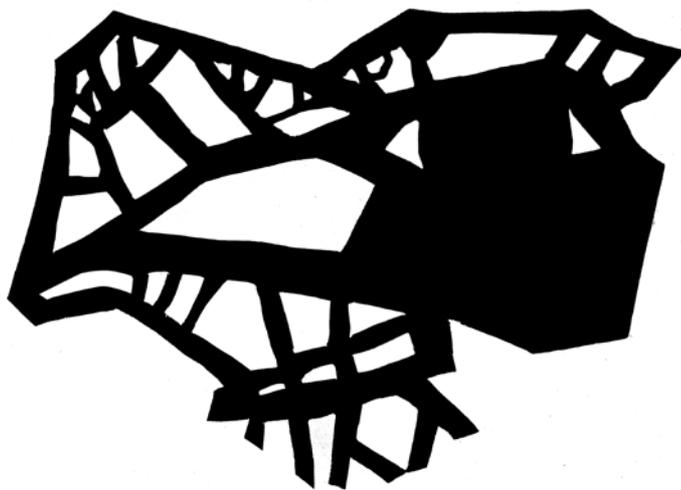


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The Space-Time Morphologies of Civilizations

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Gebser's implicit phenomenological method has been found fruitful by many scholars, because it has released them from a limited "scientific methodology" founded on dichotomies of "subject-object," "self-world," "high-low," "cause-effect," and so on. This kind of dualistic methodology, Gebser indicates, is based on a consciousness of three-dimensional space and linear time, which constitute the basic morphology of what he has called the Mental-rational Civilization¹, that is, contemporary Western. A consideration which is often neglected is that in many instances the researcher's language includes dimensions and claims which he does not recognize as arising from his own theoretical and methodological foundations², in the Mental-rational civilization. This implies, of course, that his foundations are too narrow. The paper addresses an important task, – to institute a method which can deal with a multitude of areas and dimensions of human experience without subjecting them to reductionism, such as is practiced both by empirical and idealistic schools of thought.

Keywords: Jean Gebser, integral consciousness, mythical awareness, space-time structures, audial space, civilizational morphology, comparative studies of civilizations.

It should be stressed from the outset that Gebser does not claim to have invalidated the explanations, descriptions and methods of his predecessors or contemporaries; rather, he places their work in a larger context by revealing their implicit configurations of self and world. On the other hand, he is not dealing with the question

of "reality," but with the "breaking in of different structures of consciousness"³. These structures of consciousness must be understood as correlative to the structures of experienced world, not the theoretically posited "real world." Hence the task here is to identify the more basic morphological configurations which furnish a ground for the comparative study of civilizations.

1 Jean Gebser, *Ursprung und Gegenwart*. (Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlag) 1966, p. 29ff.

2 *Ibid*, p. 148.

3 *Ibid*, p. 4.

In order to characterize the phenomenological method more explicitly, we should note that writers in this field tacitly assume certain heuristic principles which are essential to their work. These principles are the concepts of space and time, and their different configurations which are basic to individual civilizations, with all the variety of implications contained in these terms. The determination of differences by which a civilization is delimited from other civilizations, assumes a common factor on the basis of which the differences may be seen. In other words, differences (i.e. diversity, which constitutes the particular structures) are perceivable in relation to an identical or common background (i.e. identity, which provides the constant structure). Moreover, the diversity implies a predominance of one field of experience over another. Hence, each particular structure must be related to its proper field of experience if it is to yield a correct mode of interpretation of the “linguistic metaphors” of a civilization, such as visual, aural or tactile⁴. Language, in this context, must be understood in its broadest sense, ranging from bodily gesture to social institutions, to most sophisticated meta-linguistic constructs⁵.

The most basic morphological configuration is that of space and time which, according to Kant, are understood to constitute the *a priori* conditions of both subjective and objective experience. This

means that the structures of space-time cannot be deduced from subjective states and objective processes but must be assumed for the understanding of both. As Fink points out, “Space and time can be investigated neither from the perspective of objectivity nor subjectivity, for all investigation of objects and subjects assumes space-time as conditions for the investigations”⁶. Space-time, then, can be understood as a fundamental morphology assumed by all civilizations; understood in one of its possible variations (such as three-dimensional space and linear time, past orientation and so on) it constitutes the underlying structure of the modes of self and world-awareness of a particular civilization. Any particular variation is an indicator of a predominance of a specific field of experience⁷.

It is important that the concepts of morphology and phenomenology, as employed in this study of civilizations, be understood in terms of a revision (though not a dismissal) of the Kantian notion of *a priori*. This re-evaluation has taken place in a number of related traditions, the most fundamental of which is civilizational morphology, the notion of a “civilizational *a priori*” subsuming more limited *a priori* such as language, institutions and modes of perception⁸. These limited structures constitute the middle ground of societal patterns, furnishing the possibilities for

4 E. Strauss, *Psychologie der menschlichen Welt* (Berlin, Springer Verlag) 1960, p. 14ff.

5 M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, C Smith tr. (New York, The Humanities Press) 1962, p. 74ff.

6 E. Fink, *Zur Ontologischen Frühgeschichte von Raum – Zeit – Bewegung*, (Haag, Martinus Nijhoff) 1957, p. 37.

7 Gebser, op. cit., p. 469

8 M. Landmann, *Mensch als Schoepfer und Geschoepf der Kultur*. (Munich, Ernst Reinhardt Verlag) 1961.

action in terms of modes of perception and expectations of the future⁹. In turn, they institute the “form” which subjective states take within a specific civilization; the structure of human subjectivity within a given society is correlative to its linguistic and other *a priori*¹⁰. But it is important to recognize that undergirding both is the specific space-time configuration within a society, its civilizational morphology. The implications of a given society’s conceptualization of space and time is distinct from, and more fundamental than, either the objective or the subjective conditions through which they are manifest.

This may be exemplified by the system of signs institutionalized within a society. For example, an arrow inscribed “Boston,” may be of any shape, size or colour; its empirical description and the impressions to which it gives rise may vary widely. In other words, the sign functions within a spatial-temporal system which connects events into significant relationships, not within a system of empirical facts or psychological states. In brief, the “logic” of a civilization is not limited to the sum of empirical facts. The empirical phenomena function, make sense, gain relationships, within a system of *a priori* specific to a civilization (its particular space-time morphology), and the system cannot be exhausted by any particular instance of that civilization¹¹. The “civilizational morphology,” therefore, provides the network of significant con-

nections. An object functions as a clue or a witness to the culture, reclaiming it not as an empirical fact but as a system of orientations and possibilities for interpreting the lives and world of a particular people. The civilizational object is “read” in terms of its web of spatial temporal implications, and hence provides different structures of awareness capable of radically transforming the epistemological problems of subjectivity and objectivity. As Frithjof Rodi correctly states, “the object or event is elevated to the level of significance”¹².

The phenomenological approach cannot be fully appreciated without its exemplification in terms of an investigation of civilizational phenomena. Therefore, following Gebser, we shall offer a brief outline of various civilizational structures, not on the basis of chronology, but on that of space-time morphology. In passing, it may be said that this method may reveal that a number of our revered scientific theories contain aspects of myth and magic which do not fit the mental or rational structures assumed by sciences and humanities. This, of course, will not invalidate such theories; it will only point to the fact that we may be living with residua of civilizations which we thought to have “outgrown.” Hence, the unfolding of distinct structures morphologically will also unfold the levels of civilizational *a priori* which constitute what we are, and the kind of reality we face. Using phenomenological method advocated by Gebser, we ought to be able to delineate basic structures of civilizations, and not

9 W. Porzig, *Das Wunder der Sprache*. (Munich, Francke Verlag) 1971, p. 176ff.

10 A. Gehlen, *Der Mensch*. (Frankfurt, Athanaeum Verlag) 1962, p. 86.

11 Landmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 48, 37.

12 F. Rodi, *Morphologie und Hermeneutik*, (Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer Verlag) p. 81.

what are some accepted aspects contained in the already known structure, manifesting themselves as rational – evident in the theories we have outlined. Gebser's phenomenology appropriately takes "lived awareness" as a condition for the understanding of civilizations. By lived awareness is meant the ways that the world (and not things) provide frameworks for the presence of things, events, metaphysical and ontological speculations, cults, sciences, languages, and self. The best way to begin this investigation is with those civilizational structures of awareness which are known as mythological and rational.

The word *mythos* is derived from *mythenomai*, meaning "to speak, say, instruct" Harrison points to the connection between the English word "mouth" and the Greek *mythos*¹³. This implies a predominance of the audial field of experience. Audial space has its specific properties, consisting of moving dimensions which surround and penetrate, filling and homogenizing; it is not direction in the sense of having a topical determination. It may be said to have an approximation with the turbulence and rhythm of water, which also plays a great role in the mythological structure. In audial experience, we "harken" – which comes from *horchen*, "obey"; the sound surrounds and penetrates us. In audial space, things are made present without establishing a fixed distance from us; they are on top of us as if we belonged to them: *ge-heoren* (*hoerig*, "servile") Lacking a reference to distance, audial space is conducive to dancing, which is "non-directed"

in terms of a particular goal, Audial space is articulated by rhythmic and intensive time structures, The rhythm of sound constitutes a structure for activity akin to dancing present not as a temporal succession of points or steps, but as a way of moving which has no historical progression; it simply repeats the "tempo" toward intensification and release. This constitutes the ebb and flow of audial space and time.

Explicating the mythological structure in terms of audial space and time, we note first that in their art works mythological civilizations show a stress on the mouth. "Where there is no mouth, there is no myth"¹⁴. The root of *mythos*, *mu*, means "to sound, to tone." This same root is given in a related word, *myein*, which means "to close oneself" in Greek, it manifests as *mystes*, *mysterion* and *mystic*, a wordless closing into oneself. To speak, announce, and to close, to be mute – this is only an apparent contradiction. The mythical structure leads to an awareness of "soul" or "inner world", symbolized by the circle which contains polarities existing in an eternal succession from one to the other (*yang-yin*), like the turn of the seasons. The polarity between "speaking" and "closing" reveals the circular movement from self-closure within one's soul, which is dark and mysterious, to the "bringing forth" of the mystery through its expression in spoken word, poetic sayings and musicality. This circularity is manifested in a multitude of sayings to be found in mythological cultures. For example, Heraclitus writes (Fragment 36), "For souls to become water means death,

¹³ Gebser, *op. cit.*, p. 75f.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 75, 268, 76.

for water to become earth means death; from earth becomes water and from water becomes soul.” The same structure is found at the beginning of John’s scriptures: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” We notice in both cases not only the circularity but also the return to soul, and word, as expressions of the audial morphology through the circularity of rhythmic polarities. The polar rhythm is also manifest in that the hearer not only listens to the word but above all to that which remained silent, unspoken and merely hinted at. The word is thus a mirror of the inner mystery.

The phenomenon of mirroring leads us to two kinds of myths: water travel and Narcissistic myths. Water travel, crossing the great water, is symbolic of the attempt to find a fixed point or a path in the turbulent soul. The fixed point is usually symbolized by a partner found on the other shore. A sea journey is an experience of oneself in search of a direction and goal in life but this is not to be won without arduous effort. This is illustrated in the story of Odysseus, who, after a stormy voyage, lands on a shore where he meets Nausikaa and announces “Eim Odysseus,” – “Am Odysseus.” This is not yet “I am”: the ego, the “I,” is still contained in, and identical with, the active verb is. (Even today, in Italian and Spanish languages, whose people are more clan-nish, and more audial than visual, the pronominal are not independent of the active verbs¹⁵). The “Eim Odysseus” is stressed by Homer as the endurer.

15 M. Wandruzska, *Sprachen Vergleichbar und Unvergleichbar*, (Munich, R. Piper & Co. Verlag) 1969, p. 277ff.

The individual in the mythological structure is still bound to the group; the mother principle is predominant. From the Indo-European root *mat* develop the Greek *mater* (the “great mother”) and *meter* (from both of which we derive “matter”), as well as *metronome*, as both musical rhythm and the ultimate source of measure. The mythological trend of inspiration by muses constituting the latent memory of the world is traceable throughout the entire European history of poetry. W. H. Roscher traces the meaning of “muse” to the “mother of muses,” *Mnemosyne*, who gives birth to three daughters, *Melete*, *Mneme* and *Aoide*, which mean “musing, memory and chant.” These names introduce another aspect to the basic mythical morphology: circular time, in which the repetition of the past predominates. The myth preserves the past, and poetizing brings it to expression in audial rhythm. In fact, *Mnemosyne* is derived from the Sanskrit *manana*, meaning “holy musing” and “holy immersion.” It should be clear that “musing” is not yet rational thinking; it is rather “belonging” and “thanking.” (The word “thinking” is derivable from Germanic *denken*, which in turn has a common root with *danken*.) The muse is thus the latent memory of the world, and hence the mother of singers. This leads us back to the audial morphology which “surrounds and binds” to the dark, mysterious origin, the mother principle, and to group memory¹⁶. To recapitulate, the mythological structure basically arises from an audial experience of rhythmic space, and an experience of time which is circular.

16 Gebser, *op. cit.*, pp. 91, 74, 342, note 76.

The past exists powerfully in the present, preserved through myth and announced to subsequent generations, which in turn live in the rhythm inspired by “memory” in the mythological sense. There is little need to argue for the case that diverse civilizations live in mythological time and space and are bound to psyche and its imagery. It could be said that India is a rhythmic civilization, where even the highest symbols, such as Shiva, are “cosmic dancers”.

The mental or rational structure that dominates some civilizations depends on the unfolding of words “mind” and “mental” stemming from a basic root which opens the major aspect of three-dimensional spatial morphology, and a directed or linear time. The root is Sanskrit *ma*, from which derive secondary roots such as “man,” “met,” “me,” and “men.” Homer’s *Iliad* begins with one such derivative: *menis*, which means “anger, courage and power,” and is originally related to Latin *mens*, which means “courage, thought, understanding, reflection.” We notice the root *me* predominates in many heroic names, such as Prometheus, Agamemnon, Menerfa. Menerfa is the goddess who is “goal oriented,” and never misses her mark (requiring the three-dimensional space morphology and linear time). She is also the goddess who strengthens the anger of Achilles. The basic field of experience is visual rather than audial.

A brief description of visual experience may show the significance of this difference. In visual orientation, activity is directed toward fixed objects. One must move in order to see, in contradistinction to the process of hearing, where one need

not orient himself but can allow the sound to “determine” the rhythm of life. One is “attuned” to the world of sound which surrounds us. Visual orientation, in contrast, occurs along “lines of sight,” and locates us as a subject in a world of objects. In this world, objects are disposed at varying distances, “segmenting” space into a “measured domain.” The space opened to us by seeing is intrinsically purposive such that objects constitute natural “ends” of actions necessary to reach them. Activity is goal-directed. Time’s arrow is also born from spatial separation, the time it takes to cross a given space. Behaviour, so structured, becomes predominately rational and calculating of ends; performance is in accordance with the “right measure.” The root *ma* also yields *manas*, which means “understanding” “mind,” from which “man,” as thinker and measurer is derived. Hence the king and the law-giver are respectively, Minos in Crete, Menes in Egypt; and Manu in India. “Minos” also means “the darer and the measurer.” Man, here becomes the “measure of all things.” The mother principle, the dark and turbulent world of audial awareness, becomes, when objectified, “matter” which is to be measured and illuminated by the “mind.”

The water myths express the search for the right path representing a first attempt to release men from the state of mythical immersion, an attempt which is directed toward the achievement of individuality, the separate one, requiring a three-dimensional space. This spatial separation is evident in the Greek plays, specifically in drama which is moving away from the Dionysian audial space of music-sound

and dance to the opposition between the choir and the actor. The choir represents the mythic binding to the group from which the individual is beginning to separate himself (spatial movement). Here we find the beginnings of rational opposition instead of mythic polarity “The movement from audial morphology of space and time to three-dimensional space and linear time permit rules, oppositions, directions, individuation and the separation of the higher from the lower. Plato’s rationality assumes a pyramidal (three-dimensional) structure, with the Good as the highest principle of illumination and word order. Hence gods are higher which demand the highest while things are lower. This morphology alone allows for metaphysics and the elevation of “reason above matter.” It offers a basis for the movement from the early realization of three-dimensional space and linear time to the perspectival world of modern times, which materialized the word and created the profound split between subject and object.

Gebser finds the historical traces of this movement from the audial to the visual experience to be most clearly present in painting. In medieval art, we find the predominance of a dark background, symbolizing mythological-audial morphology, opposed by the light principle, exemplified by saints as higher and enlightened beings. There is no perspective in these paintings. In the Renaissance, on the other hand, we find a strong movement toward the appearance of perspective, as in the work of Ghiberti (around 1400-02 We can see a progression from the paintings of Ambrogio Lorenzetti (“Good Government,” 1338-40),

where distance in space is depicted in terms of height, to those of the Linbourg Brothers (“February,” 1413-16), which move toward greater depth instead of height, and finally to those of Masaccio (“The Tribute Money,” 1427), which shows depth without requiring that it be seen in terms of height. This reveals a movement toward the final visualization of space in terms of three-dimensional perspectivity¹⁷. As Panofsky points out, “The history of perspectivity can be seen as the triumph of distancing and objectification of reality and as the triumph of the subject who opposes reality and overpowers it in the sense of systematization of the outer world while expanding the influence of the ego”¹⁸. The term “reality,” used in this context, is valid only for the last three-hundred years and is based on perspectivity. Perspectival painting, as a final expression of the predominance of the three-dimensional morphology, at once “materializes” and fixes time. Thus, the paintings have exact shadows cast by objects, thereby indicating the exact moment in time. Thus, the final outcome of the development of the mental structure – the visualization of space, the linearity of time, and the distinction between self and world, with a spatial expansion of the ego’s influence¹⁹ – has been the growth of

17 H. W. Janson, *History of Art* (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall) 1969, pp. 272, 281, 323.

18 E. Panofsky, “Die Perspektive als symbolische Form”: in *Vorläufe der Bibliothek Warburg* (Leipzig, Teubner) 1927, Vol. IV, p. 287.

19 For an in-depth philosophical study of this movement, culminating in Nietzsche’s “Will to Power,” see K. H. Volkman-Schluck, *Einführung in das philosophische Denken* (Frankfurt, Vittorio Kostermann) 1965, chs. 3, 4, 5.

technology, and of “objective” science, specifically with the all-pervasive metaphor of theory, method, or a hypothesis that can be “applied” on phenomena. It is immediately obvious that “application” means dualism between subject and object and that the subject controls the surrounding environment for his purposes. In brief, the world is present only as “material stuff – irrational” to be controlled by mind – man.

Having delineated the morphologies of mythical and mental structures, we should consider one of the most pervasive – the magical – structure. Care must be exercised in order to avoid an imposition of mythical and mental structures on the magical, since for magical awareness there is no subject who performs rituals to effect a transformation of objects in space and time. It is rather the way that the magical consciousness experiences itself. The world with its objects and events is charged with vital powers; man, too is charged by these powers, he does not “possess” them. The consciousness of magical man is not yet “awake.” Indication of any ego-structure is lacking. Consciousness and world are one; like a Mobius strip, what seems to be outside is inside. In the same sense, the soul is not yet “inside” the individual but strewn among all events. The comprehension of the dispersal of consciousness (as that which “boundlessly” pervades the world) is a precondition for understanding the magical and vital (not causal) connections of all objects and events. Morphologically speaking, the magical world is a unity of spatial and temporal points; each point (person or thing) is interchangeable with any other. The one-dimensional point is

the basic feature of the fundamental mode of relationship of all objects and events, including man, within the vital continuum. Since consciousness is strewn in the world, any action or event affects other actions or events immediately – without a question as to distance and location. This is the specific space-time of magic: any performance, any event, is connected to anything in the world. A woodoo ritual connects to someone directly, and thus its effects are experienced immediately, without a rational question how far and where the affected objects are. The human is not the actor with specific characteristics, since his actions are identical with the events that he enacts.

The multitude of vital nodes and the presence of magical consciousness in trees, rocks, streams and mountains, among the stars is coextensive with animism, as well as totemic identification, are the features of magical consciousness. The efficacy of such magic is not one of cause but of “making.” One must make oneself into the animal to be its equal; this is well-documented by E. von Sydow²⁰. The process of such “making” is seen in hunting. A man draws the animal in the sand before dawn, and when the first sun-ray touches the drawing, he shoots an arrow into the drawing, thus killing the animal; “later” he slays the animal, and performs a ritual dance in evening. All these actions and events are one and identical, not symbolic. The immersion of magical man in a vegetative-vital sphere thus indicates not only the unity of man and nature but also the sympathetic association of all

²⁰ E. von Sydow, *Die Kunst der Naturvoelker und der Vorzeit* (Berlin) 1932.

events. Sympathy, in magical morphology, means “being with” in an identical destiny. Immersion of the individual in the group, and of the group in the experience of the vegetative-vital surroundings constitutes the world of magical man, revealed in his art. Examples are numerous: The head, and in many cases the entire body, is totally intermingled with nature, which indicates the dispersal of consciousness throughout the whole of vital nature. It could be suggested that communication is telepathic, evidenced by auras around the heads; the lack of mouth suggests that the vital sympathy of the group manifests itself in wordless communication.

Although the modern – rational West – has prided itself for its progress beyond such primitive modes of awareness as magic, too many social, political, cultic practices reveal the opposite. Simple practice of “word magic” is present in most rituals concerning the granting of identity and even “reality.” The word magic extends from ancient animism, through stories of creation: the world and the creatures in it appear with the speaking of some primal being. Its words are identical with its creative power; once it pronounces the name of some creature, some thing, some event, all of them appear as parts of the world. The supreme entity says “let there be a lion” and a lion appears. The identity of a lion is equal to the word pronounced by the “creator.” It is interesting that this magical speaking is also identical with the “primal will” because which things appear is what the primal being “wants.” This magic is evident in daily rituals of identifying all sorts of events and beings. When a baby is born, it has no iden-

tity, and the identity is conferred upon the baby by some ritual – such as baptismal. She or he becomes a “Christian” when some shaman pronounces appropriate words. The baby becomes an embodiment of a word. By word magic we become what the word says: we are democrats, republicans, Nazis, Communists, Jews, Hindus, we take communion and become one with Jesus, we convert and assume a new identity. Even in simple natural adversity, such as draught, the political leaders, the members of various personality cults, make a general request for word magic: let us pray for rain. Then there is the popular identity of masses of people in sports: a home team, whether national or local, wins a simple game, the populations shout “we have won,” “we are number one.” What is magical about such mass noises is that the public did not play, nor was it anywhere near the game in space; the members of the public were sitting in bars, by televisions, drinking beer and eating a variety of junk foods, and yet, they became one with the victorious team – without any space and time distance. In this mode of awareness, no reason will help, although reason itself might become instrumental and thus magical. We use rational formulations to apply on “matter” and “make” what we will. It is not reason that rules but magical will – we are not in any way beyond the magical domain of awareness; it is one dimension of all civilizations, including the modern Western. Yet such a common dimension is necessary as one context for understanding others as variations of such a common presence. The same can be said of mythological awareness: most varied civilizations have

their “attunements” to the audial awareness, even if expressed differently – ranging from phonetic inflections through most diverse musics, to the cosmic rhythms and turbulences.

Before disclosing Gebser’s integral structure, we should understand that here we are not dealing with the question of “truth” in the sense of determining whether the magical, mythological or mental man was correct in his view of reality. We are dealing with structures of consciousness as civilizational *a-priori*, constituting the styles of human life. This means that if human beings live in accordance with the precepts of a god or in defiance of demons, we must accept those gods and demons as civilizational realities manifested in human life. Furthermore, when we speak of egos, minds and objects, we do not in any way imply the existence of such entities. We are simply talking about the ways in which humans organize their world and are aware of themselves. For example, when we prescribe quantitative laws for matter, we are dealing with principles derived from the mental structure. Hence, when we next speak of the dissolution of this three-dimensional morphology, this does not imply that we have finally discovered a higher truth. We are simply pointing to a different space-time structure, on the basis of which we experience ourselves and our world. The task thus indicated is to trace civilizational events of this century, in order to disclose the structure of awareness which constitutes its *a-priori*.

Seeking clues in the visual arts, we find one immediate striking characteristic: lack of perspectivity and, correlatively, the

lack of “directed” shadows which would indicate the chronological time of the painting. Moreover, the lack of perspectivity is indicative of a basic movement in painting which Gebser calls *aperspectival*. *Aperspectivity* means not that there are no perspectives but that the perspectives are all manifest at one glance; the paintings do not signify a time which is extended, but rather a time concentrated, which gathers all perspectives into a diaphanous “present.” Time is seen as the “integrating and intensifying” dimension; from this Gebser concludes that time, not in its extensity, but in its integrating and intensifying force, makes all perspectives present. The new morphology could therefore be called “fourth-dimensional,” “integral” or “diaphanous.” For example, Picasso’s sketch of a man (1926) shows the figure from all sides-*aperspectively*, concentrating all perspectives. Memory and anticipation become irrelevant in such work, because the *aperspectival* character of art does not require the perception of one side after another²¹.

The integral morphology suggests a temporal structure which permits the interpretation of self and world not in terms of moments but as the “presence” of world in a no *perspectival* simultaneity. Thus, time is not divided into segments of past, present and future, but includes them as “presence”²², the dissolution of *perspectivity* in art is succeeded by attempts to express this experience as “concretization” of time. The paintings in which there are

21 Gebser, op. cit., pp. 34f, 33, 119ff.

22 M. Merleau-Ponty, op. cit., part 3, sec. 2.

no shadows, and thus no direction of light, show the despatialization of time in the sense that time becomes an all-pervading presence. Moreover, there also occurs a dynamization of space, as in Cezanne, who destroys the clear, visual contours, followed by Kandinsky, who paints space as a multitude of moving and intersecting dimensions without clear contours, signifying the dissolution of fixed, separated, space and time.

The rise of four-dimensional apectivity is also manifested in music and the change from tonality to atonality. The atonal music expresses the dissolution of linear time and introduces integral time as a force which collects and makes present moving audial dimensions that incessantly intersect, pervade and shift one another²³. Thus, we find Ernest Ansermet proclaiming that “Stravinsky sees in music the self-concretization of time”²⁴. Only time which is integral to conscious structures can be concrete. The three-dimensional morphology, with a linear time, is abstract in that time is external to consciousness; consciousness employs time as an “external measure” of events²⁵.

The dissolution of spatial rigidity, specifically the rigidity of substances, is also evident in contemporary poetry, which is changing the shape of language. From Baudelaire through Gide, Valery, Rilke and Eliot we find a total rejection of muses,

which means a release from the psychic factors: “Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not an expression of personality, but an escape from personality”²⁶. Not only that, the rigidity of space is also rejected: „Je sens l’espace s’abolir Et le temps croître en tous sens”²⁷. Time is no longer a succession of events, but a presence which integrates. The dissolution of substantives, the restructuring of language, is evident in a multitude of poetic constructions.

In the sciences as well as in the arts, the movement of consciousness toward the integral and apectival morphology is evident. After all, sciences, irrespective of the field of investigation, are also civilizational phenomena and operate within a particular, civilizational *a priori* as their ultimate foundation, value and justification.

The concretization of time and its integration with space and the consequent re-evaluation of our notions of linear time and three-dimensional space has been most obvious in physics. Since Einstein and Planck, time has assumed an integral role in the dynamics of the world process – not as a constant, causally determinable and describable quantum, but as a “qualitative structure sui generis.” Since time is a world constituent, i.e. integral to events, the events themselves are not “in” space and time but are composed of space and time. Moreover, the integration of time and space yields the dynamization of space and the introduction of structures which are

23 T. Marek, “The First World Performance of the Resurrection,” in *Polish Music*, II, 1971, P. Sf.

24 E. Ansermet, “L’expérience musicale et le monde d’aujourd’hui:” in *Rencontres Internationales de Geneve* (La Presse Française). 1948, p. 28

25 Gebser, op. cit. p. 121.

26 T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays* (London, Faber & Faber) 1932, p. 21.

27 Paul Eluard *Poésie et vérité* (Neuchâtel, La Baconnière) 1943, p. 89.

“chronogeometrical”²⁸. The new concepts of physics, like those of 20th century art, suggest the dissolution of the dichotomy of subject-object; the world is not objectifiable and hence the three-dimensional perspectivity is redundant.

Another excellent example of integral time is to be found in the sciences of biology and psychology. The question of time in biology became quite acute at the beginning of this century. There is a striking agreement between quantum theory in physics and mutation theory in biology (genetics) in that both have surrendered linear, causal continuity and introduced discontinuous events. But it was E. Minkowski who considered the notion of “temps-qualitie” and “temps-veau” by showing that integral time structures are quite varied for distinct ages of biological and psychological systems. Minkowski has also shown that a reduction of psychic functions to a locus in a fixed three-dimensional space and linear time results in a variety of psychic disorders. Without “time-capacity”-that is the integration of future and past into “presence”- there is a loss of orientation and of the capacity to function normally, “Future, past and present” constitute a structure field of action in which the present has significance, directions and implications for other possible actions. Human behaviour is integrated and unified in terms of space-time morphologies which constitute the field of action of the subject as well as the objective quality of the environment. Implications toward

future and past are both essential aspects of such integration.

The employment of the method of morphological phenomenology in terms of a multitude of space-time configurations as *a priori* structural possibilities enabled Buytendijk, Johannes F.²⁹ to investigate a variety of animal species and account for differing patterns of behaviour. Each species has a different environment not because it lives in a different and unique region (since there are many species living in the same region), but due to the differences in the spatial-temporal structures constituting its world. The specific novelty in ethological (animal behaviour) research is the spontaneity of organisms which do not simply react to each stimulus but to a “global situation” which integrates stimuli into a particular rhythm and system of orientation. It can be concluded that time becomes the integral qualitative constituent both in a biological system and its environment.

The integral or four-dimensional consciousness cannot be thought of in terms of a system, be it mythological or rational. It is rather the “integrating” of aspects into a whole, not in a successive, linear manner but in a movement whereby each aspect manifests all other aspects as well as the whole. Obviously, the new ways of language, of art and of science have surrendered the old notions of causality and of logical succession. Instead of a system, which is always abstract and three-dimensional, we must speak of a systase, which is a “continuous integrating,” and of etiology, indicating a structure of consciousness which has no world opposing it, but is rather intertwined with the dynamic and

²⁸ M. Capek, *The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics* (Princeton, Van Nostrand) 1964, pp. 175-176.

integrating dimensions of the world. We can say with Gebser that we are witnessing the rise of a “world without opposite”²⁹.

It is impossible to present all the aspects of Gebser’s work, or to offer as evidence the multitude of examples indicating the “coming integral consciousness.” Wherever we turn today, we find ruptures de construction³⁰. They have an unsettling influence on the well-established patterns of mental, linear, spatial-temporal consciousness. The uneasiness is not, according to Gebser, an outcome of the new consciousness; rather it results from an experience of the insufficiency of the three-dimensional morphology which is unable to cope with dimensions of consciousness and world not describable in terms of its assumed space-time structure. Thus, it tends to move

toward a greater “narrowing” and hence anxiety (Angst). The task, as Gebser sees it, is not to “explain away or reduce” the new to the old, but to understand the morphological limits of the old, in order that the new may become apparent. The new civilizational *a priori* assumed by contemporary artists and scientists may simply be a hint of the future; the requirement to release oneself from the “mental habit” in order to see the other structures manifesting in the midst of our own civilizational life. It could credibly be claimed that we are living in a transitional period, similar to that in which the mythological structure was dissolving and the mental structure was arising. It is our present task to explore all the areas of our civilizational life, in order to discover the extent to which the mental morphology has lost its effectiveness, and the extent to which the integral morphology is already manifesting itself.

29 Buytendijk Johannes F. *The Mind of the Dog*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co) 1936.

30 Gebser, op. cit., pp. 331, 533.

31 Ibid., p. 531.