

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

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

Keywords: Language; Klein bottle; Semiotics; Paradox; Subject-object split

As someone who is interested in transforming language to better express the complexities of both/and thinking and paradox, I greatly appreciate Steven M. Rosen's thought-provoking article, "How can we signify being? Semiotics and topological self-signification," (*Cosmos and History* 2014;10:250-277) for suggesting a novel way to signify the paradoxical nature of Being. While pondering whether and how his suggestions for signifying Being could be applied more broadly, I became aware that much more than his semiotic innovation would be required. Here, I explore how other

linguistic infrastructures and exostructures¹ will require equally innovative changes in order for language to embrace paradox more systematically.

In his essay, Rosen argues that phenomenology currently refers to Being by using a sign, namely, the word “Being,” that does not convey the richness of the discourse about Being. Essentially, its form cannot sufficiently express its content or meaning. The word “Being” itself lacks the fullness of that which it signifies, in particular, the paradoxical quality by which Being itself encompasses and transcends the seeming division into subject and object. Rosen says that “Being can be elucidated effectively only by surpassing the division of subject and object long prevalent in mainstream philosophy” (p. 250) but that “...the underlying semiotic structure of such discourse [on Being] has been tacitly geared toward maintaining the split [between subject and object]” (p. 251).

Rosen proposes the use of signifiers that radically embody paradox, first, the Necker cube and the Möbius band, neither of which is fully sufficient for the task. Ultimately he arrives at the Klein bottle or Klein surface, a fully paradoxical entity in which inside flows continuously into outside. Indeed, the Klein bottle is an apt structure for representing Being, as it requires four dimensions, not the usual three, to exist in itself (i.e., not as a projection, such as a drawing of it). The Klein bottle is not a conventional object in space. Topologically, the fourth dimension is necessary so that the Klein bottle can flow back into itself without cutting through itself. Phenomenologically, Rosen emphasizes that the fourth dimension is not another spatial dimension but rather is Merleau-Ponty’s depth dimension, which is a psychophysical dimension that integrates psychic and physical “spaces.” Rosen describes the depth dimension, quoting Merleau-Ponty, as “the experience of the reversibility of dimensions, of a global ‘locality’—everything in the same place at the same time, a locality from which height, width, and depth [the classical dimensions] are abstracted” (p. 268). Rosen further clarifies that the depth dimension is “a self-containing dimension, not merely a container for contents that are taken as separate from it; and it is a dimension that blends subject and object concretely, rather than

¹ I borrow the term “infrastructure” from David Bohm’s term “tacit infrastructure,” which he describes as a type of knowledge or skill that is learned, used, and not questioned; takes a subliminal and maybe unconscious form; and persists in the face of changes in context (in D. Bohm and F.D. Peat, *Science, Order, and Creativity*, Bantam Books, 1987.). Herein, to emphasize an ecological approach, in which systems are embedded within other systems, I propose to balance the term “infrastructure” with “exostructure” to include the entire span of structures both within subsystems of language and suprasystems that are more encompassing than language. I am not positing deep structures, either in the sense of Chomsky or Levi-Strauss. My intention is not to emphasize immutability, but rather the necessity for change: to change one subsystem, such as semiotics, the corresponding systems with which it co-operates will also change.

serving as a static staging platform for objectifications carried out by a detached subject” (p. 269).

As many creation stories tell it, after Being has been distinguished from Non-Being (the Void), Being splits into further dichotomies, including subject/object. From that split, other dichotomies derive—living/nonliving, sentient/nonsentient, matter/spirit, body/mind, and so on. Consequently, finding a way to transcend and hold such dichotomies in tension in language, being able to express the unity-in-duality (or multiplicity) of such splits could have far-reaching implications for “understanding reality and *behaving with respect to it* [emphasis mine].”² Rosen draws upon the discourses in phenomenology about Being as a unity-that-encompasses-duality. However, the linguistic gymnastics that are required to express such paradoxical notions (such as multiply hyphenated phrases) fail to embody, and thus convey, the fullness and richness, particularly the complete experience, of Being. In seeking a clearer way to represent and express such nondual dualisms, Rosen advances some topics that deserve to be investigated in greater depth, topics that are implicit and deserve to be made explicit. Specifically, in addition to the semiotic limitations that he raises regarding the split between subject and object, I intend to illuminate other linguistic infrastructural and cultural exostructural aspects of language that enforce the split between subject and object in ways that generally go unnoticed. The two separate words, “subject” and “object,” imply that they are two separate “things”; however, their use also requires a complexly entwined set of infra/exostructures. As most of an iceberg is below the surface, the tacit infrastructures of language operate, generally, below the level of conscious linguistic processing; hence, they constrain what can and cannot be said and what must be said in ways that the everyday user of language does not question. This essay will enumerate some of those structures and focus on how they maintain the split between subject and object—so that we may question them.

My intention is to hold up a prism to language to reveal a spectrum of assumptions operating as tacit infra/exostructures when we use language. “Spectrum,” however, is not quite an adequate metaphor, because in a spectrum, each color is separated out linearly from the others. Rather, the tacit infra/exostructures are differentiated for purposes of identification. As trees, air, water, and organisms function together in an ecosystem, they function collectively as integrated systems within and around the

² The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis states that “the *structure* [emphasis mine] of a human being’s language influences the manner in which he understands reality and behaves with respect to it” (in B.L. Whorf and J.B. Carroll, *Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*, M.I.T. Press, 1964., p. 23). In contrast to those who criticize Whorf for claiming that language constrains thought, my concerns focus on transforming language in novel ways to communicate paradox.

system we call “language.” By illuminating such linguistic systematicity, perhaps future efforts to address the limitations of language along the lines proposed by Rosen (which I concur are necessary) can advance in an integrated manner among the different facets and dimensions that comprise language-based communication.

Since the beginnings of western philosophy and in some non-western cultures, our experience, understanding, and representation of the world in language has involved antinomies and opposites. However, their mutual co-mingling has also been suppressed by the dominance of either/or logic. As a way to (re)assert both/and thinking, Rosen’s consideration of new types of sign-vehicles can be extended beyond the concept of Being to other types of interpenetrating antinomies. Balancing, integrating, and managing³ polarities so that we cease to be stuck on an ideological pendulum swinging from one pole to the other would advance our ability to think, speak, and write integratively and become integrated beings, not split within ourselves or from others. To communicate *from* the perspective of wholeness, which, paradoxically, is *aperspectival/multiperspectival*—and not just speak *about* wholeness—requires that the assumptions underlying our use of language embody that wholeness. What are some of those assumptions?

PHILOSOPHIC-SCIENTIFIC WRITING/DISOURSE

LeGuin points out that academic discourse, the “father tongue” is the language of power, “the language of thought that seeks objectivity.”⁴ The father tongue has been used in most philosophic writing and is indeed the form of language we are using presently, in my writing and your reading of this essay. We are not using what she calls the mother tongue, which is “language not as mere communication but as relation, relationship.”⁵ Whatever advances emerge from this inquiry in (and into) the father tongue must benefit the mother tongue as well.

Furthermore, since our mode of engaging presently is through writing, this allows us to be separated in space and in time. We are also using a very particular western alphabetic sign system that has its own historical development through the primarily monotheistic cultures that believed in a god that was separate from—more so, above—humans. I mention this as cultural context, to bring to awareness some of the taken-

³ Barry Johnson, *Polarity management: Identifying and managing unsolvable problems*, Human Resource Development, 1992. For a broader discussion, see his forthcoming book, *AND, How to Leverage Polarity/Paradox/Dilemma* (at www.polaritypartnerships.com).

⁴ Ursula K Le Guin, *Dancing at the edge of the world: Thoughts on words, women, places*, Grove Press, 1997. p. 148.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 149. Her use of “mother tongue” differs from that of Quine.

for-granted aspects of the language being used here and now. They will be examined in more depth subsequently.

In his quest to find more appropriate expressions of Being, Rosen focuses on written language: “Our system of alphabetic signs was designed to serve the interests of detached subjects who stand aloof from the objects cast before them” (p. 251). An early form of pre-alphabetic writing appeared around the fourth millennium BCE in the Near East as wedge-like marks inscribed into clay tablets, known as cuneiform. Such writing served as an accounting system to keep track of inventory or debts—who owed what to whom.⁶ “Given that the vast majority of the earliest cuneiform texts are administrative — detailing transactions involving property, materials, and labor — it is indeed difficult not to see the invention of writing as a solution to the practical bureaucratic problems posed by an increasingly complex economy.”⁷ Indeed, such representations pertained specifically to objects in space before subjects—i.e., how many cattle John owns, how much grain Mary has. Alphabetic writing emerged centuries later in Phoenicia, then morphed into Aramaic, which morphed into Hebrew and Greek and later into the Roman alphabet we are using here. McLuhan points out the profound significance of the development of those writing systems to human consciousness: “Writing, in its several modes, can be regarded technologically as the development of new languages. For to translate the audible into the visible by phonetic means is to institute a dynamic process that reshapes every aspect of thought, language, and society.”⁸ He notes that “the ear picks up sound from all directions at once” and such spherical perception differs from the more linear focus of visual perception. With some auditory experiences, one can feel as if one is inside the sound, whereas one’s experience of seeing is such that what is “out there” seems to be perceived by oneself “in here.” In this sense, the world consists of objects out there in space (the container that holds them) before myself as the perceiving subject. While writing emerged to keep track of object-beings—cattle, sheep, grain—perhaps the discourse about Being, in the form of a divine Being, presented more of a challenge. Indeed, in Hebrew, one is not to speak or write, in full, the name of the divine. To the extent that Being partakes of ineffability, Rosen asks, “How can we write meaningfully of Being when our very manner of writing keeps Being away?” Specifically, Rosen

⁶ F. Coulmas, *Writing Systems of the World*, Wiley, 1991. Also see <http://www.english.illinois.edu/~people/faculty/debaron/403/403powerpoint/how.pdf>.

⁷ C. Woods, et al., *Visible Language: Inventions of Writing in the Ancient Middle East and Beyond*, Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2010. p. 17.

⁸ Marshall McLuhan, ‘Myth and mass media’, in H.A. Murray (ed.), *Myth and Mythmaking*, Beacon Press, 1968, pp. 288-99.

emphasizes that, if Being surpasses the split between subject and object (as brought out by phenomenology), we cannot meaningfully express Being through a form of writing that implicitly enforces this split.

To “find a different mode of writing, one that can give voice to Being without turning it into an object,” Rosen introduces the paradoxical structures of the Necker cube, Möbius band, and Klein surface as novel ways to signify Being. Although they, too, seem to be objects in space serving as signs, he suggests that their representation of paradox is ongoing, active, dynamic—a verb. Here, I ask, can such integration of paradox into language, as Rosen demonstrates, be expanded beyond the domain of philosophical discourse? I maintain that it can and it must be. Indeed, Rosen has made important first steps toward reconciling not only the split between subject and object but between other polarities and oppositions and diversities that also have underlying unity. Such expansion of language will involve knowns and unknowns interacting in open process, thus mysterious as to where it will lead, in our living it out fully, not limited to any “text.”

First, I show *how* the split between subject and object (and hence other polarities-that-are-unities) is enforced by an entwined set of infra/exostructures.

ASSUMPTIONS: IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT

This is the first paradox to acknowledge: it is impossible to write about the implicit assumptions of our language system without simultaneously invoking those very assumptions. This enigma⁹ serves to further reify the assumptions rather than free us from their constraints. Although a system of assumptions is necessary for language to function, it is also necessary to become/remain conscious of those assumptions.

In the sections that follow, I examine aspects of language generally used but not thought much about because they are second nature to users of everyday language. They comprise the implicit infra/exostructures that, in addition to the semiotics described by Rosen, also conspire to keep subject and object, as well as the other antinomies, apart. This makes it difficult to discourse on the full paradoxical nature of Being (as well as topics in biology, psychology, quantum physics, economics, and so

⁹ Heidegger identified a corresponding paradox, or circularity, in seeking the meaning of Being: that which is sought is already present in the inquiry. An inquiry into X already contains X but also does not contain X. The inquirer exhibits an inquiring mode of Being. The Kleinian nature of such inquiry can be seen here: in a sense, there is a self-containing and an uncontained quality to an inquiry into Being. Heidegger describes the *structure* [emphasis mine] of the question “what is Being?” as circular, as presupposing the object of inquiry, and he dismisses, in advance, circularity as a potential criticism of his undertaking (see sections 5-8 in M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, HarperCollins, 1962.)

on). The sequence in which I present them is not as important as their systematicity—that these infra/exostructures operate simultaneously, interpenetratingly. Nor are these topics distinct; rather, they form a network of functions to which I apply an ecological model in which language itself is considered to be a system of systems. The interconnectedness of these infra/exostructures perpetuates the status quo, making it more challenging to radically alter the way we might signify Being and the way we signify everything else—which is why it is important to examine more than semiotics. In order to survey multiple infra/exostructures, I do not delve into much depth or into the internal issues in each area.

What implicit infra/exostructures comprise the system of systems called language? In this short essay I address the following structures: culture, category structure, logic, metaphor, semantics, syntax, concept, and sign vehicle. Each topic could serve as a node for finer-grained analysis. Although I discuss each separately, I do not consider them *separated*; nor do they function separately. They operate together, i.e., co-operate. By considering all these supra/subsystems as co-operative, it might be possible to identify leverage points for transforming the whole system of systems. Leverage points are places where a small change can effect a large change within the entire system.¹⁰ Which of these infra/exostructures might yield fruitful leverage points—adding new concepts to the lexicon, devising novel logics, expanding certain categories—or might a combination of many be required? That is the challenge we human beings/language

¹⁰ D. Meadows, *Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System*, Accessed 2 Aug 2015, Available from <http://www.donellameadows.org/archives/leverage-points-places-to-intervene-in-a-system/>. The structures I describe are ordered roughly corresponding to Meadows' list of leverage points, in *decreasing* order of effectiveness. For reference, listed here are her "Places to Intervene in a System" for mechanical systems (in *increasing* order of effectiveness). Language is not a mechanical system, so not all of these points apply.

12. Constants, parameters, numbers (such as subsidies, taxes, standards).
11. The sizes of buffers and other stabilizing stocks, relative to their flows.
10. The structure of material stocks and flows (such as transport networks, population age structures).
9. The lengths of delays, relative to the rate of system change.
8. The strength of negative feedback loops, relative to the impacts they are trying to correct against.
7. The gain around driving positive feedback loops.
6. The structure of information flows (who does and does not have access to information).
5. The rules of the system (such as incentives, punishments, constraints).
4. The power to add, change, evolve, or self-organize system structure.
3. The goals of the system.
2. The mindset or paradigm out of which the system — its goals, structure, rules, delays, parameters — arises.
1. The power to transcend paradigms.

users face—to consider and find ways to express opposites, contradictions, wholes and parts, and so on, simultaneously—recognizing that they can be distinguished but are not distinct.

Culture. Different cultures, over millennia, evolved sets of distinctions that matter to that particular culture. The origin of the distinction or the reason it matters might have been long forgotten. Nevertheless, each culture develops its unique ways for its members to be in and interact with the world. Whorf's hypothesis maintains that the *structure* of a language (and I would include its implicit infrastructures) influences the way in which one perceives and interacts with the world. Consequently, what one culture emphasizes as important and hence stresses or marks in language (e.g., not only by word use but also by a variety of other linguistic conventions) is not the same as in other cultures. For example, some languages emphasize kinship relations in terms of gender, whereas others, such as Indonesian, mark relational seniority and refer to siblings not as brother or sister but as first-born or second-born.¹¹ The Matses tribe in the Amazon requires a speaker to specify whether something is known by direct experience, inferred from evidence (e.g., the presence of an animal from its footprints in the mud), conjecture, or by hearsay.¹² The Guugu Yimithirr language of an Australian tribe orients the individual according to the four cardinal directions (e.g., “watch out, there is a bee near your northwest foot”) rather than subjective direction (“your left foot”).¹³ Centuries of agreement about such ways to organize one's perceptions and convey them to others enables each language user to use his or her particular language among co-speakers. It is with this broadest brush stroke that a cultural orientation, such as that between subject and object, becomes part of one's lifeworld.

Readers of this article are likely to have been enculturated to interact with a world full of objects, whereas people in other cultures, such as the Mi'kmaq of southeastern Canada, instead consider the world to be full of subjects (where animals, trees, and mountains, for example, have personhood). For the Mi'kmaq, humans are humans and beavers are beavers but both are persons, that is to say, subjects. They are relations, family—as are the wind, the mountains, and the trees. Mi'kmaq stories tell of humans marrying animals, such as the girl who married a loon and the man who

¹¹ F. Anggoro and D. Gentner, ‘Sex and seniority: The effects of linguistic categories on conceptual judgments and memory’, in R. Alterman and D. Kirsch, *Proceedings of the 25th Annual Cognitive Science Society: Part 1 and 2*, Boston, MA, Psychology Press, Taylor & Francis, 2003.

¹² Guy Deutscher, *Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages*, Macmillan, 2010. p. 153.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 160-164.

married a beaver. Such stories show how to enter the experience of the animal and know how they live, particularly for the beaver (a staple food source), to see how similar their lifeworld is to that of humans.¹⁴

Different cultures, therefore, draw the boundaries between categories (such as personhood, kinship, sentience) differently. Although cultural change is considered the most effective leverage point, such change is likely to be strongly resisted.

Category structure. From the culture emerges its category structure.¹⁵ By this I am referring to a kind of set membership whereby predication and implicit metaphors reflect the culture's distinctions and assumptions about the world, i.e., what is considered animate versus inanimate, conscious or not conscious, has agency or does not have agency, is animal, vegetable, or mineral; whether time flows linearly or circularly, unidirectionally or bidirectionally, is ever-present or only "now"; whether death is final or just a temporary transition between lives, and so on. Categories do not necessarily have clear boundaries; many have fuzzy, porous, or fractal boundaries. In some cases, there may be a prototype example of a category, but often the members of a particular category might fit only to a degree. The category structure specifies the overarching distinctions between subject and object, such as whether they are animate/inanimate, friend/foe, animal/vegetable/mineral, etc. In particular, some cultures have a narrower category of what constitute subjects, and other cultures, such as the Mi'kmaq, have a broader category.

A culture's category structures mostly go unquestioned because members of the culture learn the categories implicitly before the ability to question them has developed. Categories are taught to children as they learn to apply language: they learn which categories different things/beings belong to by learning which terms can be predicated to other terms. For example, in kindergarten-level discourse, these primary category structures are conveyed through simple admonitions of "No, Johnny, penguins aren't amphibians, they're birds." By graduate school, the admonitions become more subtle and staunch and pertain to which category structures may be challenged and which may not. In fact, I was subtly admonished not to question the category structures of language!

History provides numerous examples of how this linguistic structure has functioned as a leverage point. In particular, great scientific revolutions have occurred when it was found that a concept needed to be recategorized—notably, when light was

¹⁴ A.C. Hornborg, *Mi'kmaq Landscapes: From Animism to Sacred Ecology*, Ashgate, 2008. p. 22.

¹⁵ A.K. Gangadean, *Between Worlds: The Emergence of Global Reason*, Peter Lang, 1998.

found to be able to take the both predicates “wavelike” and “particlelike.” Similarly, prions were found to span the categories of inanimate protein and animate virus.

Logic. Logic consists of basic rules for determining what can be said, and/or what is true, within the bounds of a culture’s presupposed category structure. Logic helps to enforce the category structure of a culture by specifying the rules for manipulating concepts within said category structure. Western logic and culture have been based on the foundation of the laws of identity, of the excluded middle, and of noncontradiction. Indeed, there seems to be a bias in western cultures against contradiction—against “both/and” and “neither/nor”. How might western culture have emerged differently had Heraclitus, rather than Aristotle, systematized his ideas into a logic? Similarly, if western cultures had a slightly different category structure, our same logic would still enable us to reason as follows: all men are immortal (say, because it is assumed that they have an immortal soul); Socrates is a man; therefore, Socrates is immortal. If we were *required*, like the Matsigenka tribe in the Amazon, to specify how the information conveyed was obtained—whether by direct experience, or inferred from evidence, conjecture, or by hearsay¹⁶—philosophers would probably never agonize over truth values of statements such as “The present king of France is bald” because there would be no way to specify the source of a statement that has no actuality.

Another logical bias in western cultures is that consistency has been emphasized over completeness. Culturally, inconsistency is almost taboo (likely because assumptions of consistency underlie the concept of identity). However, Gödel’s second theorem formalized that a complete system cannot prove its consistency, implying that a complete system entails inconsistency. Language is indeed an open—incomplete—system. The notions of completeness and consistency, when applied psychologically, for example, have important consequences. One becomes more whole or integrated when one accepts rather than denies those aspects of oneself that are inconsistent with, or contradict, the ways one prefers to identify oneself. We shall see an example of this below.

Taking (w)holeness/allness/integrality as a starting point, and acknowledging the systemic inter/intraconnectedness of the (w)hole, Rosen’s approach offers us a way to deal with its inherent inconsistency, paradox, and the interpenetration of opposites in ways that do not require the resolution of the paradox, synthesis of opposites, or elimination of inconsistency, but rather maintain the coexistence-in-tension of opposites/antinomies/polarities. To practice such an approach requires a logic that

¹⁶ Deutscher, *Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages*. p. 153.

embraces (in)consistency and (in)completeness. Multiple logics can be applied according to different contexts. Alternative logics have been and are being developed, including many-valued logic, topological logic, and paraconsistent logic.

The logician Graham Priest advocates a paraconsistent logic.¹⁷ Its primary feature is that some contradictions can be true without explosion¹⁸ occurring. The prototype example of paraconsistency is the Liar's Paradox—"This statement is false"—which is true although it claims to be false. Although such bi-level statements currently are rare in ordinary discourse, the relevance of this type of statement for future discourse could prove useful. From a systems dynamics perspective, a statement could be true at one level of system and false at another level. For example, it could be said that "a Möbius strip has one side and two sides," because it appears to have two sides at the local level but has only one side at the global level. Paraconsistency expands the standard dichotomy of true/false to a 2 x 2 matrix such that there are four possible valences: true/not false, false/not true, true/false (both/and), and not true/not false (neither/nor).¹⁹ However, a paraconsistent logic could not be based in linear alphabetic writing. To represent multiple levels, a new form of symbolic depiction would need to be constructed.

Metaphor. Poets and other creative writers use metaphor—understanding one thing in terms of another—*explicitly* to convey thoughts that ordinary language fails to express directly, in order to make new connections, to expand categories, and foster the openness of the linguistic system. Everyday language, however, uses *implicit* metaphors that are systematic and mostly go unnoticed because we think we are communicating literally not poetically. Lakoff and Johnson²⁰ reveal how ordinary concepts, not just poetic metaphors, are expressed/understood in terms of other concepts. For example, "I can't spend all afternoon with you" engages the implicit metaphors Time Is Money and Time Is A Scarce Resource. Abstract concepts tend to be expressed in terms of more concrete concepts. For example, "I don't grasp his convoluted argument" uses the metaphor Understanding is Grasping. A pervasive metaphor in current American culture is the war metaphor. We describe politics (red

¹⁷ Graham Priest, 'What is so bad about contradictions?', *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 95, no. 8, 1998, pp. 410-26, G. Priest, *In Contradiction*, Clarendon Press, 2006.

¹⁸ Explosion refers to the fact that a contradiction entails everything. If logic helps us sort out what goes in which containers, explosion results in "anything goes" and hence hinders efforts to "sort" through the validity/veridicality of statements.

¹⁹ Priest, 'What is so bad about contradictions?'., pp. 413-14. In *Beyond the Limits of Thought*, he and Jay Garfield point out that this schema is native to Indian logic.

²⁰ G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, University of Chicago Press, 2008.

versus blue), sports (teams fight for first place), relationships (the battle of the sexes), health(care) (the crusade against Zika), and even weather (cold front) using war-based metaphors. The characteristics of war, such as the persistence of two opposing sides, one of which is a winner and the other a loser, then implicitly permeate the other concepts and our statements about them. How can we hope not just for a peaceful world but also for integration of opposites when we frame so many concepts in terms of war?

There are even implicit metaphors that relate to language specifically. For example, Linguistic Expressions are Containers (“his words carry little truth”), and Communication is Sending/Receiving (“do you get what I’m trying to say”). There are also culturally defined sets of implicit metaphors associated with subjects and objects. Metaphors regarding *subjects* include terms relating to, for example, agency, thinking, feeling, knowing, and morality, and metaphors regarding *objects* include terms relating to being a container, a conduit, or a vehicle or terms that convey relationship as outside-of-one-another. If I related to all *some things* as *someones*, for my conscience to let me put the coffee beans in the grinder, I would not casually say “I am making coffee.” I would instead prepare the coffee-beings for ritual transmutation by water. Thus, in order to bring subject and object into profound interconnectedness within Being as self-signified by the Klein bottle, as Rosen does, the implicit metaphors associated with subjects and objects must be re-evaluated. Although the Klein bottle (or Möbius strip) can be used metaphorically to convey the mutual permeation of opposites or integration of what is “out there” with what is “in here,” Rosen emphasizes that the Klein bottle is not simply an object in space—a different kind of uncontained container—nor simply a metaphor, symbol, or sign for the interpenetration of subject and object. It signifies itself, but we are getting ahead of ourselves.

Semantics. Semantics pertains to the meaning that words, sentences, paragraphs, and texts have in their immediate milieu. Because language is not used in a vacuum but rather in specific instances in specific circumstances in various multiply embedded cultural contexts, those contexts create the vessel in which the assumptions and words function to produce meaning. Contexts can include everything from the historiography (every use of a word and everything that has been said and written about it) to the co-text (the text surrounding the text in question) and even *who* the speaker/writer is. In spoken language, metalinguistic features, such as intonation and gesture, are elements of the semantic infrastructure. At the semantic level of infrastructure, cultural and logical contextualities meet the metaphoric/ conceptual/

syntactic/ sign-vehicular actualities to catalyze meaning in the writer/speaker–reader/listener dyad.

This is where the implicit sorting of subjects and objects (as determined by cultural assumptions, category structures, and implicit metaphors) becomes explicit. With my (i.e., the speaker's) semantic choices, my assumptions and tacit infrastructures become explicit in the words, intonations, and gestures that I use. My ability to convey meaning to another relies on the deep and immediate contexts, the manner in which I order my words, and the specific words I use, all nested like Russian dolls. If I said to someone in my culture, "I spoke with hummingbird today..." that person would need to discern what "hummingbird" refers to. Is it the tiny bird with the red throat, my sister whose nickname is Hummingbird, or perhaps my ironically named cat? By saying "spoke with" rather than "spoke to" I imply that I consider "hummingbird" to be my conversational equal, a subject rather than an object. If my category structure were such that birds belong in the category of "beings that understand my language," then my meaning goes against that of most members of my culture. Furthermore, if I said, in a nonpoetic context, "I am the mother of my father and the sister of my husband, and he is my offspring," my meaning is obscure, given the assumptions of my culture. In the semantic choices I make, I either use the taken-for-granted infrastructure or break from it. Poets often break from it. Their art is appreciated as they stretch these infrastructures and still be affecting. However, when nonpoets stretch the infrastructures too far, they encounter cultural resistance, sometimes anger or punishment.

Syntax. The standard sentence structure of subject-verb-object or subject-object-verb perpetuates the subject-object contradistinction.²¹ How does syntax perpetuate this? (Note that syntactical subjects and objects are not identical to philosophical subjects and objects. The subject of a sentence is not necessarily a subject in the sense in which we are examining regarding the subject-object split. The subject of a sentence is just as likely refer to an object.) Nevertheless, a linear syntax structures predication such that philosophical subjects/objects have an external relationship to each other rather than an internal one, and other syntactic infrastructures also externalize relationships.

Although language content evolves over time, syntax (of English, for example) has remained quite conserved. In reading Chaucer, for example, it is clear from the structure of the sentences that a subject-object split is already assumed and encoded in the syntax. Although the content words in English have changed meaning or spelling,

²¹ D. Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, Ark Paperbacks, 1983.

been added to or deleted from the lexicon, the syntax has changed little. This is why, when we read the *Canterbury Tales*, for example

Whan that Aprille, with hise shoures sote
The droghte of March hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;²²

which was written in the 1380s, a contemporary reader can (more or less) understand it even though the spelling and usage of the content words have changed. The metaphors in the passage above are also familiar: April's Showers Are A Sword Or Knife that pierce drought. Although the content words that comprise the metaphors have changed a bit, the function words (*italicized*), i.e., articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, have not changed through the centuries.²³ Function words establish the infrastructure of a sentence inside of which the main content words—the subject, verb, object, and their modifiers—provide the ideas. Function words convey the essential relationships—both spatiotemporal (above, below, after, before) as well as the internal relationships (which idea or clause is subordinate to another one). Is there a reason that the function words have changed so little? Perhaps Franz Boas was on to that reason when he said, “Grammar performs another important function. It determines those aspects of experience that must be expressed.’ These obligatory aspects vary greatly between languages.”²⁴ Thus, grammar/syntax links directly to culture.

How does subject-verb-object syntax serve to keep subject and object split?²⁵ In some languages, syntax consists of types of slots in which to place types of words. Nouns, pronouns, and some abstractions that function as nouns fill the “subject” slot in English. In other languages, the slots take different forms, such as adding prefixes and suffixes to a verb stem. To examine the assumptions underlying English syntax, consider the simple statement, “I am writing this essay.” At the moment I wrote those words in the very first draft, this essay barely existed. A brief outline in a Word document, it had no conclusion, no body, only an eight-sentence start. But the completeness of the essay is presupposed by that simple statement because “this essay” is assumed to exist as an object separate from me. In fact, the separation of “I” from “this essay” seems foreign, in the early stage of this writing, as I have yet to pull the

²² G. Chaucer, ‘The Canterbury Tales’, *The Oxford Anthology of English Literature*, Oxford University Press, 1973. p. 111.

²³ S. Pinker, *The Language Instinct: How The Mind Creates Language*, HarperCollins, 2010. p. 118.

²⁴ Deutscher, *Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages*. p. 151.

²⁵ Sometimes, but not always, the particular sequence of the words is the defining characteristic of how syntax maintains the subject-object split; more important perhaps is simply the fact that the words are ordered sequentially.

whole essay out of me, by maieusis, by giving birth to it. Likening the writing process to giving birth presupposes that the completed essay exists as a thought form in me, as a fetus exists as a physical form inside the body. So in essence “this essay” that I am writing barely exists as gestating thoughts of mine let alone as a fully formed corpus. Those are some of the assumptions implicit in the simple words “I am writing this essay.” I could have chosen different words to convey instead that I am only a few steps into what will likely be (and has been) a long journey of writing and rewriting. If I belonged to a different (imaginary) culture, I might have written something like “images-in-relationship being received by me and expressed graphophonemically.” The assumptions underlying that alternative syntax might be that I exist within a field of all possible thoughts, and what I assume are “my thoughts” are wave patterns in a field of all consciousness that “I” tune into, as a radio is tuned to certain frequencies, and convert them into patterns of images (words) associated with sounds.

In the mother tongue, statements such as “I love you” and “Don’t ever talk back to me again” draw on cultural assumptions of separate ego-identities in which the speaker is having the experience of love or anger but the one spoken to is not necessarily also having that experience. A unified subject/object perspective, as we have been discussing with regard to Being, might consider the speaker (“I”) and spoken to (“you”) as a unity partaking in an experience (love or anger) but not necessarily having the same experience. Each dyad, then, might be considered to exist in the field characterized by love or anger. In such a characterization, a different syntax could convey different assumptions. For example, “I/you (as a Kleinian unity) within field [love]” or “I/you experiencing [anger]”. In the father tongue, it could take the form “Jack and Jill/hill experienced [climbing]”, which implies that the hill experienced Jack and Jill’s climbing as well. The category structure of the language would have to provide the possibility for the syntax to express it that way.

Concept. The term “concept” has differing meanings in various fields (psychology, linguistics, philosophy). I am using the term “concept” as an abstraction that does not reference a thing; rather, a concept establishes a boundary in a field of meaning. One might say that concepts are agreed-upon set boundaries. (Such sets are “organized”—however tightly or loosely—into category structures.) The concept of tree establishes the boundaries of what can be considered a tree, and the concept of beauty establishes the boundaries of what can be considered beautiful. Some conceptual boundaries are more porous, more flexible, and/or more (in)consistent than others. Some instantiations of concepts are more prototypic than others.

Because of the nature of the category structure and hence the concepts within it that are generally agreed upon in American culture, concepts such as “subject” and

“object” are not intrinsically interrelated. Their relatedness is external; subjects perceive and/or act upon objects. Rosen argues that our usual way of expressing concepts using the standard words does not, cannot, do justice to the *concept of Being*, which draws a different type of boundary. Specifically, the *concept of Being* has a complex internal structure that includes the union of two other concepts—subject and object—that are otherwise (i.e., culturally) diametrically opposed. Rosen asserts that ordinary sign-vehicles (words) cannot sufficiently represent an internally complex concept as Being, which integrates subject and object in a way that retains their uniqueness yet also acknowledges their transpermeability. Being relates subject and object as a mutual co-arising or complementarity.

Given that the conceptual structure of English defaults to monadic forms, *conceptual* distinctions, such as the typical split between subject and object or between mind and body, are commonly assumed to be *actual* distinctions. Hence, arguments for either “this concept” or “that concept” might be more fruitful if we looked at how the situation requires, integrally, “this” AND “that”—for example, progressive and regressive, creative and destructive, influenced by nature and nurture, genes and environment.²⁶ Rosen has shown light on an area that needs not just neologisms but new *types of concepts* in English and hence new types of sign-vehicles.

Sign-vehicle. The development of alphabetic writing was both an advance and a diminishment in communication. Written words enabled a greater number of people to be exposed to the ideas of other people, but phonetic words also eliminated the ability of iconic sign-vehicles to *show* information. There is no intrinsic relationship between the c, a, and t of “cat.” Relationships such as part-to-whole are not conveyed as a gestalt in alphabetic writing but require the use of prepositions (e.g., cog on a wheel, cell in an organ). Although new words are frequently added to the lexicon, when was the last time a new preposition was added? Perhaps it is time not just for new preposition, but even for new *types* of prepositions (e.g., to convey the unity in diversity of systems, the local/global paradox of Möbial structures).

²⁶ Johnson, *Polarity management: Identifying and managing unsolvable problems*. Barry Johnson describes ways to accomplish that in various organizations and settings.

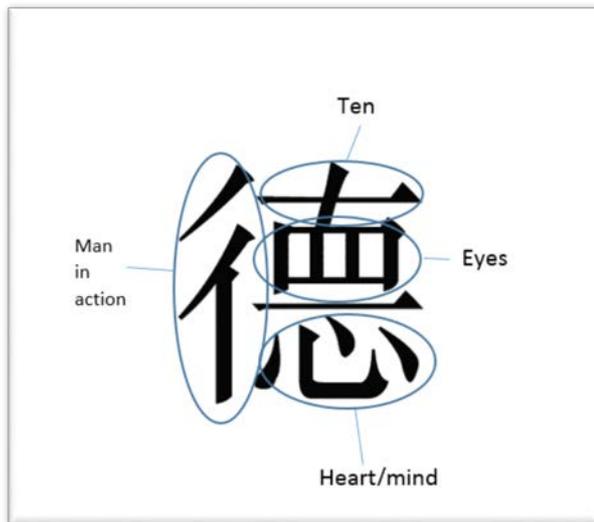


Figure 1. The character "te", which means virtue or integrity.

Languages with other types of sign-vehicles can show the internal relationships or complexity within a concept. For example, the ancient Chinese character "Te" (Figure 1) is often translated as virtue or integrity. Those glosses however do not convey the full story of what it means to be virtuous. The two diagonal lines and one vertical line on the left together mean "man in action"; the cross on the top is the number 10; the box with two lines inside it is an "eye"; and the L-shape with the

three teardrops means heart-mind (note its unified, dyadic nature, which English radically separates). "Ten eyes" indicates perfect vision, i.e., two eyes at each of the four cardinal directions and one looking down from above or perhaps two eyes for each of the five elements (wood, metal, air, water, and fire). Altogether, these components mean "action resulting from looking into the heart-mind with perfect vision."²⁷ Thus, integrity or virtue consists of looking at an issue from all sides, balancing all the options, knowing what is in your heart, and then taking action. It is not about doing good according to some external standard; rather, integrity is doing the right thing after looking inside and outside, thereby seeing the whole picture.

The internal complexity of Te exemplifies how nonalphabetic sign-vehicles could inspire the invention of other types of sign-vehicles. As Rosen suggests, the Klein bottle offers a sign-vehicle for Kleinian (w)holeness, complexity, and dynamism. The Klein bottle as a sign-vehicle is not an iconic sign and thus goes well beyond iconic signs, such as emoticons ☺, alphabetic neologism, or compounding, as in bittersweet or subjectobject. Furthermore, the image of the Klein bottle (i.e., the picture in Rosen's article) is not the sign-vehicle; the Klein bottle itself is. An important difference between the Klein bottle as a sign-vehicle and alphabetic words is that the Klein bottle does not refer to—point to—something else, something other than itself. Kleinian self-

²⁷ E. Pound, *Confucius: The Great Digest, the Unwobbling Pivot, and the Analects*, New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1969.

signification embodies the fullness of lived experience of flowing of subject into object into subject and so on. The Klein bottle is a paradox-in-itself, as its inside and outside are one and both. What Rosen presents is not a superficial application of topology. To grasp the Klein bottle's fullness/emptiness as a self-signifier requires moving from three-dimensional spacetime into the depth dimension by way of an embodied, meditative stance, an experience of the merging of subject and object. Such a sign-vehicle could not be thrust into parlance that presupposes dualism; indeed, it also requires a nondual context, a basis in meditative reasoning.²⁸

The Klein bottle, with its unification of inside and outside, gives us a different way to approach boundaries. It has no boundary where inside becomes outside and vice versa. (It might look that way in a picture, because of the constraints required to represent it as a two-dimensional drawing.) From the fourth/depth dimension, where else might boundaries that seem to be real in three dimensions merge or disappear?

To find ways to enable full-spectrum language to embrace paradox, it will be necessary to move into the paradigm of both/and. However, there are no agreed-upon conventions for expressing categories, logic, concepts, and sign-vehicles that partake of "both/and-ness." We will need to invent ways to convey nonduality, interdependent co-arising, and paraconsistency in ordinary language. The infra/exostructures that enable us to use language to communicate will all need to be transformed.

AFTER SOLVE, COAGULA

If this were a strictly analytic text, I would have stopped after I had pulled language apart to reveal its infra/exostructures, but in the Kleinian spirit of the unity of opposites—*solve et coagula*—it is now necessary to move into the complementary process to breaking apart, which in alchemical terms is known as *coagula*, the process of congealing. If you have ever watched something congeal, you know that it is not a process of building—starting from foundations and adding layers. Rather, once all the necessary ingredients are present, the addition of a catalyst causes an instantaneous change. The congealing of matter is a chemical reaction—ions get redistributed; new bonds are formed. In consciousness, congealing can take the form of an "Aha moment" or a gestalt shift. Although it is my intention to produce a congealing in the minds of my readers, each person is different, so it might happen by the time you finish this essay, or it might happen next week, next year, or never.

I have characterized language as a system of systems. Systems that are not unduly stressed can be highly resilient, and language systems have proved to be so. However,

²⁸ A.K. Gangadean, *Meditative Reason: Towards Universal Grammar*, P. Lang, 1993.

many of the systems in the world, including our ecosystems, financial systems, and social systems, are currently undergoing considerable stress, which will put stress on our linguistic systems as well. As we have seen, linguistic systems are malleable in terms of content words that have changed over time and space (i.e., context) and conserved in terms of function words that have preserved a syntactic structure. Language evolves by balancing old and new, arbitrary and motivated²⁹ additions. Another source of resilience is the interconnectedness of the subsystems; thereby they reinforce each other. Each subsystem, however, affords a different way to affect the overall system. According to the systems theorist Donella Meadows, to change a highly resilient system, it is necessary to find its “leverage points,” which are “places within a complex system...where a small shift in one thing can produce big changes in everything.”³⁰ Leverage points at different levels or places in a system, when tweaked, can lead to different outcomes. For example, rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic might facilitate discussion among a small group of passengers, but would not, ultimately, save them from collision with the iceberg; however, adjusting the helm even a few degrees sufficiently in advance of the iceberg would be a leverage point that could save the entire system.

Each infra/exostructure of language could be considered a type of leverage point. To the extent that each has its particular way to keep subject and object separated, it might be necessary to (a) develop ways to signify new types of concepts that partake of complementarity, interdependent co-arising, or enantiadromia; that have logical but not actual distinctions; that convey ontologic relationships such as part-whole; that convey becomingness/process; that are self-signifying, or that are otherwise interrelated; (b) develop and implement novel forms of logic, such as paraconsistent logic,³¹ topological logic,³² meditative reasoning³³; and (c) revise cultural assumptions and category structures.

²⁹ “Motivated” is a term from Saussure, which means that language has a history, in use and/or in foundations from Greek or Latin roots. In other words, it describes words that are not entirely arbitrary.

³⁰ Meadows, *Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System*.

³¹ Priest, ‘What is so bad about contradictions?’, Priest, *In Contradiction*.

³² Louis H. Kauffman opens a special issue of the journal *Symmetry* on Diagrams, Topology, Categories and Logic with this quote from David Hilbert speaking to the International Congress of Mathematicians in Paris in 1900: “To new concepts correspond, necessarily, new signs. These we choose in such a way that they remind us of the phenomena which were the occasion for the formation of the new concepts. So the geometrical figures are signs or mnemonic symbols of space intuition and are used as such by all mathematicians. Who does not always use along with the double inequality $a > b > c$ the picture of three points following one another on a straight line as the geometrical picture of the idea “between”? Who does not make use of drawings of segments and rectangles enclosed in one another, when it is required to prove

Accordingly, a small shift in assumptions at the level of culture or category structure is likely to make a bigger difference to the whole system than extensive addition of new words to the lexicon. Meadows states that “The shared idea in the minds of society, the great big unstated assumptions — unstated because unnecessary to state; everyone already knows them — constitute that society’s paradigm, or deepest set of beliefs about how the world works. [For example,] there is a difference between nouns and verbs. Money measures something real and has real meaning (therefore people who are paid less are literally worth less). Growth is good. Nature is a stock of resources to be converted to human purposes. Evolution stopped with the emergence of *Homo sapiens*. One can ‘own’ land. Those are just a few of the paradigmatic assumptions of our current culture, all of which have utterly dumbfounded other cultures, who thought them not the least bit obvious.” However, she continues, “paradigms are harder to change than anything else about a system...But there’s nothing physical or expensive or even slow in the process of paradigm change. In a single individual it can happen in a millisecond. All it takes is a click in the mind, a falling of scales from eyes, a new way of seeing. Whole societies are another matter — they resist challenges to their paradigm harder than they resist anything else.”³⁴ That millisecond it takes to change one’s own paradigm is the *coagulatio*. At larger scales of magnitude, of course, it takes longer.

Before we endeavor to invent new infra/exostructures or revise the old ones, it is necessary to be sensitive to the intended and unintended consequences of linguistic changes. Those imposed by an authority structure, whether by a government (as in China in 1949) or by colonization (as has happened during warfare throughout history and by commercialization more recently) can be counterproductive. Second, because language use depends on agreement among users, agreement that is a free choice, with no coercion, is likely to be the most successful form of linguistic emergence. Such linguistic changes must reach a tipping point of acceptance. Esperanto did not. Buckminster Fuller contended that you never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, he said, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete. Similarly, recall the popular quote of Einstein that you cannot solve a

with perfect rigor a difficult theorem on the continuity of functions or the existence of points of condensation? ...” (http://www.mdpi.com/journal/symmetry/special_issues/topological). Kauffman has developed a topological logic that also deserves exploration as a novel logical infrastructure.

³³ Gangadean, *Meditative Reason: Towards Universal Grammar*, Gangadean, *Between Worlds: The Emergence of Global Reason*.

³⁴ Meadows, *Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System*. These unstated assumptions are resonant with Bohm’s notion of tacit infrastructures.

problem using the same mindset as that used to create it—yes, but can there be a new mindset if it is necessary to use the language of the old mindset? I suspect that one will encounter the same limitations of the old mindset. Who can build a new model that does not use the old mindset to create it? Among language users, who are the language inventors?

The first recorded intentionally constructed, non-“natural” language was developed by Hildegard von Bingen in the 12th century. Since then, many others have constructed languages,³⁵ but those invented languages did not attract a critical mass of other users. However, the constructed languages in recent science-fiction movies and television shows (e.g., *Star Trek*, *Avatar*, and *Game of Thrones*) have acquired many users. The Klingon language from *Star Trek*, in fact, has been expanded more by the users themselves than by its original creators.³⁶ David Peterson, who created the languages for the television show *Game of Thrones*, has also invented nonalphabetic scripts for them.³⁷ Perhaps this trend indicates that people of the current zeitgeist are open to embrace novel linguistic infrastructures. However, if such constructed languages simply map new sounds onto the same old categories and assumptions, they do not speak to the issues raised herein. Indeed, did Na’vi, the language developed for the movie *Avatar*, reflect the interconnected worldview of Pandora? From what I saw of the online dictionaries, it sadly did not.³⁸

Fortunately, to create novel language that embodies a new mindset, Rosen has shown us a way to better convey certain types of paradoxical or internally complex concepts. However, just as Sanskrit is not used to order a pizza, neither are Rosen’s suggestions regarding the language about Being useful to ask for sausage and mushrooms on it. To use Kleinian self-signification to inform ordinary signification is difficult if not impossible, as it requires a kind of “stepping down of the energy,” as transformers take high-voltage power and step it down to a level that is usable in everyday life. To bring the notion of the depth dimension of Kleinian self-signification into an ordinary dualistic worldview would defeat its purpose. Indeed, for Rosen’s ideas to be fully taken up linguistically would require, as I have argued, not just semiotic innovation but full-scale sociocultural paradigm shift. And how would such a shift manifest in the linguistic infrastructures discussed above? In other words, how do

³⁵ D.J. Peterson, *The Art of Language Invention: From Horse-Lords to Dark Elves, the Words Behind World-Building*, Penguin Publishing Group, 2015. p. 7.

³⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2016/apr/29/star-trek-fan-film-klingon-paramount-cbs-lawsuit>

³⁷ Peterson, *The Art of Language Invention: From Horse-Lords to Dark Elves, the Words Behind World-Building*.

³⁸ There are many sources online. Here are a couple to get started—the creator’s (Paul Frommer’s) blog (<http://naviteri.org/>) and a useful resource (<http://learnnavi.org/>).

we revise logic to grant paradox? What new kinds of paradoxical concepts might better express the complexities of our ecological, economic, and other post-postmodern contexts and systems? Is it possible to work them into the syntax of our existing language, or will it be necessary to develop a new syntax? What category boundaries need to be revised? What cultural assumptions need to change? How do we change our minds, i.e., our assumptions, about “the way things are”?

In other words, how do we alter worldviews so that the depth dimension, paradox, and Kleinian self-signification become the new “normal”? How can we leave behind the accepted certainties and enter the mystery? How can we relinquish our addiction to the steady swing, back and forth, from one known perspective to its opposite? Can we incorporate both simultaneously?

As a way to enter into a mindset of unity and wholeness, i.e., as in the paradoxical unity of subject and object, let us consider part of an ancient Gnostic wisdom text, *The Thunder, Perfect Mind*.³⁹ In this text, Being is speaking as if she is “a being.” This integral being (Sophia, wisdom) speaks from the paradoxical perspective of Allness (completeness rather than consistency). Such a perspective enables one to get beyond the limitations of either/or thinking, but not without some cognitive dissonance, at first. I invite you to read it out loud, not as a textual relic, but *as if you were declaring it of yourself*. Don’t get hung up on the words. Swim with the paradox.

For I am the first and the last.
 I am the honored one and the scorned one.
 I am the whore and the holy one.
 I am the wife and the virgin.
 I am <the mother> and the daughter.
 I am the members of my mother.
 I am the barren one
 and many are her sons.
 I am she whose wedding is great,
 and I have not taken a husband.
 I am the midwife and she who does not bear.
 I am the solace of my labor pains.
 I am the bride and the bridegroom,
 and it is my husband who begot me.
 I am the mother of my father
 and the sister of my husband
 and he is my offspring.

³⁹ J.J.M.C. Robinson, R. Smith and C.G.L. Project, *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, E.J. Brill, 1996. pp. 271-77.

I am the slave of him who prepared me.
I am the ruler of my offspring.
 But he is the one who begot me before the time on a birthday.
 And he is my offspring in (due) time,
 and my power is from him.
I am the staff of his power in his youth,
 and he is the rod of my old age.
 And whatever he wills happens to me.
I am the silence that is incomprehensible
 and the idea whose remembrance is frequent.
I am the voice whose sound is manifold
 and the word whose appearance is multiple.
I am the utterance of my name.

What does it feel like to speak from this atemporal, aperspectival rendering of identity, from this exuberant fullness of being? Sophia here integrates divergent aspects (honored one and scorned one) of herself and integrates her various identities past, present, and future as different familial relations. Indeed, we get the sense that the being speaking is the One Being who has manifested as the many beings. (Could you enter into that when you read it?) In the final line of the passage above, and in subsequent lines of the text, she says, “I am the name of the sound and the sound of the name. I am the sign of the letter and the designation of the division.” Those statements convey that the sub-objective being, Being itself, is not even separate from the speaking of her/its name. The distinctions between representamen, object, and interpretant are therein integrated.

When one knows oneself as bride and bridegroom, as holy one and whore, as the mother of one’s father, as the utterance of one’s name, the law of noncontradiction no longer applies, the familiar categories of self and other no longer apply, the construct of time no longer applies—how can one speak from such a context in which the familiar structures no longer apply—especially if one only has the familiar structures of language and culture with which to work?

In order for a sociocultural shift to happen, individual shifts must occur. Thus it might be useful to turn to oneself, to one’s lived sense of paradox in order to appreciate it in the broader context. How does the Kleinian awareness/ intuition/ comprehension/ aperspectivity presentiate in your everyday life? Facing personal paradoxes usually involves the experience of cognitive dissonance, a sense that who I think I am is not who I appear to be. The psychologist Carl Jung, for example, calls this facing and accepting of otherness in oneself “integrating the shadow.” To own your psychologic shadow, dwell with the irony in your life. Do you “put on a happy

face” no matter how you feel but have a child or spouse who is chronically depressed? Have you experienced being honored and scorned, say, in a relationship that ended abruptly? Or perhaps the current political climate has left you wondering whether you are indeed conservative/liberal. Without linguistic structures that contain the dynamic, differentiated unity of such volatile polarities, a strong tendency is to take one side of the paradox and deny the other. For example, given my family’s cultural background and values, I have often sided with my intellectual nature and devalued my artistic nature, so my own challenge is to be both intellectual and artistic—and still earn a living!

Such disunities are manifested not just personally but also culturally (part and whole are not separate). The societal expression of the objectivizing, fragmented, mechanistic worldview has resulted in the current cultural polarizations between political factions, religions, ethnicities, and other forms of Us-versus-Them that are based on turning the other into an object. Some people, however, do realize that the split between subject and object—the separation of a “me” and a “not me”—has fueled an unsustainable, even destructive, way of living.⁴⁰ Although differentiation of subject and object is a necessary part of our phylogenetic individuation process, we humans can now locate ourselves as both differentiated and integrated within the larger global and universal, social and spiritual spheres, as different but not separate. But consider the consequences of remaining stuck within language that assumes and hence sustains a state of radical differentiation.

In 1983, the physicist David Bohm observed that

“The attempt to live according to the notion that the fragments are really separate is, in essence, what has led to the growing series of extremely urgent crises that is confronting us today. Thus, as is now well known, this way of life has brought about pollution, world-wide economic and political disorder, and the creation of an overall environment that is neither physically nor mentally healthy for most of the people who have to live in it. Individually there has developed a widespread feeling of helplessness and despair, in the face of what seems to be an overwhelming mass of disparate social forces, going beyond the control and even the comprehension of the human beings who are caught up in it.”⁴¹

What Bohm perceived over 30 years ago has since been magnified. To break free from the constraints of fragmentary worldviews, it is necessary to see how the language we use, especially the father tongue, is deeply enmeshed with and expressive of a fragmentary worldview *not just in content but in form*. To the extent that we continue to

⁴⁰ J. Kiehl, *Facing Climate Change: An Integrated Path to the Future*, Columbia University Press, 2016, Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*.

⁴¹ Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*. p. 2.

use the same sign-vehicles, logic, and concepts that are informed by a presupposed category structure derived from cultural agreements based on that old worldview, it will not be possible to devise a new worldview using the language of the old one. Revision of both content and form/structure will be necessary.

Speaking from and, further, living from the knowing of oneself as a difference-within-unity requires one to revise one's sociocultural-linguistic assumptions. For any individual to be able to say "I" and mean not just the agency that acts through this particular body—but that and everything else, as Sophia has illustrated for us—would constitute not just a personal transformation but also a linguistic transformation. In a fictive world that I created in a novel, the type of culture that allowed for such language was described thus: "The key is to hold two perspectives simultaneously, to look at the whole painting while seeing each brush stroke, to consider the whole body when just the foot hurts, to be here now and to be everywhere everywhen".⁴² It requires the ability to have both a local and a global perspective simultaneously—as a Möbius strip seems to have two sides when viewed locally but has only one continuous side when viewed globally. To live from that expanded awareness, we need to find ways to enhance the structure of discourse so that the dynamism between/among the various sides can be addressed in a way that it is clear that one side without the other is incomplete—a liberal perspective without a conservative perspective is incomplete; a masculine perspective without a feminine perspective is incomplete, and so on.

Such revision will transform experience in profound ways. In order to speak *from* the depth dimension (and not just speak *about* it), western cultures will need to make important shifts in category structure. To embrace and live in paradox (given our cultural abhorrence of it) might be uncomfortable, even terrifying, at first. To include that which our current category structure considers an "object" (e.g., a tree, rock, or your computer) to be a subject-object will require revisions of deeply held assumptions, beliefs, and ways of being and relating to all types of "others." First, we will need to understand the implicit assumption, for example, that when I refer to "that X" (e.g., you, or that tree, or even that book), I am also referring to an expanded sense of myself as subject-object. Although I distinguish myself from that tree, I do not hold myself separate from it. I not only understand our deeper connectedness via the depth dimension but also experience it, for example, via a sense of flow. The notion of "reference" itself would become obsolete or require revision, as there would be nothing "out there" to refer to, only distinctions within my-expansive-self.

⁴² L.E. Maroski, 2006, p. 115.

In order to embrace such transformative awareness, it will also be necessary to transcend seeming contradictions. Disallowal of contradiction precludes wholeness. *The Thunder, Perfect Mind* illustrates the embrace of contraries within Being. It is time to question the law of noncontradiction. It is time to construct a way of reasoning that *starts with completeness AND the distinctions within it*, rather than separateness. If we *start with* the explosion, i.e., the field of all possibilities, with the implicate order, including the possibilities that we don't know we don't know—rather than starting with conventional actualities and trying to put fragments together to form a whole, then perhaps a logic of both/and can be realized to support a paradox-based language system.⁴³

Although in this essay I have used the father tongue, language is not limited to this form. We use it for myriad purposes, not just to propose ideas, make arguments, or describe some aspect of our experience. The mother tongue keeps us related. Language is also used performatively. As Austin⁴⁴ noted, we do things via language, from “I thee wed” to “I certify that this agreement is legal and binding” to “whatever”. The most subtle and unconscious motivations are present in the language used and the way we use it in a particular situation. Even when we use the mother tongue, how we relate will shift from a perspective of exteriority (I am other than you) to paradoxical transpermeability (I am you and me and thusness in a global sense, AND I am this identity-me in a local sense). As in the Bantu concept of Ubuntu (“I am because you are”) and as in the words of John Lennon

I am he as you are he as you are me/ And we are all together,
we can find new ways not just to signify Being but to signify our being-as-Oneness-and-uniqueness.

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⁴³ As well as neither/nor. “Classical Indian logic and rhetoric regards any proposition as defining a logical space involving four candidate positions, or corners, in distinction to most Western logical traditions which consider only two – truth and falsity: The proposition may be true (and not false); false (and not true); both true and false; neither true nor false.” G. Priest, *Beyond the Limits of Thought*, Clarendon Press, 2002. pp. 263-4.

⁴⁴ J.L. Austin and M. Sbisà, *How to Do Things with Words*, Harvard University Press, 1975.

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