Cognitive Processes -- Being a Verb
rather than a noun or another part of speech

Introduction

The title of this exploration might be considered inappropriate to what follows. However, briefly put, the concern is with the dynamic nature of a more appropriate method of engendering and relating to knowledge -- one in which identification with any parts of the process as substantives renders the method non-viable. In this self-referential mode, method, process and mode are themselves called into question.

Playing with categories

It is useful to recognize the extent to which the array of categories that can be drawn into any exploration constitute what might be termed a "built environment" -- a highly urbanized conceptual context. In that environment there are many owners of intellectual property and many with rights as users, perhaps to the extent that particular contexts are "open to the public" or to users authorized in some way. Such properties may effectively be rented or leased. In this context, it is difficult for newcomers to acquire property -- to obtain the resources to get "a step on the property ladder", to have a congenial "place to stay", or to "call their own". This built environment of course has its own logic and one is free to buy into its processes and to associate one's identity with some part of it -- perhaps even to have a building bear one's name in lasting recognition of one's place in it.

The concern here however is with the possibility of dissociating one's identity from the finite and enduring nature of these constructs -- which may also be felt to be "cages" and "traps", as commonly expressed.

As an alternative, the array of categories may instead be framed more like a "keyboard" of "notes" of a musical instrument. The organization of this built conceptual environment, in all its complexity, is then to be understood more like a vast organ -- a musical instrument with multiple keyboards. The emphasis then shifts from the cognitive identification with particular notes to how the notes are to be played. Significance is attached less specifically to the enduring sound of a particular note. It shifts to the pattern of notes and the harmonies that can be made apparent by the sequence in which they are played, their combination in chords, and the interplay and juxtaposition of patterns played simultaneously on different keyboards of the conceptual organ.

Rather than an "organ" -- and recognizing the degree of conceptual and organizational subdivision in practice -- its various "keyboards" may be understood as distinct instruments. The metaphor might then be a string quartette, a jazz group or a symphony orchestra with its many instrumental "voices", perhaps complemented by solo voices or a choir.

The question is then what sense of identity is carried by music engendered in this way? A sense of such possibilities is already intuited in the recognition of the capacity of the most powerful to play effectively on multiple keyboards, expressed in the sense of their capacity to "pull strings", and many of them -- switching here from an "organ" metaphor to a "harp" metaphor perhaps. This intuitive understanding is also expressed less musically through the expression "having a finger in many pies".

The point to be stressed is the capacity to engage with a particular note or not. The challenge is the shift in cognitive centre of gravity from any habitual note or set of notes to the potential of the keyboard, the challenge of making music, and what that music is to embody.

Expressed in terms of spiritual disciplines of "detachment" versus "attachment", this shift is not one of complete detachment. Rather there is a necessary pattern of attachment to particular notes at particular times, and detachment from them otherwise. In effect there is a detachment from whether there is attachment or detachment at any one time -- recognizing the need, however, for a degree of attachment to particular notes at particular times if the music is to be played.

Instrumentation and tuning

In seeking to give expression to this "method", whether "new" or not, the challenge with respect to these musical metaphors, is how the variety of "instruments" is to be recognized to enable engagement with them. Or rather, perhaps, the challenging vulnerability to being overwhelmed by the seeming power and omnipresence of a particular instrument to which one is (unduly) exposed. More problematic is the challenge of the enchanting capacity of the instrument(s) with which one is most familiar, competent and content -- for which
"enchanting" may indeed be the operative term.

However the challenge may be framed otherwise. The built conceptual environment described above may indeed be understood as a vast array of instruments. One may select amongst them, choose to play with them or to listen to the compositions and performances of others on them.

A set of categories may be selected "off the shelf" to provide an array of notes -- a fret or keyboard -- through which expression can be given to an understanding of cognitive reality. Effort can be devoted to identifying alternative tuning systems to express these understandings in a less distorted manner -- recognizing the price of cognitive compromise.

What is the significance of "ringing true" in this context? For whom does this appreciation hold -- for whom is it true? How is the "goodness of fit" of an explanation determined to be satisfactory? What kind of understanding is carried by such appropriateness? (Comp Appr)

**Compositional process: from art trouvé to méthode trouvé**

Rather than selecting a "prefabricated" set of categories, no matter the expertise and tradition by which they are guaranteed, a more radical approach may be taken. This is readily understood, as an extension of the above metaphors, through the process of folk songwriting so clearly articulated by Tom Bliss (Folk Songwriting, Living Tradition Magazine):

Songwriting -- specially 'folk' songwriting -- is essentially a subtractive, not a constructive art. I sometimes liken it to restoring an overgrown garden. You know the shrubs are in there, but you have to pull out the brambles to find them. Then you need to prune or maybe move what you've uncovered, before you can begin planting new flowers.

Because Folk is an inclusive rather than an exclusive genre, and so much fine music has come before that we'd be foolish to shut it all out. So we need to embrace our influences, rather than reject them, if we're to make our songs as familiar as possible, as quickly as possible.

And if it is a constructive art, then it's more like art trouvé -- making sculpture from bits and bobs, because most of the musical phrases and harmonic possibilities do already exist, as do most of the narrative ideas, and even some of the lyrical phrases -- whether we like it or not.

Our job as 'folk' writers (and let's not forget the implied contradiction in that title) is not to build something new from the ground up (which is almost impossible in any musical genre anyway these days, though brand new genres do keep appearing, and probably always will). It's not to splash bright paint onto a grey canvas.

No. Our task is stare at the block of stone until we see the shape within -- and then to chip and polish until it's revealed. Or maybe -- if we're talking about sculpture trouvé -- to pile the pebbles so they catch a new slant of light. Or make a pattern of seeds on the ground. Or maybe to bend the twigs with care, so our sculpture will grow on, and on, long after we've left the glade.

Because the folk-songwriter's challenge to make art that is both new and old at the same time. Songs that borrow from, yet (hopefully) also add to, the tradition. Art which is familiar -- yet fresh, challenging - yet comfortable, exciting -- yet embraceable by what is perhaps the most conservative market in the country. [development in detail]

Given its original purpose, such a text has however to be carefully re-interpreted as a metaphor to be of relevance to this exploration. The point then is the capacity to select disparate materials, as seems appropriate, in order to compose them into a pattern capable of bringing out another level of significance. This "method" may of course be subject to criticism, as is art trouvé, when some other method is favoured. The advantages are however clearly stated in the above quotation.

Of particular interest is how one a set of categories -- a fret or keyboard -- is identified by this method, or how the compositional process effectively defines such a set and proceeds to "tune" the materials into an array -- a tuned cognitive instrument, according to some tuning system considered to be appropriate. Again the set may be trouvé (from a seemingly relevant discipline), possibly borrowed (as the songwriting process has been borrowed here), or imposed as a creative act. The number of "notes" permissible within such a set is also of great concern -- notably how "too many" and "too few" are determined (cf Rep ***). But, in the spirit of the method, any such choices may be made for the moment and abandoned thereafter.

It is in this sense that any method can itself be understood as trouvé. Borrowed from the conceptual altars of the day -- or retrieved from the refuse abandoned by it, however appreciated it may have been in the past. Antiquities have their own qualities in contrast with bright and shiny efficient novelties.

**Incorporation and embodiment -- beyond performance**

The previous argument, and the metaphor used, emphasizes the creative act of selecting in order to compose and perform. Whilst this is an expression of great appreciation of the quality of what is assembled, it raises questions about what is "left behind": What was surplus to requirements in focusing attention through the composed resultant pattern? And for whom is such a selective focusing designed?

Metaphor can be used differently to take the exploration further. It may be assumed that many, if not all, human activities in and on the "real world" are in some respects metaphors for cognitive processes. These processes have effectively been (mistakenly) projected "outward" and their cognitive connotations have been obscured, lost or denatured. But the "external" processes are patterns totally respectful of those "internal" processes -- and are in fact faithful reflections of them. The observer of these processes has however
effectively become disembodied or discorporate in the sense of no longer embodying or incorporating these processes. The elements of such an argument have been extensively explored elsewhere (cf Francesco Varela, Evan Thompson and Eleanor Roach. *The Embodied Mind: cognitive science and human expression*, 1991; George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: the embodied mind and its challenge to western thought*, 1999).

This "re-cognition" opens the possibility of exploring a form of bonding with reality -- a coniunctio that unites the "internal" with the "external" -- otherwise to be considered as having been separated by cognitive artifice. This has been neatly expressed by the title of a study by Gregory Bateson (*Mind and Nature: a necessary unity*, 1979). However this transformation undermines the focus highlighted in the previous section on performance, expression or profession. In effect the "audience" has disappeared -- or been resorbed through the coniunctio.

The totality of external objective reality (Gegenstand) so embodied is then to be understood as constituting a kind of receptive aerial array capable of sensitivity to larger and more integrative patterns of significance. The array metaphor of such embodiment is enriched by consideration of extremely low frequency (ELF) antennas which, because of the huge size requirement, and in order to transmit over long distances and underwater, makes use of the earth itself as an antenna, with extremely long leads going into the ground.

**Incorporated processes**

Of particular interest in taking the exploration further is the manner in which the "external" challenges of "global" governance, namely the "problems" of the world, and the "strategies" to be deployed in response to them, are themselves resorbed into an integrative cognitive dynamic. The problems are then to be understood in terms of the cognitive deficiencies which engender and sustain them -- a view directly consistent with some Buddhist perspectives and less directly consistent with the generative consequences of "sins" as understood in other religions.

The "big" and "external" problems are all effectively present in embryonic form in the cognitive mindset -- as are the "global" action plans appealing desperately for attention and resources in response to them. The question is how, why and who made them "big" and "external"?

However it should be emphasized that it would be inadequate to assume from this that the problems, for example, are to be understood as of purely "internal" origin. Any coniunctio is to be understood as engendering a cognitive zone which is neither internal nor external -- well symbolized by the vesica piscis (with its mandorla). It is in that zone that understanding of the problems and strategies is to be more fruitfully reframed.

**From categories to processes**

The challenge is to reframe the complete array of human activities such as to emphasize the associated systemic processes rather than labelling each activity as a static cell in that array (cf *Functional Classification in an Integrative Matrix of Human Preoccupations*, 1982). Within the earlier musical metaphor, such an array needs to be understood as an array of "notes" -- a fret or keyboard. The point to be stressed is that habitual treatment of human activities as static categories, or matters of observation, reinforces an administrative disassociation from the dynamics of cognitive engagement with them. This is the strategic challenge of governance in engaging with the instrument and "playing" it -- especially when one is the governor of one's world. Useful points of departure are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category (understood as a noun)</th>
<th>Implicit dynamic process (understood as a verb)</th>
<th>Indicative problem categories (calling for understanding in dynamic terms)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[see Integrative matrix]</td>
<td>[see Global Strategies]</td>
<td>[see World Problems]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agriculture</td>
<td>farming (historically: hunting and gathering)</td>
<td>water shortage, soil infertility, soil erosion, pests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health</td>
<td>healing, curing</td>
<td>illness, disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(self-)employment (economic activity)</td>
<td>working (productively)</td>
<td>unemployment, unproductivity, poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education, culture, media</td>
<td>learning, educating, cultivating, informing</td>
<td>ignorance, disinformation, spin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food and water</td>
<td>nourishing</td>
<td>hunger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>habitat</td>
<td>sheltering</td>
<td>homelessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment</td>
<td>conserving and recycling</td>
<td>environmental degradation, over-exploitation, wastage, nuclear proliferation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>energy resources</td>
<td>conserving</td>
<td>over-exploitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>security</td>
<td>protecting</td>
<td>insecurity, crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>justice, ethics</td>
<td>caring</td>
<td>inequality, injustice, unethical activity, immoral activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reproduction</td>
<td>procreating</td>
<td>over-population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recreation</td>
<td>entertaining</td>
<td>substance abuse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The challenge of the above table is to reframe and internalize understanding of the categories in the left-hand column, as typically manipulated by intergovernmental agencies, in order to activate the understanding of the central column. For example the attitude of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the OECD or the European Commission to "agriculture" has virtually nothing in common with the attitude of someone engaged in "farming". In this sense it is questionable whether people with insights into "farming" processes would be considered as appropriate employees by an organization concerned with "agriculture". This means that they respond to the "problems" of the right-hand column in quite different ways. Because of the degree of subjectivity associated with the
internalization of the processes of the central column, any explanations of them quickly take on the static character of the categories of the left-hand column.

Cognitive processes

A second (and possibly greater) challenge in developing this exploration is that of reframing -- as metaphors or patterns of cognitive activity -- the processes of the central column (of the above table), and the problems of the right-hand column.

The following paragraphs are developed from earlier exercises (My Reflecting Mirror World: making my World Summit on Sustainable Development worthwhile, 2002; Being the Universe -- a metaphoric frontier: co-existent immanence of evolutionary phases, 1999; Opportunity: reframing problems through metaphors).

Consider some of the categories of human activity from the above table in terms of this challenge.

Process of recreation, entertainment, distraction: There is a widely acknowledged recognition of the capacity to project certain psychological processes into competitive sport. It is however significant that for a variety of sports, emphasis has been placed on the "inner game", whether as a key to conventional success in the outer game or as an experience of significance in its own right (cf the Inner Game of: Tennis, Golf, Frisbee, Chess, Poker, Billiards, Fencing, Go, Sumo, Skiing). Play may itself be considered as spiritual discipline (Mary Katherine Morn, Play as Spiritual Discipline, 2003).

Recreational problem: substance abuse (including drugs and alcohol): Surely the substance abuse in which I engage is signalling a desperate need on my part for different modes of thinking, feeling and experience than those encouraged by a society I have created for myself -- now governed by antiquated thinking patterns which have been only too effectively institutionalized in "acceptable" modes of work and leisure? Again, since many that I have set up as role models in key positions in such institutions also use drugs or alcohol "to relax", what should I be learning from the level of stress -- and schizophrenia -- at which the prevailing mode of thought is requiring them to function? Is my substance abuse not effectively offering a remedy for the imaginal deficiency and mechanistic patterning characteristic of "acceptable" individual and collective behaviour? And consequently would not substance abuse become less necessary if my society acknowledged more imaginative opportunities? What is the incidence of substance abuse in the other cultures of my world whose languages make very extensive use of metaphor? To what extent is it useful for me to perceive my relation to the prevailing thinking pattern as a form of "addiction" -- a habit that I do not know how to kick?

The relevance of the process dimension of play to governance was considered in an earlier paper (Playfully Changing the Prevailing Climate of Opinion: climate change as focal metaphor of effective global governance, 2005).

Process of farming (category: agriculture/husbandry): The sense of the "inner game" in sport has also been applied in the case of gardening as a form of agriculture (cf Diane Dreher, Inner Gardening: A Seasonal Path to Inner Peace, 2002; and notions of an "inner garden", or a "secret garden"). There is widespread recognition that preoccupation with the external phenomena of gardening has psychological implications:

- gardeners everywhere have acknowledged the psychological impact of gardens and gardening, and may well engage in those processes for that reason [more | more]
- there is widespread recognition within certain spiritual disciplines of the role of gardening and sacred ecosystems (cf Zen temple gardens, sacred groves and other sanctified ecosystems)

It is appropriate to reflect on the potential implications of the internalization of the processes of agriculture: ploughing, sowing, irrigating, fertilizing, weeding, harvesting, and the need for crop rotation (cf Sustainable Cycles of Policies: crop rotation as a metaphor, 1988).

Even externally there is a striking parallel between the rotation of crops and the succession of (governmental) policies applied in a society. The contrast is also striking because of the essentially haphazard switch between "right" and "left" policies. There is little explicit awareness of the need for any rotation to correct for negative consequences ("pests") encouraged by each and to replenish the resources of society ("nutrients", "soil structure") which each policy so characteristically depletes. Presumably these processes provide templates for a range of insightful cognitive processes.

It is worth reflecting on the extent to which "gardening" corresponds to the "agricultural" phase of human community development in contrast with the "hunting" phase more appropriately corresponding to competitive sport. These therefore reflect contrasting dispositions between which some form of "marriage" is called for -- to enable a coherent new response to the challenge of the times. At present "gardening" corresponds to the kind of strategic process that sustains "business as usual", whereas "sport" (notably in the form of competitive ball games) corresponds to the kind of strategic process characterized by "point scoring" and "fast footwork". It might be argued that any "marriage" between them has so far proved to be infertile.

Farming problems:

- a) Control of pests: with each crop grown the emergence of characteristic weeds, insects and diseases is facilitated. Changing to another crop inhibits the spread of such pests which would otherwise become uncontrollable (to the point that some crops should not be grown twice in succession). By rotating winter and summer crops, the farmer fights summer weeds in the winter crop and winter weeds in the summer crop.
- b) Maintenance of organic matter: some crops deplete the organic matter in the soil, other increase it.
- c) Maintenance of soil nitrogen supply: no single cropping system will ordinarily maintain the nitrogen supply unless leguminous crops are alternated with others.
• (d) **Economy of labour:** several crops may be grown in succession with only one soil preparation (ploughing). For example: the land is ploughed for maize, the maize stubble is disked for wheat, then grass and clover are seeded in the wheat.

• (e) **Protection of soil:** it was once believed necessary to leave land fallow for part of the cycle. Now it is known that a proper rotation of crops, with due attention to maintaining the balance of nutrients, is more successful than leaving the land bare and exposed to leaching and erosion.

• (f) **Complete use of soil:** by alternation between deep and shallow-rooted crops the soil may be utilized more completely.

• (g) **Balanced use of plant nutrients:** when appropriately alternated, crops reduce the different nutrient materials of the soil in more desirable proportions.

• (h) **Orderly farming:** work is more evenly distributed throughout the year. The farm layout is usually simplified and costs of production are reduced. The rushed work characteristic of haphazard cropping is avoided.

• (i) **Risk reduction:** risks are distributed among several crops as a guarantee against complete failure.

**Process of working (economic activity):** The insight of an "inner game" in sport has been adapted to competitive economic activity (cf the Inner Game of: *Business, Investing, Wealth, Work, Management, Trading, Entrepreneurship, Selling, Prospecting*). Many spiritual disciplines use "work" has a learning process, notably within intentional communities (cf D.G. Hart, *Work as (Spiritual) Discipline*; Kent Walkemeyer, *Work as Spiritual Discipline*, 2006). The practice of *karma yoga* is understood as the correct manner of performing work without greed or desire, and without looking for the fruits of benefit or loss in the action performed.

**Poverty:** I am exposed to a great deal of poverty in my world -- and I consider myself relatively impoverished compared to many. My concern about poverty tends to focus on objects that I do not have -- even when I do not need those things to enable me to achieve a degree of well-being. Somehow my well-being is intimately related to things that I do not have -- even when I have most of the things that many in my world only dream of having. And of course, once I obtain the things I feel I am lacking, I find that there are other things that I lack which still define me as poor in my own eyes. Is it possible that what I, and my world, really suffer from is some poorly diagnosed chronic poverty of the spirit?

**Unemployment** (including underemployment and absenteeism): Unemployment is a major concern in my world. It is no longer fruitful to argue that a significant proportion of unemployment is simply due to laziness, reluctance to learn new skills, lack of initiative or lack of opportunities. Is it possible that the prevailing mode of thinking, that I encourage, is inhibiting my peoples' ability to imagine new forms of action of value to others, encouraging many to perceive existing employment opportunities as worthless both to themselves and to others, as well as impoverishing the manner in which they consider what to do with their lives? Is unemployment telling me that much of the work on offer in my society is not worth doing -- and that much which is done is pointless? This would certainly be consistent with many criticisms of the consumer society and of industrial exploitation of the environment. Perhaps it is also saying that what I value doing, or am obliged to do, is not appropriately valued (as "work") in an economic system that I have allowed to be governed by an inadequate mode of thinking. This would certainly be consistent with the debate about the economic value of housework. Contrasting employment with recreation (as opposed to unemployment) is somewhat ironic in that unimaginative leisure opportunities are increasingly incapable of offering "re-creation". Is the level of unemployment also indicating that I really do not know to what I could usefully and meaningfully devote my resources? Worse still, is it indicating that I have dissociated the challenges to human society from opportunities for "work" because of the way such challenges are perceived within the pattern of thinking that I have allowed to prevail?

**Unproductivity:** A prime concern is with economic productivity and the relatively unproductive nature of my "developing" countries and regions -- all according to monetary criteria. My "countries" are now traumatized by the need to increase productivity and "market share" in competition with each other. This is considered to be a healthy characteristic of my world -- although clearly the hope that any country could increase its market share, as more countries become productive, is clearly illusory in the extreme. It is also curious that the more productive countries need less productive countries in order to remain competitive. Given the extent to which many in my world are having to become reconciled to being "unemployed", and therefore "unproductive", it is unclear why I have to be so convinced of the vital importance of productivity -- or why I have to tolerate such a degree of frenetic activity in my world. Is it so impossible for me to engender a more graceful way of sustaining the movement of energies within the world?

**Process of nourishing**

**Problem: Hunger (including malnutrition):** I am constantly hearing that millions of people in my world are threatened with death by starvation. I am able to keep this challenge at a distance -- despite the pictures in the media -- but it is a constant drain on my spirit. All is definitely not well. Is this problem signalling the existence of a subtler and more widespread form of deprivation -- a malnutrition of my psyche and a spiritual hunger which I am even less capable of addressing? This would be consistent with many concerns about the artificality and superficiality of experience offered in the emerging "information society" or "global village" -- and with the desperate attempts to increase the level of "reality" by increasing the quantity and degrading quality of violence portrayed in the media. Do I now need a "murder-a-night to feel alight"? What does this say about my sense of superiority towards the public hangings in times gone by? To what extent is my imagination appropriately nourished at this time -- despite the surfeit of imaginative material available? What are the foodstuffs and vitamins of the spirit? What is the nourishment for the spirit that I am unable to cultivate and harvest? Is this a skill now lost to my world?
Health

Disease (and pain): There are many kinds of disease in my world with many suffering chronic pain. Beyond the physical pain are the many forms of mental illness, stress, neurosis and personality disorder -- especially in the "industrialized" parts of my world. Why am I so unhealthy? The many types of disease are useful indicators of the different ways in which I tend to fail to come to terms with my world -- and of the remedies that I seek as appropriate. Why, for example, do I invest so much in supporting the curiously dysfunctional dynamics of a pharmaceutical industry and a medical profession that are so well-nourished by disease? The question is whether such diseases are effectively diseases of my imagination and of my imaginal deficiency. To what extent is the illness and pain in my world a consequence of my inappropriate thinking and framing?

Education, cultivation

Ignorance (including functional illiteracy): Is the level of ignorance, even in my "industrialized countries", telling me that much of the knowledge on which that judgement is based is not worth learning? This concern has certainly been expressed in debates about existing curricula. Is it suggesting that for their psychic survival my people are educating themselves along pathways that are not considered meaningful, or indicative of intelligence, within the pattern of thinking that I have allowed to dominate? This is suggested by the immense resources devoted to music and to "alternative" therapies and belief systems. Is it suggesting that my people feel deprived of an imaginative education, faced with the formal (even rote) learning so frequently considered most appropriate (especially "to the needs of industry")? This is suggested by the enthusiasm for graphics, cartoon books, science fiction, fantasy and the archetypal portrayal of cult figures of the music industry. Is my concern with the ignorance of many, including myself, concealing the fact that those to whom I have attributed most expertise and power are really quite ignorant about how to navigate through current and future crises -- an ignorance compounded by my incompetence?

Disinformation and spin: My world is now almost entirely governed through media spin. Any conceivable viewpoint can be solicited from the highest authority -- appropriately rewarded -- including denial that there is any spin. Whilst only a proportion of the "evidence" is now obtained through biased research, bribery or torture, I no longer engender any authority to be trusted to distinguish "truth" from "lie" in my world. Consequently all authoritative pronouncements I engender are now suspect. Ironically those who benefit most from such spin now despair at the lack of collective trust in their affirmations.

Uncultured:

Shelter, habitat

Homelessness: Many people in my world lack adequate shelter. Is the lack of appropriate shelter, even in my "industrialized countries", indicating that, with the current pattern of thinking that I have allowed to prevail, I am ineffective in my ability to provide, construct, or acquire cognitive and affective frameworks to shelter my people appropriately from the turbulence of the times? This would be consistent with concerns about alienation in modern society. It would also follow from the recognition that many traditional frameworks and belief systems have been torn down or discredited. Even where my people are well sheltered, it is often in houses or apartments that reflect an impoverishment of architectural imagination -- as reinforced by unimaginative building regulations and construction economics. Is my imaginal life so impoverished by the media that I engender the ability to provide a hospitable "interior decoration" for my psyche has been degraded? Have I lost the ability to understand how to create "hearth" and "home"?

Environment, recycling

Wastage (including environmental degradation): Is my insensitivity to the processes of wastage and pollution, for which I am personally responsible, signalling the existence of an indifference to the "salubrity" and "sanitation" of my imaginative life? This would be consistent with the concern expressed by some of my non-western cultures and constituencies at the indifference to "spiritual purity". There is little consensus on what is or is not healthy for the psyche -- just as I am no longer clear, with the increasing extent of pollution, to what extent which foodstuffs are safe. The depletion of natural resources associated with wastage calls for reflection on the possibility that my western-inspired culture is depleting its psychic resources in ways that I have yet to understand? Can the imaginative resources of a culture be depleted to a point of "bankruptcy" and how can such resources be conserved and "recycled"? Do empires fall through imaginative failure?

Degradation of the environment (including ecosystems and species): There is widespread recognition that the environment of my world is being severely degraded and may well be close to collapse. Ecosystems and species that I have engendered are being annihilated by those whose livelihoods depend upon them. Healthy ecosystems are being "poisoned" by lethal pollutants, genetically modified organisms, and introduced species -- that somehow I accept. How is it that, despite lip service to the contrary, I am so tolerant of this process? Is it that my ability to be conscious of the full richness of biodiversity is highly constrained? Consequently is the loss of this or that ecosystem (or species) essentially irrelevant to the dynamics of the reduced ecosystem (with its minimal range of species) of which I am most directly aware? Is this somehow a measure of my own impoverishment -- reflected in the concrete jungles that are increasingly the habitat of my awareness? How is it that I have lost
any sense of the irony of importing exotic species (provided that they behave) to populate artificial niches in such concrete habitats? Worse still, how is it that my conceptual framework attaches no sense of the importance to the dynamics of species in the wild, rather than to those restrained in pots or cages -- or by enclosures or chains? What degree of self-mockery do I celebrate with a dog kept on a leash?

Nuclear proliferation: Many have pointed to the degree of risk associated with proliferating nuclear power stations and weaponry. A chain of accidents could trigger complete disaster to life on my planet. Is this some form of ultimate existential risk with which I choose to stimulate my world and my sense of reality -- in order, paradoxically, to feel alive? Does the nature of the risk carry learnings that would be of most value to a more insightful mode of life?

Security

Crime (including corruption): A major criticism of my development aid process is that the resources are diverted away from those most in need, despite agreements to prevent this. Various forms of bribery or "commission" are a common feature, even in my "industrialized countries". In any position (and notably in intergovernmental agencies), my appointees endeavour to obtain perks and privileges for themselves, for relatives or for friends -- whether this is limited to pilferage of office supplies, extended into the imposition of a "socially acceptable taxation" (or "sweetener") on any transactions which they control, or developed into a full-blown criminal activity. What can I learn from this degree of self-interest and the associated rule-breaking propensity? Is this an indication that my people cannot survive within the mechanistic regulations which emerge from the current pattern of thinking I have engendered -- or at least choose not to do so, and feel free not to do so when possible? This would be consistent with the admiration for people "who can get things done" despite the rules, because they are capable of imagining more subtle opportunities. To what extent is corruption associated with a more creative world view -- as reflected in the term "creative accounting"?

Insecurity (and violence): Concerns about personal and collective security are a major feature of my world. Many have reason to fear violence from others. Why is it that I entertain myself so frequently by exposure to dramatized representations of such violence -- which are so characteristic of the products of the cultures of my world, especially as reflected in the media? Why is it that security is so closely associated with boredom and that risk is so closely associated with feeling alive? Do I engender violence in my world to inject a sense of life and risk -- whatever the price? Why is it that I can tolerate the exposure of some to high levels of violence and insecurity -- perhaps deploring it, but certainly without evoking any effort to remedy the situation? Does the insecurity of others, and the violence exacted upon them, obscure from my awareness my own profound sense of insecurity and the violence that I so casually need to do to others, if only through my agents?

Unethical:

Inequality and injustice: Inequality is a major feature of my world and is a source of much protest. The few are privileged in relation to the many. But this inequality seems indeed to be a reflection of my own attitudes, for I do indeed treat some features of my environment as of greater significance than others -- and would not know how to do otherwise. I am indeed partial in my preferences, notably with respect to the attention that I accord to one person rather than to another. This treatment may indeed be said to be unjust. But how could I give attention equally to everyone, if only because of my obvious handicap in being confronted more frequently by the few that are near me -- in contrast to the many that are elsewhere, who might rightly complain to be unjustly treated in consequence? Is there some more fruitful way of responding to those who are apparently less significant to the dynamics of my world -- and of responding less enthusiastically to those who seem to make my world more meaningful?

Immorality: There are many standards of ethics and morals in my world -- and various efforts to form them into a universal standard. They are put forward as guidelines for behaviour that would be minimally harmful. And yet my various proponents of such different value systems continue to engage in the bloodiest conflicts in defence of their respective frameworks of "harmlessness". What are these competing frameworks that I engender? Why are the universal frameworks so unmeaningful to those who identify with more specific frameworks? Why is no universal framework that I have engendered an adequate vehicle for the diverse individual and collective identities in my world? Why do such frameworks somehow negate the diversity that I would claim to value?

Resources

Over-exploitation of energy resources: A great deal of energy is necessary to keep the industrialized parts of my world operating coherently. Basically I unashamedly use any energy I can get -- and without regard to whether there is enough for the neighbours and children that I have engendered. I am extremely reluctant to impose any constraints on that lifestyle and the sense of identity that is sustains. However I am dimply aware that there are other parts of my world -- from which a significant proportion of my energy is obtained -- and that they cannot possibly achieve the energy intensive lifestyle on which the coherence of my daily life depends. I am also dimply aware of the highly problematic situation I am creating for future generations. Unfortunately I am effectively a vampire -- with an unrestrained tendency to flatulence.

Water shortage:
Technology: If a technical justification for the argument that follows is necessary, this may be found in the isomorphism in the systemic relations between these phenomena and processes in different contexts, as understood in terms of general systems theory (cf James Grier Miller, *Living Systems*, 1978). Possibly more pertinent is the extent to which the role of metaphor is now considered fundamental to technological creativity and innovation -- metaphor has itself even been considered as a technology (cf Laura Mandell, *Metaphor as Technology*, 2003). But in addition, technology is itself considered as a powerful source of metaphor (cf Robert D Romanyshyn, *Technology as Symptom and Dream*, 1989; David Weinberger, *Technology as Metaphor*, 1996).

- the psychological impact of technology is discussed in a variety of contexts (Erik Davis, *Techgnosis: Magic, Memory, and the Angels of Information*, 1994/1998), notably in relation to the development of the web (Sherry Turkle, *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet*, 1995), and is even a focus of concern (computer addiction, videogame addiction, etc).

I can configure such problems into seats at a kind of shadowy "roundtable" that effectively underlies every meeting such as my Johannesburg summit. Each such shadowy figure has its particular role to play out in my psychology [see diagram linking to roles].

**Energy and flow**

beyond method

Ton-E / An-Ton-E -- antonym
closure

inappropriate concreteness
cogito ergo sum -- process reality

**Identification with parts of speech**

(with which does one identify?):

- noun
- adjective
- adverb
- injunction
- exclamation gerund?
- pronoun
- Keyserling

truth is not a noun

- "things" articulated in a language are potential notes come alive (not items in dusty volumes) -- Grail
- it is a verb
- in the beginning was the Word -- and it was a Verb
- making it true -- rather than finding "truth"
- ringing true
- then play tunes with it

not what it "is" but the making of it so

- poetry making
- perform not form
- project logic -- thrown pottery
- who am I

**Senses**

personal "reflection" (mirror)

- echo as sound mirror
- smell mirror?
- taste mirror
- feel mirror?

Nada Brahman -- Music of the spheres

Smelling the future

Cognitive body odour

Deprivation

- smell: flowers / pheromones
- taste: foodies
touch/tactile: paws for thought / intercourse with nature / breeze / phatic / presence / dog

"Cultivation" -- of the mind / replicated in the mind
	nature and mind -- necessary unity

	intercourse with nature -- spell of the sensuous


text:

hunting / gathering

the land / agriculture

	• irrigation
	• sowing
	• ploughing
	• reaping / gathering

animal husbandry

employment as a relation of trust and confidence -- sharing it

"Audience"?

• otherness
• remainder
• left-behind

confirmation

• peer review
• delay / hanging about respectfully
• authority structures -- like built urban environments -- with locations beyond my budget or earning capacity
• what are they doing for me
• notes in my reality

Another "method" / Other "logics" / methods

Missing logics

Aesthetic /

• Concept packaging
• Marketing
• Connectivity
  
  • "it works"
  • ringing true (or false)
• Meaningful --- something to believe in
• Symbolic

System of describing distinct methods for meaning

• intelligences
• periodic table
• self-reflexive

Bacon --where is the emergent new method

• novum organum
• grokking
• conscientific
• patterns
• beyond method -- paper / Feyerabend
• correspondences / associations / ringing true
• Marsilio vs Boulding
• goodness of fit

play with notes on reality

• whatever they "are" held to be
• freeze drying awareness
• modelling awareness
• notes are reification by "isness"
• tragedy
• comedy
transform "things" -- lead
transitional objects -- dancing with reality
antique theories -- theories as antiquities
magic -- energy from correspondences
Blake / Yeats, etc
work cycle vs instrumental -- differential vs integration
confidence(s) trust -- You Tube, etc
excitement
  - photo/psychosynthesis
  - special theory of relativity
  - "joy" (de vivre) / high in metabolic pathways ATP, etc -- endomorphins
  - in alternative energy psychosocial
unconstrained by inherited baggage -- reification from the past?
resonance / entrainment
beyond the fact/fiction duality
  - ringing true
  - nourishing the imagination
  - metabolic pathways of joy
  - phosotsynthesis vs psychosynthesis
Also of interest was the reflection that the phrase "modelling awareness" tends to obscure another mode of understanding. There are many efforts to model the brain, cognition, etc -- from without with appropriate disciplines. Methinks that I am much persuaded by a different approach in which every theoretical articulation is a projected model of the understanding which enables it. Your dismay at my use of hard science concepts I see in reverse. The hard science, external, articulations are entirely constrained by the human imagination to connect up dots in a way that is meaningful. As such they are indeed a particular model of awareness -- with many such being imaginatively engendered as time goes by.

In that sense, your use of The Gita is admirable and profoundly insightful. However, to some degree at least, it is your imagination that is connecting the dots -- and communicating the resulting image -- using the story as a catalytic template. The Gita is indeed a model of awareness -- but with a different history you would be connecting an isomorphic pattern of dots from the story of another culture. It is you who makes visible the depth from a story of adequate complexity. You are doing your singer number!

One of my concerns, in the process in which we engage, is why we do so. What is this effort to explain and to describe? The process and its result need to be questioned. I worry about ex-planation when it is in the plane that I sense we need to be. You address that well - - but of course you are offering an explanation. I worry about de-scription when we are in some way part of the script and the scripting. Again you address that well -- but again it is a form of description You give value to "witnessing". It has a quality of viewing and spectating which bothers me The text as you have written it offers a multiplicity of challenges as to how to be but necessarily says little about why. The possibility of "emancipation" emerges as an indicative possibility but without a sense of how it is to be understood as a dynamic -- however well the allusions to the nature of that experiential dynamic. The presentation of the language of fields is however excellent although it left me with the sense of what for? Where or how would one be with those understandings? And why? Perhaps the greatest value of the text (for me) is the quality of the question it raises about what is not there -- and should not be sought therein. The taste of that calls for many re-readings A wonderful piece of writing. A powerful device. But, to be provocative, perhaps best explored as a potential trap! How might the trap work? What might be trapped?

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if all you have is a hammer then everything looks like a nail,

but if all you have are notes about the process of being, then you have the possibility of organizing them and playing a tune

Dancing with reality

body processes as cognition metaphor / process metaphor -- patterns layed down

senses
I was struck by the relation of poesis, autopoiésis and the I-maker -- all based on the notion of making but from different "perspectives". I have not finished with your admirable articulation and may write about it in some way. I am still confused about how, or whether, it relates to the anticipated book. The text as you have written it offers a multiplicity of challenges as to how to be but necessarily says little about why. The possibility of "emancipation" emerges as an indicative possibility but without a sense of how it is to be understood as a dynamic -- however well the allusions to the nature of that experiential dynamic.

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A wonderful piece of writing. A powerful device. But, to be provocative, perhaps best explored as a potential trap! How might the trap work? What might be trapped?

One has to be careful how one reads it and comments on it -- and as the author, with how one writes it.

I note "he does not see how things hang together on account of the greed of his mind for his own way of knowing".

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**Audial and Literary Cultures: The Bhagavad Gita as a Case Study**

Antonio T de Nicolas
Monday, 05 March 2007

I am arguing in this paper that in order to study cultures we must first be 'in able to identify the models by which a culture forms itself. I 'n distinguish between audial and literary cultures and audial cultures 'n further distinguish from oral cultures. Oral cultures used songs to 'n transmit information (like the navigation rules of the Somosans), while an 'n audial culture provides us with a structure ruled by the corre- spondence 'n between the innate auditory sense of harmony and tone on the one hand and 'n the arithmetic properties and ratios of the vibrating strings on the 'n other. The literary culture takes the eye as the primary sense and 'n organizes sensation by the criteria of a semiotic model that takes sight 'n as primary. These texts are based upon the properties of sentences as 'n embodied in grammar, two-
valued logic, mathematics, classical physics, constructivism.

Through the identification of culture with Text and by using the Bhagavad Gita as a case study, I am able to isolate the three following texts from this original audial Text: (a) a semiotic text, alien to the Gita, and identifiable as the text the reader carries with him/her 'n to the reading of the Gita; (b) an audial/musical text, or the text-model 'n by which the Gita, so to speak, wrote itself; (c) the text of the 'n imagination, or a text based on non-cognitive skills for the sake of 'n decision-making; this text we identify as the text of meditation.,”1]; Antonio T de Nicolás Monday, 05 March 2007

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While the literary or semiotic text is grounded on principles of knowledge and therefore on abstraction, the audial/musical text and the meditation text are both grounded on the imagination and therefore on experience. Thus we establish two origins of language: cognition and imagination. Each develops different skills and the rules of reference are complementary in the sense that what is true or can truly be said in one is not true and cannot truly be said in the other.

This paper concentrates in developing the audial/musical model. It shows, in two appendices, the dramatic consequences it carries for translations, transliterations and the transformations of the imagination.

Introduction

This essay is a prelude to the study of culture. It will not deal with the ‘facts’ of cultures, but rather the conditions of which cultural facts are born. ‘Culture’ is often equated with language, for language is the empirical evidence of what we call a culture and culture is only knowable as language and through language as some form of ‘human flesh’ and vice versa. What is here called human flesh is the embodiment of a plurality of languages from which a plurality of cultures may be abstracted. Thus, language as understood here will take into account not only the external tokens of sound, gesture and word, but also the internal tokens of intentionality, conceptualization and purposive action. I shall therefore focus not only on language as culturally used but also on the presuppositions which such use entails.

In order to do this successfully, we have to recall from the cemeteries of the centuries a discipline that has long been dead to the memories of man: music as epistemology. When studying other cultures, natural science and even philosophy have approached those cultures on the assumption that their disciplines provided a knowledge radical enough (equal to the roots) to coincide with the knowledge that grounds culture, especially audial cultures. Philosophy’s study of culture has committed the same sin of interpretation by identifying radicality with epistemology and epistemology with a theory of knowledge. In every case the particular form of knowledge of the discipline determines the ground of the culture under study. What remains problematic, therefore, is the fact that the ground of knowledge of natural science, philosophy, but especially of audial cultures, is not ‘knowledge’ at all, but a bundle of presuppositions, criteria and decisions which remain mute once knowledge is established. Therefore, the word epistemology will be used to focus exclusively on those criteria and presuppositions underlying the audial cultures that took sound as the source of their criteria of knowledge. Music will refer only to the music that has served as a model to derive epistemological criteria, and not to the convenient meaning of music as an art form that has had a history. I shall test this thesis on a well known document of the Hindu tradition: the Bhagavad-Gita,* which we shall call the Text, with a capital T. This hermeneutic approach will, however, apply to all cultural languages and their translations and transliterations.


To help the reader cope with this essay, let me advance here some of the presuppositions/ conclusions on which it is based.

Cultures divide into at least two recognizable groups: oral/audial and literary or logomachic.

Oral/audial cultures or texts are ruled by the correspondence between the innate auditory sense of harmony and tone on the one hand and the arithmetic properties and ratios of the vibrating strings on the other. They also possess inner mandalas, or protogeometries homologous with musical arithmology charting the path of the imagination.

An audial culture or text takes the ear as primary sense and organizes sensation and the criteria of interpretation or of knowledge by the
criteria of a model based upon certain demonstrable criteria of sound properties.

The literary culture or text takes the eye as the primary sense and organizes sensation by the criteria of a semiotic model that takes sight as primary. These texts are based upon the properties of sentences as embodied in grammar, two-valued logic, mathematics, classical physics, constructivism. Such texts tend to reduce all issues, all languages, to one or another form of logomachy: disputes about words, their meanings, relationships and implications. Several elements contribute to establish certain variable criteria as fixed or invariant. The invariant criteria determine the reading or the listening. The process by which certain criteria become invariant is the process of verification and it is always in the hands of one or more sciences. In the case of oral texts, the sciences that formed and verified the invariant criteria were music and acoustics. In the case of literary texts the invariant criteria were fixed by a logic, physics, geometry and optics. Any culture or text which would not take these sciences as the method of verification was never considered a ‘text’ or a ‘culture’ and was automatically exiled to the limbo of preliteracy or subcultures.

What we normally call prose is the sediment of many scientific and non-scientific, audial and logomachic translations and transliterations of these texts and subtexts. In the wake of scientific verification philosophers and others followed with justifications of what had already been verified and epistemology was equated with a ‘theory of knowledge’. Depending on the science of the times philosophers were mostly mathematicians, physicists, theologians, biologists or musicians.

Since prose was the sediment of so many conflicting epistemologies, philosophy has always been much more an exercise in power than in reason. The philosopher was more keen on converting people to his own model of reason than in liberating his own model of reason from its own conditioning and conditioned invariant criteria.

Nowhere has this philosophical lack of reason been more keenly felt than in the reading of texts ruled by audial criteria. The language of the imagination is such a text regardless of whether it comes from the East or the West.

The poet, the singer, the mystic is always straddling the frame of a model, challenging it, transcending it, or simply repeating it, once more with feeling; but unless the reader knows the frame the poet, the singer, the mystic is riding, he might be climbing or barking up the wrong leg. There is always a necessary connection between texts and models. And the reader has no freedom but to find it.

To jump the common frame, however, entails always a risk. Besides the common misunderstanding, mystics divide on this point. Some aim for the absolute Zero: the absolute, ineffable experience -- Buddhism, Meister Eckhart, John of the Cross -- while others are content with aiming for the One: Hinduism, Ignatius de Loyola. Some would like, even demand, that at the other end of the frame there be nothing, absolute emptiness, but all they really find is yet another frame and another, and another. Nirvana equals Samsara, freedom equals controls. Movement through frames is a necessary condition for detachment and freedom.

When facing, therefore, a text from an audial culture we are forced to overcome the following problems:

(a) the language/model we carry with us to interpret the document:

(b) the multiple language/models the Text offers for its own possibility of existence: (the fact that by those language/models it wrote itself, so to speak);

(c) the most difficult realization of all is that any Text from an audial culture demands from us the ability to re-enter a whole different communications-system not only different from our own but demanding from us certain activities for which we may not even be trained or be able to handle.

Thus, the Text of The Bhagavad Gita offers us three texts for our consideration. One text for translation, and this we shall consider in Appendix II; a text for transliteration, the musical model, and this we shall consider in Appendix I; and finally a text for meditation, and this we shall consider in Appendix III. These three texts, as derived from the Text, have their genetic origin in the imagination. They are made and remade by the use of the imagination, with the aid of memory. They are not texts built on cognitive skills, and thus their rules of reference differ. Since we cannot do justice to the three texts in this paper we shall concentrate on the text for transliteration and refer the others to the Appendices. It would be useful to bear in mind that since texts built on cognitive skills and those built on imagination make claims about knowledge that we reserve the word wisdom to those texts only that derive from the imagination, or texts from audial cultures.

In view of the above we will focus the present study of the Citff in the following three moves:

I. The language of prakti/karman (the primacy of sensation, substances).

II. The language of dharma/Krsna/purusa (the primacy of fields).

III. The model of both languages (the primary of movement, detachment and embodiment).

Samjaya, the narrator of the Gita, designates for us as the world of the Gita as a world embedded in sound, mounted on the wheel of sound and ruled by its criteria. The whole ‘body’ of the Gita stretches as far as its sound can be heard. Notice how the Gita begins amidst noise and a chaos of sound and how, from a distance, Samjaya is able to ‘pick out’ the dialogue between Krsna’s ‘word’, a word
which has been moving among confused sounding noises, yet remains always clear throughout. Notice also that the cultural ground from which Arjuna and Krsna emerge is a world of 'sounding silence', the original rhythmic impulse which keeps sending beings and worlds without ever being exhausted. By which criteria do these sounds become the language of the Gita?

1. The language of prakrti/karman (the primacy of sensation, substances)

According to the Gita, Arjuna, as a Hindu warrior, should know not only to act (fight) without regard to the consequences of his action according to his condition (XVIII. 45), but he should also know how to act without any doubt (IV. 40; VI. 39; VIII. 7) and with an unshakable judgment (XVIII. 49). Arjuna, however, collapses in the battlefield unable to balance the terror of being a man with the decision to be a man. The terror is grounded on the belief that there is a natural condition of man, a natural self-body, which naturally and blindly is forced toward the reproduction of social action. Arjuna's liberating decision will be his ability to recover the cultural condition of man: man having to cope with a multiplicity of predetermined worlds (karmic laws) of which he can not only sketch the profile (dharma, horizon, context), but must also make his self-body coincide with its direction and demarcations. Language and body coincide.

To follow systematically this journey from the space and self-body of crisis to the spaces and self-bodies of liberation, let us summarize here the programmatic moves of Krsna/Arjuna.

1. Arjuna's arguments for in-action in the present situation are futile once he is in that present situation in the field of battle (dharmaksetre).
2. These arguments veil a belief in a natural, raw, barbarian state within which man may try to hide, as it were, neutral and unaware of ontological and epistemological presuppositions: the slave of karmic laws.
3. This false situation of Arjuna is held together (epistemologically and ontologically) by the bewitchment of language in the form of ahamkara (I-maker or sense of I) and its subsequent epistemological and ontological appropriations or identifications. A linguistic space is thus absolutized into a universal human space reducing all human acting and human self-body to only one possible interpretation.

Situation as determined action

Krsna shows Arjuna that his arguments for not doing anything while facing the battlefield are useless and ineffective. He shows him that to fight (act) is inevitable. He points out that according to the Ksatriya tradition fighting is in keeping with the noble traditions of the royal sages; it is also virtuous, enough to lead to heaven, and it is glorious enough to establish fame on the earth. Thus it is emphasized that this line of action has come down through tradition (IV. 2). Winning or losing, participation in war, would accomplish good in either case (II. 37), and Arjuna is therefore clearly told: 'But if you will not engage in this righteous battle, then having foresaken your own particular dharma as well as glory, you will incur sin' (II. 33).

In this further attempt to show Arjuna the emptiness of his arguments not to fight, Krsna, as one who has the whole culture at a glance, reveals before him the destiny of the people assembled there for the battle and points out that it is futile on his part to think that merely on account of his desisting from fighting, the battle would be avoided and the lives of these people would be saved. In keeping with the line of argument that the evil-doers are killed by their own outrageous conduct and the man who is merely instrumental in their killing is not guilty of the sin, Krsna exhorts Arjuna to follow his duty and earn the glory of a true warrior (XI. 32-33). Arjuna is told to be wise enough to realize the true duty of a Ksatriya, with the natural endowment of which he is born, and not to allow his I-maker (ahamkara) and attachment to get the better of him (III. 30).

Had Arjuna minded the tradition, and remembered even a bit of its intentionality, he could have avoided this impasse (II. 40). Arjuna's condition as a warrior is grounded on 'heroism, energy, firmness, resourcefulness and not fleeing in battle; generosity and lordliness ...' (XVIII. 43), and in a 'battle situation' there is nothing else he can choose.

Despite this, Arjuna, even in his despair, realizes that human acting is decision-making, a decision in relation to a radical orientation of knowledge in which the whole body participates, a judgment at every step of the way without questions, doubts or hesitations. He wishes he knew how to be a man or asaktabuddhi (firm knowledge-wisdom) (XVIII. 49; II. 41; II. 54).

Krsna promises him no less. * But first Arjuna must realize and transcend the muddy space in which he is trapped. The important point to be made, however, is that a rationalization of in-action (or of whatever action man performs) is always an interpretation -- radical and sufficient or dogmatic and insufficient -- of a man's orientation to life.

*see II. 67, 71; XII. 8; IX. 34; IX. I; III. 32; IV. 40; VI. 39; VII. 21; VII. 7.

The relation dharma-karman and yoga

The first chapter of the Gita places man in the midst of his own authentic reality: despair, anxiety, inaction.

The second chapter shows the ground on which man (Arjuna) stood all his life: a theoretic consciousness of his culture and the actions and roles he was determined to play and for which he was trained by the culture. Now that this ground is no longer under Arjuna's feet, what is he to do?
Chapter III offers the first solution: Arjuna must recover his lost memories, all he has forgotten: the kind of knowledge that created the culture in the first place, and the kind of knowledge that, if sought diligently, will help Arjuna save himself and his circumstance. The relation dharma-karma and yoga is the root relation which Arjuna must discover to lead him to freedom.

The first line of the Gita identifies for us the human problem of Arjuna. The 'field of battle' and the 'field of dharma' are the same: 'dharmaksetra kuruksetra'. In the field of the Kurus, in the field of dharma, the crisis of Arjuna unfolds. What is at stake in Arjuna's mind is not the battle alone, but his whole social and conceptual scheme, his whole life: every action from fighting in battle to eating leftovers. He has literally no ground to stand on (I. 40-44). The root of the word dharma, dhr, means to support, sustain, hold together; i.e. dharma is the general or particular context and structure which holds together certain objects with definite and determined programs of action.

What constitutes, in the Gita, the basic element of our -- or Arjuna's -- creatureliness, our historical ground is karma: 'Karman is the creative force that causes creatures to exist (as creatures)'.* The word karman is a noun meaning action, from the root kr, 'doing, acting, performing'. The significant point of the Gita, however, is not so much to stress this obvious fact of man having to act, but rather the fact, as in Arjuna's case, that acting enslaves, if karmic acting brings along karmic thinking and its point of view on the world. Karmic thinking in this case consists in Arjuna or anyone thinking that he is the agent (III. 27; cf. XVIII. 29); that is, he deludes himself into thinking linearly by causally uniting action after action and ontologically linking them with himself. In this view action, self, and body are unified ontologically: fear, anxiety, despair, agitation, in-action follow. Negatively the Gita says: 'He who thinks himself the agent is wrong' (XVIII. 16). There are five factors which are the causes of action (XVIII. 15), and, prakrti (as well as the gunas) are bound to lead you to action (XVIII. 50). Under karmic law man has no other alternative but to act. This sounds like sheer determination and it is. And although prakrti and the gunas may explain the human fact that man, whatever his nature, tamasic, rajasic or sattvic, has to act, they also put man in the midst of his own existential anguish that he is determined to act, trapped in action. Add to this inescapable fact man's own decision to identify himself with his actions and you have the impossible aporia, problem, non-exit of Arjuna. This solution, obviously, is not in action but in the viewing it is grounded on. The starting point of Arjuna's liberation is the understanding of dharma.

*See VIII. 3; in other contexts, see also II. 42-43; II. 47-57; III. 4-9; III. 14-15; III. 19-20; III, 22-25; IV. 14-24; IV. 32-33; V. 1-14; XVIII. 2-25.

Krsna addressing Arjuna, reminds him that his conduct does not become him (II. 3) and Arjuna confesses plainly that he is confused about his dharma (II. 7), and in typical karmic-value thinking asks the question (determined in the answer): 'which would be better, tell me decisively (to fight or not to fight)' (II. 7); he sees no other possible avenue of action.

All actions are action, and actions are of value, because they come so ordered in a concrete contextual-structure of dharma (V. 15; XVI. 19; IX. 16. 24). Looking at the actions alone, one is determined; knowing the dharma one is free. If we took directly at the Gita we find that Arjuna's journey into his own culture from Chapters II through X is a journey of the relation between karman-dharma, action-context: cultural man and his multiple embodiments begin to emerge.

Two readings

If we were to read Chapter I of The Gita by the conditioning of a model of language that takes language as a sign, we would then of necessity focus on Arjuna's body as a substance to which the attributes of sin, guilt, fear, despair must be ascribed. This self-body, moreover, will remain constant. This reading will force us to feel the weight of all the names, discreet noises, entities, in Chapter I of The Gita, and in general believe that each self-body is already endowed with agency and finality.

There is, however, another possible reading of the same chapter. When we see Arjuna's limbs become weak, his mouth dry up, his body tremble, his hair stand on end, and the like, we are seeing a self-embodied theory collapsing. Agency and finality belong to this theory. What appears through Arjuna's body is a theory made flesh which collapses because it does not account for the whole situation. The theory appears insufficient in the field of battle through Arjuna's self-body. This is the yoga of crisis in Chapter I of The Gita.

Methodologically the two readings are incompatible. The first one takes a theory which is historically public and posterior to The Gita and universalizes itself to reduce the world to linguistic uniformity. On the other hand, the second reading proceeds by squeezing out of a particular and historical human flesh and circumstance the theory by which it becomes such flesh. Flesh and theory are inseparable like Arjuna and Krsna in the yoga of crisis of Chapter I in The Gita. Sensation is a language.

II. The language of dharma/Krsna/purusa (the primacy of fields)

When a man is in the midst of a crisis, like Arjuna's, things must first get worse before they get better. The crisis must peak before it is resolved. Arjuna realizes in the midst of his impotence that his crisis is about knowledge: 'Why is it not wise for us, O Janardana (Krsna)?' (I. 39). Arjuna realizes so vividly that his crisis lies in his position about knowledge that he is ready to give up victory, pleasure, his kingdom and even his own life for the sake of the knowledge that will take him away from his crisis.

Arjuna shares with his enemies the same theory of knowledge for which he blames them. Like the Kauravas, he does not see how things hang together on account of the greed of his mind for his own way of knowing (I. 38). Like them, he does not give up this delusion (II. 52; VI. 13) and the desire (II. 55; III. 37) born of this attachment. Attachment, fear, anger (II. 5 6) and hatred (XVIII. 51) are all born of desire which is ontologically linked to a theory of knowledge which can only function through self-identification and appropriation (II.
Both Arjuna and his enemies are ignorant of the fact that desire ontologically links man to the dualities: cold and heat, pleasure and pain, happiness and grief, knowledge and ignorance (II. 14, 15), good and evil (II. 57), and this they presuppose to be the knowledge of how things really are. The Gita, however, points out that this position is deluded since it is a knowledge covered by ignorance (V. 15), and in general it functions through the belief that an individual, (Arjuna) is the doer of the action (XVIII. 17; III. 27).

In contrast, knowledge, according to The Gita, should produce even mindedness in pain and pleasure (see II. 15, 56; XII. 13, 18, XIV. 24), in honor and dishonor (XII. 18), in blame and praise (XII. 19), equality to friends and foes (XIV. 25), and in general a man without doubt and of firm judgment (II. 58).

By way of the radical thinking we have set before us, we find ourselves from the beginning of The Gita facing moving bodies and structures: each structure a rhythm through which a body-world appears, revealing as it appears a background of living beings together with the glory and terrors of their life. It is against this cultural horizon that the moving bodies of Arjuna and Krsna speak out and make present their world. Their movement in The Gita is the movement and opposition of the gunas. It is the movement and complementarity of prakrti and purusa. It is also their parity and dependence. Arjuna and Krsna are like two halves of an orange belonging to a common origin which negates and reconciles the parts in every movement. Yet, having this in mind, we may speak of Arjuna and Krsna as if the two halves were really independent. When Arjuna moves Krsna moves, and if Arjuna stands still so does Krsna.

One must not forget that Arjuna is a warrior, used to living dangerously, with death stalking him at every step. Yet it is this same Arjuna who is now in the grips of a crisis so severe that his limbs tremble, his skin is feverish, his weapons fall from his hands, and he can hardly move; the man has frozen. This is the problem which The Gita is 'set' to solve. It is a controlled experiment with sickness, diagnosis, medication, cure and rehabilitation, all in 700 verses, all in one song-poem. If Arjuna's point of view depends for its survival on the objects and the senses as appropriated by the ahankara and himself, the whole program of The Gita will be a program to desensitize such a world-view from its absolutized directions: to detach the senses from one absolute form of sensing and feeling the world. A man, to be a man, has to be able to move without touch, smell, taste, sight, sound; to be able to move up and down, backwards and forwards, in and out the corridors of his own emptiness into the throbbing light, the sustaining ground, by his own impulse. Man can only know his bearings if he himself becomes those bearings.

Arjuna's initial condition in The Gita is a complete blank. He is tamas, dullness and inertia. It is not the case that Arjuna 'feels' low. Rather it is the case that Arjuna is the whole tamasic condition, not only in his mind but in his whole body-feelings-sensation. Man is viewpoint. Structure is the viewpoint made flesh. Arjuna is tamas and prakrti in Chapter I of the Bhagavad Gita.

If Arjuna had been able, in his moment of crisis, to realize that his body was as large as his tamasic condition, i.e. if he had been able to realize the dependence of body-feelings on perspective and realize also this ontological unity, then the subsequent journey of The Gita would have been superfluous. But Arjuna settles instead for a crisis and The Gita's wheel moves on.

The structure of the journey between Chapters II and X of the Gita is again a structure to be 'seen' in order to be understood. It shares the same kind of ontological union -- viewpoint dependence as the structure of crisis. Through the mediation of memory -- the lived memories of Arjuna's past, the imaginative variations of a life lived and forgotten -- Arjuna is able in these chapters to refeel his body as it felt and thought in different contexts: samkhya-yoga (II); karma-yoga (III): the yoga of action; jnana-yoga (IV): the yoga of knowledge; karmasannyasa-yoga (V): the yoga of renunciation of actions; dhyana-yoga (VI): the yoga of meditation; jnana-vijnana-yoga (VII): the yoga of wisdom and understanding; aksara-brahma-yoga (VIII): the yoga of the imperishable Brahman; rajaya-jogasya-gnyan-yoga (IX): the yoga of sovereign knowledge and sovereign secret; and vibhuti-yoga (X): the yoga of manifestations. Within each one of these contexts, world-body-feelings are different; the intentionality of the context determines actions and the way these actions world-body-feel. This long journey of lost memories is a journey of re-embodiment. It demands an ontological reduction grounded on the realization of the non-existence of any reference for language, perception or experience in general. But the conclusion of such a re-embodiment shows the futility of trying to grasp substances or anything permanent. Chapter XI of The Gita shows the finality, dissolution and despair of any world grounded on permanence; yet it remains a world and a body alive (XI. 23-30).

Note: the greatest linguistic sin in The Gita is the ahankara, literally the 'I-maker' (X. 42). The most favored modality of seeing oneself in the world is the anahamvadin, literally 'not-I' speaking (X-VIII. 19, 26, 40).

'Aham' emphasizes the agent in an artificial way for the simple reason that the personal suffix to the verb alone suffices to specify the agent. The reason for the use of aham has been more concerned with the partial aspect of momentary interest, on the emphasis placed on individualization for the sake of clarification: aham yaje (It is I who sacrifices as opposed to yaje, I-sacrificing). Indian philosophy has made extensive use of what is Sanskrit is ahankara, literally 'I the maker'. It is understood as a principle of artificial individualization of any and all particulars. However, by using aham the speaker would be committed to a way of speaking which would 'create the impression that' (or talk 'as if') the individual had an ultimate ontological identity with the activity-whole.

The Bhagavad Gita portrays three basic types of agency in Chapter XVIII, verses 19-40, which can be explained in terms of these modalities, ahankara and anahamvadin.

Instrumental agency is paradigmatic of the 'agent' of 'light' (sattvika) who allows the cosmic ritual of karman, samsara and dharma to play itself out or appear through the body (XVIII. 23). Here the 'agent' in the instrumental case is on a par with the body or material instrument through which an interpretation appears (III. 27); the efficient cause is not to be distinguished from the cause of the movement or interpretation made flesh through the material cause or body.
Dative agency is paradigmatic of the 'agent' or 'passion' (rajasa), who is accordingly disparaged in Indian culture, for he continues ignorantly to bind himself to the wheel of samsara and to accumulate karma-phala (fruits of action) (XVIII. 24).

Dative agency is also typical of the 'agent' of ignorance and darkness (tamasa), who is even worse off than the 'agent' or passion, for he acts blindly, with no knowledge of dharma or how things 'hang together' (XVIII. 25).

Thus, if the individual subject were to be understood as material instrument through which movement appeared, lie was expressed in the instrumental case. If he were to be understood as a partaker of the action and vitally interested in the outcome as to whether it might be of benefit or disadvantage to him, he was expressed in the dative case. The wise man would speak as anahamvadin (not-'I' speaking).

This is the end of Arjuna's moves through the first 11 chapters of The Gita. What we see in this journey of Axjuna is that the memories he re-embodies are lived memories. Arjuna himself has gone through them and therefore knows how they world-body-feel. Arjuna is able to body-feel his own body while travelling the corridors of his memories. He is able to body-feel other body-feelings he himself was when those memories were not memories but a living body. He knows of other world-unions which are possible through himself or that he himself has been. But again, as phenomenology reminds us, these body-unions are problematic. One may decide to ascribe these memories, all these imaginative variations, to the same constant body, i.e. one may decide to ascribe them to a body which remains constant through all these variations and to whom memories (imaginative variations) are never recoverable as embodied, but are only possible as embodied attributes from a logical world to a logical subject. This union is a precarious one, a theoretic unity to which different sensations, different body-feelings, may be ascribed or may be denied. Man can never find himself at home in such a body, and the only way out for man is either to declare himself in crisis or diligently to dedicate himself to the task of finding his own emancipation.

The problem of reading

If we take language as a sign, and then read from Chapters II through XI of The Gita, our reading will of necessity be blind, like the King of the Kurus. Each chapter is a field, a yoga or dharma, and the entities within each chapter arise and collapse with each chapter.* No entity, theory or body carries over from chapter to chapter, even if the names do. Each field arises by cancelling the previous one and each self-body, Arjuna-Krsna prakrti-purusa, body-perspective arises anew within the boundaries of each chapter with which it shares its dimensions and demarcations. Furthermore, the movement of the fields cancels out the movement and continuity of any entity or substance. Time cannot be read as duration, nothing lasts; but as Chapter XI clearly states, time is the movement of one self-body perspective to another, the shift of the perspective of one field to the perspective of another field. And space cannot be read as distance, but as the rising or falling of two simultaneous perspectives, Arjuna's-Krsna's. Both these perspectives are complementary yet contradictory; what can truly be said in one cannot be truly said in the other. Finally, the duration of any one life or self-body lasts as long as a field and rises and dies with it. But the question remains: by which grammar are we going to read this text? Or, more precisely, by which conditioning model of language was the text composed?

*Thus the human body as base frames the imagination in the Bhagavad Gita as the experiences of 'I' and 'not-I': the Ahamkara and the Arahamvadin. In the structure of The Gita, these two experiences coincide with Chapters I and XI. Between these two experiences, the meditator’s body is systematically disembodied in a multiplication of bodies that coincide with each one of the yogas of each chapter between II and X. Once the meditator has become the frame of a whole background, as in Chapter XI, the focus of the imagination -- what the meditator does after the great experience -- is a systematic development of focusing with backgrounds only in mind, and this is the function of the chapters between XII and XVIII. This is known in The Gita as the movement of the gunas.

Thus the text of meditation is built like a musical composition and so are the criteria for reading it. It is built in four steps, like a tuning theory: an original blank string; the dismembered string in multiple divisions; the birth of new tones and their sacrifice for new ones to rise, and the identity of singer and song by sharing in such a body, and therefore knows how they world-body-feel. Arjuna is able to body-feel his own body while travelling the corridors of his memories. He is able to body-feel other body-feelings he himself was when those memories were not memories but a living body. He knows of other world-unions which are possible through himself or that he himself has been. But again, as phenomenology reminds us, these body-unions are problematic. One may decide to ascribe these memories, all these imaginative variations, to the same constant body, i.e. one may decide to ascribe them to a body which remains constant through all these variations and to whom memories (imaginative variations) are never recoverable as embodied, but are only possible as embodied attributes from a logical world to a logical subject. This union is a precarious one, a theoretic unity to which different sensations, different body-feelings, may be ascribed or may be denied. Man can never find himself at home in such a body, and the only way out for man is either to declare himself in crisis or diligently to dedicate himself to the task of finding his own emancipation.

The text of meditation has certain decisive advantages. Instead of reducing all signs to a cognitive science like semiology it opens language to context and establishes the imagination as a source of languages and signs. It liberates language from the inhuman constraint of universality while giving it the public domain of its function. Above all it divorces the texts of cognition from those of the imagination by establishing different sets of rules of reference. Without the above provisions the passage from human sinner to human saint or much less the simple process of acquiring different organized levels of sensitization would not be possible.

The text of meditation needs to be explored further for it shows that an archeology of the imagination does not exhaust the text of the imagination; nor is the imagination exhausted by doing what we have done in this paper, namely to abstact from it its languages and structures. These languages and structures become, for the text of meditation, memory-points to guide the imagination. III. The model of both languages (the primacy of movement, detachment and embodiment)

Taking our clue from The Gita's insistence that sensation is a language, we find ourselves forced to establish also that perspective is also sensation, or reality. Aduna's body in Chapter I is both body-perspective, prakrti-purusa, Arjuna-Krsna, and so is his body in Chapter XI. But by then everything has changed. Faith (XII) is no longer any thing or any god, but a space beyond any god. Knowledge (XIII) is no
longer the absolutized universal knowledge that led him into crisis, but rather: 'Know me, O Bharata, to be the knower of the field in all the fields; the knowledge of the field and of the knower of the field: This I hold to be (real) knowledge (XIII. 2). And the body (XIV- XVIII) will emerge as a radical embodied unity, which appears as multiplicity of body-feelings-sensations, complete each time it acts, in every action, in every social situation. But to retrain the body to 'think itself up' every time it acts requires not only time but also the constant effort and habit of learning how to shift perspectives, progressing from the perspective of Chapter I to the perspective of Chapter XI.

This simply means that from now on we cannot read the Gita without simultaneously reading the movement of the three gunas and the simultaneity of both prakrti-purusa, Arjuna-Krsna.

The strangeness of the new situation demands a critical change not only in conceptual structures, but also a relearning of the new process of body-feelings, a re-education of the muscular and nervous systems, the opening of the frontal lobes and the heart, and above all a change in conceptual structure to account for the new situation. This is the change during which a whole new style of embodied interpretation is assembled, but this is not achieved without an intellectual bereavement which can only proceed to relearn its own process of formation step by step, action by action. It is for this reason that Chapters XIV to XVIII are fundamental to The Gita, for they are the chapters which show the 'rehabilitation' process of a man who has seen the emptiness behind his own old structure of meaning and does not yet know how to proceed in the integration of the new.

What Krsna proposes to Arjuna from the start of Chapter XIV is that for Arjuna, who has already seen, every action is 'dangerous', for each one contains the creation and dissolution of the world. The creation of the new world is accomplished if in every action Arjuna orients himself through the buddhi-interpretation of action. The world will destroy itself if in every action Arjuna orients himself through the interpretation of the manus. But this program of living is only for one who has 'held to this wisdom (Krsna's) and become the likeness of my own state of being' (XIV. 2). For these are the people who 'are not born even at creation, nor are they destroyed at dissolution' (XIV. 2). They are humans who have learned to transcend the gunas of prakrti (XIV. 19-20).

From now on, Arjuna the warrior has to tread carefully, for every step is dangerous, every step in his world is explosive. In no way can Arjuna, the warrior, abandon himself in any action, not even those full of sattva (XIV. 6).

Arjuna, obviously is bewildered and lost while trying to give body-shape to his new vision (XIV. 21), but Krsna states simply the absolute criterion for knowledge, solely by realizing that it is only the gunas which act when we witness activity, by remaining as if unconcerned without attributing or appropriating pleasure or pain to oneself, that one may stand apart and remain firm, without doubt (XIV. 23-25).

Arjuna has to learn that in every action, every step he takes, the whole creation is present. It is the upturned peepal tree, with its branches below, its roots above. The branches stretch below and above, nourished by the gunas; its sprouts are the sense objects. When this tree reaches the world of men, it spreads out its roots that result in action (XV. 1-2). But men do not see how their actions are so umbilically joined to the whole world. They do not comprehend its form, nor its beginning, nor its foundation. Their only release is to cut this firmly rooted tree with the weapon of non-attachment (V. 3).

The patient waiting for the right conditions to see, or give embodied shape to the new vision which Arjuna has just touched in Chapter XI should be nothing new to Arjuna the warrior. Take a piece of land and there will be as many perspectives as men passing through it. But for a warrior every piece of land is all the life there is. The discipline of his own training as a warrior has, in many ways, prepared Arjuna already for detachment, and for the silent last for life, and for each of the things of life. His disciplined training as a warrior has already prepared him to immerse himself in every action without fully surrendering to it. His ear is always cocked to anticipate any danger, even while immersed in every action. In fact, there is only every single action for him to count on as 'his life' as a warrior, and it is in every action that he will have to throw himself with the full power of his decisions.

Arjuna's conclusion at the end of his long journey, in terms of a philosophy which would give shape to his vision of Chapter XI, is obviously a coincidence with Krsna: to realize his own emancipation through the action facing him by reading the conditioning of all life. Through that action Krsna, Arjuna, purusa, prakrti and their foundation coincide. For emancipation to be possible, however, Arjuna's will (body-self) has to coincide with the original cultural will of which both Krsna and Arjuna are the bodies. But this realization could not have been mediated had Arjuna not been able to 'body-think himself up' (XVIII. 73) and share with its cultural orientation its dimensions and demarcations. A man of culture is a man with his feet always on the human flesh. The human flesh is the ultimate ground of all theory and no theory can substitute for that (as the ground) without amputating human life.

The model of language according to the criteria of sound -- the truth is in the string

Taking our clue from Plato, we have, at this time, to end this the way he ends the Symposium, 'by letting the band of musicians and clowns in and spoil the order of the banquet'. No Western philosopher since Plato has taken the model of music with its 'aural' directions and 'context dependency' as a model of rationality. This is precisely what we claim is the case if we are going to understand radically the basic orientation of The Gita.

It is obvious that The Bhagavad Gita is an aural/oral document from an aural/oral culture. We claim its model of language to be ruled by sound criteria. This is all we need to assume for what follows. These criteria are apt for any knowledge of the Gita to be possible.

No later than the third millennium BC, and probably more than a thousand years earlier, man discovered that the intervals between the tones could be defined by the ratios of the lengths of pipes and strings which sounded them [Fig. I(a)]. It was the ear that made ratios
invariant; by its vivid memory of the simpler intervals, the ear made the development of a science of pure relations possible within the theory of numbers, the tone-field being isomorphic with the number field. From this musicalized number theory, which we know as 'ratio theory', but which the ancients simply called 'music', man began his model building. The ratios of the first six integers defined the primary building blocks: the octave 1:2, the fifth 2:3, the fourth 3:4, the major third 4:5, and the minor third 5:6. From these first six integers, functioning as multiples and sub-multiples of any reference unit ('1') of length or frequency, a numerological cosmology was developed throughout the Near and Far East [Fig. 1(b)]. The ultimate source of this 'Pythagorean' development is unknown. The hymns of the Rg Veda, The Gita, Buddhism, and so on, resound with the evidence that their authors were fully aware of or conditioned by this science and alive to the variety of models it could provide.

Tones recur cyclically at every doubling or halving of frequency or wavelength which are reciprocal: vṛtra-agni; prakṛti-purusa; Arjuna-Kṛsna; samsara-nirvana; thus the 'basic miracle of music' [Fig. 2(a)]. From this acoustical phenomenon, the number 2 acquires its 'female' status; it defines invariantly the octave matrix within which all tones come to birth [Fig. 2(b)]. Here, in this initial identification of the octave with the ratio 1:2, is the root of all the problems which haunt the acoustical theorist, problems which the ancient theorist conceived as symbolizing the imperfection and disorder of the universe, and also its renewal through new tones, new births, new songs, new gods. The octave refuses to be subdivided into subordinate cycles by the only language ancient man knew -- the language of natural number, or integers, and the rational numbers derived from them [Fig. 3(a)]. It is a simple arithmetical fact that the higher powers of three and five which define subordinate intervals of music never agree with higher powers of two which define octave cycles [Fig. 3(b)]. It is a man's yearning for this impossible agreement which introduced a hierarchy of values into the number field. For our ancestors, the essence of the world and of the numbers which interpreted that world was sound, not substance, and that world was rife with disagreement among an endless number of possible structures and possible worlds. The epistemological field of sound, however, remained invariant.

Therefore, from a linguistic and cultural perspective, we have to be aware that we are dealing with languages where tonal and arithmetic relations establish the epistemological invariances. Invariance was not physical, but epistemological. Ratio theory was a science of pure relations; its fixed elements came from the recognition of the octave, fifth and derivative tonal relations which made ratio concrete. The divorce of music from mathematics came later. Language grounded in music is grounded thereby on context dependency; any tone can have any possible relation to other tones, and the shift from one tone to another, which alone makes melody possible, is a shift in perspective which the musician himself embodies. Any perspective (tone) must be 'sacrificed' for a new one to come into being; the song is a radical activity which requires innovation while maintaining continuity, and the 'world' is the creation of the singer, who shares its dimensions with the song. The octave remained the epistemological invariant, 'Mother-Earth', of which all these worlds are the offspring.

Tuning theory establishes for us certain epistemological criteria which we need bear in mind if any meaning is to be derived from any culture which takes tone as the ground of language: (a) it is not the case that numbers or ratios control movement, but it is the case that movement may be ordered according to certain ratios; we are not watching the movement of certain sounds, but rather, we are watching how movement becomes certain sounds (the body is the carrier of particular backgrounds); (b) tones may be generated by numbers; this generation does not give us isolated elements, but rather constellations of elements in which each tone is context and structure dependent (the background is the primary focus); (c) within the matrix of the octave any tonal pattern may rise or fall, hence opposite or reciprocal possibilities are equally relevant, both in the sense of time (shift of key -- modulation) and space (rising-falling) (the problem of choice, duality); (d) any perspective remains just one out of a group of equally valid perspectives, and the variety of possible perspectives from which to view any set of tones is apparently inexhaustible; any realization (that is, any song) excludes all other possibilities while it is sounding, but no song has so universal an appeal that it terminates the invention of new ones (the possibilities of dismemberment and the temporality of the body); (e) linguistic statements remain structure- and context-dependent, and the function of any language is to make clear its own dependence on, and reference to, other linguistic systems; a model based on the primacy of sound is not based on the reality of substance. Whereas the eye fastens on what is fixed, the ear is open to the world of movement in which 'existence' (sat) and 'non-existence' (asat), Arjuna-Krsna, prakṛti-purusa are locked in an eternal and present absence/presence.

Music is a field of aural dimensions where the only substance is its own structure plus the dynamic movement which carves it out from the reverberant sphere of silent potentiality. There are no lasting invariants -- the form of the construction and the 'rules of the game' last only as long as the duration of the piece. Each tone is subject to redefinition and shifts in perspective as soon as a piece is completed.

Unlike an architectural (i.e. spatial) construction, which once completed remains static, its elements forever locked into a set pattern, a musical piece comes and goes. It is called and recalled into existence any number of times, during which it exists as concretely as any visual or tactile construction. Each time a piece is played, it is carved anew out of an infinite source of sound possibility, and each subsequent playing is an act of creation.

Each act of creating, though physically/aurally separate, is connected to each and every other act of creation by a continuous path of memory and movement, lending as much concreteness' to a musical world as notions of metric distance lend to a visual/tactile world.

It is precisely its transcendence which gives a sound-universe its dimensions. By its continual motion and the possibility of superimposing perspectives, either literally or through memory, music functions within a field which transcends three-dimensional static space. Each note springs forth from a sort of infinite-dimensional musical manifold, an unbounded space of shifting tonal possibilities.

A form, or song, born of this space becomes one possibility manifest, one possibility existing at the temporary sacrifice of all other possibilities. A choice must be made for existence to be. A song can be sung in only one key at a time to be recognizable as a coherent form/song, and for this choice of key, tuning system, interpretation and the like to be made, is to sacrifice all other possibilities for the
duration of the piece's performance. But since a musical creation can be called and recalled into being any number of times, the 'sacrifice' is not a dogmatic invariant.

No choice, however, is an absolute in the field of time, for perspectives can change, either after a piece is completed or within its own structure, in the form of modulation to another gravitational center. But modulation is not a random jump. There is always the linking factor of memory. Modulation has no meaning without the memory of where the song came from and where it is going. Each movement is glued together by a memory which flows in a continuous omni directional path. Direction and intent in music are based on a memory of the immediately preceding events but also on an image of the construction in its entirety. It is this continuity of memory which determines the forward motion of the piece and the meaning of each tone when it is recalled in subsequent playing -- the tones have no choice but to slide along the path already charted by memory.

had we not removed music from the curriculum we might not have so much difficulty in understanding audial cultures, and therefore in recovering our own memories. For this reason, any one construction of these cultures is simultaneously a deconstruction. We are forced to cross a sound barrier which we did not know existed and which originally was taken for granted or was slowly being forgotten. Sound gave birth to symbol, but we cannot exalt the offspring without killing the mother. Thus, it is obvious that statements from audial cultures will remain unintelligible as long as they are not read against the background model which generates them: the model of music as model of language.

It should also be amply clear that it is only through such radical activity that our rationality can know itself as rational by embodying other people’s rationality, rather than colonizing them into our own decisions about rationality.

Conclusion

The first discovery we have made when approaching documents from audial cultures is that 'the book' as a model of reading is dead. That what lives is the text. (The book is dead, long live the text!) The book as the model of reading carries with it a host of presuppositions that belong exclusively to literary cultures: the unity of the text, the uniformity of language, the exclusive focusing on content, the fixity of both the reader and the text, the accidental changes in the reader of the text as attributes of a fixed subject, the exclusive function of language as sign, the identification of content with knowledge, the coincidence of knowledge with our model of reading, the ontological and axiological priority of purusa over prakrti, etc., etc.

On the other hand, a document from oral cultures appears simultaneously as an explosion of different texts, different languages and different functions of language in such a way that when taken together in any 'one' text from audial cultures they offer us a complete and wholly new communications-systems. To enter the system demands from us, interpreters or translators, the ability to discover the plurality of languages and texts, and also perform the kinds of activities that such discovery would entail so that we may write a text of the audial culture under study. The Gita for example gives us the language of prakrti, and the language of purusa and the common language of tuning theory and mathematics of which both languages emerge plus the relation of these languages to the body-in every case body and language coincide in dimensions -- and simultaneously we are forced to develop a way of focusing in each one of these languages by the criteria and intentionality of the language and of the system as a whole. While in one language we may focus on substances and content, in the other we have to learn how to focus on fields and movement. The problem of the translator or the interpreter, therefore, is not so much to give us a consistent and uniform translation of the text, but rather to open the plurality of texts to the possibility that texts as much as languages and cultures are incommensurable. Incommensurable texts, or languages, are neither inconsistent with each other nor comparable for content. (We, of course, can make them, by a dictionary, inconsistent and their content comparable.) Unless we are capable of doing this we may miss the picture that emerges from reading a document like the Gita in its totality of text, plural languages and plural bodies where at times (prakrti) the body and the language coincide improperly and there is room for personal agency and where at times (purusa) the language and the body coincide to the point of sharing the same dimension and then there is no room for agency but only witnessing.

This essay would be incomplete if the implications of the method used here to analyze the text of The Gita were not generalized to apply to other disciplines. Literary criticism of modem as well as mythic materials has taken many forms and in every case each form has been identified with one particular kind of 'knowledge' to which the cultural text has been reduced. Few have taken the rationality of mythology seriously enough to realize that the models they carried to its study could in no way coincide with the source of the knowledge from which mythology was born in the first place and which was no knowledge at all. Literary criticism has not been very much aware of its own criteria of interpretation much less the criteria of constitution of others. The same criticism may be applied to philology that could only interpret The Gita if it were reduced to an epic document -- and epic criteria -- just because it is found in The Mahabharata. But what philologists, anthropologists etc. fail to realize is that what is at stake in the study of culture is not only their claims to knowledge but that the knowledge those disciplines carry with them to the study of culture cancels those cultures out, and that in this cancellation we systematically reduce the plurality of cultures to an imperialistic uniformity. And since language is sensation and vice versa, we are systematically cutting off possible sensitization mechanisms for contemporary culture.

For some, culture is a geographic concept; for others, something in the blood. But in the end for all of us our homeland is language, for only on its soil we can conceive and feel our own existence. Whichever decision we can make on method, it results in a language and therefore in a sensitization mechanism. The oral mechanisms of oral cultures focus on wave-functions which determine a biological type of human -- our ancestor -- different from the optical men of the visual world that transforms wave-functions to generate event-type objects and the viewpoint that goes along with this world. If we study the past it is out of a biological necessity to reensitize ourselves to a world that is in eternal motion and depends for sensitization on our own ability to move conceptually first, biologically later. What India has discovered for us -- Hinduism and Buddhism -- is a language to describe consciousness as witness, the purusa of the Yoga-
Sutra or the Krsna/purusa of The Gita, for example, and it also gave us a language, another different language to speak about objects and things, cabbages and kings: the language of prakrti. What we have lost in the West is not the ecstasy, the oceanic experience, but the language to describe such experiences. Thus we have misread the East in one of its most fundamental contributions: the experience of immortality in the form of the consciousness as witness in this very world and by the same yogin who now may be enlightened and now unenlightened, who now experiences Yoga or now talks or writes about Yoga. Because we lost the language, we lost the body that could intelligibly integrate experience and interpretation and we lost the community. We do not realize that the possibilities of the human body are in direct proportion to the languages it can embody. We opted for an interpretation that together with one language would also presuppose one body that is either enlightened or stupid and we decided never to mix the two. Classical Samkhya, Classical Yoga and The Gita, not to mention Buddhism, are the worst victims of our paucity of language, bodies, in a word, inner mobility.

Ultimately our emphasis has to be biological because primarily and ultimately, our right and wrong methods, our ethics and metaphysics are grounded on a biological origin and are capable of subverting our biology into a higher or lower degree of sensatization. The biological emphasis of the body in documents like the Gita is obvious, and also a result of the method here used, and it becomes even more obvious when the experiences of the I and the not-I -- mortality and immortality -- are both housed in the body, in the human biology and not away from it. The same happens with ethics. When we see two opposing armies being destroyed as in The Gita or two groups of people killing each other, historical adversaries, then we know a theory of knowledge is dying or living with those people; biological life dies or lives with the theories that sensitize it.

The ultimate concern for the method we propose is the fact that through it we expand the languages of the cultures surrounding us, rather than return to the mysterious, and that through these expansions we increase the sensitization mechanisms of the humanity with which we find ourselves in community.

Appendix II
Translation and the language of purusa

Taking our clue from the first verse of the Gita, 'on the field of the Kurus, the field of dharma', we see that this early in the text the discrepancies in translation are as many as the translators. Here are some samples:

'In the field of virtue, in the field of Kuru'
'On the field of righteousness, the Kuru field'
'On the field of justice, the Kuru-field'
'The place of virtue, the place of Ngrinage'

and so on. What is missing in these translations is not the 'happy phrase' that would translate accurately the Sanskrit kurus/ dharma-ksetre but the ability of the translator to recognize that dharma and field (dharma-ksetre) belong to the language of purusa and that the translator cannot give us a discrete term but must learn to focus, and make the reader do the same, in the total fields, wholes, contexts, horizons etc.

Chapter XIII of the Gita defines clearly the field as the ability to focus and become (Chapter XI) those fields.

Thus we have one language of fields totally different from the language of discrete objects.

While in one we may easily find a discrete equivalent English term, in the other the English terms are lacking; and so is the ability to focus on fields, contexts, wholes etc.

The language of fields and the ability to focus on them appears in the Cita in such wholes as: Krsna/purusa/yoga/dharma/ksetre/gunas.

Chapter XI of the Gita is the coincidence of this language with the body and the oceanic experience of the world in front of it. All the chapters of the Gita from I through XVIII are an exercise (Yoga) in seeing the dependence of particular words and statements on the concrete field, whole, context that conditions them.

The emancipation of Arjuna consists primarily in his ability to shift the focus of his actions from the actions to the field, context, dharma, yoga, gua that conditions it.

While the language of prakrti demands, for the sake of identification, the fixity of things, situations and subjects, the language of purusa brings forth the correction of this fixity with its ability to focus on movement, offering as criteria for such movement an embodied vision, that is a-perspectival, detached and without any room for self-identity. Self identity gives way to witnessing. Any forms of identification of such experiences with any subject are possible only when the language of purusa is cancelled, and the language of prakrti is the only language to describe experience. And vice versa the language of purusa describes only such states of 'oceanic experience' and to give it priority over the language of prakrti would also destroy the worlds we know.

In sum, both languages of prakrti and purusa describe for us a plurality of ways of being in the world not because these are the worlds oral men knew but because these are the languages he had to describe them. As you may notice the Gita begins and ends with Samjaya choosing the only form of narration available to him and telling us in the end that whenever Krsna and Arjuna meet the whole human drama starts again. This could equally be said of texts like Classical Samkhya, Classical Yoga and, in general, any classical texts from oral cultures.

Appendix III
The text of the imagination: meditation

The Bhagavad Gita, as The Text, has already produced for us two texts: a semiotic text and an audial/musical text. The semiotic text is alien to the Gita and we identified it as the text the reader carries to the reading of the Gita. The audial/musical text, on the other hand, we have identified as the model text by which the Gita, so to speak, wrote itself. Our present study would be incomplete if we stopped here. We need to proceed farther, one text farther, to prove the necessity under which we are laboring.
The language models of the two texts mentioned above differ radically from each other as to their origins. The semiotic text is grounded on principles (of abstraction). The audial/musical text is grounded on origins (of experience). The semiotic text is an exclusive product of abstraction through cognitive skills. The audial/musical text is an abstraction from the imagination and imaginative skills.

The third text, the text of meditation, is an exclusive product of the imagination. But before we proceed any farther we should distinguish the use of the imagination by the Gita from the way the imagination has been described by others. Freud buried it in the subconscious while Jung confused it with fantasy and falsely identified its origin with Greek archetypes. (When, in his later writings, Jung focused of Eastern archetypes he was closer to the imagination than to fantasy.) The main distinction we have to bear in mind between imagination and fantasy, is that fantasy’s origins, development and conclusion rise and fall with its creator; they live and die within the covers of a book, a text or a story. The imagination’s origins, on the other hand, are public and universal and the creations of the imagination transcend any individual texts and affect always the world: they create new worlds. Fantasy may give rise to feelings, in most cases sentiment or sentimentality, but the imagination leads always to decisions that change, affect or somehow create new worlds. The imaginations’ feelings are of a different kind and intensity than those of fantasy and they require an external and experienced guide for decoding or interpreting them.

The Bhagavad Gita, as a text for meditation, shares with the imagination its limits and demarcations. The main elements of the text are memory and imagination. Imagination functions as origin, the original experience of which a whole religion, a whole culture, is born: the original archetype. Memory, on the other hand, provides the imagination with image-points -- memory-points -- of concrete instances, manifestations of that imagination -- that silent background -- made flesh.

The meditator’s task is a movement through memory-points to steal the imagination’s horizon: to become the experience, to make his body coincide with the limits and demarcations of that horizon.

The method of the imagination in meditation is an exclusive concentration, a dedicated focusing on only those signs that come from the background. In the case of the Gita it is a play of discernment of the inner sign of detachment between the disciple, Arjuna and his guru Krishna.

The text of meditation in the Bhagavad Gita may be better understood if moved in its entirety to the human body as its base: the body, its operations and its possible embodiments. The human body of the meditator comes to the meditation in an apparent false unity of experience that the meditation is going to dismember systematically in order finally to steal the larger unit of the horizon. (Re-read footnote on pp. 276-277.)

References


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