

Abstract cont.:

Albert A. Johnstone: No less importantly, where imagic thinking is not made subservient to linguistic thinking, it may develop into an autonomous private language operating independently of the socially constructed linguistic conceptual scheme. Thus, the capacity for imagic thinking endows the self with a potentially substantial increase in freedom, freedom both in the sense of cognitive and praxic independence from the present perceptual environment, and in the sense of independence from the conceptual constraints and social relativity of linguistic grooming.

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The Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness (SAC) is a member unit of the American Anthropological Association. SAC is an interdisciplinary organization concerned with cross-cultural, experiential, and theoretical approaches to the study of consciousness. The primary areas of interest include: (altered) states of consciousness, religion, possession, trance, dissociative states; ethnographic studies of shamanistic, mediumistic, mystical, and related traditions; indigenous healing practices; and linguistic, philosophical, religious and symbolic studies of consciousness phenomena.

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SOCIETY FOR THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In conjunction with the 71st Annual Meeting
of The American Philosophical Association
(Pacific Division)

Conference Program

BERKELEY

March 26 - 29, 1997



Conference Coordinator

Helmut Wautischer
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Rohnert Park, CA 94928



a section of
the american
anthropological
association

CLAREMONT HOTEL, 41 TUNNEL ROAD, BERKELEY, CA 94705

Thursday, March 27

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Session I
CHARDONNAY

Topic: Transformative Visions of the Self

Chair: Helmut Wautischer (Sonoma State Univ.)

20 min. for paper presentation, 10 min. for commentator, 10 min. general discussion:

2:05 - 2:25 Sander Lee (Keene State College)

Notions of Selflessness in Sartrean Existentialism and Theravadin Buddhism

Comment: Peter Hadreas (San Jose State Univ.)

2:45 - 3:05 Stanley Krippner (Saybrook Institute)

The Kallawaya Practitioners of Bolivia: A 12-Facet Model of Healing

Comment: Ruth-Inge Heinze (U. of California Berkeley)

10 minutes break

3:35 - 3:55 Brian Schroeder (Univ. of Southern Maine)

Standing Firm on Nothing: Ethics and No-Self in Nishitani and Levinas

Comment: Andrew Young (California State U. Stanislaus)

4:15 - 4:35 Hoyt L. Edge (Rollins College)

The Experience of the Totemic Self

Comment: John D. Dadosky (Univ. of Toronto)

Abstracts:

Sander Lee, Department of Philosophy: The purpose of this essay is to briefly examine similarities and differences between the notions of selflessness to be found in Sartrean existentialism as it is expressed in Being and Nothingness and in the beliefs usually associated with Theravadin Buddhism. I contend that while they share many similarities in methodology and content (e.g., both advocate the use of introspective meditative techniques and both deny any ontological status to the self), they differ most profoundly in their interpretations of the moral and religious implications which derive from their common conclusions. The major difference between the two lies in the materialistic, this-worldly orientation of the Sartrean as opposed to the transcendent, other-worldly concerns of the Buddhist.

Stanley Krippner, Department of Anthropology: In 1996, Earl Scott Glenney and I interviewed several Kallawaya healers in La Paz, Bolivia. The Kallawaya tradition is several hundred years old and interweaves the maintenance of health, the treatment of sickness, the fostering of spirituality, and the facilitation of social and environmental relationships. Using a 14-facet model for our interviews, we concluded that the goal of the Kallawaya model is to live in harmony with nature, one's community, and oneself. Sickness is conceptualized as dissonance with this relationship. Treatment, both herbal and spiritual, is conducted in ways to restore this balance.

Brian Schroeder, Department of Philosophy: This paper addresses the possible relation between Keiji Nishitani and Emmanuel Levinas on the question of the constitution of ethical subjectivity. A mark of the so-called Kyoto School is its attempt to bridge the discourses of Asian and European thinking, and it is in this spirit that the present paper proceeds. For both, a radical assessment and reevaluation of nothingness is necessary in order to avoid the nihilism so often recently associated with Western ontology and Buddhism, and to pave the way for an ethical conception of intersubjective existence. Both thinkers share the view that most Western interpretations of nothingness, up to and including Heidegger's, end up prioritizing a selfsame conception of Being and inscribing difference and otherness as moments within the totality of Being as ontological (not metaphysical) difference. The paper concludes by considering the Korean Minjung mask dance, a traditional Buddhist ritual given new impetus of late, as a tangible means for self-effacement, thereby displacing the negative, destructive internal energies associated with the nihilistic feelings of social and political powerlessness.

Hoyt L. Edge, Department of Philosophy: The Australian Aboriginal worldview has been called a totemism, a view in which the person feels an identity with an animal or plant; this is one version of a number of worldviews that point to a self identity with the world or some cosmic consciousness. The question naturally arises in such systems whether the distinction between subject and object still holds. I argue that although there is a profoundly intimate relationship to the land found in the Aboriginal worldview, nevertheless it not only retains a subject/object distinction, but the totemic relationship is built out of it, although these philosophical terms are transformed in meaning.

Friday, March 28

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Session II
SONOMA

Topic: Tribal Epistemologies

Chair: Malek Khazae (California State Univ. Long Beach)

20 min. for paper presentation, 10 min. general discussion for each paper:

6:05 - 6:25 Nina Rosenstand (San Diego State Univ.)

Know Thyself: Personal Identity in Cross-Cultural Contexts

6:35 - 6:55 Maxine Sheets-Jonstone (Univ. of Oregon)

Learning to Move Oneself: Significances of a Pan-Cultural Human Phenomenon

10 minutes break

7:15 - 7:35 Albert A. Johnstone (Univ. of Oregon)

Imagic Thinking and the Self

7:35 - 7:55 Katharine Young (San Francisco State Univ.)

Reifying the Dream Body in Somatic Psychology: Kinaesthetic Visions

7:55 - 8:15 Stanley Keleman (Center for Energetic Studies)

Reifying the Dream Body in Somatic Psychology: Somatic Practices

Discussants: Daniel Deslauriers (California Inst. of Integral Studies)

Yves Marton (Univ. of California at Los Angeles)

Robin A. Roth (San Jose State Univ.)

Leah Shelleda (Marin Community College)

Helmut Wautischer (Sonoma State Univ.)

Abstracts:

Nina Rosenstand, Department of Philosophy: This paper explores the concept of selfhood within three philosophical traditions: The Western tradition of self as unity, the tribal tradition of self as a composite, and the late twentieth century Western feminist interpretation of self. The working hypothesis of the paper is that although these views of selfhood have fundamental differences, a tentative common ground may be postulated by means of a narrative approach.

Maxine Sheets-Jonstone, Department of Anthropology: This paper elucidates foundational aspects of our humanness that emanate from our common human task: learning to move ourselves. Through a descriptive account of four inter-related facts of human life, it shows how fundamental human concepts are rooted in movement, how we make sense of the world by moving our way through it, and how we are naturally sensitive to the movement of others. The paper poses the question of how our first wordless sense of ourselves is transformed by language and sketches out implications of what it would mean to reform our linguistically transformed notion of ourselves.

Albert A. Johnstone, Department of Anthropology: Imagic thinking, or thinking in images, is distinct from both linguistic thinking and nonsymbolic or stimulus thinking. Unlike stimulus thinking, it is not moored to the present perceptual situation, and hence it permits a significant increase in the scope of entertainable hypotheses the self may envisage. Likewise, since it allows the envisioning of options other than those perceptually present, it vastly increases the range of possible courses of action available. (continues on back page)

Katharine Young, Department of Anthropology: The visibility of dreams deflects awareness of dreaming as a kinaesthetic experience. In a somatic therapeutic practice, the somaticist recovers the kinaesthetics of dreaming by inducing the dreamer to embody the dream on the occasion of its narration. The act of narrating either conjures up the dreamworld in the gesture space in front of the narrator's body or invests the narrator in the dreamworld bodily. By various techniques of practice, the therapist appropriates these narrative gestures as apertures through which to pull the dream body into the space of interaction - the therapeutic space - where it can actuate somatic change.

Stanley Keleman, Center for Energetic Studies: The dream is integral to how the body continues its individuation and its cognitive/emotional growth by embodying its experiences. When people narrate their dreams, they shift between the realms of the nighttime somatic emotional unknown and the known daytime somatic reality through language, gesture and expression. Somatic psychology works with the dream and its characters to somatize the body's inner experiences. Embodying experience is a transformative process that reorganizes and deepens the personal somatic self. This presentation will display somatic methodology by analyzing a videotape of a person working bodily with a dream.