influences, and independent of thought and spirit. The body and the mind are distinct and separate. Man and God can from afar observe the workings of this objective reality, but its operations are dependent on neither man nor God. Birds, mammals, trees, landscape, mountains--all the "stuff of nature" and all conceptualized as "objects"--have an autonomy of their own. As Newton proposed, the universe is governed by its own autonomous "Laws of Motion." The "stuff of nature" is compartmentalized into its assigned place, separate from humanity. The domestication of plants and animals, and building of the "walls of Jericho," separating the "wild" from the "civilized," were early expressions of this sort of objectification. "Wildness" and "wilderness" thus come into being. And even among a single, separate species, its members can become separate from each other. Hence the rise of social class distinctions, as expressed at Jericho, of "individualism," as noted by Tocqueville, and of "self-interest," as established by Smith in his fundamental principles of "laissez-faire capitalism." To term a phenomenon an "object" is to ultimately render that phenomenon distinct and separate from the whole. In so doing, that phenomenon can now be "analyzed." And in so doing, that phenomenon can now be brought under "dominion."

Gradation refers to a process of presupposing and establishing a hierarchical relationship with the "other," which is, in turn, conceptualized as subordinate. Be it nature or even another human group, the "other" is often assigned distinguishing characteristics thought of as inferior by the dominant group. Rights and privileges are only granted to a few. The trees and animals of a

forest are afforded no rights of their own. In its most extreme expression, the "other" is approached as if to be subdued and controlled. "Be fruitful and increase, fill the earth and subdue it, rule over the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven and every living thing that moves upon the earth." In turn, the "other" has value and worth to the extent that it benefits mankind. The human is the "caretaker of his garden," a garden whose purpose is to benefit its caretaker. A forest of trees is to be made into various products for human consumption--lumber for houses and furniture, parks for recreation and fishing; a forest is made into a "natural resource." In contrast, "wilderness" is given further meaning as a wasteland of "no use" that can, in fact, threaten the very vitality and integrity of the cultivated land. "Wildness" must be subjugated, if not eliminated.

It is ironic that the contemporary "environmental" and "wise-use" movements, while espousing entirely opposite views on the value of wilderness, are both predicated on the very same pivotal values, those of objectification and gradation.² Both view natural "wilderness" as somehow separate from and in many respects the antithesis of human "civilization." It is only in their reversal of gradation that the distinction between the two positions emerges. While admittedly speaking in oversimplified terms, for the environmentalist, in wilderness can be found the pure, the noble and the beautiful, a place of inspiration, renewal and the possibility of salvation for humanity; in civilization can be found the dangerous, the corrupt and the vile elements of the world. In contrast and often shrouded in Christian references, for the wise-use advocate, in civilization can be found industry, well-being, progress and hope, and the possibility of forging out the Kingdom of God; while in wilderness can be found either "no use" or a natural resource to take

²The "wise-use" movement began in the 1980s as a grass-roots movement of primarily western-states ranchers, timber workers, private-property activists, and conservative republicans. Followers advocate opening up of protected public lands for private use and oppose most forms of governmental regulation. It is felt that only the private property owner is best suited to manage natural resources, having "its best interests at heart." See the "Wise Use" story text.

dominion over. And if not controlled, the wilds can corrupt and destroy. Wilderness becomes a place of danger from which the Devil will tempt.

Quantitation refers to a world that is entirely knowable to humans, a world knowable in terms of mechanical, numerical elements. The "other" is quantified. The elementary components of the world are discrete and discernible. There need not be any mystery. Eventually man will learn the secrets of the universe. We have already learned its language, and as stated by Pythagoras, Galileo and Bronowski, that language is the language of numbers. The "life" of an animal and the animal itself are precisely and analytically defined, understood in terms of specific chemical and biological processes, and of its quantifiable actions and dimensions. To know the world, then, is to rely upon the experiences and rigors of the human intellect. Empiricism and rationalism predominate.

Secularization refers to the process of envisioning a world devoid of spiritual significance. In its most overt expression, there is no divinity; there is no transcendent within the world. The source for inspiration, the archetypes to guide humanity, is not to be found in the transcendent. There are no souls in animals, nor perhaps, in humanity. If there is an acknowledgement of a divinity, it is of divinity that may have created the world and set it in motion, but it has since left it alone to its own devices. The "other" is primarily material substance, governed by the "Laws of Motion."

Progression refers to the view that through time the human condition develops into more perfect states. Implicit are the notions of lineal time and of advancement. Time is conceptualized with a past, a present and a future. History is made possible. Advancement presupposes that "what was" is necessarily inferior to "what is" and "what will be" is superior to "what is." New is better. The development of the individual, as echoed by Maslow, and of the entirety of humanity, as Spencer and Marx wrote, are conceptualized as a progression from immature to mature, from basic "survival needs" to "self-actualization," from primitive to civilized, be it "classless" or "capitalist" society. And what is to be known in the world is what is to be discovered anew, or to be invented. The old

theory is surpassed by the improved. And a new physics awaits; Einstein was convinced of it.

Reduction refers to the view that there is "one true reality," and that reality is vested in material forms and objects. The material world is the world acknowledged. Literalism and reductionism pervade the thinking about the "other." As Marx proposed, the "modes of production" of a society, or as Smith maintained, the material "self-interest," or as Spencer held, the "survival of the fittest," becomes the driving force of our humanity. For Locke, to know is to have a verifiable and replicative experience, to "touch" the material objects, to be empirical. And there can be no other way of knowing the world. A "flower" is reduced to its "natural qualities," be it biologically described by the scientist or literally represented by the artist.

Another expression of reductionist thinking is found in the conviction that eventually there will be a singular, unified theory predictive of the structure and process of the universe. This universe is defined as the natural world of physical entities; all will be reduced to the truth of this singular explanation. Galileo and Newton were convinced of it.

Reduction not only refers to the process in which the material object referred to by the theory is the "truth," but the theory itself is also reified as a material object and as truth. The theory, in fact, often becomes more "real" than that which it refers to. This is the case when it is asserted that "the written word is the literal truth," or when it is assumed that "the theory of inertia is the law causing inertia." The apple fell because of the "law of gravity." In these instances, the unit of reference becomes the referent. That which the symbol refers to is given a concreteness and reality of its own. It is as if a gourmet chef, who, with great deliberateness, follows his recipe book and then adds one final ingredient to his cuisine, the ripped up pages of the recipe book!

Reduction is perhaps the ultimate expression of human separation from the world, the total emphasis on and enclosure within the reality fabricated by human symbolic activity, by theory championed as truth. The theory is the reality.

In attempting to be "set apart from the world," the Dream Animal thus seeks independence from the "other," from the world about it. The Dream Animal erects "walls" and views the world as if through a "glass pane." The "stone" separates. The more distance achieved, the greater the control and dominion obtained. With control comes the enhancement of the Dream Animal's material well-being. A "rich man" is measured in terms of competition and survival, and in the "things" he alone has acquired. The more accumulated, the richer the man. It's a self-reliant, solitary road the "rich man" travels. Only a privileged few are vested with and granted "ideas" and moral rights. With the "individual," so goes the welfare of the community. Humanity looks out from an ever-expanding world of its own fabrication over an ever-increasing barrier into the world of the "other." It is the "other" of the overt, the literal, the material forms. The "stone" is inanimate. It is the "other" knowable only through the rigorous applications of precise methodologies governed by the analytical mind of man. And once known, it is the "other" brought under "dominion." The quest is to the summit of the mountain and, once there, to look down upon the conquered rocks far below. What then is to be feared most is to fall from the mountain top and to participate in the "wildness" below. What is to be feared is the loss of separation from the world. The values of objectification, gradation, quantitation, secularization, progression and reduction have helped define and, in turn, constitute the world as if seen through a "glass pane," the Glass Pane world view.

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Yet, despite its estrangement from the natural world, the history of the Dream Animal is a history of questing and searching for meaning within the world, as a part of that world. Despite its best efforts, the Dream Animal has never strayed far from the natural world. The various forces of nature, be they earthquake, flood, heat, cold, are a constant reminder of its ever-present influence. Food, clothing and shelter have always been ultimately derived from nature,

though perhaps acknowledged less so today. Nature touches everyone directly, found at each juncture in the life of an individual Dream Animal--birth, nurturance, growth and death.

While the act of symbolizing at once separates, it also facilitates a return to and a participation with the world. Through an ability to symbolize, the Dream Animal is given an opportunity to observe, learn about and grow in the ways of the world. Lessons, literal, metaphoric and anagogic in meaning, are offered. And it has been in the solitudes of the natural world that the Dream Animal has always found the great spiritual and aesthetic meanings to life. The quest has been to the mountain and to the *axis mundi*, and to the beginnings of time and of creation. The quest continues, and the Dream Animal yearns to return to the place of origins.

In the Looking Glass world view, like the Glass Pane world view, six elemental and interrelated values are given life and can be identified in the Dream Animal's cultural story of "questing to be a part of the world." These are subjectification, equalization, qualification, transcendentation, replication and participation. Unlike the Glass Pane values, these six values are readily apparent throughout all of the history of the Dream Animal, from the earliest times to the most recent. Each of the six values can be seen embedded in the various story texts of this workbook.

As with the Glass Pane world view, these six Looking Glass values pervade all aspects of the cultural story: the social, ideological, psychological and ecological domains, the ethos and persona. As with the Glass Pane, the actual expression of the Looking Glass values varies from individual to individual and society to society. And finally, these values also refer to the desirable, an ideal to be sought, and not necessarily what is. Judgements and actions are influenced by these values. People strive to actualize them in their lives. But, any given individual or group is capable of falling short of their ideals and values.

The particular configuration of values I have isolated represents a binary typology. The six values identified with the "setting apart" can be paired, representing opposite meanings, with the six values identified with the "questing to be a part." Each of the paired values is thus the antithesis of the other:

objectification/subjectification, gradation/equalization, quantitation/qualitation, secularization/transcendation, progression/replication, and reduction/participation.

This antithetical relation does not preclude the possibility that expressions of both Looking Glass and Glass Pane values can be found in the same community or even in a given individual. In fact, strands of both world views are interwoven throughout our contemporary Euro-American society. Both are essential to and help bring forth the world you and I depend upon. As was suggested previously, despite the tendency for consistency, a particular configuration of values can integrate, however seemingly awkward, disparate and often mutually contradictory values. To embrace one world view does not automatically preclude the incorporation of the other. While the Looking Glass and Glass Pane values presuppose contrast, as threads woven throughout an entire societal system or within an individual personality, they do not necessarily presuppose exclusivity.

Subjectification refers to the process of presupposing and establishing the view that all things are connected into a singular, unified whole. Animal, plant, humanity, physical, spirit, while overtly differentiated, are ultimately linked as an indivisible whole. All "peoples," animal, bird, human and spirit are part of an all-inclusive "kinship," the world of the *Alcheringa*, the "driftwood lodging" and the "wagon wheel," the world of "Mind" and "cybernetic pathways." There is little room for compartmentalization or for autonomous segments, separate from the whole. "Individualism" can not be rooted in subjectification. The philosophy of Descartes and the assertions of Cartesian Dualism separating mind and body, each as non-reducible to the "other," is incompatible with subjectification. And there can be no areas set aside, set apart from the world, as "wilderness areas." All phenomena are intrinsically interconnected--"Mind" and body as one.³

³Phenomena are defined as inclusive of all entities knowable through the senses, thought, intuition and mystical revelation, and are not limited to sensual experience.

Equalization refers to the view that acknowledges differentiation manifested throughout the whole, and that the differentiations are understood as all fundamentally equal to each other. A plant can be overtly distinguished by its physical form and attributes, its "cell membrane or skin," from an animal and from a human, but as each is intrinsically interconnected with the whole, each has an ultimate equality with the others. This is perhaps best expressed in the imagery of the "wagon wheel." Kinship, rather than class distinction, predominates--all "spokes" are of equal value. No one kinsman should be subordinate to another--no one "spoke" can dominate if the wheel is to continue turning. There is no hierarchical relationship among the entities. All phenomena, plant, animal, rock and human are inherently equal with the others. As among the Inuit, a simple "stone" can hold the secrets of life and release the power necessary to assure success in the seal hunt. One listens to even the smallest of creatures, the ant. A forest of trees is the home of animal and bird "peoples," of "bothers" and "sisters." There can be no "wildness" in nature.

And within this network of kinship, all "peoples" share in a reciprocity with one another. If one is to receive a vision from the Eagle or the meat from a Seal or an Elk, a gift of value must be given. One offers *diakaashe*, sincerity, or closely follows a taboo and shows respect. The members of the Bandicoot and of the Kangaroo clans each dances for the spiritual well-being of its ancestral totem as well as for the physical well-being of the members of the other clan. And at its most elementary level, exchanges of information transpire between all the component parts of the "planetary ecology." Balance among all the "peoples," and the "ideas" must be maintained. Is not the offering of "thanks" an acknowledgement of the completed exchange of information flowing through the cybernetic circuits? Has the Elk offered itself up to the hunter, or was it taken? "Sedna is to be feared."

Qualitation refers to an understanding that the world participated in is a world oozing with meaning, with "informational ecology," with qualities of significance. The world offers archetypes

to guide and to live by.⁴ "Ideas" and "knowledge" are "inherent in all things." Seeing an eagle while one is on a long journey is not just a sighting of a large diurnal bird of prey, but the Eagle can signify that the journey's destination will be reached safely. The cross and the circle, originating out of a primordial past, have infused meaning into Christian and American Indian being. "Even the smallest ant may wish to communicate." The world is understood as being not only alive with meanings, but also emanates with a "life-force." This is the power of life and of healing, that which animates all things: plant, animal, human, and even rock or feather. Meaning and life abound throughout all phenomena. The world is neither meaningless, in a void, nor is it inanimate and dead.

It is a world that offers messages and lessons, patterns and models, life and health--if "one is attentive." Of course, one can always choose not to listen to its voice. It is a world of choice, and not of fatalism. To know the world is thus to be "attentive" to its voice, to listen with the "heart" and to "feel beauty" in the "stones, leaves, grass, brooks, and the birds and animals." To know the world is to be receptive to all the pathways of the cybernetic ecosystem. "All true wisdom is to be found far from the dwellings of men, in the great solitudes."

Transcendentalism envisions a world beyond the overt, material forms, a world inclusive and expansive of transcendent levels. The transcendent pervades and is within all phenomena. This is the realm of "Mind," the interconnecting pathways and messages of the cybernetic ecosystem. This is the realm of the divinity, the dwelling place of the souls, the souls of all "peoples"--human, animal, plant, rock. "The bear has a soul like ours." This is the realm of the intuition, the abode of inspiration. This is the realm of the meaningful and the life-force. From here, all ideas and thoughts are born. From here, a vision to live one's life emanates. From here, an inspiration for a poem or a painting is born. From here, the power to

⁴Archetype is defined as a primordial model of exemplary meaning occurring *in illo tempore*. Implied is the extension and replication of that model in the actions of humans. This usage of the term follows Mircea Eliade 1954 and not Carl Jung.

cure emerges. It was here that Burnt Face traveled and from here that he was transformed. To dance in the *Alcheringa* is to dance in the transcendent. The world is not to be reduced to its physical and literal expressions alone. A "flower" is "spiritual essence" "precipitated," its "inner forms" represented by the artist on the churinga board or in the poem.

This is not to suggest that the physical realm is not also acknowledged. The Dream Animal, living close to the natural world, has always been rather pragmatic. The thorn piercing the finger's tip is most assuredly felt. And the thorn is to be avoided. But the thorn, the finger and the pain, the lesson of avoidance are after all given their very existence out of the structures and animations emanating from the transcendent. In the Looking Glass world, the beauty and meaning of the flower cannot be reduced to its physical properties. Thus, as the physical is the overt manifestation of the inner transcendent meanings, the spiritual and aesthetic are always of primary concern. The physical is epiphenomenal of the transcendent.

In "questing to be a part of the world," spiritual self-actualization necessarily precedes material actualization. When the soul is nourished first, so then will the body be given an opportunity to fully grow and prosper. This particular view may seem reversed from what we typically take for granted. But we must be cautious in our assumptions. While those assumptions may be appropriate within certain societal contexts, they may not be appropriate in assisting us in understanding all of the human condition. For instance, we must be cognizant of a dominant praxis premise within Euro-American society that assumes that ideas and a spiritual transcendent are epiphenomenal of the material conditions, e.g., the economic "modes of production" are primary and determinant of societal and religious values. In the example of Maslow's "hierarchy of needs," it is asserted that positive personal adjustment comes only after basic physiological needs such as food and shelter are first achieved. Such an assertion may be not only inappropriate but, in fact, may distort attempts at appreciating the Dream Animal and ourselves in our entirety.

Replication refers to the view that events and periods of time are continually reoccurring within a pattern of cyclical time. Implicit

are the notions of cyclical time and of perennial archetype. Time is conceptualized as continually reoccurring cycles rather than as unique events occurring in a lineal progression, with a past, present and future. "What was" and "what will be" is "what is." It is the *Alcheringa*. And the ancestors continue to "live" among the living. In contrast, "history means disrespect for the ancestors." These reoccurring events and periods of time, in turn, are replications of the perennial archetypes originating out of the transcendent. The beauty of the flower now held in hand is a reflection of the perennial archetypical "flower." One dances the Dreamtime. And what is to be known is ultimately what is to be remembered that had been forgotten--anamnesis. To know is to return to the archetype, to the Dreamtime. For there is "nothing new under the Sun."

Participation refers to the process in which humanity partakes of an active role in helping bring forth the world. Are we not what we imagine? Is not imagination the "act of knowing and of feeling the life within all the world, and of participating in that life?" Is not the "vital act" the "act of participation?" And is not the universe "brought into being by the participation of those who participate?" Given the unity of all creation, and the meaning and animation that emanates through and from it, humanity, as a part of that creation, must necessarily emanate with that same meaning and animation. In turn, the participation of humanity in the world, expressed in symbolic actions, assists in the unfolding and creation of that world. The movement of an Eagle feather can knock over, and it can revive. A name can bring health or it can sicken. The Holy People think the world and then speak the world into being; and God said, "Let there be light." "That which comes through the mouth, words, has the power to effect the world," *dashussua*. Symbols are creative.

But the human acts of creation are not random, but guided by *perennial, transcendent archetypes*. The animation and the meaningfulness of human symbols occur when the human is in alignment as a microcosm of the world macrocosm, each mirroring

the other.⁵ The transcendent, and the archetypal meaning and animation that emerge from it, must be equally shared by human and world alike. To receive a vision, one must listen to the animals speak and to one's own soul speak. To receive a poem, one must listen to the voices of the flowers and clouds and to one's own voice. During a vision or an inspiration, all voices are in harmony. To heal with the feathers of the eagle, the symbolic actions of the healer must replicate the archetypal meaning of health as defined in the transcendent and shared by patient, healer, Eagle and the world. To continue through life with meaning, humanity must continually replicate in its actions the archetypal meanings that emanate from the transcendent, in humanity itself and from the world. To ignore the archetypes is to be blinded and lost. Symbols are creative when the symbols replicate the transcendent archetypes. And the stone of Sedna was held in one hand and the harpoon in the other. "Then the seal comes forth for a breath of air..., and some fresh water!"

In "questing to be a part of the world," the Dream Animal thus seeks participation with the world. From the transcendent emerge the meanings that guide and the animation to give life to those meanings. The "stone," alive, "held in hand," reveals. But one must be "attentive" with the "heart." To know is to "feel beauty" within the world. And to represent that "beauty" is to attempt to convey the mystery of the "inner forms." To continue access to the meaningful and to life, the Dream Animal seeks to replicate, seeks to mirror, in its actions and deeds the transcendent archetypes that emanate from all of creation--human and animal alike. To look out into the world, to look into the "looking glass," is to see the world within. The quest is to the summit of the mountain, and once there, to continue to live under the shadow of that mountain. What then is to be feared most is to live other than under the shadow, to be estranged from the world and not to participate. What is to be feared is the possibility of "wilderness" itself. In turn, a "rich man" is measured in terms of relationship and reciprocity, and in what is given. The more given the

⁵Much is owed to Mircea Eliade 1954 for clarifying the process and significance of replicating and mirroring archetypes.

richer the man. A "rich man" becomes a rich kinship, an integral and vital participant in the all-inclusive community of "people"--human, natural and divine. The "ideas" and moral rights of all "peoples" are affirmed. With the "community," so goes the welfare of the individual. The values of subjectification, equalization, qualitation, transcendentation, replication and participation have helped define and in turn constitute the world as if seen through a "looking glass," the Looking Glass world view.

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The entirety of the human experience has been a history of oscillating tendencies and pulls, what I have come to term, the Great Paradox. To survive in the natural world and to enhance its material well-being, the Dream Animal has sought to erect "stone walls" and thick "glass panes" between itself and that world, to be estranged from the world, from the natural world, and to live in the Glass Pane world. The Dream Animal has sought to live *apart from the world*. Yet, to obtain ultimate meaning and purpose in life, the Dream Animal has sought membership and participation in the world, to view out into the "looking glass" and see within, to live in the Looking Glass world. The Dream Animal has sought to be *a part of the world*. The stories we have just eye juggled certainly reflect the values of both tendencies. It is this tension and the oscillating emphasis from one to the other tendency, the Great Paradox, which characterizes much of the history of humanity's relationship with the world as well as the difficult choices each individual must make in his or her own life. The Dream Animal, indeed, is a Great Paradox.

The Culture of Consumption

My second observation. In the whole of human history there has never been a societal system that has produced such a *high level of material well-being and wealth of material comforts* than that which has originated out of our modern Euro-American (Western

Europe and North America) society.⁶ From sophisticated health care systems, to automated industrial manufacturing, to high-yield farming practices, to expansive transportation and communication networks, to an accessible educational system, the accomplishments go on. Humanity has now walked the craters of the moon and extended the life of a child with the implantation of a baboon's heart. In fact, the human biological heart can now be replaced with a mechanical heart.

The world is rapidly becoming a singular community. What is news in Beijing, Buenos Aires, Jakarta, Moscow or Tokyo is news in one's own living room. And what is dreamed in Beijing, Buenos Aires, Jakarta, Moscow or Tokyo is dreamed in one's own home. The aspirations associated with Euro-American society are rapidly becoming the aspirations of much of the entire world community. And those expectations are directed at ever increasing levels of consumer goods and material well-being, e.g., automobiles, clothing apparel, entertainment systems, recreational equipment, housing, nutrition and health care. One of America's most lucrative exports is its multi-billion-dollar-a-year "Hollywood Image,"--the motion picture, television, magazine, amusement park, popular music, and most assuredly, "fast food" and clothing industries. At this very moment it is likely that someone in Beijing, Buenos Aires, Jakarta, Moscow or Tokyo is standing in a line, wearing a pair of Levis, listening to "rock 'n' roll" and about to order a Big Mac and a Coke, and that someone is not an American. An entire life style, "American Popular Culture," is being successfully marketed worldwide. The images are clearly disseminated and received, images ingrained with expectations.

⁶Our Euro-American society is the culmination of the influences of both Looking Glass and Glass Pane world views. We are reminded that we should not arbitrarily assume an exclusive association of one or the other world view with any particular society.

With the emergence of modern Euro-American society has emerged what John Bodley has labeled the "culture of consumption."⁷ It is a life style predicated not only on what one consumes, but on an ever increasing level of consuming. One's social and economic status, familial relationships and modes of entertainment, the very core of one's self-identity are defined in terms of an almost insatiable hunger for consumable goods. Two favorite American pastimes, viewing television and visiting shopping malls, are oriented around their sales pitches for and lure of a seemingly endless array of brightly packaged consumer goods and throwaway products. The "culture of consumption" can best be epitomized in the soft drink and fast food slogans, "Gotta have it" and "What you want is what you get."

With these levels of material well-being and expectation also come a price tag. Never in the whole of human history has a societal system necessitated such high levels of resource and energy consumption than that required by our modern Euro-American society. To facilitate this cultural infrastructure and level of expectation, expanded and new sources of energy and resources are constantly being sought. In 1991, the energy use in the United States translated into the equivalent of each American consuming 25 barrels of oil, 3.5 tons of coal, and 75,000 cubic feet of natural gas.

But within the global community, shared by so many world views, the benefits of Euro-American society are not uniformly bestowed on all those who aspire its dream. While estimations vary, in the United States alone, Americans consume some 40% of the world's annual production of goods and 35% of the world's energy. Americans represent only 5% of the world's population. In global terms, the top 20% of the world's population controls 80% of the wealth while the bottom 20% controls less than 1.5% of the world's wealth. It is estimated that over a billion people in the southern hemisphere of this world survive on the equivalent of one dollar a day. Many dream the dream, yet for most the dream is far from

⁷See Bodley 1985. Bodley is among many who have used the term "culture of consumption." For an insightful discussion of the range and implications of the consumer life style, see Alan Durning 1992.

realized. All indications suggest that this socio-economic schism is widening and becoming more pervasive throughout the world, expressed in virtually all communities. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer.

With the increased levels of energy consumption characteristic of our Euro-American society, the questions remain whether the earth can continue to supply the energy resources necessary to maintain the expectations of its people, and whether the by-products of this level of energy consumption (i.e., pollution) can safely be absorbed within the world ecological system. Are new resources to be found? Are new technologies to be discovered? Is a change in expectations or even world-view values necessary?

At stake are the reserves of fossil fuels and raw materials such as iron ore and copper. At stake is the very fertility of the earth. Within the United States, for every ton of wheat harvested from the great plains, two tons of topsoil are lost because of erosion caused by modern farming practices. Each year some three billion tons of topsoil are lost to water and wind erosion tied to agricultural practices. In turn, agriculture and silviculture account for 46% of all river pollution in the United States. It takes approximately 500 years to produce an inch of topsoil.

At stake is the quality of the air and water. At stake are the global fluctuations in temperature and solar radiation. Each year, America emits over five billion tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, a major "green house" gas, and hundreds of millions of tons of sulfur dioxide, causing acid rain.

At stake is the continued existence of the vast forests of the Amazon, Southeast Asia, and the American Northwest. At stake is the diversity of animal and plant species, and the indigenous peoples who inhabit those forests. Each year between 20,000 and 40,000 species of animals and plants is eliminated from this planet by the actions of humans; and the rate of species extinction is increasing. It is estimated that one in eight known plant and animal species will be extinct within the next ten years. Of the five million Indians who once lived in the Amazon region, only 220,000 survive today. Until very recent and reluctant intervention by the Brazilian and Venezuelan governments, an average of one Yanomami Indian was

killed each day by gold mining and lumber interests. Yet, of the remaining 300 million indigenous people scattered throughout the world today, representing some 5% of the world's population, tens of thousands continue to die each year because of murder and warfare or disease and starvation, all brought about as a direct result of the resource demands of Euro-American society. With the death of indigenous peoples comes the loss of cultural diversity. As the biologist reminds us and as echoed in the voice of the anthropologist, a viable ecological system is a reflection of species and cultural diversification. Ultimately all successful adaptations to the dynamic of our bioenergetic-cybernetic niche are predicated on the vitality of and accessibility to system-wide diversity. An unstable and potentially dying ecological system is a reflection of an absence of species and cultural diversification, and the emergence of what is called a "mono-culture."

At stake is not only the quality of our life, but the very existence of the Dream Animal itself. At stake is not only the preservation of pristine wilderness areas, but the very existence of all life in this planetary ecosystem. Never in the history of this planet has a single species so influenced the very survival of all the species!

The Mobius Strip and the Mountain

Long ago a servant was sent to the market to buy some salt and flour for his Lord. "Here, bring the flour and salt to me on this plate, but don't mix the two; keep them separate," the Lord says, handing the plate to his servant. So the servant heads to the market, mindful of these instructions.

At the market, the servant has a shopkeeper fill the plate with flour. But as the shopkeeper is about to measure the salt, the servant stops him. He remembers what his master had told him. So the servant turns the plate over and has the shopkeeper pour the salt on the bottom side of the plate. Careful not to spill any of his cargo, the servant proudly returns to his Lord.

"Here's what you asked me to bring you," the servant says. And he presents the Lord with the plate of salt. "But where's the flour?" commands the Lord. "It's here," says the fool, turning over

the plate. But nothing is there, and as soon as the plate is turned, the salt is gone as well!

So it is, in doing one thing that you think to be right, you may undo another which is equally right.

* * * * *

My third observation. Exclusivity breeds destruction. Patterns of exclusivity pervade our thinking. They are often manifested in dichotomized, either/or thinking such as is found in situations characterized in terms of us/them, friend/foe, good/evil, win/lose, true/false, black/white. In these situations of polar opposites, any given position or category is arbitrarily perceived as not the other and is excluded from it. However, when dichotomized thinking is taken to extremes it can stereotype, distort, limit choices and options, and is divisive. In the instance of the Glass Pane and the Looking Glass world views, when one world view has dominated the values of a particular society or individual, exclusive of the other, the earth and humanity have suffered.

To embrace Looking Glass values, exclusive of Glass Pane values, is to ignore the welfare of humanity. The creation and accessibility of food, shelter, health care, communication, transportation, recreation: all are contingent upon Glass Pane values. The understandings of our biological, historical and social being as well as the attempts to thwart those stereotypes, prejudices and hatreds driven by our blind ignorance and false assertions: all are contingent upon Glass Pane values. "History," after all, has chronicled the considerable and senseless destruction of human and animal "peoples" in the name of "religion," or "Manifest Destiny," or some other narrowly-defined conviction. And we are reminded that much of the impetus for the emergence of our contemporary "social sciences" was the challenge to the prevailing and pervasive oppression of other peoples--African American, American Indian,

Jew.⁸ Certainly the very assumptions upon which you have endeavored in this workbook, to "interpret," to "eye juggle," are in part grounded in Glass Pane values. Our sciences and technologies, our analytical pursuits and intellectual curiosities are all thus made possible. Glass Pane values bring forth a world of discovery, as new frontiers are to be explored, and a world of hope, as obstacles to human betterment are overcome. Human populations need the nourishments that Glass Pane values provide.

On the other hand, to embrace Glass Pane values, exclusive of Looking Glass values, is also to ignore the welfare of humanity as well as the welfare of all the earth. When animal, plant and human are defined as material objects alone, and are denied a spirit and soul, are denied "Mind," they are rendered susceptible to neglect, abuse, degradation and destruction. It is so much easier to cut down a stand of trees, endanger a species of animal, and pollute a stream when that tree, animal and stream are seen as nothing more than objects. It is so much easier to hate another person, to be a racist, and to engage in war when that person is seen as nothing more than an object. While the causes of prejudice, whether directed at human or animal "peoples," are certainly varied and numerous, the necessary precondition for them all is objectification. And the greater the objectification, the greater the potential for abuse.

Paradoxically, while Glass Pane values at once bring forth new understandings upon which we as a humanity depend, those understandings are also predicated on the very same values of which we must also be cautious. For those values, when untempered by Looking Glass values, have ultimately fostered our insidious hatreds and wanton destructions of other "peoples." As two expressions of that destruction, we are further reminded that our emerging "social sciences" also contributed to and, however unwittingly, became

⁸As in the example of the American anthropologist Franz Boas (1858-1942) and the American sociologist and educator W. E. B. Du Bois (1868-1963).

instruments of European and American colonialism, and of racist doctrine.⁹

And "*the creature that wins against its environment destroys itself.*" In our cybernetic ecosystem, the continued viability of any given component, as well as the viability of the complete and total circuit, are dependent of the free flows and exchanges of information through *all* pathways and among *all* components. As the wheel fails to roll when some of its spokes are removed, so too within a closed ecosystem. When segments of the circuitry are ignored or eliminated, entropy and chaos ensue, and death is assured. The Inuit "peoples" maintain a balance in their delicate ecosystem by entering into an *all-inclusive* web of feedback loops and information exchanges with the animal "peoples," regulated in the character of Sedna and an intricate series of hunting taboos. The driftwood survives the turbulence because of the lodging of *all* the driftwood.

And should not the moral rights of *all* "peoples" be acknowledged and assured?

The Looking Glass values necessitate a participation with animals, plants and culturally distinct peoples, with the entirety of the planetary ecology. Brought forth is a world of kinship, as an ethic of respect and cooperation among kinsmen is fostered, and a world of inspiration and imagination, as the ultimate destiny and purpose of the Earth and of Humanity, each inseparable, is revealed and given meaning. Brought forth is the world of the *Alcheringa* and of "Mind." The Earth and Humanity need the nourishments that aesthetic inspiration, spiritual revelation, and ecological humility and balance provide; the Earth and Humanity need what Looking Glass values provide.

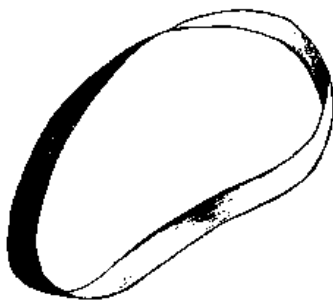
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⁹As in the instances of Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), the German writer Count Joseph Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882), the English eugenicist Francis Galton (1822-1911), and the American sociologist William Graham Summer (1840-1910).

Is exclusivity an inevitable feature of our humanity? Or can one category, seemingly an opposite, embrace and be included alongside the other? How then are we to view phenomena as simultaneously divisible, unique, material, devoid of spirit, as well as united within a singular whole, indivisible and transcendent? How can something be *many* and *one*, as well as *material* and *transcendent* all at the same time? Are we as the fool? Or can we carry the salt and the flour together on the same plate, without spilling one or the other or both?

Our first task is to be alert and receptive to the “possible,” and not blinded by unchallenged preconceptions. We must apply elasticity to our story. I am reminded of the Mobius strip.¹⁰ When can two parallel lines, each never crossing over the other and each with a discrete beginning and end, become a singular line, each inclusive of the other, with neither beginning nor end? An impossibility you say? The resolution is, in part, perceptual, in the way we think and tell the story.

Take a long narrow strip of paper. The outside edges of the strip represent two parallel lines, each separate from the other, each with a beginning and an end--exclusivity. Now twist the strip 180-degrees and link one end with the other. Out of an exclusive, lineal structure of two parallel lines you have created an inclusive circular flow of a singular line, without beginning nor end--inclusivity.



¹⁰After August F. Mobius, a German mathematician who died in 1868.

As an expression of our perception of the world, as an ingrained value within our cultural story, I would argue that exclusivity is neither inevitable nor intransigent. Is not the Dreamer a part of the Animal, and the Animal the Dreamer? Can we not attempt with one eye to see into the Looking Glass while with the other look through the Glass Pane? As the old man with long, black braids juggled his eyes to the top of that tall cedar, can we not attempt to balance our eye juggling?

* * * * *

Once freed from the shackles of preconception and open to the realm of the "possible," we must next complete our new story. An appropriate metaphor is to be found.

Such a metaphor, I would argue, is to be found when Looking Glass values, and especially the value of transcendency, are acknowledged and brought into consideration. This apparent contradiction, of the *many* and *one* and of the *material* and *spiritual*, can be clarified and resolved. Simply put, the multiple of phenomena is associated with the overt and the manifest, while the oneness of phenomenon is associated with the transcendent. While boundaries demarcate and separate the "conspecific individuals" within the bioenergetic ecology, a unity of interconnected information pathways encloses the entirety of the cybernetic ecology; Mind and body are unified. Was not this suggested previously in the symbolism of the spokes and hub of the Crow Indian "wagon wheel" imagery. If the wheel is to continue to turn, that which is unique and separate, the spokes, must nevertheless remain part of the wheel, anchored to the rim and hub.

The parable of the "mountain climb" adds further resolution. On the mountain there are many and differing routes for reaching the summit. One route comes out of the hot desert, another from the grassland prairie, one from a lush jungle, and a fourth comes out of a rugged mountain range. As each climber begins his or her ascent

of the mountain, each is attired in the clothes and gear appropriate to his or her home terrain. Each necessarily differs from the other, unsuited to the terrains of the others. As the climbers continue toward the summit, much of the gear each once wore is discarded along the way. After much effort, each of the climbers finally reaches their common goal. And what each is now wearing is indistinguishable from the others. In our metaphor, the home terrains represent the unique and multiple found in the history and geography of a people, the overt and manifest differences that separate--the Glass Pane world. The summit, reached only "after much effort," represents the unity and oneness to be found in the transcendent--the Looking Glass world.

* * * * *

As we have discovered, awareness of our stories is a task not easily accomplished. Values are never readily revealed. Yet an informed life is a life with meaning. An uninformed life is no life. To "live lives of quiet desperation," as Thoreau suggested, is to be bound in our imagination and being to a life enslaved by forces unknown to us, to be at the mercy of our ignorance, to be owned by our stories. With knowledge comes an opportunity to celebrate our stories, to rejoice in the meaning and beauty they have for us. With knowledge also comes an opportunity to re-evaluate and re-combine the values of our own stories, and to incorporate the values of another's story, if we so choose. With knowledge comes ownership of our stories and choice; and, with choice comes the possibility of an improved quality of life.

As with the choices offered the *akbaalia* when he was visited by the Little People, we all have a choice in the particular combination of stories we wish to tell of and to ourselves, a choice in the path in life we wish to take. Because of the tremendous consequences to ourselves, to others, and to the world about us, should we not then take responsibility to explore the particular stories we tell and to appreciate the values that emanate from them, to grow in an awareness of who we are and what humanity is? Which Looking Glass and which Glass Pane stories are our stories? Which combination of Glass Pane and Looking Glass stories do we wish to

tell? And what do our stories tell--what are their implications--implications for us, for others, for the earth? Should we not take ownership of our stories? Not to take ownership of our stories is to allow our stories to own us.

Eye juggling, in its most essential form, is after all the human act of making choices and pursuing options, of sending our eyes to the sky and looking in the four or in the many directions, or in altogether new ways, or in ways forgotten and now remembered.

* * * * *

"The essence of moral decisions is the exercise of choice and the willingness to accept responsibility for that choice."

So wrote Carol Gilligan in her book entitled, *In A Different Voice* (1982).

