

Theosemiosis: An essay on consilience and the perennial philosophy

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Abstract: Can the divide between science and religion be bridged? The current article will present the case for semiotics – and specifically the process of theosemiosis – as that platform of connection. In order to present this argument a key issue that must be tackled is whether there is one underlying function within the category of religion that can be extracted and held accountable in its knowledge claims: what has generally been termed the perennial philosophy. This extracted principle must then be capable of conforming to a broader model of consilience that can contain the knowledge captured in both science and religion. A model that can equally explain the work of Aristotle, Bacon, Galilee, and Einstein as it does Moses, Buddha, Jesus and Krishna, both in an ontological and epistemological sense; and thus a modification and extension of Enlightenment principles in such a way that they can capture the western and eastern notions of that light. In this regard, seeing truly is ‘knowing’.

Keywords: theosemiosis; perennial philosophy; consilience; embodied cognition; religion; logic

Introduction

[Tartu.] Being planted on the borders of the semiosphere of your mind at this very moment are three interpretive seeds of light that once inseminated will pry open the Doors of your perception: omniperspectivism; phantasy; and the womb of the matrix.
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Is there one fundamental truth underlying all religions? A perennial philosophy. A *prisca theologia*. Is this truth compatible with the efforts of modern science and philosophy, as well as meaningful in a post-religious world where philosopher

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Friedrich Nietzsche already in 1882 declared God “dead” (Nietzsche 2001)? Could it even go so far as to ground those disciplines as well – through consilience – in a unity of knowledge? The present work will make the case that there is an underlying thread running through the seemingly disparate fields of religion, science and philosophy. By utilizing the field of sign systems studies known as semiotics, this article will focus on only one symbol, one word to seek to unveil that thread in a process called theosemiosis. That symbol, that word is: ‘Tartu’.

The key argument that will be presented in this work is that knowledge construction comes through a process known as semiosis by translating past memory into use against present experience. Religion will be shown using the Theory of Mind to provide an unconscious lens upon which to interpret the incoming source data that are novel, contradictory, and/or ill-defined. Religion in essence rectifies time within systems of static logic. In order to make that argument it will be important to go through the process of how novel information is transformed into predictable knowledge. The first section will therefore ground knowledge in its physical sense. The second section will ground knowledge and information in its biological sense. The third section will ground knowledge in its socio-cultural sense. The fourth section will ground knowledge through embodied cognition that grasps the unique and ineffable – as opposed to general rules of logic – through analogy. The fifth section will show how this four-tier structure of knowledge creation is captured in a single word, the general catalyst for scaffolding intuitive action. The information contained within each section is to be read in the order it is presented, as it is necessary to understand the process of knowledge construction as a whole. Only then can the role that religious instruments play within this space be properly understood. The quest of this work is to lead towards Enlightenment. To see. To know. It is time to ‘see the light’.

Womb of the Matrix

On 24 February, 2022 attendees started to arrive at the *okraina* – the eastern borderlands – of the western world to attend the Juri Lotman Congress on the Semiosphere in Estonia that was the impetus for this special religion and semiotics publication. The focus on religion and semiotics arose out of three panel discussions co-organized at the conference by Thomas-Andreas Pöder and the present author on this topic. The aim of the overall conference was to celebrate the work of the founder of cultural semiotics, professor Juri Lotman from the University of Tartu. However, on that very day Russia invaded Ukraine.

It took no small stretch of the imagination to foresee possibilities of an apocalyptic World War III arising from the decision of a nation that holds the largest nuclear arsenal in the world. From that decision came the darkness of suffering, death and destruction during war. The guilt experienced by those involved in killing their brothers and sisters, and the feelings of meaninglessness that can come to grip people at the existential thought of the annihilation of human life during war – which has haunted humanity since time immemorial. The end of the world, followed by judgement and the resurrection of the dead in a world to come has been described by all major world religions. Ultimately, the fate of the universe even in the scientific vision is either nuclear holocaust or the death of the sun and the heat death of the universe. This is the disintegration that begins in the heart of darkness, and leads back through wisdom and understanding towards knowledge of a re-equilibrated state: the tree of life.

For the purposes of the present work, this first section will be limited to looking only at the knowledge claims and logic of the Enlightenment era. The worldview of the scientific method stems originally from the work of Aristotle who disagreed with his teacher Plato that there was a world of eternal and immutable forms that existed beyond sensory experience. Instead, Aristotle argued, form is what took shape through matter and was accessible to the senses. Therefore, form could be defined by its underlying matter, as well as by understanding the reason it has shifted and changed into that form. The causation of that form. This causation took four steps: a material cause; an efficient cause; a formal cause; and a final cause.

The material cause is represented by the matter it is composed of. The efficient cause is the cause itself. The formal cause represents the pattern – the informational dimensions – of the object (its size, shape, etc.). The final cause is the end-directed goal for which it is being shaped – the teleology. The scientific method took this one step further, by removing the formal and final causes. In his *Advancement of Learning*, Francis Bacon (1842[1605]: 197) wrote that natural science “doth make inquiry, and take consideration of the same natures: but how? Only as to the material and efficient causes of them, and not as to the forms”. In *The New Organon* Bacon (1905[1620]: 307) explained further why metaphysics had to be separated from physics:

Let the investigation of forms, which are (in the eye of reason at least, and in their essential law) eternal and immutable, constitute Metaphysics; and let the investigation of the efficient cause, and of matter, and of the latent process, and the latent configuration (all of which have reference to the common and ordinary course of nature, not to her eternal and fundamental laws) constitute Physics.

It was argued that science would only use a form of logic that tracked reality itself through direct observation, what is known as inductive logic. However, the fact of the matter is that science does not simply build models from observation, but actually in reverse fashion builds models from hypotheses that it then tests against reality. The direction is important as it alters the form of logic being applied. It was American philosopher Charles Peirce (CP 5.171) who realized that science was not founded upon induction, but actually upon what he termed abduction. It was founded upon human-constructed hypotheses tested against nature and not on observation of nature directly. This will prove to be important, for it means that science is a methodology of pragmatic and formal causes in disguise.

Peirce (CP 2.98) realized this logic through designing a category system of signs and their relations. While induction seeks to extract a general rule from a particular case, a hypothesis makes the assumption that a general rule applied to a particular set of facts could identify the particular events that will then occur. Once empirically tested, this hypothesis could assess whether that general rule truly did apply in that particular case, hence strengthening that general law, or finding exceptions. Moreover, science does not only stop at being an area of hypothesis, but it requires performing a method of deductive logic to that hypothesis before any observations can even take place. Deductive logic, as opposed to inductive logic and abductive logic, seeks to apply necessary laws to situations in order to draw necessary conclusions. Inductive and abductive logic alternatively only deal with probabilities and likelihoods – not necessities.

Therefore, a hypothesis truly stems from seeking to extend or differentiate general rules derived through deductive logic to cover broader territory, rather than from looking at nature directly. A pragmatic correspondence – not a direct correspondence – is then sought between the model and underlying reality. Understanding these three forms of logic is essential to extracting the underlying semiotic philosophy of knowledge. Charles Peirce was able to make the link between these forms of logic and his taxonomy of signs. The three signs are indexes, icons and symbols. Indexes are signs that are contiguous in time and space, such as a blowing flag signifying that there is wind. Icons share a resemblance with the object to which they refer – without regard to time and space – such as a portrait. Symbols connect signs to their objects through general rules that mean the signs are arguably arbitrary. In other words, unless the general rule – such as a definition – was taught to an individual they could not simply look at a word and know what it means. Every word is a symbol. In this system then indexes help to flesh out inductive logic in a syllogism, icons help to flesh out abductive logic, and symbols help to flesh out deductive logic.

Far from pure induction, science has built a hierarchy based around the numerical version of deductive logic: otherwise known as mathematics. The more mathematically compatible, the more truly scientific the evidence. Science's heart is the mathematics of the motion of matter through a field of space-time. Those sciences that are most amenable to this structure of mathematical models provide the hardest evidence, that of the physical sciences: physics, chemistry, astronomy, and Earth sciences. On the other hand, the life sciences under the umbrella of biology cannot be so mathematically pinned down. In the hopes of holding onto a mathematical and mechanical worldview the teleological and intentional behaviour of plants and animals is hidden behind a veil of mechanism only, leaving historico-descriptive approaches as tools for changing and evolving species. This is why social science is the most denigrated of the sciences, as universal mathematical laws are hardest to pin down here. As physicist Albert Einstein (2010[1923]: 27) noted, "One reason why mathematics enjoys special esteem, above all other sciences, is that its laws are absolutely certain and indisputable, while those of other sciences are to some extent debatable and in constant danger of being overthrown by newly discovered facts."

Theoretically, scientific knowledge is meant to represent a direct correspondence theory of truth, whereby the propositions it suggests represent objective reality. From observations these potential patterns are then tested against deductive predictions in order to extract scientific laws. Acclaimed philosophers such as Thomas Kuhn (1962) say this representation is not accurate. In fact, science is only a coherentist representation of truth. It is built on certain axioms that serve as the foundation of a certain paradigm. This paradigm changes when the axioms change, causing the famous paradigm shift to take place. Instead of science projecting an objective reality, Kuhn (1962: 54) has argued that it only finds laws consistent with an axiomatic set of rules that change over time. Even hard social scientists such as Karl Popper (1934) of the London School of Economics opposed the idea that empirical laws could be extracted from human or material relations or could be verified at all: they could only be falsified.

It took a third person, also from the London School of Economics, Imre Lakatos (1970: 91–195) to overcome this divide between Kuhn and Popper to present a model of science that could account for the ideas of both luminaries. Lakatos's model became known as the 'research programme'. For Lakatos, the research programme had a hard core that was untouchable. In a different context it could be called sacred in a certain sense as this part of the programme could not be replaced without abandoning the whole programme. On the periphery were auxiliary hypotheses that were expendable and whose aim was to reach the standard of falsification.

There is a famous line in science called Landauer's principle (Bennett 2003: 501–510) stating that 'information is physical'. What this means is that any irreversible calculation within the universe actually physically produces entropy in the world, it produces heat loss. Therefore, for information to be created irreversibly, a greater entropy must come about in the total system. The deeper question than simply information as a whole, though, is human knowledge. How does human knowledge exist in a universe tending to greater entropy? This is where a new model of physics has been taking shape known as Constructor Theory – one that shows that knowledge is physical.

The phrase 'universal constructor' came from John von Neumann, who himself had worked at Los Alamos constructing the first nuclear device that began the modern visions of apocalypse. He developed a theory of the universal constructor as a self-replicating machine. The purpose was to show how the complexity of life could evolve in a universe where spontaneous reactions do not predict such a thing. The Constructor Theory, developed by Oxford professor David Deutsch (2013), also used this term.

The key is reframing physics from a field of study based upon necessary spontaneous reactions in the direction of entropy – where initial conditions and physical laws lead to necessary results – to a field focused on the broader question of possible transformations, not simply necessary transformations. The question of possibility and impossibility of transformations opens up a space between degenerate states to include the chance for greater tasks, computations, transformations in the same period of time. The key is having a constructor, which is a physical material that can carry out tasks repeatedly. A task can only exist if a constructor can carry it out. Information then is computation, the ability to either perform a task or not. An information medium/computation medium would be capable of holding a set of computations to perform specific transformations. A most straightforward example of a constructor is a catalyst. Nobel Prize winner Wilhelm Ostwald of the University of Tartu was the first to understand the implications of autocatalysis that is at the core of the origin of human life. This all would mean that counterfactuals are actually more fundamental than spontaneous reactions, which would only be a limiting case. This is because objects such as catalysts, which can continually repeat tasks without themselves being used up in those tasks, naturally exist in the material world.

A constructor, then, in some sense is a memory of tasks applied to the flow of potential, which in itself is a constraint of that potential. Physical knowledge is always the past staring at the present. Transforming the present through past information. Conversely, to stare at the present directly, without prior knowledge, is looking at pure potentiality, which to human cognition is pure chaos. For

instance, when looking at any object or event, Peterson and Flanders (2002: 2) note, “[t]here are an infinite number of ways to perceive or construe a given situation, and an infinite number of potential consequences of a given action or event.” From there, it is possible to understand that “[e]very ‘object’ can be classified, even perceived, in an infinite number of manners. Every object must therefore be regarded as something infinitely complex – objectively, intrinsically.” This potentiality is at the foundation of David Hume’s Induction Problem – the notion that no empirically derived knowledge can certainly predict what will come next (cf. Hume 1978[1739]). Deductive symbols are always presenting historical data to the present moment in order to grasp it, but in truth it is pure potentiality. The world beyond symbolic cognition. The flow discussed by Heraclitus and Alfred Whitehead.

For alchemists the *prima materia* was not simply neutral matter, but chaos. This is exactly the felt experience that ensues when axioms of meaning collapse. It is what has led to the modern divide between the humanities and the sciences, and has been captured so intensely in the visual and verbal religious mythology found throughout the world. Potentiality is all that truly exists in the present – possibility. Actuality only discusses the past according to the information arrow of time when looking at the directionality of the irreversibility of information. Math and science are always only historical affairs when speaking of the real world. The induction problem guarantees this. This present moment is the world of secondness, because it is the world of errors, where future expectations – using past memory – will fall short. In literary theory it is the second-person point of view. The viewpoint that takes in the world one directly perceives and the visual information that communicates directly with the eye. The world of objects and observation. ‘I–You’ communication. The word ‘matrix’ in this regard stems from the same root etymology as matter itself, which is mother. The mother that has always served as a metaphor for nature – mother nature.

Darkness and phantasy

The cycle of perception and action feedback loops connect the perceived world with consciousness and conscious experience. It is how phantasy *knows* the matrix, phantasy being the innate mental image of an object that links instinct and reality, and the scaffolding that results from testing actions against that image. In a word, phantasy can be described as learning. While the first section started with looking at a historical moment of time and space for Tartu, this section will look at the University of Tartu as an analogy of learning and education as a whole. For

it is here that the Tartu School of Biosemiotics holds that the key to understanding what separates life from non-life is particularly the learning process known as semiotic scaffolding. This process of semiosis – of autonomous learning – is coterminous with life. What is semiosis? It is the process of extracting meaning and capturing it within signs and symbols. In short, the process of meaning-making. Leading lights in this intellectual space from the city of Tartu include, but are not limited to, Karl Ernst von Baer, Jakob von Uexküll, Kalevi Kull, and Jaak Panksepp. The key updates to the fields of biology, neuroscience and epistemology as a whole have been reintroducing morphology and teleonomy/teleology, formal and final causes back into systems of knowledge. There are three key takeaways from this section: biosemiotic learning; vision; uncertainty.

The current default setting in biology is that there is no intentional, purpose-driven life outside of humanity. Not semiosis, but computation is at the core of biology. In this worldview DNA is pure unconscious information that has been naturally selected through chance mutation and evolution. It is the “translation” of this information into perception–action feedback loops, however, that serves as the core change from traditional biology to biosemiotics. In this view, “[d]evelopment, not evolution, could be considered as the central theoretical framework for biology. In this case Baer and not Darwin would become the central historical figure in theoretical biology” (Salthe 1993: 247). In other words, “the whole biology can be built up either as explaining ontogeny through evolution, like neo-Darwinism does it, or as explaining evolution through ontogeny, which is the essence of von Baer’s paradigm” (Kull 2000: 7). Further, “if organisms would only copy information and not translate, i.e. not change and transform information like it always take place in the process of translation, then they would never be able to predict, to expect, to intend, i.e., to live” (Kull 2000: 7). In biological terms “genome does not determine the phenotype [...] the organism interprets its genome when producing phenotype” (Kull 2000: 7).

Alongside this knowledge of the body and morphology are two key functions of action and perception that together form a unit termed by Jakob von Uexküll (1934/2011) as ‘the Functional Circle’. This circle extracts an *umwelt* – a subjective world for lifeforms. In other words, a functional circle is where meaning is derived from. The embodied, perception–action feedback loops that successfully conclude in states of homeostasis. Thomas Sebeok’s thesis is that the “life process is semiosis”, and therefore “semiosis is the general catalyst” in life (Kull 2014: 114). Scaffolding “is what results from learning. Semiosis produces scaffolding.” Returning to the previous section on constructors, “catalysts in living systems – in organisms and cultures – are just special kinds of scaffolds” (Kull 2014: 117). Constructor Theory and semiosis as a process work well with the models of

Terrence Deacon (2012) and his theory of the autogen, as well as the Friston Free Energy Principle on Markovian blanket self-organization (Friston, Kilner, Harrison. 2006). Ultimately, a blanket is akin to a body. Life is then semiotic at its core, and not computational.

The notion of the moment that was first utilized in relation to time in the 8th century by the Venerable Bede – who has been interred in what is now Durham, UK – is more directly defined in the present day with the phenomenal present itself as “a subjective duration felt as one moment so that the options or choices, which computationally taken are always sequential, are seen simultaneously” (Pikkarainen 2018: 444). The subjective moment is species-specific nowness first studied by Karl Ernst von Baer of Tartu, and set by Ernst Pöppel at roughly three seconds. As Kull (2015: 225) notes, “Thus, we observe that a fundamental feature of the phenomenal present is the existence of multiple possibilities. This occurs when several operations clash.” Kull (2015: 225) further makes clear, “Decision making is not computing, it is choice. Computing is based on operations that cannot meet a confusion. It is not a parallel computation either (for parallel computation also uses some algorithm that excludes clashes), it is not computing at all – it is choice in the situation where operations are incompatible.” The choice is between action and memory.

Turning to human perception specifically, the key to understanding the interaction between the light and the human eye is the difference between foveal and peripheral vision. The difference between cones and rods, colour and grayscale. Foveal is that clear vision down the centre of one’s eye where information is processed more clearly by cones; the periphery is that part which finds itself at the edges utilizing rods. It was Leonardo da Vinci who first noted the difference (Keele 1955: 384–390). Within the peripheral vision, rods are for vision, and they are not found in fovea. Far more rods than cones are found in the eye. Rods are peripheral vision (Kandel, Schwartz, Jessell 2000: 507–513). Cones are trichromatic. The three primary colours here are red, green, and blue. Cones are not as much about intensity of light but all about colour and photopic vision.

‘*Fovea*’ means ‘pit’ in Latin. It is only 1.5 mm wide and entirely composed of cones; it detects colour, shape, distance and visual acuity. An even tighter area is the foveal avascular zone without any blood vessels in order to allow pure light to be seen without loss. The foveola is only between 0.35 mm and 0.5 mm in diameter. Half of all nerve fibres in the optic nerve come from the fovea and the rest comes from the other portions of the retina (Provis *et. al.* 2013). This is the only area where 20/20 vision is possible. When there is good lighting it is known as photopic vision. This vision is what allows colour perception and higher visual acuity. The opposite is scotopic vision that takes place in darkly lit conditions. In

well-lit, photopic conditions, cones in the fovea are the most used and aid with colour perception and visual acuity. Foveal information is more heavily processed and provides solid spatial representation that is more consistent and hence more static, whereas scotopic vision relies more upon rods for night vision, and changes in the peripheral vision. This peripheral information is therefore the dynamic dimension. Central vision is poor in the dark conditions utilizing scotopic vision. Cones lack sensitivity in low light, whereas rods work better in low light. Fovea covers less than 1% of retinal size but over 50% of visual cortex, and it only sees two degrees of the visual field.

Light is one key aspect to the equation of perception, the receptacle of the light is the other. The human eye is called trichromatic, which means that it can only absorb three major colours and by adding those three colours to one another the rest of the colour palette is formed. This is the reason why seven colours in particular stand out to the human eye. The first are the primary colours of red, green and blue. However, when they overlap it produces even brighter colours in yellow, turquoise and magenta. When all three overlap the result is white. It is cones then that provide colour and are largely produced in the foveal region, but rods record not in colour but greyscale. That is how the right hemisphere largely produces a broader form of attention with a less focused, more dynamic view on the world. It is important to note again that foveal vision is related to the seven colours and the peripheral to light in darkness. Foveal vision is tied greatly to the left hemisphere, to language. Conversely, global attention in the peripheral vision is largely processed in the right hemisphere.

Psychiatrist Iain McGilchrist collected the evidence to show that the left hemisphere is dominant around narrowly focused attention, while the right hemisphere has “broad, global and flexible attention” (McGilchrist 2009: 40). He summarized this as follows: “Patients with a right-hemisphere lesion (therefore relying on their intact left hemisphere) start with the pieces and put them together to get the overall picture, whereas those with a left-hemisphere lesion (relying on their right hemisphere) prefer a global approach.” Further he states, “Patients with right-hemisphere damage don’t seem able to adjust the breadth of the ‘spotlight’ of their attention: they suffer ‘an excessive and more or less permanent narrowing of their attentional window’” (McGilchrist 2009: 40). On top of that, “the right hemisphere alone attends to the peripheral field of vision from which new experience tends to come; only the right hemisphere can direct attention to what comes to us from the edges of our awareness, regardless of side” (McGilchrist 2009: 40). One reason for this is that “[b]lurred or indistinct images are not a problem for the right hemisphere, but are for the left, even where the nature of the task would suggest that it should be more problematic for the right hemisphere” (McGilchrist 2009: 83).

Ultimately then, McGilchrist summarizes the main difference between the right and left as, respectively, global attention versus focused attention; novelty versus routinization; concern with the whole picture versus concern with just the right side; concrete and contextualized versus abstract. The left hemisphere worldview is “explicit, abstracted, compartmentalised, fragmented, static (though its ‘bits’ can be re-set in motion, like a machine), essentially lifeless” (McGilchrist 2009: 93). In other words, “the world of the left hemisphere, dependent on denotative language and abstraction, yields clarity and power to manipulate things that are known, fixed, static, isolated, decontextualized, explicit, disembodied, general in nature, but ultimately lifeless”, whereas the right hemisphere “yields a world of individual, changing, evolving, interconnected, implicit, incarnate, living beings within the context of the lived world, but in the nature of things never fully graspable” (McGilchrist 2009: 174).

To tie this to the previous section: a fundamental question in physics, chemistry and biology is whether uncertainty is a part of the fabric of reality itself, or whether it is simply to do with ignorance on the part of the human researcher, and is therefore a question for epistemology more than ontology – more philosophy than science. In the sense of information theory, uncertainty, improbability, and information are all directly connected with one another. According to the father of Information Theory, Claude Shannon (1948), possibilities must exist in order for new information to be created. This would spell difficulty for a deterministic model. The fact that new information is continuously being created in an expanding universe shows that the laws of entropy and information enable the conditions for this new information to be created. By radiating away excess energy and heat these conditions enable stable structures to persist in non-equilibrium thermodynamic gradients. Added to the notion of possibility is the notion of chance. Chance and choice is what collapses possibility to actuality.

In anthropology it is shown how rituals purposefully create this chaotic and anxious state of entropy in order to collapse the previous axioms and replace them with new societal ones and with a new role. This is known as liminality, ‘liminal’ meaning the edge of the known world. It is the collapse of stable axioms and the requirement of plasticity of habits. George Kelly (1969: 283) states, “A major revision of one’s construct system can threaten with immediate change, or chaos, or anxiety. Thus it often seems better to extort confirmation of one’s opinion – and therefore of the system that produced them – rather than to risk the utter confusion of those moments of transition.”

The Entropy Model of Uncertainty by Hirsh, Mar and Peterson (2012) shows how the conflict in ‘perceptual and behavioural affordances’ due to uncertainty is what is experienced physically as anxiety, leading to tonic noradrenaline release.

This rise in anxiety is due to reflexivity and critique revealing a mismatch of ‘types’ of semantic forms, narratives, goals/ideals, and conceptual models related to one reward system with the ‘tokens’ in terms of actual “states of affairs”. It is this very anxiety that rituals produce in a more controlled manner in order to generate a transformation that brings a member out of their past narratives and reward structure into a social whole through the “rite of passage”.

The aim then is to re-establish emotional regulation after this period of high anxiety in order to bring individuals and their communities back to a stable state as discussed in cybernetics and sociocybernetics as self-regulating goal-directed organisms (Wiener 1948; Luhmann 1975; Parsons 1982). This is necessary because tonic release leads to the collapse of the top-down goals-based structure towards a bottom-up “attentional capture by salient stimuli”, and goals must then be re-established (Hirsh, Mar, Peterson 2012: 12) This is where a new system of symbols is adopted to constrain, coordinate, and provide cohesive social action (Turner 1970; Douglas 1970; Geertz 1973). The sacred symbol must be capable of aligning a Theory of Value, with the worldview of the community to prevent cognitive dissonance and emotional dysregulation (Geertz 1973). In narrative form it matches the structure provided by Van Gannep (1909) as the transition from the “liminal” stage, as well as the works of Joseph Campbell (1949) in the form of “the Return”. In Piagetian terms, the role of the ritual would then be argued to be accommodation to a new social symbolic system, or a renewal for those members already initiated. A modern tool that has been developed to make explicit the implicit life metaphors driving behaviour – so as to make smoother transitions through significant and traditional life events – is known as the ‘Life Maps Process’ (Watts 2011).

All of this ties in with Jean Piaget’s (1954) model on childhood development, whereby a child starts with *a priori* models that are then disrupted. The novel information is adopted in one of two ways, either through assimilation whereby the current model stays in place but with updates, or via accommodation, whereby the current working model is thrown out and replaced by a model that can accommodate the information from the environment. This happens within the brain through the release of dopamine and serotonin to mark feelings. As Clifford Geertz (1973: 140) notes, “The drive to make sense out of experience, to give it form and order, is evidently as real and as pressing as the more familiar biological needs.”

Where the matrix is the world of secondness, the world of errors, phantasy is the world of firstness. The first-person point of view. This is the world of ‘I–Me’ conversations. Of conscious experience. Of feelings. The extracted identities from the embodied perception–action functional circles construct a concept

of the self. The conscious experience is argued by Mark Solms (2021), Antonio Damasio (1999) and Jaak Panksepp (1998) to be coterminous with feelings. To be equivalent to feelings is related to the first-person point of view. 'I–Me'. It is the translation between the direct instincts from perception, and from memory.

The perspective of propositions

What moral lessons can be drawn from Tartu? In WWII Tartu theologian Uku Masing famously helped a scholar of Jewish descent Isidor Levin, for which Yad Vashem recognized him as Righteous Among the Nations – an honour of recognition also granted to Dirk Pieter and Klaasje Kalkman of Moordrecht, Netherlands, for their efforts in helping to save the life of Catharina Kuijper. After WWII, Tartu's lessons in morality continued. Hiding in a secret farmhouse on the outskirts of Tartu in Estonia a book was being written by Aleksander Solzhenitsyn that bore the title *The Gulag Archipelago* (Solzhenitsyn 1974[1973]), a book that exposed the moral faults that lay in the reality of a communist system, as opposed to its theory.

While the work of Solzhenitsyn might be inspiring, the practice of the USSR was not. The moral credibility of that empire was raised to a fever pitch through the sound of music from a festival that started in Estonia. In 1988 it was the students of the University of Tartu who showed up to the Tartu Festival to first hear and raise their voices to Alo Mattiisen's *Five Patriotic Songs* inspired by music of the 19th-century national awakening. This event, and those that followed shortly thereafter, in turn led to the Singing Revolution that through harmony showed a call for freedom from Soviet oppression. This call for freedom was visualized in those pieces of film footage that captured a million of people holding hands across the borders of the three Baltic countries in one single moment of time – one third of the entire population in one instant, showing through peace the call for freedom; forming the human chain known as the Baltic Way. Soon the USSR would explode and this region would be the first to be set free. Estonia's most respected and renowned academic Juri Lotman closed out his career by looking at just this nature of Culture and Explosion (Lotman 1992), with this time period in mind.

What had made Tartu the expert on explosive events in culture? In order to get to that answer, it is important first to understand culture from a semiotic perspective. Lotman (1970: 5–6) defined culture itself as “the whole of uninherited information and the ways of its organisation and storage”. Memory, in short. These communities of culture are known as semiospheres that nest inside one another all

the way to the global semiosphere. As Lotman (2000: 33) states, “Culture itself may be regarded both as the totality of messages exchanged by different senders [...] and as a single message sent by the collective ‘I’ of humanity to itself. From this point of view, the culture of humanity is a colossal example of auto communication.”

These self-communicating semiospheres are defined by their centre and periphery. It is at the border where the extra-spatial reality and the semiosphere come into contact that translation occurs between these two spheres, producing new knowledge. This happens not only at the cultural level but within the minds of individuals. For in the *Universe of the Mind*, Lotman (2000[1990]: 36–37) suggests that creative thought stems from the communication between the verbal and visual hemispheres of the human mind, and from there this creative thought becomes reflected in culture. This is why reality can be grasped in a way those only believing in subjective truths believe it cannot. For reality produces languages in multiplicity, not singularity. They can then come close to describing a model of reality by their overlap, even though they cannot grasp it in all its complexity. Translating between different forms of language, such as visual gestural cues into verbal cues, will bring out a greater model of cohesion. At this border between semiospheres and between languages there is always a layer of untranslatability. It is in the striving to translate this untranslatable area that creativity is produced.

Turning to explosion, the very category of ‘explosion’ became the centre of Juri Lotman’s thoughts after he had previously focused on the sign systems of culture being modelled upon the centre-and-periphery model (Lotman 1992). As opposed to a spatial metaphor for new knowledge generation, explosion is the creation of new knowledge through time. In contrast to gradual progress or evolution, it presupposes the utmost uncertainty: “The moment of explosion is also the place where a sharp increase in the informativity of the entire system takes place” (Lotman 1992: 28). As has been seen, Juri Lotman would argue that change comes not from the centre of culture, but from its periphery. This is exactly where Estonia has found itself, having been located around the fringe of several empires, and hence being a prime model for testing the morality of different cultural codes. The explosions start generally from these centres of new knowledge at the periphery.

Culture is composed of symbols. However, deductive symbols are static. Static symbols within a dynamic environment are forced to evolve and take on new meanings in order to maintain a “fit” with their environment. This is because the nature they try to grasp and describe is not static. It transforms. This again has led to a very consistent theme across academic disciplines that a very central relationship between natural and symbolic transformation is a universal structure. Symbolic anthropologist Victor Turner described this four-stage process as: (1)

Breach; (2) Crisis; (3) Redress; (4) Reintegration (Grimes 1985: 79–99). He noted that he discovered this drama after observing the interaction of Ndembu people in West-Central Angola in Africa. However, this pattern was also noted in the work of Mircea Eliade (1971) who extracted it from comparing world religions. Arthur Wallace (1956) noted this same pattern in his anthropological work in North America. A longer version of this drama is documented in the hero's journey structure popularized by Joseph Campbell (1949) where the crisis serves as the call to adventure followed by the specific steps of redress and concluding in the return to the community after the reintegration. As previously discussed, in anthropology and psychology this process is known and ritualized as liminality. Within the field of semiotics this structure takes the form of a semiotic explosion.

These first three parts of this work can be limited to one word: proposition. A proposition is a truth claim and requires a Predicate and its Arguments. Predicates in this sense largely equate with the verbs of the sentence, and arguments with the nouns. This is important to note as the theory of information crafted by one of the most instrumental semioticians, Charles Peirce, largely centres around understanding both the distinction between these categories, as well as how information is the product of their relations with one another (CP 2.419). In this theory the world of induction was the indexical world, the world of the Arguments. The world of abduction was the iconic world, the world of Predicates. The deductive world on the other hand, is the world of symbols, the world of Propositions. Propositions equal in a very direct sense the information in the world. The work of Peirce is voluminous, but if a reduction is possible the work all comes down to the proposition. Peirce read into the structure of the Proposition several overlapping terms: argument-predicate; denotation-connotation; and extension-intension. Extension is inclusive of all the objects attached to its sign, and intension is the list of qualities attached to that object. Information then is the extension multiplied by the intension. New information can only be produced if there are either more objects in the world or more predicates attached to the objects. Two propositions can produce an argument that draws necessary conclusions.

Every word carries with it a perspective. This is because every word is not about an object, but about the human-embodied responses to that perceived object in a necessary fashion. The perceived object is a second-person point of view. The subjective feelings attached to that object are the first-person point of view. The necessary implications attached to the object are the third-person limited point of view. This third-person point of view for words is unique as words are socially constructed – not subjectively constructed. This means that the results arising from this third-person perspective seek to produce communally accepted

information. The coordination of motivations then comes from the coordination of perspectives. In fact, because of the Theory of Mind, humanity's great skill is in adopting the perspective of others. This builds upon the perspectivism of Tartu's professors throughout the generations: Gustav Teichmüller, Karl Ernst von Baer, Jakob von Uexküll, and Juri Lotman. Through means one can infer ends. At the same time, all limited perspectives are bound to meet their point of failure in an evolving environment. This means every limited point of view is due for expiration and failure at some point in time. Thomas-Andreas Pöder (2021) has shown how Lotmanian perspectives on explosion and semiotics can start to be applied within the field of religion. It could even be argued that it is the ability to take on the perspectives of another that explodes any notion of ever having an action that can be completely good from the limited perspective of some other observer – the fall of humanity stems from its most useful asset. Its evolution into the symbolic species (Deacon 1997).

As Peterson and Flanders (2002: 454) note, “Ideological rigidity is therefore the tendency to avoid emotionally and cognitively-demanding exploration and information-gathering, subsequent to the receipt of an error message, in the interests of maintaining short-term emotional security. Events that indicate error in the pursuit of goals are negatively valenced, but informative.” Further, they state, “Ideologically rigid individuals sacrifice new and potentially useful information – and, therefore, personality and habitable world – to avoid short-term negative emotion.” (Peterson, Flanders 2002: 454)

The logical world then is the world of structure, equilibrium, balance, necessity. This is the world of the symbol. The symbol in this case represents the proposition. However, when it is actually connected to the empirical world it does so in the way Bayesianism connects the *a priori* with *the a posteriori*. It shows that a symbol is only a degree of belief, a probability. That is the foundational relationship between information in the third world and information in the first. The fallacy of misplaced concreteness is mistaking the map for the territory, the symbol over the reality. The enduring object of the materialists over the processes they actually abstract away from. A figure stripped from its ground. This is the world of thirdness. ‘I-It’ communication.

Vedanta and the circumpunct

It is now time to turn to the end of knowledge and see that Plato and Aristotle together held a lock and key to resolving the Greek philosophical conundrum, as well as aligning the West with all knowledge traditions. The key is returning to

Plato's philosophy in the *Republic* where he discussed his ideas using the Analogy of the Divided Line. In this analogy there were actually four ways to comprehend an object. Two of them were comprehended visually, and two intelligibly – in the mind's eye. The first way to know an object was through its reflection in consciousness. The second was to hold a belief in that object. However, the third related to the mathematical and qualitative forms of that object, which transcended the materiality of the object. Yet it was the fourth way that would define the entire picture. This was the realm of the Form of the Good. For it was only through goodness that any true form of knowledge was defined. In order to get to this Form of the Good Plato used the Allegory of the Sun. In this realm forms were eternal and immutable, and goodness shined a light on the knowledge of that object akin to the sun's physical light serving as a medium of visual information: "As goodness stands in the intelligible realm to intelligence and the things we know, so the sun stands in the visible realm to sight and the things we see. The Republic VI (508c)." (Pojman, Vaughn 2011: 171)

Amazingly, these four worlds match with Aristotle's four forms of causation that were discussed in the first part of this work (see p. 400 above): there is a material world; a world of pragmatic conception; a world of informational patterns; and finally, there is a teleological world. The teleological world is a world of purpose towards which things are perfected, either eternally (Plato), or through physical growth (Aristotle). Where Aristotle and Plato seemingly differed from each other was the fourth realm. For all Greek thought agreed that the material realm could be mapped out in symbols, in forms, in categories. Everything could be mapped by the mind in broader and broader categories until capturing the totality of All in the category of the Absolute. The disagreement between the two was only whether the forms were eternal and immutable or temporary and open to change. What both missed is that both lead to the same conclusion. There is only one immutable 'form', and that is the point beyond forms themselves. Non-categorization. Formlessness and non-being that cannot be captured in finite symbols. This is the realm where contradiction lies. As every symbol capturing a physical item that is exposed to time – to entropy – becomes a contradiction within itself. It is this final point that Aristotle's system also inevitably leads to. The final outcome then is a form of the good that is actually beyond form. Beyond binary distinction. How does one digest this formlessness without making meaningless every other action? For contradiction in any logical system makes it prone to what is referred to in logic as the 'Principle of Explosion'.

This nothingness is at the heart of all mystical traditions, whether known as *Wu Wei*, *śūnyatā*, *Ayin*, or Meister Eckhart's no-thingness. The realm of uncategorized thought is grasped only by negative theology, that which cannot

be spoken. In mathematics this is the realm of incompleteness within consistent systems of logic. Every system of logic must grasp non-contradiction without being captured by the 'Principle of Explosion' that rots out logical systems. This is the happenstance of any static system of categorization exposed to time. The solution has been to build a model of learning centred on paraconsistent logic, whereby the information grasped in the foveal centre line is ranked as a higher, more sacred value; with greater precision in a Bayesian analysis than the information grasped in the periphery. However, sacred knowledge claims are always traditional and past-tense. In the present realm of potentiality new information is being found and that information has not yet been categorized. In order to integrate this not-yet-categorized information that knowledge must be captured by a word and transferred successfully from the periphery to the centre.

Whereas the three forms of logic discussed in the previous three parts of this work have been dealing with expanding and extracting general laws, there is one form of logic that deals only with particular cases: the analogy. The unique and ineffable. The uncategorized. True metaphysics is meant to be the opposite of symbolization. According to Henri Bergson (1946: 159–162) intuition is that which transcends symbolization. This means that instead of grasping the general, it grasps the unique and ineffable. The wholeness prior to division into parts. This is, perfection and infinity within the object. Symbols again have the weakness that they are all about division, capturing parts of wholes, with generalizations as terministic screens (Burke 1966). The unique and ineffable is removed. There must therefore be a fourth sign added to Peirce's taxonomy. The sign of contradiction that leads to exploration. That initiates the process of semiosis. In addition to the index, the icon, the symbol there would additionally be the seeker sign.

How does one integrate contradiction into their worldview, their coherent and consistent system of logic that guides their interpretation of reality? The contradictions of facing: how to work hard to live when death is a certainty; how to aim to do good even though life lives on death of other life; how to want pleasure in a world of suffering. Not to mention novel information that inherently represents contradiction. Whether the world is suffering (secondness), or full of sin (firstness), or shrouded in meaninglessness (thirdness) in the realms of experience, how does one find the unity of opposites? The answer is: through perspective. It takes looking at the Centre and Periphery model that has served as the core for all knowledge models presented in this work, whether Lakatos for science, Uexküll and McGilchrist for the mind, or Lotman for culture. In religion, the equivalent is found as the symbol of the centre in Mircea Eliade's work. What is the underlying reason behind the centrality of the model of the 'centre and periphery' that has been discussed throughout the work of these leading thinkers?

The answer lies in embodied cognition, and the realization that the medium truly is the message, the medium being the human body. Our body, what we see through light, what we read through words and transmit electrically, defines our relationship with Being. The medium is the body, light, the alphabet and language, electrical communication. Work in the field of embodied cognition showed that one can only communicate subjective feelings through objective metaphors that one perceives and experiences. For example: to feel sad is to feel down; to feel happy is to be elevated; to feel close to someone represents warm relations; to be distant is to be cold.

One metaphor above all others is at the heart of knowledge claims. This is the metaphor ‘Knowing is Seeing’: “The Knowing Is Seeing metaphor is so firmly rooted in the role of vision in human knowing and is so central to our conception of knowledge that we are seldom aware of the way it works powerfully to structure our sense of what it is to know something” (Lakoff, Johnson 1999: 394). This stemmed from the work of Eve Sweetser (1990). Some examples given in reference to this metaphor include: “Someone who is ignorant is in the dark, while someone who is incapable of knowing is blind. To enable people to know something is to shed light on the matter. Something that enables you to know something is enlightening; it is something that enables you to see. New facts that have come to light are facts that have become known (to those who are looking).” (Lakoff, Johnson 1999: 239)

This metaphor is prevalent throughout religion. In Christianity, Matthew (6:22, NIV) states “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light.” In Islam (An-Nur, 24:35), “A likeness of His light is as a pillar on which is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass, the glass is as it were a brightly shining star, lit from a blessed olive-tree, neither eastern nor western, the oil whereof almost gives light though fire touch it not – light upon light – Allah guides to His light whom He pleases, and Allah sets forth parables for men, and Allah is Cognizant of all things” (the Quran, 1920: 704; translation by Maulvi Muhammad Ali). In Hinduism (Chandogya Upanishad), “There is a light that shines beyond all things on earth, beyond us all, beyond the heavens, beyond the highest, the very highest heavens. This is the light that shines in your heart” (Mascaro 1965). As Laozi said, “Yet mystery and imagination arise from the same source. This source is called darkness ... Darkness within darkness, the gateway to all understanding” (*Tao Te Ching*; Mitchell 1988: 1). Even the Buddha’s name, Siddhartha Gautama, translates as ‘he who has found meaning (*siddhartha*) of light in the darkness (*gautama*)’.

This metaphor is the proposed solution as to why the circumpunct – the circled dot – shows its face in Jungian psychology and the human psyche as the

integrated Self. The Ego represents the foveal centre, but the total Self includes all knowledge from the centre to the periphery. What is one then meant to see in these religious traditions? One is meant to see the light. What is the light? It is the Form of the Good. The difference then is perspective. For Plato each individual object is defined by its perfect categorical object. This means that there are Good and Bad versions of that object. Alternatively, the creation of light on the first day in Genesis for instance is stated to mean that all of the light is Good – from the omniscient perspective. These are the 3D glasses the reader is asked to put on when reading the work.

Aligning the third-person limited perspective with the omniscient perspective enables a new informational channel to be created. The only possibilities that can be perceived then are the Good outcomes being planted from seeds created in the worst possible situations. This more often than not demands the active participation of the observer to bring about that Goodness. The goal is to not ‘know God’, but to see through God’s eyes, so to speak. To have knowledge of the world from a different perspective. As Eliade (1957: 21) noted, “In the homogeneous and infinite expanse, in which no point of reference is possible and hence no orientation is established, the hierophany reveals an absolute fixed point, a centre”. To overcome the contradiction between Good and Evil then is to understand a perspective where all is Good. To overcome the contradiction between life and death is the adoption of another perspective that sees eternal life. These goals are not in fact the ends within themselves, but the beginning. The beginning of the ability to explore an environment that now feels safe. The beginning of creative exploration. Genesis.

The goal of semiosis is to capture information that has not yet been symbolized and categorized. That has not been captured as a piece of knowledge. The meta-response is to adopt the omniscient perspective. However, unlike in the case of the goal of science, the goal here is not to attain the view from nowhere, but the view from everywhere. A subjective and not objective vantage point. To see all as good. To see through God’s eyes. As “God saw”. This requires that the third-person limited perspective is meant to sacrifice itself to an omniscient perspective that sees all outcomes as being seeds towards something good holistically. While there can be evil on individuated bases, the holistic picture means that every action has the potential for goodness. This demands the action of the individual vessel.

In Hinduism this ultimate moment of reckoning with formlessness is captured in the narrative of Ganesha and Shiva where the limited perspective of Ganesha is represented as having his head lopped off by Shiva to be replaced by the head of the elephant – the omniscient perspective that can capture the formlessness represented by the god of death. In the West this symbolism is captured through

the crucifixion, the purest act of kenosis – which is self-emptying to make way for the divine will. Human perspective giving way to the Omniscient. In Taoism this process is captured through the Circulation of Light found in the Secrets of the Golden Flower. How *Wu Wei* culminates in the Tao. Even within Buddhism – which can be interpreted in a non-theistic way – it is Buddha's own perspective that provides the lens to capturing emptiness beyond categories. The world beyond subject-object and categorical distinctions. Buddhahood is when one attains *tathāgata* as one who attains the ability to perceive suchness, or *śūnyatā*, as emptiness. This is to attain the state of Enlightenment.

Religion then is not about God. That is a philosophical question. Religion is about seeing through God's eyes, or Shiva's eyes, or Buddha's eyes straight into *Wu Wei*, *śūnyatā*, *Ayin*. It is about how the concept of a new perspective can open oneself up to receiving the light that is presenting itself at this very moment. The light not only in the seven-coloured foveal centre, but the light in the dark. Captured by the rods and not the cones. The light of new information in a field of contradiction. Here is the story of contradiction then, and its cure. Omniperspectivism. Out of chaos and disintegration comes the optimal solution for opening oneself to new information that can lead to greater integration. Out of destruction then comes creation. New beginnings. Paradise, Shambhala, the New Heaven and New Earth, the New Jerusalem, the Golden Age, the World to Come. Suffering is caused by resistance to change. Redemption is led by the figures of Tirthankara, Amitābha, Li Hong, Maitreya, Joshua, Kalki, Saoshyant. The purpose of the tree of life is to grasp the infinite. The endless. The formless. Time then is not death, but perfection, salvation.

The process of theosemiosis mirrors the story of language, and that which has not yet (or can never be) captured by language. McGilchrist (2009: 83) references Justine Sergent (1982) by noting that she

[...] makes the interesting observation that letters of the alphabet 'represent a finite set of stimuli that are sharply focussed, familiar and overlearned', whereas visual images 'represent a potentially infinite set of shapes of large visual angle size, with different levels of structure of unequal importance and salience that are most often unfamiliar to subjects'. --- In doing so she neatly reveals a common thread which unites, on the one hand, the left hemisphere's affinity for what it itself has made (here language), well-worn familiarity, certainty and finitude, and, on the other, the right hemisphere's affinity for all that is 'other', new, unknown, uncertain and unbounded.

Every finite goal structure that is pursued through the foveal lens is partial and incomplete and open to explosion. Knowledge from the periphery always has the

potential to collapse everything a partial culture holds sacred. The centre and periphery then are real. No idols within the field of space-time can represent a true non-categorized suchness that transcends time. The reason is that nothing finite lasts through time, and it is only in infinity that everlasting goodness and life – the world beyond contradiction – can be found. Therefore, any finite idol of goodness does not capture the necessary actions to lead to intuitive motion. The grounding of the Self beyond a clearly defined self must therefore also be within this realm of contradiction. For the extracted self that has clearly defined identity is only a partial and incomplete map of the full self beyond memory – the territory beyond the map. This is the world of zeroness – nothingness. It is the world of ‘I–Thou’ communication (Buber 1958).

The Passcode – Adam Kadmon

Before He gave any shape to the world, before He produced any form, He was alone, without form and without resemblance to anything else. Who then can comprehend how He was before the Creation? Hence it is forbidden to lend Him any form or similitude, or even to call Him by His sacred name, or to indicate Him by a single letter or a single point... But after He created the form of the Heavenly Man, He used him as a chariot wherein to descend, and He wishes to be called after His form, which is the sacred name ‘YHWH’. (Zohar, part ii., section “Bo”, 42b – translation by Kaufmann Kohler and Isaac Brody in 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia)

Whereas the first section looked at Tartu from a literal perspective, the second section looked at Tartu from the allegorical predicate lens of learning. Following from there, the third section looked at Tartu as a moral example, and the fourth section had no words for the formlessness underlying it. This final section would like to look at Tartu as the seed from the Tree of Life being planted. The key is understanding where the word ‘Tartu’ came from. Its etymology stems from ‘*Tarbata*’, ‘*Tarvas*’, and ‘*Tawros*’ (see for example Ernits 2021: 535). Related to the Latin word ‘*taurus*’ (‘bull’), it stems from the auroch, the original ox. Why this is important is because the auroch was the animal that served as a key sacrificial animal in early religion and is the foundation for the letter A in English, Aleph in Hebrew, and Alpha in Greek. As James Joyce (1922: 3.6) said, the number back to the Garden of Eden is “aleph alpha nought nought one”. This letter is the finger pointing to the moon. It will soon be seen why an auroch is the key to theosemiosis. This section is important to showing that meditating on the process of theosemiosis is a central function of religion. In order to present this

final section I will begin by focusing on one word from one particular religious tradition, before broadening it to show its core in all faiths through its reflection of the semiosis process of human cognition as a whole.

At the heart of religion is a love story. That love story is held together by a secret passcode that can unlock the Bible in the west and connect it with the religions of the East. Many do not realize that from the first page the Bible is a password-encrypted work – a password that people carry around without realizing it, and that is inserted through a hermeneutic key. It is the one word the reader of the Bible is not meant to say out loud. This is referring to the Tetragrammaton. YHVH. Yod Heh Vav Heh. Sometimes written as Yahweh, and sometimes as Jehovah in the West. Hidden within these four letters is the key to unlocking Genesis – not of the universe, but of the reader. For this is not only a key to the text, but to bringing the reader into Israel. Into paradise itself. Into creation. Into elevated scaffolding.

How do these four letters contain a love story (Zohar 1: 120b, 3: 74b, 3: 296a referenced via Matt 2004)? Jewish mysticism argues that it holds an insight into the hidden inner Torah – the first five books of the Bible – whose secrets can only be penetrated by those who are ready to receive them. In order to get to that point though, it is important to understand what a hermeneutic circle is. Simply put, this is the idea that a part can only make sense in the context of the whole, and the whole can only make sense in relation to its parts. Therefore, understanding the whole can make sense of the part, and truly understanding the one part can alter the interpretation of the whole. This article would like to layer upon those four letters of the Tetragrammaton. This one code can now be read into the whole of the present paper, and the whole can be read back into this seed. It will be shown how this one seed reinterprets the very first line of the Bible, the very first page, through the two stories of Genesis, and then throughout the work. It will be shown that the hidden light is captured by the name Yah, a light that shatters vessels when he cannot be contained. The only way to capture the light that passes through Yah is with Elohim, the rectification, which in Hebrew is called '*tikkun olam*'.

In order to interpret Genesis it is important to remember again the four letters of Yod Heh Vav and Heh. The middle Heh will be referred to as the Upper Heh, and the final Heh as the Lower Heh. A very brief overlay of YHVH with Genesis will highlight the basis of this love story. Kabbalists interpret the very first word of the Bible using this code (Zohar Introduction 7: 40; 8: 42–44). The word '*Beresheit*' in Hebrew is traditionally interpreted as 'In the Beginning'. The Zohar (Introduction 6: 37–38) asks the question of the sages as to why a letter B begins the Bible when the letter A Aleph represents God. The reason suggested is that a

human-made symbol can only grasp at the divine and is never representative of the divine itself. The letter B in Hebrew represents the word 'Beit', meaning 'house'. The Torah is thus meant to be a house for the divine. The divine being represented without symbolization by not writing aleph down.

The first two letters of 'Beresheit', Be, in themselves represent the word 'in'. The middle section of the word, 'Resh', is a Hebrew word meaning 'the mind'. The final letters of 'eit' transform a masculine noun to its feminine counterpart. When 'Resh' and 'eit' come together in Hebrew as 'Resheit', it means the 'first fruit'. The conclusion is the letter T, the Tav. This word in Hebrew means 'sign'. The key then is marrying the hidden aleph to the very present tav. Spelling Et, Aleph Tav. Aleph Tav is the Hebrew way of saying the alphabet. The process of capturing nothingness as it arises into some-thingness within language. Using the code, the Yod would represent the Aleph, the Upper Heh the Beit, the Vav the Resh (head), and the Lower Heh the Tav (the sign).

This process is then repeated. The very first line of the Bible needs to be looked at with a fresh pair of eyes. In the Beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The actual translation from Hebrew however is that, "In the Beginning (Beresheit) ___ formed God, and the heavens and the Earth" (Zohar Bereshit 1: 15; Bereshit 2: 6–11). Kabbalists replace this blank space with the words 'Ein Sof' or 'Ayin', meaning either the infinite or no-thingness. From the Secret seed then this line would equate the Yod with no-thingness, the Upper Heh with God, the Heavens with Vav and the Earth with the Lower Heh. That is the first line. As seen from the prior paragraph the line can also be read that "in the head/mind is created God and the heavens and the earth" (Zohar Bereshit 2: 6).

Now instead of reading YHVH into the first line, the code will be read into the first story of Genesis. It can be seen that the seeded plan, the Yod is 'Ayin, God, the Heavens and the Earth'. This Yod is formless and unseen if it is not captured by their symbols in the reader's mind, leaving the symbols as empty void. These are represented in Hebrew as Tohu – formlessness – and Bohu – void. In other words, a predicate unlinked with the subject leads to darkness in the mind, and a flooding in perception. Where the divine light cannot be captured by Tohu it causes Bohu to shatter, and so no light gets into the depths, Tehom, and the spirit of God cannot be seen floating above the flooded waters. Where the light is captured, on the other hand, it produces the seven visible colours. Seven properly integrated days of the week with time. When the two great lights of the Sun and the Moon are integrated with the hidden light it produces the Sabbath, the seventh day of rest ensues. On this day the Or Haganoz, the hidden light, does not have to veil itself. It is the pure light of goodness. It is all being made good. In this model then Elohim is equal to Bohu, which captures the Tohu through Yah. Elohim again

is the transformation of limited third person perspective to omniscient perspective that includes incoming peripheral information. This perspective gives birth to the light of the seven days that are integrated in the perspective that all is good. The Upper Heh is Elohim – the concept of God – the Vav are the Six days of the week, and the Lower Heh is the Seventh Day of Rest.

It is important to understand at this stage that Yah in itself represents the traditional name of a God of the Moon (Allen 2000: 436). This is the name of God revealed on Mount Sinai, Sinai representing the Mesopotamian God of the moon, Sin. Elohim on the other hand is the name of God that shows in visible light as the God of Mount Horeb. Horeb represents the Aramaic word for heat of the sun. Elohim in itself is a strange name because it turns a plurality of gods into one name. Elohim means Gods, but is used as if referring to one God, so there is a plurality in this unity. YHVH on the other hand is the sacred and ineffable name that should not be mentioned out loud. However, its etymology is from ‘*Yah Chava*’, ‘Yah lives’. Yah is important because it has been traced in its history to representing a moon God in Egypt, and is connected with Thoth (Allen 2000: 436). Thoth himself was both God of the moon and God of communication and writing.

The key to unlocking the light revealed on the first day, is then found by the instructions given on the fourth day: Moon as peripheral light in the dark, and the sun as the great light that produces the seven colours of the rainbow. The moon represents time in ancient mythology, as that is what marks the calendar. The sacred numbers within the Bible and Hebrew are 1, 3, 7, 12 as explored in the *Sefer Yetzirah*. The seven represents the seven days of the week in a four-week lunar cycle. The three is representative of the dying and resurrecting new moon. Twelve represents the number of lunar months that complete the year. The light of the moon then is that which shines in the darkness of category explosion through time, while the light of the sun is that which shines on static, well defined categorical objects.

The second story of Genesis similarly sees the Yod stemming from the first Genesis, followed by the Upper Heh as the Sabbath, the Vav as the story of Adam, and the Lower Heh as the story of Eve. Two Hebrew words in this narrative then convey information on the third-person limited perspective. They are ‘*Arom*’ and ‘*Aur*’. The play on words means they represent either nakedness and the light, or cunningness and skin. Where Adam and Eve turn to the carnal self-centred pleasure they forsake their garments of light for garments of skin. They are no longer naked, but as is the case with the snake, that likewise fell, their cunningness means that the divine light is hidden behind new layers of skin. This again is found in the play on words for light and skin, both are spelt the very same way

'Aur'. However, the A in light is represented by an aleph, whereas the A in skin is represented by ayin, aleph representing God and ayin representing divine absence through the human perspective in this case. The word for skin also is the word for blindness. To not see the light is then to be left with simply seeing the masks people wear. The cunning nature of the masks we wear as selves then hide the deeper light. The word 'ayin' itself when spelt with an ayin means man's vision, whereas when spelt with an aleph means no-thingness. The aim is to transform perception from one into the other. To capture the aleph in the ayin.

Now that this structure has been laid out, it is time to return to the love story. In order for the proper marriage to take place it is important to see that the fall culminates when Adam *knows* Eve. The Vav (Adam/heaven/the mind) is meant not to marry the Lower Heh (Eve/the earth), but the Upper Heh (God). This is because the divine light is meant to marry the Lower Heh. It is not a story of Adam and Eve then, but of Yah and Eve. The Hebrew word for Eve is 'Chava', Heh Vav Heh. Marrying the two as one becomes Yod Heh Vav Heh. Here then are the instructions of the Bible. One is not meant to marry the lower world with their third-person limited perspectives, but is instead asked to turn towards the omniscient perspective and become a vessel for that intuitive knowledge of the present to impregnate the moment. "For the sake of the union of the Holy One Blessed be He, and His Shekhinah, to unite the name Y-H with V-H in a perfect union, in the name of all Israel" (Green 2003: 47), Shekhinah being the feminine divine presence of God on earth. The bride of God. The entire work then is a meditation on a single word that seeks in its finite nature to grasp the ungraspable. That which is beyond even the tip of the first symbol. Beyond the tip of the yod. The smallest letter. The Word made flesh – theosemiosis – is *kiddush hashem*, which means, 'To sanctify the Name'.

The secret then is that Adam was never meant to *know* Eve. Adam, Noah, Jacob (Israel) were meant to know the concept of God in order to be open to the actual divine light beyond symbols. Whether turning to Shekhinah, or building an ark, or marrying Leah. The light that would use the vessel to interact with the matrix. This is as when *Resh* (the mind) knows *eit*, it produces the first fruits. However, it is when *Resh* (the mind) builds a house of omniperspectivism that true intuition – spirit – can marry the matrix. Genesis. The aleph can then be captured in the tav. The sign. The whole process is then semiosis.

A picture is being presented that Yod refers to the first attempts to grasp the ineffable in a symbol. Upper Heh represents the House of the Divine, the Ark, which is the concept of God. The Vav represents the mind of the individual, consciousness, Heaven. The Lower Heh represents earth. The perceived world. God is now only a concept, pointing to a deeper ungraspable layer. What is the

light? It is the goodness that can be captured through the omniscient perspective. This is a radical reinterpretation of God. Ayin is not YHVH or Elohim. Every concept, every symbol will fail to grasp that which is beyond it. That which transcends it. God is only a human construct to capture something much deeper: the uncategorized realm.

Kabbalists apply the same code to the Aleph that transcends the beginning of the Torah itself in order to capture the whole meaning within a single letter. The Aleph is composed of three parts: two yods and a vav. The lower Yod in the Aleph is a Lower Heh in the code, and the Vav is the Vav. The Upper Yod in the Aleph then is the upper Heh. Again, the smallest letter, the Yod is seeking to capture that which is beyond itself, which has not yet been symbolized. “The Holy One, blessed be He, said to her, ‘Aleph, aleph, why do you not enter My presence like all the other letters?’ She replied . . . ‘Because I saw all the letters leaving Your presence fruitlessly. What could I do there?’ . . . The Holy One, blessed be He, then said, ‘Aleph, aleph. Although I will create the world with the letter beit, you will be the first of all the letters. Only through you do I become One” (Zohar 2004: 16).

The entire Torah is a meditation on a single divine name. A single divine letter. The marriage to the upper Heh enables the spirit to marry the lower Heh. This shows then that when Adam knows Chava with the snake it leads to a fall. Adam should really be turning to the *Shekinah*, the *Shekinah* being the divine presence. Adam then should be turning to the divine presence so that the correct connection can be made with the lower Heh. When Yah then is integrated with Elohim, it leads to a marriage with Chava. Yah Chava. Yod Heh Vav Heh. The whole sacred name then is the equivalent of a semiotic process through omniperspectivism. YHWH, The Word, is the general catalyst.

Before imagining this to be a western-oriented conclusion, the reality of this process is directly mirrored in all major religions that seek to capture the light of integration of the Self through time. This love story is exactly what is to be found in the Eastern religions where the goal of Hinduism is the Union of Shiva and Shakti, Formlessness and Form. The same structure is found within Buddhism where ‘*Amitābha*’ means ‘immeasurable light’, and ‘*Amitāyus*’ means ‘immeasurable life’, so he is also called ‘the Buddha of immeasurable light and life’. The right perspective enables one to be able to digest emptiness and find light and life.

The way this divine light is grasped in Buddhism conforms to the same process, but through its own terms. The process sees its process similarly mapping to the imagery of the womb in its own version of the Upper and Lower Heh’s. The word in Buddhism is ‘*Tathāgatagarbha*’. ‘*Garbha*’ means ‘womb’, ‘seed’ or ‘matrix’. ‘*Tathāgata*’ means the Buddha that can embrace suchness. The *śūnyatā* beyond

the *māyā* requires integrating this through the concept of Buddhahood. Again, this light of not-self penetrates in the upper Heh as an incipient Buddha, the embryonic *tathāgata*, and appears in the lower Heh as the womb of the *tathāgata*, its fruit (King 1991: 4).

These four worlds are represented in Hinduism as the Purusarthas and the four paths of Yoga. The material world of secondness is Artha and is the world of Karma Yoga. The psychological world of firstness is known as Kama, and connection comes through Bhakti Yoga. The propositional world of thirdness is represented by Dharma and Jnana Yoga. The world of zeroness is represented by Moksha and Raja Yoga. These worlds are also represented by the four syllables of Kalachakra. In Taoism these four stages represent the four Dantians of *jing, qi, shen* and *wu wei*.

The final piece of wisdom comes from the first and last letter of the five books of the Bible known as the Torah (Kaplan 1997: 9). The letters L and B(V), Lamed and Vet, which together spell the word 'Lev' – meaning 'heart'. The gematria of *Lev* is the number thirty-two representing the ten numbers and twenty-two letters of the Hebrew language. The shape of the L in Hebrew, the lamed, is the tallest letter and is a Vav reaching up to a Yod. The lamed in Hebrew means learning and teaching and represents the ox-goad. Curiously, Ganesh's instrument is the elephant-goad that is known in Sanskrit as the *ankusha*. The purpose of the Bible then is to help learn about what is beyond the Yod, and by ascending to attain the Yod, the Yod descends into the *Beit* (the house) of the world. Learning about the light and sharing it with one's fellows then is the work that builds the semiotic scaffolding of a more integrated world. The Yod itself comes from the index finger pointing to the smallest dot. The foveal centre. Kabbalah in turn means to receive, to receive the light. Only two letters can be combined with Yod Heh Vav and Heh in the Hebrew language: Lamed and Vet. When Lamed is combined with these letters it represents a journey 'to her' (lah – the Heh); 'to him' (lo – the Vav), and 'to me' (li – the Yod). When combined with *Beit* it goes from 'in her', to 'in him', to 'in me'. Yod stands for me. Heh stands for her. Vav means him. Lamed then is a process of the conscious self turning to the omniperspective so that the true Self can impregnate this moment.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this high-level overview has sought to present the structure and flow of knowledge creation. Semiosis. How the mind seeks to interpret incoming data from its initial intuitions through to action. Science and religion are ultimately

both sub-models of this process. Where the scientific method seeks to grasp a 'view from nowhere' through quantitative hypothetico-deductive logic, religion seeks to open up a 'view from everywhere' in such a way that a hypothetico-inductive logic can be applied to inquiry. One process seeks to assess the applicability of general laws, where the other seeks to go beyond the static general laws already categorized.

Knowledge is physical. It is a memory of tasks to be applied to stimuli. Where that memory fails in its tasks it produces the problem of explosion in its logic. This chaos is felt as anxiety. Where fear rules, past symbols continue to be utilized, leading to further error. Where goodness to undefined situations is applied as an *a priori* axiom, the exploratory circuit of the hypothalamus opens up and novel information can be interacted with. In order to hold the problem of explosion at bay the body has evolved to create a hierarchy of information based upon its level of precision. This distinction is captured directly by the human eye, whereby the information in only a small portion of the eye receives the greatest predictive value. The fovea. The world of colour. The periphery is the world that holds less predictive value and getting that information incorrect does not lead to the same level of anxiety. All of human knowledge is comprehended through this single simple metaphor 'Knowing is Seeing'.

The light. The light that enters the fovea is the knowledge from memory. This is the ego. The light that enters through the periphery is beyond current categorized thought and is the knowledge that religion captures as divine – where it is a pathway to integration. The light in the centre is captured by the seven colours, the seven days. The light in darkness is captured by three days of the new moon. When they are all in accord there is a rainbow covenant. The eye then captures the light in its ten vessels in interpreting infinity. It is all about how to digest infinity, and how to integrate peripheral knowledge. It is a process of moving knowledge from the periphery to the centre, and exploration of new knowledge requires an attitude of goodness. In semiosis one's neighbour is oneself because of scaffolded learning, for learned behaviour is collective in the semantic realm. When the object is no-thing, contradiction, it can lead to the principle of explosion except through a paraconsistent logic that has a core and periphery.

Novelty is met firstly through analogy. The world of zeroness – the unique and ineffable that has not yet been symbolized. Then the world of firstness kicks in with a hypothesis of past symbols up against present experience. From that interaction of firstness with secondness either error or success is produced, leading to either assimilation or differentiation of categorization. A successful procedure that can be utilized as a general law is a successful symbol that can be utilized to make future predictions. This is the world of thirdness. However, all symbols are only maps of territories and are built from past experience. This

means that there may come a time when the unique and ineffable again arises in the peripheral light. The world of zeroness then re-arises. The omniscient perspective is that which opens one up to exploration in spite of and due to a lack of information, thereby bringing an observer as close to present experience – beyond the traditionally held view and beliefs of the old self – as possible. The world of zeroness is the Form of the Good, the notion that time, change and formlessness contain an unseen goodness from the omniscient perspective.

The Form of the Good dictates the openness to what presents itself. Humans are the species of alternative perspectives. The periphery holds the key to new knowledge. The periphery of the human eye is represented by the rods that take in information through the changing luminescence. Religion then has the very specific function of beginning the process of knowledge creation in moments where prior categories fail to interpret incoming data. Science looks purely at material objects. Psychology and aesthetics takes the first-person perspective. Postmodernism alternatively takes the focus of deconstructing the qualitative third-person limited perspective. Religion then is the study of the omniscient perspective. All of religion can simply be seen as a corrective to uncategorized information. How to open oneself up to novel peripheral knowledge. Religion, science, philosophy and the humanities ultimately are simply forms of logic, snapshots of a complete process of theosemiosis that arises when information shows up errors and attention is required. Key to political health then is a system that opens itself up to this process of theosemiosis through timeless semiotic freedom (Kalkman 2011). With a responsibility to protect the 'Other' (Kalkman 2009).

The greatest evolutionary step of humanity has arguably been its evolution into the symbolic species (Deacon 1997) that can communicate at a level and in a way no other animals seemingly can. However, this explosion of perspectives that each socially constructed word/behaviour brings forth has also meant that the third-person limited perspective always comes to its contradiction in measuring whether any act is truly good or evil when viewed from a different point of view. Theosemiosis as a process has been described throughout this work as a specific corrective for the contradictions exposed by the third-person limited perspective for that very reason. Theosemiosis as a corrective enables humanity to move closer to being present and to take intuitive action as opposed to solely relying upon historical data, behavioural patterns and goals that are starting to present errors and contradictions. Religion then serves to transform a static system of logic to a dynamic system in a field of infinite potential, to enable one to be more present to experience, and less attached to past narratives that no longer serve their function. This is grasped through narratives that use conceptual metaphors to capture an unseen reality – one's emotions in relation to their environment.

Ultimately, the debate between science and religion has been looking at God incorrectly. By definition no one can speak of something they cannot define. Religious texts do not describe the indescribable. They actually describe a process to trust the incoming indescribable information as good, so as to bring that indescribable incoming information into integration with the thoughts, speech and actions of the individual and those “in their neighbourhood”. Even the concept of God is a finger pointing at the moon. The whole process is all focused on what is beyond the tip of the Yod – the tip of the smallest point, the smallest symbol. This is where the knowledge of the integrated self lies. The whole process of theosemiosis, then, is a corrected method of semiosis because the fall of humanity comes from being self-conscious, and conscious of the perspective of others. Only in a field of total goodness is it possible to move towards integration in all environments.

The secret seed to interpreting the Bible, YHWH, has been in fact a meditation on semiosis itself. The marriage of Shiva and Shakti. *Tathāgatagarbha*. The circulation of light. How no-thingness emerges into a finite world of things and back again. How the infinite becomes grasped by finite symbols and sounds. In Greek thinking everything under the sun can be categorized. The ultimate category is the Absolute that is the container of All. However, the truth is that all symbols point to that which is outside of itself. Anything uncategorized at whichever scale is a nothing and can explode any logical system. Thus, the great failing of the west is that it seeks to map out all knowledge and fit it within the limited perspective of the finite human. However, there will always be new knowledge beyond the frontier of human cognition’s finite capacity. In order to help humanity remain open to this new knowledge – which is available to explore through the omniscient perception of Goodness – one must not only seek to elevate their own spiritual life, but that of their fellow human beings. Life then is a story of light. A story of the Form of the Good being impregnated into a womb the world. The ultimate vantage point is that ‘thou art that’. True enlightenment. Between Lamed and Beit, by reflecting on Tartu, the auroch, aleph, the Yod above and its action in the Yod below one can enter paradise. To see the aleph in the ayin. The divine light captured by the eye. The paradise sought by all humanity – whether that be known as Tartu, Nirvana, Shambhala or Israel.

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תיאוסמוזיס: פיוס ופילוסופיה רב-שנתית

תקציר האם ניתן לגשר על הפער בין מדע לדת? המאמר הנוכחי יציג את המקרה של הסמיוטיקה – ובמיוחד את תהליך התיאוסמוזיס – כפלטפורמה זו של חיבור. על מנת להציג טיעון זה, סוגיה מרכזית שיש להתמודד היא האם קיימת פונקציה אחת בבסיסה בתוך קטגוריית הדת שניתן לחלץ אותה ולחייב אותה בטענות הידע שלה. מה שכונה בדרך כלל הפילוסופיה הרב-שנתית. העיקרון המופק הזה חייב להיות מסוגל להתאים למודל רחב יותר של נוחות שיכול להכיל את הידע שנלכד הן במדע והן בדת. מודל שיכול להסביר באותה מידה את עבודתם של אריסטו, בייקון, גליל ואיינשטיין כמו משה, בודהה, ישו וקרישנה. הן במובן האונטולוגי והן במובן האפיסטמולוגי. לכן, הארה שתופסת את ההגדרות המערביות והמזרחיות של האור הזה. בהקשר זה לראות באמת הוא 'ידיעה'.

Teosemioos. Essee kokkulangevusest ja perenniaalsest filosoofiast

Kas teaduse ja religiooni vahelist lõhet on võimalik ületada? Artiklis pakutakse välja võimalus, et semiootika – konkreetselt teosemioosi protsess – on selline ühendusplatvorm. Selle väite esitamisel on oluline käsitleda võtmeküsimust, kas religiooni kategoorias on olemas mingi põhifunktsioon, mida saab esile tuua ja mida saab pidada selle teadmisväidetes vastutavaks; see, mida on üldiselt nimetatud *philosophia perennis*. Selline välja selgitatud printsiip peab suutma vastata laiemale kokkulangevusmudelile, mis võib hõlmata nii teadusesse kui ka religiooni kätketud teadmisi, mudelile, mis suudab võrdselt seletada nii Aristotelese, Baconi, Galilei ja Einsteini töid kui ka Moosese, Buddha, Jeesuse ja Krishna tegevust, ja seda nii ontoloogilises kui ka epistemoloogilises mõttes. Niisiis on tegu, valgustusega, mis hõlmab nii lääne kui ka ida määratlusi tollest valgusest. See tähendab, et nägemine tõepoolest on teadmine.