

The Unconscious and World Pictures

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To my surprise, my approach to world pictures involves quite a few breakthroughs. I have been reading psychoneurotic theory and find that, though almost all psychiatrists know with certainty that healthy activity of the unconscious occurs, this does not interest them, except to provide information which can certainly help get at their patients' neuroses. They know with certainty, as I do, that healthy activity of the unconscious goes on. They falsely believe that it is their work which provides the best basis for their theory of the (healthy) unconscious.

They, like comparative civilizationists, are unaware that much better evidence of the existence of unconscious rational activity exists in the symbols and metaphors in artifacts of a higher society. Mechanics is symbolized in medieval cathedrals, multi-voice canon music, Carravagio's painting, and, of course, in ideas leading up to Newton's mechanics. The space-idea of a higher society tends to be special. Ancient Greek space was, essentially, place. Middle Eastern space (since Sumerian times, and in Christianity, Judaism and the other M.E. religions) is essentially where God's created space, to which God is present. Chinese space is in terms of fields of space, and space is highly inter-relational. India's space is a dynamic all-powerful expansive space you see it symbolized in the tight-fitting skin of divinities whose are pictured in statues. Are you beginning to see parallels between modern physics and Chinese and India's spaces? China's field theory of space affects the whole Chinese world picture.

This world picture was communicated to Westerners both consciously and unconsciously; you remember an awful lot of things unconsciously, which your consciousness forgets. After 1800 the Western world picture was Sinified to a considerable extent. (It was also Indianized to a great extent, too; and yet remained Western.) Einstein (and his predecessor, Christian Gauss) was affected by the changed Western world picture. His Relativity Theory includes a field theory of space. Einstein was probably affected by points-of-view which originated in China. His very idea of a very powerful dynamic space is probably affected by points of view which originated in India. If my example were alone I could not say anything; but Einstein is only one of many replicates of evidence of Asian influences on the Western world picture.

The unconscious is very much involved in the make-up of a world picture. And a world picture partakes of the immense complexity of the human unconscious. For it is possible, rationally, to figure out some of the symbols and metaphors imbedded in the works and writings of a higher society. Moreover, it is possible to see how these symbols and metaphors actually become part of the society's world picture. It is also possible to see how China's world picture could be communicated to Westerners, little by little, both consciously and unconsciously.

Civilizationists consign unconscious-theory to psychologists and believe they are not equipped to make discoveries about the unconscious. Moreover, they, and everybody else, are unaware of how tremendous was the impact of India, 'China, and Japan, beginning in the sixteenth century. They are all the less aware that study of these inter-civilizational impacts helps, with the aid of numerous replicates, to establish in a scientific manner, the existence of unconscious mental processes of all kinds, including the ability to arrive at new knowledge.

My only predecessor I know of who made considerable progress along these lines was Spengler in his *Decline of the West*, but he didn't realize how scientifically valid were his findings; and he had no theory of the unconscious. Experts have no idea of what I have outlined above; Spengler is criticized too much; Toynbee's blunt rejection of Spengler probably deepened this excessive rejection of Spengler's insights; especially since Spengler did make a lot of mistakes. Nevertheless, Spengler's insights into worldviews were far more brilliant than he realized. He has inspired me for fifty years, even though he wrongly thought that worldviews cannot be scientifically studied.

It requires a great deal of research and learning, which I have been able to achieve, to see or recognized evidence of world pictures influencing other world pictures. To begin with, it is necessary to know something of the philosophies and religions of a civilization, as well as some of its history and its culture.

To know, for instance, that old China was absolutely opposed to atomic theory, and that India was very interested in atomic theory, can be helpful. To know that Japan was converted to Buddhist teachings very differently from the way that Chinese intellectuals were converted, helps to understand why Japanese art became "expressionistic" and "impressionistic" and why Japanese architecture, which is well-known, today, was so different from that of the West. Some symbols in Buddhism and in Japanese architecture are immensely indebted to India's world picture.

Before Alexander the Great, around 300 B.C., attempted to conquer India, and, therefore, before Greek pictorial art exerted its immense influence on India's art, a different point-of-view existed in India. There are eighteen foot trenches in which the glorified Buddha supposedly reclined, but which were kept empty. India, isolated from Greece, might have taken this abstract route, not unlike that of Japan. In a way, therefore, Japan's very original world picture is, nevertheless, indebted to India's old world picture. Since we know that Japanese architecture has heavily influenced that of the modern west, it follows that, here, too, India has play a role, too. Here, too, are evidences of the activities of the human unconscious, as well as of human conscious reason.