

Conjoining

The Reawakening to Spiralism from the Age of Progressivism

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Comprehending the connectivity of things is the driving motive behind forming knowledge. Recognizing and experiencing relationships is the basis for knowledge. Each culture serves as the dynamic framework within which relationships between people; the natural environment and the cosmos unfold. In the myriad modes of thought created out of cultures throughout the world we find this compulsion to discover how things relate to each other, how they connect. When the question of human connection is the principal point of inquiry, there are no limits to the effort that will be mustered to find an explanation. Whole ways of thought evolved as mental and spiritual constructions to mediate relationships between all manner of things in the Living Universe. Modes of thinking evolved in different parts of the world to give us Cyclicism, Fatalism, Providencialism, Progressivism and Spiralism¹ among many others.

Beginning in the 17th Century of the Christian Era the idea of progress started to compete with Cyclicism, Fatalism, and Providencialism, but it was not until the 20th Century that Progressive thinking began to rule diverse parts of the world. Progressive thinking is now widely understood to dominate in the industrial/technologic parts of the world the way peoples mediate relationships between things in their surroundings. It is the dominant mode of thought among those who rule the Peoples' Republic of China as much as it dominates as the mode of thought among people in the industrialized states and countries as varied as Cuba, the Netherlands, Zimbabwe, Canada, Singapore, Iraq, Uzbekistan, South Africa, and Bangladesh.

Progressivism embraces an implicit faith in the belief that change will always improve what existed before, and supposes human dominance over the natural world for the benefit of human life. Progressivism also supposes the sanctity of the individual and the overriding validity of rational inquiry and explanation in contrast with intuitive knowledge. A more ancient mode of thought, which I have designated as Spiralism, now challenges the supremacy of Progressivism and it demonstrates that a comprehension of the Living Universe is only possible if Progressivism is restored to its utilitarian role performing simple measurements of the material world. Progressive thinking, along with Fatalism, Cyclicism and Providencialism exist as different threads of the same rope along with other threads that comprise the Spiralist mode of thought.

¹ See *Tribal Epistemologies*, edited by Helmut Wautischer, 1998.

Spiralism comprehends the totality of the Living Universe in both its material and immaterial forms and unifies knowledge instead of separates it.

In the Americas there is a deeply rooted history of learning and knowledge. This tradition of knowledge has long lingered in the shadows of modern consciousness—remote, mysterious and held by only those who maintain and renew cultural bonds with the living world of the Americas. The modern overlays of Progressivism have so dominated the Americas for the last 150 years that it is difficult to reclaim the traditional roots of knowledge and the practice of thought essential to comprehend the Living Universe.

For more than twenty-five millennia the peoples of the Americas evolved a Spiralic² way of thinking that permits comprehension of intimate connections between all living things in the universe from the smallest particle of dust to the largest galaxy. Reason and intuition are not separate, but merely two parts of the same process. They are complementary. As a mode of thought Spiralism evolved out of an intense awareness of the power and influence of the sun, the moon and dancing lights in the night sky on events, affairs and changes observable among humans and other animals, and among plants, waterways, mountains and the earth itself. The early thinkers conceived of an intimate relationship between the movements of stars, the sun and the moon in great cycles of time and space connected to the personal lives of living beings on earth by an unseen tendril connected to an infinite number of other tendrils. Humans and other beings command and can be commanded

by others through this unseen force.

Fourth thousand years before the present the Olmec³ found in the dark skies of the night a full and rich explanation of human connection and human destiny that later informed the Maya civilization and finally the cultures throughout the Western Hemisphere. A total reality was formed out of the comprehension of humans and other living things on earth existing as participants in the grand play of natural movements among the stars, sun and the moon as well as unseen forces on the earth. As a result of this comprehension human beings became active participants in the great cycles⁴ of World Transformation. Understanding these spirals of movement was derived from the studied understanding of earth's alignment with the Sun, the Seven Sisters (Pleiades) and the center of the Milky Way Galaxy as well as an intuited and measured recognition of changing relationships between the earth and stars. Though held as sacred knowledge over the ages it was not until 2,200 years before the present that the people of Itzapan first codified the great transformation⁵ catalyzed by these alignments in the sky with the writing of the Mayan Book of Counsel, the Popul Vuh.⁶

² The author discusses Spiralism as a mode of thought in his essay "On Self and Knowing" in *Tribal Epistemologies*, edited by Helmut Watisher, 1998. The principal character of this mode of thought is that it embraces other modes of thought including progressivism, cyclicism and fatalism as subset modes available for apprehending knowledge that spirals within time/space and movement.

³ As the Méxica, the Nahuatl speaking people of Central Mexico new them.

⁴ According to the grandfather peoples of Southern Mexico and Guatemala, these great cycles extend over 5125 years each

⁵ Jenkins, *Maya Cosmogenesis* 2012, p. 336

⁶ See Tedlock's translation of the Popul Vuh.

In the 1,999th year of the Christian Era on the day of the Winter Solstice the great alignment between these bodies of light—the earth, the Sun, the Pleiades and the center of the Milky Way Galaxy—began anew. This alignment thus signaled the commencement of a twenty-six year period of World Transformation known by humans only four other times. At the momentous mid- point, December 21, 2012 of the Christian Era, and 13.0.0.0.0 of the Mayan Era we take note of the end of one great cycle and the beginning of another in the birth of what the México call the Sixth Sun. By 2025 of the Christian Era the Spiralic transformation that takes place only once every 5125 years will have been completed. A great process of World Renewal will have been enacted marked in the Christian Era as the period from 1999 to 2025.⁷

It is within this twenty-six year period of World Renewal that new relationships between humans, their world and the cosmos, so it is foretold, will take place. What the exact nature of that transformation will be, what shape and character it will have cannot be known until the time of transformation. An optimistic mind

must inevitably project that the transformation of which all living things and we are a part shall create a world that is different from what is now comprehensible, but still containing aspects of the present age serving as path markers. Spiralic thinking permits us to look into the future with some certainty and yet there remain surprises that await our discovery.

The universe is a living organism comprised of space and time bound together by movement that reaches from the greatest to the smallest and to all extent of the universal body. The intimacy and respect of all parts of the universe serves as the constant that ensures the well being of all things. This is a conception among the Taidnapum⁸ of the Kowlitch Illahee that informs daily life and describes the connections between all things. It is a concept that came to the Cowlitz people who have resided on the Cowlitz River long before any other humans. This concept of the Living Universe is not, however, unique to the Cowlitz. It is, as suggested earlier, a concept recognized and applied by peoples from the Arctic, dense forests, to the deserts, the jungles and high mountains throughout the Americas.

⁷ While these ideas have long been well understood among different peoples in the Western Hemisphere for many ages (i.e., the Yup'ik, Hodenosaunee, Anishnawbe, Cowlitz, Aloné, Kiowa, Huitchole, Zapotec, Pipil, Sumo, Kúna, Yanomomi, Aymara and Mapuché) recent studies by Progressive thinkers like David Bohm (Wholeness and the Implicate Order, 1980), Sheldrake (XXXXXX, 1989), José Argüelles (The Mayan Factor, 1987), Edward O. Wilson (Consilience, The Unity of Knowledge, 1998), Linda Schele (A Forest of Kings, 1990) and John Major Jenkins (Maya Cosmogenesis 2012, 1998) have only just begun to realize the breadth and depth of the Spiralist Reality. The Wanapum thinker and spiritual leader Smohwalla, 150 years before the present, recited the transformative impact of great cycles reflected in the stars and on the earth to his own people as well as peoples all along the Pacific Coast from Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte's Island) to the southern tip of the Baha Peninsula. The Ute leader Wavoka also repeated what he had learned about the great world changes of the past and in the future as he encouraged his people and others to practice the Ghost Dance. Suiattle, the leader of the Suquamish and Duwamish also reflected ancient learnings in his teachings.

⁸ This is the name of my own people living as neighbors to the Wanapum and Yakama to the east, the Klikittat to the south, Snoqualmie, Nisqually, and Puyallup to the north and the Squaxin and Chehalis to the west. While this essay speaks of ideas and views from other peoples in the Americas, it is not possible to ignore the forces and influences emanating from one's own culture. While no culture is isolated it is nevertheless true that certain threads of thought and being are stronger in one's culture than in others. Consequently the reader should recognize that Taidnapum threads of thought and being rule this piece.

In the thinking of peoples in the Western Hemisphere no living being could be conceived that did not have all of its parts connected. Accordingly, all animals, plants and earth are related to each other and the action of one affects the actions of the other. They are related as if being born of the same family. One can recognize

how each part of the Living Universe respecting the other translates to the earthly plane from this modern version of an ancient Cowlitz story that explains how, one day, a mountain in Cowlitz Country erupted (now named Mount Saint Helens which volcanically exploding in 1980).

Some time before now—over there nearby—a great controversy arose between two mountains. One was the color of yellow and the other the color of white. The mountain over there nearby had the color of red and she was removed, but between the other two mountains. The mountain from the red direction saw that the dispute between the other two was about an unimportant difference of opinion, yet it was a dispute that would erupt into great violence that would disturb the balance of life throughout the land. First she tried to explain to each of the two other mountains how their difference over which mountain was taller could not be resolved.

The red mount spoke to the others. “Since the mother giving life to us all,” she said, “always changes, the fact of who is taller will also change.” Believing her voice to have been clear the mountain from the red direction turned her thoughts to other matters.

Still the mountain from the white direction and the mountain from the yellow direction remained unsatisfied and continued to bicker. This continued bickering and constant threat of violence between the two mountains caused the mountain from the red direction to turn her thoughts toward them once again. Becoming agitated, she raised her voice to express her displeasure with the petty dispute.

“Stop this bickering and calm yourselves lest you upset the tranquility our mother has provided.”

At first White Mountain and Yellow Mountain hesitated—startled by Red Mountain’s strong voice. Seeing that she was agitated the two mountains took to bickering with each other again.

Now, considering her greater age, Red Mountain believed that the bickering mountains would immediately cease and calm down. Seeing that they did not the Red Mountain began to raise her voice even louder, and then louder still. Finally, she could restrain herself no longer. She blew steam, smoke, rock and ash high into the air making the sky turn dark. So frightened by her great roar and by the sudden darkness of the sky White Mountain and Yellow Mountain immediately calmed down—shuddering slightly.

“There!” Red Mountain said. “You now have the same height, for I have given some of my life to each of you.”

And so she had. Here steam and smoke had driven great amounts of her living body into the sky so the wind spirits could carry parts of her body on to the other mountains, and over all the land. Through her own sacrifice Red Mountain settled the dispute and placed new life on the land to ensure the balance of life. The dispute was settled.

This story reminds us that we often fail to recognize our relationship to other things because we frequently have selfish thoughts. While the tendency to think of one’s self contributes to each person’s ability to live and survive, it is also a tendency that when not well regulated may cause one to lose sight of the connection we have with all other beings. Individuals living in modern cities often experience the loss of one’s relationship to other things. This condition is produced from a need to preserve oneself owing to the great and persistent demand for self-preservation. The great paradox of the modern city is that it is a massive organism which relies on individuals to exist, but it does not provide all the things individuals require to live freely and unmolested. Modern cities, therefore, promise well being and social comity, but they separate and divide humans from each other into countless

hostile camps of selfish indifference. Individuals wishing to overcome this condition must make great efforts to establish relationships that reinforce wholeness.

To bring about a balance between unequal conditions it becomes necessary for one to make a sacrifice to repair the distortion. In the Cowlitz cosmology the notion of sacrifice is not a self-less act, but rather a self-fulfilling act that may take many forms. It is the Cowlitz cultural tradition of *Give-Away* that we see the actualization of sacrifice for self-fulfillment.

To succeed in Give-Away one accumulates large quantities of material wealth over time. These things may be blankets, animal skins, eagle feathers, cedar boxes, finely woven grass baskets or cedar root baskets, clothes, drums, dried food—all manner of wealth. According to

the role of proper respect for those beings, which gave their life to create this wealth, the one who accumulates is obliged to organize a great feast and invite all people. At the gathering of these people the one who has accumulated the wealth must be modest and speak through another person chosen for that important purpose. The Spokesperson then delivers a great speech and recognizes the different families present and says that it is the wish of the organizer of the giveaway that they should be recognized. The spokesperson then calls upon singers and dancers to share their gifts.

When the dancing is done and the great feast has been consumed the Spokesperson calls upon individuals representing different families to step forward and accept humble gifts from the giveaway organizer. These gifts are, in reality, considered quite valuable by all people present, but still humility is essential in giving these gifts away. Each receiver of a gift is then asked to express a few words, and often the receivers will deliver dramatic and expansive speeches expressing confidence and a sense of great honor and respect toward the gift giver. It is not uncommon for a gift receiver to call upon other members of his family to extend the speech with personal reminders of the respectful and humble actions of the gift-giver.

When those speeches have been completed, there is a great roar from the drums and voices of all present confirming the truth of what was just said. The Spokesperson will then begin another speech telling stories of praise for the next gift receiver, explaining important things

about the achievements of the family. Once the Spokesperson's words have come to a halt, the new gift receiver steps into the circle and expresses respect and honor for the gift-giver. This continues until all of the great wealth that was amassed has been disseminated.

The Give-Away might take several days or even a week if the gift-giver is a particularly good accumulator of wealth. As a direct reply to the gift-giver's sacrifices, obviously for the people, the gift-receivers are obliged to extend to the gift-giver and the giver's family demonstrations of respect and honorable recognition. It is in this way that sacrifice is reenacted in the form of the Give-Away—a cultural practice that was later called Potlatch (thought by many to be a mispronunciation of the word “potluck” practiced among immigrants who came to Cowlitz Country in the mid-19th Century. The Give-Away recreates harmony and balance within the society by ensuring the even distribution of wealth and a sense of well being.

The Give-Away reflects the Spiralist conception of sacrifice to achieve balance and harmony. There is an exchange for each sacrifice and in the case of Give-Away one receives respect and honor in exchange for the accumulated wealth. Accumulation of wealth is, therefore, a goal to be achieved not as an act of acquisitiveness and personal possession. Accumulation is, rather, the act necessary to respect the sacrifice once given by the original owners of wealth, and to be given away for the benefit of others in exchange for respect and honor.

Progressivism, which holds sway over most minds today, calls upon individuals to secure and accumulate wealth at the expense of the original owners and at the expense of other living things. Progressive thinkers assert King-Of-The-Mountain (whether liberal or conservative) as the highest achievement, and such “Takers” are then rewarded with status and positions of importance if they accumulate the most. “Takers,” as Cowlitz and neighboring peoples knew the early settlers from the United States, Britain, Spain, France and Russia in the early 18th and 19th centuries were responsible for tearing great holes in the social and spiritual fabric of mature societies in the US Pacific Northwest. They exhibited a lack of respect for the living world and by their actions contributed to great distortions. While all beings contribute to distortions from time-to-time, each according to its nature undertakes actions to restore the balance. The experience of the Cowlitz with the “Takers” demonstrates how greedy accumulation sets in motion more greedy accumulation that is both mindless and dangerous to the natural balance of things.

As a respected nation with the Chinook and Wishkah to the west, the Squaxin, Nisqually and Puyallup to the north, the Wanapum, Yakama and Klikitat to the East and the Wasco to the South the Cowlitz have a special duty to conjoin respectfully with the land and other living beings in the Cowlitz River Basin. By recognizing this conjoined reality the Cowlitz contribute to the balancing of relationships from the headwaters where the Taidnupum live to where the Splugumlx live at the mouth of the

river. When the “Takers” arrived to settle among the Cowlitz and neighboring peoples they began first receiving gifts from the Cowlitz while the “Takers” were weak and small in number. After the “Takers” grew stronger and more confident, they began to take the fish and not perform the rituals necessary to ensure the return of more fish. The “Takers” began to cut and remove great old trees without recognizing that the thousand year old cedars measuring six meters in diameter were members of Cowlitz families—that the taking of Cedar tree lives was a matter of grave consequence affecting the lives of not only Cowlitz families and their history, but the lives of other plants and animals. Not only were they killing ancient trees, they were killing families of human beings, other wildlife plants and even the winds. “Takers” divided and fenced the land preventing other living beings from freely living their lives in the forest, on the prairies and in the swamps. The consequence of “Takers” exploiting Cowlitz Country was distortion, imbalance, and destruction. The land, the wild things and the people are now deeply wounded—struggling to restore themselves.

More unsettling than the “Takers” exploitation was the imbalance caused between the Cowlitz. When the “Takers” first came to Cowlitz Country (beginning with the arrival of Spaniards in the late 18th century and then with the arrival of the Meriwether Lewis and William Clark expedition from the United States (1803 to 1806)) diseases later understood to be chicken pox, measles and influenza carried by them infected the Cowlitz and their neighbors. Lacking any natural immunity

to the diseases and their carriers thousands of Cowlitz died literally within weeks and months in waves resulting from “Taker” visits. Unable to immediately restore the balance caused by such a catastrophe many of the remaining Cowlitz believed they could live on a parallel path with the “Takers.” Others slowly began to learn the ways of “Takers” and after several generations some Cowlitz forgot their duties to conjoin respectfully with the natural world and continue the Give-Away. Believing that the “Takers” had the only way to survive as individuals, some Cowlitz became creators of imbalance lacking the knowledge to restore the balance. Lacking the history of their own families contained in the living cedar trees (now destroyed by the whipsaws), Cowlitz could not find their way back to the appropriate role of their people. Those who still had their grandmother/grandfather trees, and those families and Cowlitz communities that were not completely devastated by disease and settler encroachments managed to continue the duty of respectful conjoining in the natural world. The rips and tears in Cowlitz society were so extreme that they have taken generations to repair. Recognizing the great cycle and the impending period of World Renewal suggests a time of restoration for harmony and balance.

Harmony and balance cannot exist without disharmony and imbalance since each is made whole by its other part. So, we can account for these things being all around, undulating and changing from aspects of one to aspects of the other. Living beings are obliged to make sacrifices

to achieve the necessary balance between imbalances. Failure to do so endangers all living things. By not tilting the scales to achieve a new level of equilibrium one risks leaving the world mottled by distortion. Correcting the distortion restores life.

Spiralic Nature of Time

Some say that time is made up of cycles where what began in one place follows an arcing path and returns finally to the point of beginning. As one of the three legs of the Living Universe time is often misleadingly presumed to be repetitive. Perhaps it is the timepiece at the end of the watch fob that creates this deception. Maybe it is the visual nature of clock hands circling the center of the clock that creates the impression that time is forever repeating. It is perhaps this same quality that gives the impression that one “doesn’t have enough time” to do one thing or another. One need not be confined to this conception of time, and, indeed, it may help one to understand the Living Universe better if this conception of time is replaced with a more appropriate concept.

Spiralic thinking comprehends time as a living quantity that exists in all places simultaneously. Like a spiral in space-time moves and stands still, it is up and it is down and it is in front and behind all at once. Time can vibrate rapidly and at the same moment vibrate very slowly. It has shape and no shape, yet it fills all space and fills no space. Time animates movement in space to connect all living things. This is the essence of the Living Universe.

An individual's being is defined by time animating movement in space. Because of this essential unity each person is respectfully conjoined with all other living beings in a great soup. Yet individuation is apparent because it is possible to inform one's present being by drawing the previous self into the present since it already exists simultaneously. The past, as we think of it, is an essential aspect of the present. It is in the nature of time that as time proceeds along the spiral image flecks of the past stick to the present parts of the spiral. Rather than repeating the past, the present simply includes parts of the past as the present. We each recognize the past in the present and, thus formalize connections between things as new knowledge. Because we are each as much a part of the past as we are of the present we are able to project this experience as a future. By so doing, we create before ourselves a pathway that is recognizable and approachable. It is a place where we exist also even as we exist in the present and the past defined by the movement in space.

Though there is the sense of separateness between past, present and future, the reality is that none can exist without the other—making them interdependent aspects of our perception of time. We have mentally separated time into these apparently separate parts in only relatively modern times. The three qualities of time, movement and space combine to form the Living Universe.

Birth and Death

Time understood as an aspect of the Living Universe contains within it the sense of a beginning, middle and an end. Indeed, this sense of being is reinforced by evidence in nature all around us. We see in the stars, in the seas and on the land a constant urgency for life to burst into existence. The sheer abundance of birthed life only assures us of the presence of the Living Universe. As life dazzles us with its energy giving birth in all its varied forms we also see death. As noted earlier, like other apparent opposites, birth and death are merely two parts of the same thing. In Spiralic thinking one is obliged to recognize that at the moment of an ending there is also the moment of a beginning, which occurs simultaneously. In birth, therefore, there is also death. In death, there is also birth. Such a pattern of existence is repeated at the grandest levels of movement between stars and the sun and the moon. Similarly, these patterns repeat at the most minuscule levels of life. On the great spiral of time and movement through space birth and death exist on the same plane and mirror each other.

Progressive thinking constructs reality into cause and effect and opposing dualities. This is particularly obvious when the way Progressive thinking is applied to the “protection of the environment.” Progressive thinkers conceive that they can be both “Takers” and “Givers.” It is apparent in the language of progress upon which Progressive thinkers depend. First there is the

presumption that human beings are the “users of the land” who must dominate, control and benefit from its exploitation. The term most often used by this point of view among progressives is the word “development.” This idea supposes that an infinite supply of raw materials is available to exploit for the benefit of human beings and their ever-increasing prosperity. The essential faith in progress and the inevitable growth and consumption of the natural world suppose perpetually improving prosperity toward a kind of “Kingdom of Heaven” on earth. “God has given man dominion over the land and all the wild things,” so it is suggested. “Development” for prosperity drives such institutions and the United Nations, the World Bank, real-estate agencies, city and state planning commissions, corporations and small businesses. As one business leader was reported to have said, “All of our efforts must work to prove the inevitability of progress.”

Other progressive thinkers disagree with this notion of progress and repudiate “development” as a scourge that is to be eliminated from human activity. These progressive thinkers argue that “no developments” occur and that human involvement in nature must be severely restricted except on terms involving recreation. In this instance the presumption is that human beings are evil parasites capable of terrible damage to nature needing control by the actions of other human beings. These progressive thinkers fail to recognize that they are acting and thinking in much the same way as the people they say they oppose: the developers. They are presuming that human beings are something apart from the natural world instead of a part of nature. They

suppose that human beings are still inevitably progressing along a line of development that inevitably takes them into conflict with the natural world. This wing of environmental progressives finds itself in constant contention with the development wing of progressives.

There is yet another group of progressive thinkers who believe they have found a “middle path” between the extremes of unrelenting development and environmental exploitation verses a kind of “don’t touch that wild thing” kind of approach. The “middle of the path” Progressive thinkers believe you can “have your cake and eat it too.” These are the progressives who advocate the idea of “sustainable development.” This idea takes for granted that one can “develop;” the central meaning of which is “a progression from a simpler or lower to a more advanced, mature,

or complex form or stage”⁹ and sustain that process without having an adverse effect on the natural world. The idea is something of an oxymoron, but many who want to avoid the extremes of the environmental debate embrace it. Indeed, the idea of “sustainable development” implies that the modifier “sustainable” mitigates the adverse impact of “development.” This is an example of how Progressive thinking gets tangled in its own presumptions of inevitability. Neither progress nor development is inevitable, though Progressive thinkers are unalterably convinced to the contrary. By being so convinced, though

⁹ *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition* copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from InfoSoft International, Inc. All rights reserved.

wanting to engage in activities that do not create the adverse results routinely associated with development, Progressive thinkers attempt to soften the consequences with the modifier “sustainable.” This is clearly a contradiction in thinking, even by Progressive standards.

Progressive thinking advocating “sustainable development” creates odd notions like “eco-tourism” or “archeo-tourism” or “sustainable tourism” as alternatives to “tourism.” “Eco-tourism” supposes that plants and other wildlife can be left undisturbed as humans “unobtrusively” march single-file through forests, in swamps and in jungle canopies.¹⁰ “Archeo-Tourism” supposes that people can visit a traditional site of ancient beginnings and have no affect on the cultural realities of the peoples who live in these places. Again, hyphenated and other types of modifiers are meant to alter the meaning of the word “tourism” which is considered a negative human activity. It is presumed that by modifying the term “tourism” the adverse affects resulting from this activity affecting human cultures and other diverse living things can and will be avoided.

What such advocates fail to express is the reality that all of these are simply different forms of the same thing. They all produce the same outcomes: cultural disintegration, spoliation of the natural world and interruption of the

relationship between people, their place and the cosmos. The forms of tourism are all ways of commodifying places for people to visit and for recreational and tourist industries to make money. They are really all forms of development that commercially exploit regions, wildernesses and peoples in the world. This way of expressing the progressive analysis of environmental protection restates the view that progress is inevitable, but it can be implemented cautiously in a measured and conscientious way so as not to change things too rapidly and too destructively. This moderate progressivism as applied to the environment supposes development remains inevitable, but it can be done in such a way as to all for constant and perpetual development.

All three approaches to human relations with the environment imply human domination, perpetual progress and human separation from the natural world. They are all simply different ways of expressing the same idea as expressions of Progressivism. Like the “Takers” who came to Cowlitz Country in the late 18th century progressive thinkers cannot avoid the essential construction of their mode of thinking. It presupposes exploitation without the restoration of balance. It presumes that the evil, backward and primitive found in their midst will simply dissolve into the past and be replaced by refined improvements...perpetually improving prosperity.

⁹ Ian McIntosh, Managing Director of Cultural Survival takes this idea to a greater extreme and suggests that advocates of ecotourism ought to “honor the commitment to create the conditions under which indigenous societies can exercise self-determination; retaining the largest measure of autonomy and power of decision making over their own affairs.” (See Editorial, Cultural Survival, Summer 1999). As a modified version of Cultural Survival’s “jungle capitalism” this approach would seem consistent with their progressivistic approach to promoting the sustainability of tribal societies. What Cultural Survival has not been willing to advocate is the view that externally promoted ecotourism or any form of externally imposed development should be abandoned as nothing more or less than forms of “cultural mining.”

When Progressivism is reduced to an occasional method for interpreting material reality it must be informed by other modes of thought so as to ensure the broadest possible comprehension of reality. Blending Progressivism with other modes of thought results in Spiralism— comprehension of reality in its greatest and smallest detail. Spiralist thinking notes that there is a thing called tourism, but it does not presume that touristic behaviour is inevitable. It is not an inevitable consequence of some mysterious progression resulting from cause and effect.

Tourism, like other human actions, is intentional and can be transformed. In other words, tourism and its adverse effects are made inevitable only because we think they are inevitable. The result is that we are trapped by our own thoughts.

Spiralism and World Transformation

Students of Mayan literature commonly depict the calendar of these ancient people, the 5,125-year “Great Cycle” as evidence of a mode of thought fundamental to the original Middle American and South American cultures. Associating the Mayan mode of thought with cycles where time and space repeat in infinite circles, like the Mayan and the Aztec calendars appear to suggest, is so common among scholars that few have stopped to consider how they may be actually projecting their own cultural templates on to the evidence of Mayan and western hemispheric ways of thinking. Though

satisfying to their templates, imposing Cyclicism in the context of the western hemisphere tends to conceal the reality of a mode of thought unique in the world.

In an attempt to reveal the underlying character of this distinct mode of thinking, I shift the symbolism slightly from a circle to a spiral. With this change I believe it is easier to apprehend a mode of thought I have labeled “Spiralism”. More than any iconographic image the *Hunab Ku*, translated as “One Gives of Movement and Measure,” (Argüelles 1987 Page 52) affirms *Cuarto Spiralism*. This mode of thought takes its name from the infinite repetition of four spiraling arcs, four “spirals” in the Mayan conception of time.

The *Hunab Ku* symbolizes the ideas: Movement corresponds to energy, the principle of life and all pervading consciousness immanent in all phenomena.”¹¹ Though similar to the Yin and Yang of the Tao, Hunab Ku is much more. As the symbol of Spiralism the Hunab Ku illustrates the interconnectiveness of all life, the four cardinal directions, the four arcs of time and perpetual movement in all directions through space. The past, the present and the future are all represented in the spiralist mode of thought. A spiral in space moves outward, inward, forward and backward occupying space and not occupying space all at the same time. Life and death are, therefore two aspects of the same thing.

¹¹ Argüelles 1987, Page 52

Wholeness and particularity are manifestations of one and the same quality of existence. These are the central attributes of *Cuarto Spiralism*.

Cuarto Spiralism predominates as the underlying mode of thought of the many cultures in the western hemisphere recorded in their literature, stories, songs, dances and symbols. Peoples as remote from one another as those living in the Arctic North and those in Patagonia and the Micmac, Cowlitz, Hopi and Kiowa as well as the Mapuché, Yanomami, Aymara, Sumo, Pipil and Zapotec share a common, underlying mode of thought which infuses a wide diversity of cultures.

Cuarto Spiralism permits the apprehension of the universe as a whole while giving respect to particularities. The mutuality of respect is the essential glue that connects and separately identifies all parts of the whole, living universe. It is necessarily the case that all aspects of the universe are alive and possessing of the capacity to choose. It is this capacity of the living universe to choose that leaves the future unpredictable and open to surprise.

Cuarto Spiralism shapes systems of tribal thought throughout the western hemisphere as a structure that permits aspects of experience that come before to combine with aspects of

the present to provide the basis for interpreting the future. Modern Mayan Day Keepers demonstrated their reliance on this structure, on the mode of thought, when they stepped from a cave (January 1, 1994) in the highlands of Chiapas to announce the coming of the end of the fourth spiral and the impending arrival of the “Sixth Sun.” By their interpretation of the sacred texts, the Day Keepers set in motion a series of events that began to transform the Mexican and Guatemalan states and the peoples of the western hemisphere—and beyond. Such a simple act and the events that followed demonstrate the powerful influence of the *spiralist* mode of thought.

The reality as we all comprehend it is perpetual change, but only at the point of end and beginning of the great spiral first noticed by the Olmec and eventually documented by the people of Izapan 2,200 years ago. Like a child at birth the world of people, place and the cosmos begins fresh and new carrying pieces of the past into the present while change brings new and unexpected things into the present. The world has been growing older and is nearly spent after its 5,125 years journey through time and space. A World Age is nearing its death and the moment of World Renewal as the DayKeepers of Chiapas have now given notice.

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